PARENTAL VALUES FOR THE

EDUCATION OF THEIR

CHILDREN

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EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

While broad attempts have been made to investigate values undergirding school choice (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013), research has yet to employ a means for subjectively and holistically investigating parents' values for the education of their children across multiple school contexts. Q methodology was used with 29 parent participants who rank-ordered 40 statements aligned with the four-quadrant model of human development and holistic education: cognitive, social and emotional, psychomotor, and intuition and creative. Results yielded a three-factor solution interpreted along with interview data and field notes to be *Reverence in Tradition*, *Diversity in Experiences*, and *Morality in Decisions*. *Reverence in Tradition* reflects a priority of spiritual development. *Diversity in Experiences* emphasizes autonomous student growth through diverse interactions and ideas. *Morality in Decisions* emphasizes respectful and positive interaction with others. Three conclusions emerge from this research: there are three ways that parents who enroll their children in public, private, or homeschools express the priorities for the educational needs of their children; a four-quadrant model of education assists in understanding parents' subjective views related to the educational needs of their children; and school setting serves as an interesting role in understanding priorities for the developmental needs of children. Of interest is the finding that all three academic contexts were represented in each of the three viewpoints; however, some parents may place children in school contexts that align with preferences, such as most *Reverence in Tradition* were home or private schools, the other two parent groups favor public schools. Findings from this research can assist policymakers, administrators, and teachers who want to understand parents' values for the education of their children.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

School choice movements across the United States have raised awareness

concerning perceived inadequacies of current public and private education (Ravitch,

2013; Rebell, Lindseth, & Hanushek, 2009; Sheehy, 2013). Resourceful parents have

utilized federal legislation, personal investment, and awareness of the varied needs of

children to ensure academic success for their children. For some families, academic

investment goes beyond federal and state funding and finds its anchor in private school

settings with specialized programs. Likewise, home schooling (Ray, 2010),

microschooling (Horn, 2015), and unschooling (Hammer, 2010) choices provide

academic contexts, so parents can directly meet the perceived needs of their children and

families.

Personal beliefs undergird the decisions parents make regarding the educational

choices for children and youth (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007). Therefore, school choice is an

attempt by parents to align the needs of their children to the academic context that

connects personal priorities and values. Values can be understood as the cognitive

representations of desirable goals and involve the criteria utilized to make selections and

defend personal actions (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, & Knafo, 2002; Schwartz, 1992).

Values that parents have for educational choices vary widely, including foundational

academic approaches in reading and mathematics (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007; Hastings & Weinstein, 2008; Jacob & Lefgren, 2005; Maddaus, 1990; Raveaud & van Zanten, 2007; Schneider & Buckley, 2002; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013) and school location and convenience for the family (Glaeser, Poftak, & Tobio, 2013). Furthermore, other values have been found to influence parents such as the development of critical thinking skills (Bridgeland, Dilulio, Streeter, & Mason, 2008; Harris & Larsen, 2015; Shumow, 1997) and specific academic needs including special services (Bridgeland et al., 2008; Harris & Larsen, 2015; Shumow, 1997).

Some educational practices are unpopular for parents who value learning opportunities that are thought to suffer when classroom instruction focuses on excessive testing (Jacob & Lefgren, 2007). *Every Student Succeeds* (Every Student Succeeds, 2015) the successor to *No Child Left Behind* (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2001) legislation, continues accountability standards that include standardized national testing procedures. Other parents reject the secular foundation of public education (Newman, 2017).

Broad attempts have been made to investigate values undergirding school choice (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007; Hastings & Weinstein, 2008; Jacob & Lefgren, 2005; Maddaus, 1990; Raveaud & van Zanten, 2007; Schneider & Buckley, 2002; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). To date, researchers have attempted to study what parents seek from school-type participation by the analysis of traits or characteristics of schools, children, and families rated separately. What has not been considered is how the use of a holistic theoretical approach to understanding parents' subjective values may reflect deeper ideas in relationship to children's needs.

Background to the Problem

Public education has undergone significant changes from its inception. The historical evolution of education in the United States has created an environment that is often questioned by parents regarding the intentions of public education (Gatto, 2003; Holt, 1982; Labaree, 2004, 2010). Compulsory education first appeared in Massachusetts in 1852 with the state law that children were required to attend public school. The initial goals of education were rooted in parental values connected to community-wide religious beliefs and morality. Specifically, education was utilized as a means of reinforcing faith within the religious community (Labaree, 2011). As such, education within these communities focused upon academic endeavors that would support an individual's work ethic and contribution to the community in direct obedience and dedication to God. By 1918, compulsory education was the norm across the United States shifting from the community focus to a national understanding. Instead of relying upon individual communities to determine academic outcomes, a new national conversation was taking place, one that began considering the national benefits of standardized education. Eventually, this evolution to a national vision gave rise to Progressive education as envisioned by John Dewey (Lionni, 1993). Education evolved from a community-centered endeavor to a republic-focused entity to an economic stimulator, and finally, an equalizer in social opportunity (Labaree, 1997). The vestiges of faith-based community endeavors have given way to current focus upon the promotion of social norms (Labaree, 2011).

Significant attention given to the preservation of the republic came about because of international competition. This is best seen in the Space Race that arose after the

former Soviet Union successfully launched the first satellite, Sputnik, into space (Hansen, 1993; Jolly, 2009; Skinner, 1984; Steeves, Bernhardt, Burns, & Lombard, 1993; Wissehr, Concannon, & Barrow, 2011). This inequity between the US and USSR became a focal point whereby policy makers and parents became concerned that American students were inadequately prepared to compete against enemies in the global market. Public perception was refocused in the 1980s after publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), a national study that suggested the inferiority of American public schools. Despite significant negative press over the years, public education has continually sought to utilize programs designed to address the specific needs of individual children, such as the monumental national initiative to find and serve children and youth with disabilities known *as Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, or *IDEA* (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). It is critical to understand how changes in American education history helped spur change. While improved standards yielded new understanding of education in public schools, concerns of parents persisted leading to an increase in school choice discussions.

Since the American Constitution does not explicitly provide for education, individual states have been charged with addressing the necessity of academic instruction. State policy makers consider appropriate standards for curriculum, attendance, and regulations concerning educational outcomes. For decades, children in the public-school system were relegated to their local school campus as dictated by local attendance zones. This attendance policy may have worked in districts where schools reflected effective practices and the values of local parents. However, students in low-

performing attendance zones had few options enabling them to escape the realities of underperforming campuses as determined by state measures.

Further complicating current educational choice is the notion that many schools are now outside the control of government action. Home school, unschool, microschools, and private schools are not regulated in the same manner as the regulations required of public districts (US Department of Education, 2009).

Though government intervention has historically assured higher literacy rates, high school education equivalents for all youth and cultivation of talent for the country do not exist. Furthermore, there is no agreement regarding how to meet an appropriate educational goal for all learners. Religious individuals may value their spiritual beliefs as the predominant educational context (Carper, 2000; Johnson, 2013; McDowell, Sanchez, & Jones, 2000). Likewise, parents who subscribe to a specific theory or philosophy of education desire a school more aligned with their philosophical beliefs (Jacob & Lefgren, 2005; Schneider & Buckley, 2002; Sheehy, 2013). Waldorf schools serve as a cogent example of parental interest in specific educational philosophies. Rudolph Steiner, the creator of Waldorf schools, emphasized the importance of educating children according to their developmental stage (Steiner, 1965; Uhrmacher, 1995). At its core, Waldorf schools seek to educate the threefold nature of the child: mind, body, and soul (Easton, 1997). Furthermore, parents who believe that children learn best when they are left in a natural environment may be drawn to the child-focused form of education known as unschooling (Gray & Riley, 2013). Unschooling is a form of homeschooling where no established curriculum is used and student-interests are emphasized (Gray & Riley, 2013).

To date, only one study with a large number of participants at a national level connecting parents and school choice was commissioned by the Fordham Research Institute (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). Fordham researchers utilized a unique approach in that they wanted to determine whether U.S. parents could be segmented into groups that hold common sets of priorities. Location, college readiness, math and science curriculum, assignments that focus on critical thinking were some of the characteristics of education studied in this research. The Fordham research considered general parental opinions and did study not values based upon their children's needs.

Other researchers focused on what parents want in their children's schools (Glaeser et al., 2013). Maddaus (1990) and Bosetti and Pyryt (2007) attempted to explore parental choice, but both studies concluded that it is difficult to make clear suggestions based upon the research. Research that was supposed to assist policymakers and parents has been unable to give helpful guidance. Though these researchers and the Fordham study engaged in the largest participant research into parents and school choice, such quantitative measures failed to consider the subjective viewpoints of parents regarding school values. Therefore, Parker (2015) utilized Q methodology to garner a deeper understanding of the decision-making processes involved in choosing among private schools. Her research yielded a three-factor solution demonstrating a focus on personal values and beliefs as they related to religion and character development, a desire for strong academic environments, and a need for safe and selective social environments.

Issues related to measurement of parental values through Likert-type scale assessments have been found to introduce bias related to transpersonal experiences (Edwards, 2003). Specifically, Edwards found that unclear wording in measurements of

transpersonal constructs such as "god" or "goddess" could bias participants' responses depending upon their personal beliefs. This is critical in researching connections to holistic education as it underscores a need to consider a methodology that can better capture the subjective nature of transpersonal constructs like spirituality.

Theoretical Framework

A mechanism to construct the broad needs of children and youth within the family context is necessary when considering the values parents prioritize in making academic decisions. Holistic education is an approach that includes multiple aspects of human development that can be organized in four or more general areas, often conceptualized according to Jungian psychology as thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuition (Cano, 1999; Kreber, 1998; Montgomery, Strunk, Steele, & Bridges, 2012; Yang & Lin, 2004). Thinking encompasses cognitive development, the knowledge and content areas, and critical thinking skills. The feeling function can be broadly represented by social psychology, emotional development, and civility. Sensing is learning with the body and body-mind connections and may be characterized by psychomotor development. Intuition is an area that is not often included in discussion of education unless creative thinking, creativity development, and spirituality is addressed. According to Montgomery et al. (2012), these aspects of learning and human development can be further understood in a four-quadrant model:

1. Thinking (Mind): thinking, cognitive domain, knowledge development
2. Feeling (Heart): feeling, affective domain, social and emotional development
3. Sensing (Body): doing, psychomotor, physical development
4. Intuition (Spirit): creating, intuitive domain, spiritual development

This theoretical model was used to capture the needs of children as related to education that considers holistic aspects of human development for learning and growing. Likewise, such a framework transcends emotional and physical aspects of sensing and includes the spiritual aspect of learning and imagination. Ultimately, this model allows for a deeper understanding of parental values and the education of their children.

Statement of the Problem

Subjective and holistic values cannot be understood by surveys of item-based questions or interviews of parents attending one type of school. What has yet to be described in the literature is the subjective views of a diverse set of parents, which can be accomplished with Q methodology (Davis, 2011; Lauen, 2007; McClain, 2010; Parker, 2015; Watts & Stenner, 2012). The coexistence of public, private, home-school, microschool, and unschooling indicates parents have myriad choices, especially as the priorities relate to the needs of children.

While school choice continues to be a popular concept, the school choice literature is limited to issues of types of schools, the impact of school choice, relationships between parental involvement and school choice, and reasons undergirding a particular school. School choice fails to include discussions related to the subjective and holistic values of these decision-makers (Parker, 2015; Yang & Kayaardi, 2004). As a result, such research reflects a scant list of preferences that remain biased and divorced from actual values (Schneider & Buckley, 2002). The lack of parental voice further complicates the issues of learning and instruction. This study addressed gaps and limitations in prior research to gain deeper insight into the values parents hold regarding educational priorities as they relate to their children's developmental needs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the subjective values of parents in relation to the developmental needs of children. The needs of children were considered using the theoretical framework of holistic education to garner all possible areas that might influence parent priorities. Furthermore, school choices made by parents were aligned to subjective values.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided the present study were as follows:

1. What are the values of parents/guardians related to meeting educational needs for their children and families?

2. In what ways do values align with school setting choices?

3. How does a theory of holistic education guide the understanding of parental values?

Significance of the Study

The importance of values is critical from a short- and long-term perspective. Values become even more important as they affect public perceptions connected to academic medium, contribute towards funding decisions, and ultimately shape children's development based upon choices made for school settings. Such understandings of these values will assist policy-makers and stakeholders. Parents and guardians may reconsider which schools they are choosing for their children and why resources should be increased or decreased. Likewise, this research will be a powerful tool in assisting parents and stakeholders alike in making clear, value-based decisions connected to where and how their children will be educated. This is not simply a private matter. Parents who are

unsatisfied will explicitly choose one type of school over another (Witte, 1990).

Administrators who wish to positively change their school climate and bring disillusioned

parents back into their campuses must consider parent values and a child's developmental

needs. Thus, understanding these values and decisions is critical in allowing parents the

best options for educating their children according to their developmental needs. Another

approach to analyzing these values and decisions is necessary in light of the measurement

issues (Bosetti & Pyryt, 2007; Edwards, 2003; Glaeser et al., 2013; Maddaus, 1990;

Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013).

The present study was unique because I took a novel approach to parents'

values. First, I considered parental values considering children's developmental

needs. Secondly, like Parker (2015) I utilized a data analysis that allowed for subjectivity

unavailable in prior studies. Third, I aligned school choice to subjective values. The

present study helped to add a new dimension to research on school choice and parental

decision-making.

Assumptions

Assumptions in this study include:

1. Q methodology meets the purpose of this study because it is designed to
   explore the subjectivity of parents as they utilize their values in determining
   the educational needs and contexts of education for their children.

2. The sample statements from the sort are informed by the theory of Holistic
   Education.

3. Participants in the study provide honest and reliable responses.

Definition of Terms

Concourse: The concourse in Q methodology refers to the communication flow

regarding the studied phenomenon. In this study, the concourse represents

communication about values parents hold regarding educational needs and

choices.

Condition of Instruction: The condition of instruction includes the directions that are

given to participants when they sort statements from the Q sample. The most

common way researchers utilize the condition of instruction is to ask participants

to determine which statements are "most like" and "most unlike" themselves.

Factor Arrays: Factor arrays include patterns of viewpoints/perspectives regarding

phenomenon that comes out of the study.

Factor Loadings: These are correlation coefficients according to McKeown and Thomas

(2013). Participants' sorts load or do not load on one of the factors that result

from the study.

Home School: These are academic settings whereby parents/guardians create the school

environment within their home, homes of like-minded individuals, or gathering

spaces where learning and instruction can take place. Home school can be driven

by religious and/or philosophical beliefs. Additionally, theory may also underlie

home school methods.

Holistic Education: an approach to education whereby the "entire" child is educated.

The use of a four-quadrant model is employed: Sensing, Thinking, Intuition,

Feeling (Montgomery, Strunk, Steele, & Bridges, 2012).

P-Set: This is a reference to the participants in the study. Diverse, purposive viewpoints

   will reflect the subjectivity of the statements.

PQMethod: The statistical program that supports the analytical procedures of Q-study is

   known as PQMethod.

Public School: Public schools refer to government funded campuses existing at local

   levels. These can include traditional school campuses, charter schools, and

   magnet programs. These academic settings are regulated by federal and state

   laws.

Private Schools: Private schools are governed independently of the government.

School Choice: School choice, broadly refers to a parent's rights related to choosing

   their child's school whether it be public, private, home school, or unschooling.

Q Methodology: Q Methodology was developed by William Stephenson as a means of

   studying subjectivity in a scientific manner.

Q-Sample: The set of statements chosen from the concourse to represent the

   phenomenon in the study is known as the Q-sample. Unlike the concourse that is

   much broader, the Q-sample is the representative statements sampled from the

   concourse for the study.

Q-Sort: Participants engage in a Q-sort when the rank the order of the statements from

   the Q-Sample through forced distribution.

Unschool: Unschool is a relatively unknown educational method whereby student

   interest is the sole driving force behind learning activities. Instead of utilizing

   prepackaged curriculum, children learn solely through play and their interest in

specific topics. Parents function as facilitators in the process, but as completely

decentered as experts in teaching and learning.

Values: Values can be understood as the cognitive representations of desirable goals

(Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, & Knafo, 2002). Values involve the criteria utilized in

order to make selections and defend personal actions (Schwartz, 1992). Values

are understood in this study to be the outflow of parent priorities.

Subjectivity: Subjectivity refers to a communication of a person's point of view

(McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to describe the subjective values of parents in relation to the developmental needs of their children. Furthermore, school choices made by parents were aligned to subjective values. The first section of literature reviewed includes a discussion of holistic education and the developmental needs of children. This will be followed by a discussion of the types of schools, specifically public schools, private schools, unschools, and microschools. Each of these sections on school-type includes the research and literature of programs associated with the school. Finally, literature related to types of programs available to parents in public schools is presented.

Holistic Education

The values parents have regarding their children's developmental needs can be viewed through the lens of holistic education. Holistic education emphasizes what it means to be human (Forbes, 1996). It is a rejection of the standards and testing methods that have become key parts of academic measurement in public education (Mahmoudi, Jafari, Nasrabadi, & Liaghatdar, 2012). According to Forbes (1996), there are at least 7,500 holistic schools. The modern existence of such academic contexts stems from the social and global threats existent in the 1960s and 1970s, which included the threat of nuclear devastation, breakdown of traditional family structures, and disregard for

traditional institutions like church (Forbes, 1996). Holistic education can be viewed as a reaction to behaviorism, a theoretical approach to education that failed to engage human depth (Forbes, 1996). As such, the unraveling of wholeness was occurring, and people were losing their unique identities only to be remade in the image of corporate needs. One of the key ideas espoused by holistically-focused educators is that conventional schools' claims of freedom and democracy are moot in light of the explicit nature of authoritarian-led classrooms (Forbes, 1996). Authentic holistic education de-emphasizes the traditional roles of teachers and allows them to function as a mentor and facilitator.

From a broader historical perspective, holism can be traced through an ancient Greek belief that the universe cannot be parsed, thus it must be understood through integrated wholes (Lee, 1988). Socrates represented a holistic approach through his exhortation for individuals to examine themselves (Miller, 2007). Furthermore, modern understandings of this form of education can be understood through the theories of Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Frobel, and Jung (Mahmoudi et al., 2012; Montgomery, Strunk, Steele, & Bridges, 2012). Three principles guide holistic education: interconnectedness of life, a sense of the sacred, and the education of mind, body, and spirit (Four Arrows & Miller, 2012). With these aspects in mind, the goal of holistic education is twofold. The first goal can be termed *ultimacy* or the highest state a human being can aspire (Forbes, 2003). This can be viewed through the lens of stage development (Mahmoudi et al., 2012). The second goal is the engagement to reach the ultimacy (Forbes, 2003).

Specific, modern examples of holistically-based educations are evident in Waldorf and Montessori schools. Rudolf Steiner, the originator of Waldorf schools, based his education model upon a spiritual philosophy of human wisdom (Martin, 1997).

Emphases in these schools center on the development of the whole child through music, art, and dance, elements that can be directly connected to the four-quadrant model (Martin, 1997). Steiner utilized imagination through these arts as a means of encouraging students to envision prospective futures (Gidley, 2010). Dr. Maria Montessori, originator of Montessori schools, was more research-focused than Steiner's philosophical approach to education. Her observations led to a focus on experiences and activities designed to encourage an individual's growth in physical, intellectual, creative, and social independence (Martin, 1997). Her overall concern was the natural development of a child physically, mentally, and spiritually (Miller, 1997).

Through my understanding of holistic education, I constructed this study to be connected to the four aspects of development according to Haynes (2009) and Miller (1991). These four aspects of development include cognitive, social and emotional, psychomotor and creative, and spiritual realms (Montgomery et al., 2012). This four-quadrant model can be further understood as thinking, sensing, intuition, and feeling, which are based upon the Jungian personality processes of judgment and perception (Montgomery et al., 2012). These aspects of development comprise the theoretical framework for this inquiry seeking to describe the values that parents have for the education of their children according to their needs. However, most academic contexts seem to favor one or two areas of development over the others, thus I have chosen to narrow the aspects into these overarching categories: cognitive development, social and emotional, psychomotor, and creative and spiritual development. The next section will discuss academic contexts and their connection to developmental needs. Relevant quantitative and qualitative inquires will be reviewed according to the holistic

developmental areas of cognitive, social and emotional, psychomotor, and intuition and creative.

Cognitive Development

Critical thinking skills are of high importance when parents consider what is integral to their child's educational needs (Hastings & Weinstein, 2008; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). Rigorous education focusing on critical thinking skills moves beyond normal regurgitation of facts and encourages deeper thinking patterns among students. In what has been the most in-depth look at educational desires, Zeehandelaar and Northern (2013) found that the development of critical thinking skills was one of the most important facets in education according to parent desires. Additionally, income level is directly correlated with desires for the development of critical thinking skills (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). The higher the income level, the more parents expressed the expectation that schools would foster critical thinking skills. Furthermore, critical thinking was considered a precursor to higher academic achievement and future college achievement (Hastings & Weinstein, 2008). Critical thinking skills capture academic rigor, another aspect of parent interest. Bridgeland et al. (2008) found that rigor was important to parents in relation to school choice.

Whether the parents are religious or secular, the most common theme arising from academic choice research is the desire for college readiness. Colleges and universities continue to employ holistic admissions policies (Jaschik, 2015) that consider more than grade point average and SAT or ACT scores. Gloeckner and Jones (2013) reported that among surveyed admission officers, more than 78% expected students from home schooled backgrounds to perform better in their first year of college than traditional high

school graduates. Zeehandelaar and Northern (2013) place college readiness in the top reasons parents choose school contexts. Hastings and Weinstein (2008) found that using higher academics metrics led to a withdrawal of students from one school to another as a means of eventually facilitating better college readiness.

From a broad perspective, the curricular desires of parents include many different dimensions. While curriculum can address development in all four developmental areas, it often focuses on the cognitive domain. This is best seen in public school settings. Raveaud and van Zanten (2007) conclude that parents desire a curriculum that fosters not only positive outcomes, but emphasizes learning that leads to academic and personal success. Parents have indicated that the inclusion of science-specific studies within elementary grades is an important part of early education (Glaeser et al., 2013). Traditional studies in school have emphasized the development of reading, writing, and math skills. This has been found to be an important value parents consider when choosing academic contexts for their child's needs (Shumow, 1997). Zeehandelaar and Northern (2013) found that a curriculum that emphasized reading and mathematics was important in a similar manner to critical thinking skills. This same research found similar parent interests in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Social and Emotional Development

Social and emotional development in education can be observed in programs that emphasize a positive school climate, character development, and bullying prevention. Illinois and Kansas have recently adopted social and emotional learning (SEL) standards into their public-school curricula (Bridgeland, Bruce, & Hariharan, 2013). Researchers with Fordham Institute found that parents choose schools based upon character

development programs (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). These same researchers also found that parents desire schools that promote positive school climate (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). One specific example of character development is anti-bullying campaigns. Puhl, Suh, and Li (2016) found that parents wanted programs in their local schools that addressed bullying of obese students. While parents have indicated character development as a reason for selecting specific schools (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013) SEL poses a major difficulty as a parental choice for children's developmental needs as it remains largely theoretical. However, the research cited in this section clearly indicates that parents make choices related to SEL when asked about their preferences.

Unlike SEL, Youth Empowerment Programs (YEPs) suggest that adolescents' self-efficacy and self-esteem can be improved through targeted training. One meta-analysis of YEPs (Morton & Montgomery, 2013) found some positive effects in the areas of social skills, coping skills, and diminished self-destructive behavior. Conversely, the same researchers suggested an overall lack of empirical evidence in relation to the generalization of improved behaviors and self-esteem of adolescents (Morton & Montgomery, 2013). Like SEL, YEPs remain a theoretical endeavor; however, they represent concrete programs that may contribute towards parents' selection of specific schools based upon the developmental needs of their children.

Psychomotor Development

The importance of educational facilities cannot be understated. These are structures that house courses emphasizing critical thinking skills and academically focused programs. They are the spaces where children play on playgrounds during recess and engage in physical education. According to the World Health Organization (WHO,

2014), less than a third of adolescents meet the recommended level of physical activity. Furthermore, WHO (2014) concluded that a lack of physical activity adversely affects a child's physical and mental abilities. This study clearly connects the two. Other research has suggested the cognitive benefits of physical activity (Archer & Garcia, 2014; Tomporowski, McCullik, Pendelton, & Pesce, 2015; Van der Niet, Hartman, Smith, & Visscher, 2014). Research indicates that some parents choose a school based upon athletics (Harris & Larsen, 2015). Harris and Larsen (2015) suggest that parents in one large American coastal city consider athletics at least as important as academics. The rise in social awareness in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education is reflected in what parents consider important their children's academic needs (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). Specifically, one study concluded that the absence of science labs may cause parents to consider a different school (Glaeser et al., 2013). Such research indicates a desire for development in the psychomotor domain.

Project-based learning was found to be a creative model chosen by parents (Shumow, 1997). This type of education is akin to Montessori schools. Project-based learning indicates a desire for development in Spirit as children engage in creating products through their creative abilities. Perhaps the best example of project based learning, though different from Shumow's (1997) research, is vocational education. Vocational education specifically engages students in learning activities that prepares them for employment in trade-vocations. This type of education encourages development in creativity as students are challenged to address real-world situations.

Intuition and Creative Development

The development of intuition is complex and difficult to describe from the variety of literature. Although some believe this represents the creative (Savoie, 2017), others see intuition as the foundation for spiritual development (Sisk, 2002, 2006, 2008).

Intuition involves the ways people perceive the world indirectly through unconscious practices of speculation and imagination (Felder & Silverman, 1988; Roeper, 1995). According to Felder (1993), intuition involves information that emerges from internalized memory, reflection, and imagination. Furthermore, the use of intuition facilitates growth in spirituality as it develops an individual's core values (Sisk, 2006; Kessler, 2005; Kidder, 1999). Other researchers suggest that spirituality assists in the development of intuition (Astin, 2004; Sisk, 2002). Silverman (2005) connected success between creativity and spirituality. The bridge joining these concepts exists in the idea of creativity. Astin (2004) explains creativity in terms of the process by which a product is brought into existence. In other words, there is a symbiotic relationship among intuition, creativity, and spirituality. Spirituality, then, is the continual search for meaning and purpose in one's life (Kessler, 2005).

More in line with private and home schooling, parents desire a plan of study that emphasizes faith-based and religious teachings (Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). From a public-school perspective, these desires could be viewed through the lens of morality, not a faith-based or religious perspective.

Though Zeehandelaar's and Northern's (2013) research is thorough, its findings do not emphasize families who choose education based upon morality. These same researchers suggest that moral education and character development are average concerns (Zeehandelaar and Northern, 2013). In fact, other research suggests that education must

be based around family values (Farris, 2013; Hill, 2000). Farris (2013) estimates that up to two-thirds of home schoolers choose this mode of education based upon religious underpinnings that are not represented within public school settings. Beavis (2004) utilized data collected from 609 families to suggest that morality through religious education is a key factor in educational choices. Thus far, the literature review has considered aspects of education.

Types of Schools

This section presents the research associated with five classic and contemporary school opportunities for the education of children and youth. Public schools, perhaps the best-known mode of education, are first discussed in terms of participation and programs often offered in local schools. Next, microschools are discussed as a lesser-known opportunity for student participation in smaller learning communities. Following the discussion of microschools is a consideration of private schools and what appeals to parents when making choices for private school attendance. Next, home schooling is presented. Lastly, the concept of unschooling will be reviewed.

Public Schools

Historically rooted in the Progressive Education movement inspired by Dewey, Pestalozzi, Rousseau, and Froebel, public education has been envisioned as the vehicle by which students become prepared to contribute to society (Lionni, 1993; Taggart, 2001). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 50.1 million children are enrolled in public elementary, middle, and high schools across the US (NCES, 2015) including the 3.1 million professional teachers who are responsible for educating these millions of learners (NCES, 2015). Despite negative press associated

with public schools and standardized testing, enrollment in religious and secular private schools may be dwindling (Marcus, 2015). In comparison, elementary and secondary enrollment has increased and is projected to increase through the year 2023 (US Department of Education, 2015).

From a parental standpoint, public education offers broad opportunities for both family and individual child. For qualifying families, government sponsored Head Start programs offer early educational opportunities, health and nutrition training, and parental guidance (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2016). Additionally, public schools often host low cost day care. Local school districts may be more likely to fund diverse courses as their financial support is spread across greater numbers of contributors. Projected public school cost per student are nearly $13,000 (NCES, 2015).

Public oversight may be one of the strongest reasons for utilizing tax-payer funded education. In fact, it has been suggested that there is no greater period in American education than now, where the public is aware of the lagging performances of any given student group (Hill, 2000). One of the accountability pieces featured under *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation is known as National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Most notably, NAEP testing measures student math and reading proficiencies in fourth, eighth, and twelfth grades (National Assessment Governing Board, 2009). Other subjects tested include science, US history, civics, and geography (National Assessment Governing Board, 2009). Essentially, NAEP scores can be understood as an overall educational report card (Strauss, 2015). Research into the results of NAEP testing suggest that NCLB efforts have not brought about the desired results. Progress of math acquisition in grades 4 and 8 is suggested to have slowed since

the inception of NCLB. Specifically, there has only been a 5-point increase in overall

scores since 2003, whereas previous testing between 1992 and 2003 indicated a 15-point

increase (Fairtest, 2015). Likewise, reading scores have significantly lagged in the same

manners where students have not significantly increased proficiency rates since 1990

(Fairtest, 2015). The hallmarks of college entrance exams, SAT and ACT, have reflected

stagnation and declines since 2010 (Fairtest, 2015). Further analysis suggests that while

NAEP proficiencies positively correlate with college readiness (Fields, 2014), scores do

not positively predict job preparedness for individuals who do not enroll in college

following high school (Becker, Dickinson, McCloy, Sinclair, & Thacker, 2015). Though

research interpretations yield conflicting results, public education still offers the clearest

opportunity for learning that is measured and compared across the nation.

From a developmental standpoint, public education largely appears to follow

education that emphasizes development in cognition and knowledge development and

chronological age. Specialized programs in public schools, such as Advanced Placement,

often place great emphasis on multiple choice questions. For example, Byrd, Ellington,

Gross, Jago, and Stern (2007) concluded that Advanced Placement tests still placed too

much emphasis on memorized facts to be awarded unconditional high praise.

Progressive education focused on memorization and drills for learning (Gill &

Schlossman, 1996).

Microschool

Microschools demonstrate a new shift in education for greater parent and student

choice based upon need. Due to the newness of such schools, there is no academically

agreed upon definition of microschools; however, there are core goals associated with

these types of schools. The most common understanding is that microschools constitute a sort of return to the one-room schoolhouse model of the past (Candler, 2014; Horn, 2015; Kamenetz, 2014; Vander Ark, 2015). The focus on such educational settings is based upon the perceptions of traditional schools that are habitually labeled as failures. Accordingly, one central tenant of microschooling is the focus upon maintaining small numbers of students. No more than 153 students comprise these kindergarten through 12th grade schools based upon research that indicates difficulties in maintaining positive and meaningful relationships between teachers and students in larger groups (Candler, 2014). Not only are school sizes kept small, but student interest is a key part of the academic day. Students autonomously determine their daily schedules as means of fostering college preparatory mindsets and a more global view of adult life (Candler, 2014). Teachers function beyond their traditional roles with more variety that can contribute towards individual learners' preferences (Candler, 2014). Proponents of these types of environments use examples of specific schools to point out the efficacy of this model (Horn, 2015). Sometimes the school is a publicly funded school while other times the school functions as a sort of fusion of home and private school. Microschools all utilize technology to ensure students can learn through diverse opportunities. Parents, then, do not have to choose among traditional types of education (public/private/home), they can decide whether new academic practices are appropriate based upon their personal values and the needs of their children. Research on academic outcomes from microschooling are not available since this is a relatively new model.

Private School

Private school education continues to be a viable option for parents whose values are different from their local school district. Parents may perceive their children's needs to be different from the offerings of a local school. Research indicates that between 10 and 12 percent of school-age children are enrolled in private schools (Council for American Private Education, 2012; Hoffer, 2009; Lacireno-Paquet & Brantley, 2008; Lyons, 2012; Marks, 2009; Parker & Pettijohn, 2007). Nearly five million students in private schools are spread across 30,861 schools in the US (Broughman & Swain, 2013). Unlike public schools, teacher-student ratios in private schools remain low at 10:1 (Broughman & Swain, 2013). Private schools graduated 98% of their seniors within one year while 64% attended a four-year college or university (Broughman & Swain, 2013). Private schools exist as Catholic, non-Catholic religious, and independent, non-sectarian schools (Baker, Han, Keil, & Broughman, 1996). Catholic schools can be further broken into categories that include parochial, diocesan, and private sector (Parker, 2015). Categories of non-Catholic schools include conservative Christian, affiliated, and unaffiliated schools (Parker, 2015). Two types, non-sectarian and independent schools, operate outside of any religious group or organization. Religious private schools comprise the greatest percentage of type at 68% with Catholic schools comprising the majority (Gutnik, Hakimzda, Yoskowitz, & Patel, 2006; Hoffer, 2009; Parker & Pettijohn, 2007).

Private school officials are free to employ whatever curriculum they deem desirable. Like public schools, private schools may offer AP and IB programs. The lower teacher-to-student ratios may contribute to better academic and learning outcomes.

The higher percentage of religious institutions would suggest that faith-based infusion into learning is an important value among parents in meeting their child's needs (Coons & Hanley, 2013).

Public perception plays a key role in the popularity of private schools. Research indicates that perceptions of private schools include greater academic achievement among higher standards, smaller class size, freedom to incorporate more rigorous curriculum, better parental communication, better moral education, extracurricular offerings, and higher rates of college acceptance (Kennedy, 2013). Peterson and Llaudet (2006) found a 3 to 6.5 test point advantage in 8th grade math scores, favoring private school students over their public-school peers. The same population achieved a 9 to 12.5-point advantage in 8th grade reading (Peterson & Llaudet, 2006). These same researchers found a 2 to 3-point advantage in math scores among 4th grade private school students, as well as a 7 to 10-point advantage in reading scores among the same populations (Peterson & Llaudet, 2006). Other researchers purportedly found the opposite results. Lubienski and Lubienski (2004, 2005, 2006) report that fourth grade students outperform their private school peers. In all three research endeavors, the researchers utilize the same manners of analysis as NCES and report similar findings. Peterson and Llaudet (2006) call the findings into question because of a post-treatment bias. While noteworthy in a discussion related to determining the superiority of one education model over another, Peterson and Llaudet (2006) choose to avoid endorsing one type of school over another, despite their analysis. Lubienski and Lubienski (2004, 2005, and 2006) implicitly choose public school over private education as a function of cost. Clearly, there remains a significant debate over the benefit of one over the other.

Home School

Home school constitutes the earliest forms of education in the United States (Johnson, 2013; Mayberry, 1989; Ray, 2013). The view of parents' roles in education changed as a result of such legislation that mandated public school attendance (Kunzman, 2012; Maybery, 1989). Eventually, by the 1960s and 1970s, parents responded to criticisms of public education by removing their children from local school campuses. They began engaging in home schooling as a result of pedagogical and/or ideological reasons (Johnson, 2013; Van Galen, 1986). Accordingly, this was an effort conducted by both secular and religious groups as a means of educating their children based upon personal values and needs (Johnson, 2013). Home school represents a shift away from Dewey's vision of citizen-identity and towards an understanding of an individual's human and nonpolitical identity (Glanzer, 2013). Specifically, home schooling may be understood as the private education of a child through parental means via individual households or cooperative groups of like-minded families. Whether religious or secular, the thread that connects home schoolers across the country is the common basic convictions espoused by each distinct group (Farris, 2013). Estimates on the numbers of home schooled children range from 750,000 to 1.7 million (Carper, 2000).

The obvious difference between home school and public (and private) schools is the location of education setting. Home schoolers educate children in their own homes, homes of families who participate in learning cooperatives, meeting places like churches, and city-spaces available to the public. The greatest obstacles in this form of education is the necessity of parents to learn what is normally taught and then prepare how to negotiate their values and child's needs against traditional curriculum (Hill, 2000). Like

regular classroom teachers, parents must learn about student motivation, assess resources, and tailor material for their specific needs (Hill, 2000). Though it has been common to suggest home schoolers are isolationists, Hill's (2000) research suggests the opposite. Families are choosing to engage in cooperative learning groups as a means of utilizing resources in better manners. For example, one parent may not feel efficacious in their understanding math or science, so another parent might fill this need.

In reality, home schooled students and public/private school students engage in learning the same core subjects. Standardized tests are popular ways of measuring for differences among populations. As such, home schooled students have scored at the 65th to 80th percentile on such tests compared to public school students who average in the 50th percentile (Ray, 2010; 2013; Rudner, 1999; Van Pelt, Allison, & Allison, 2009; Wartes, 1990). These studies suggest that home schooled students are likely to outperform their academic peers in math, science, and reading. Academics, though, are not the only area where home schoolers are questioned.

Socialization is an integral part of school contexts. There is often a bias against home schoolers that their social development is adversely affected by a lack of diverse social experiences. Social research conducted on home school students suggests the opposite (Medlin, 2000, 2007, 2013; White, Moore, & Squires, 2009; White, Williford, Brower, Collins, Merry, & Washington, 2007). In fact, research has suggested that home schooled students' self-concept is significantly higher than their public-school peers (Medlin, 2007). Along with social concerns, there may be questions regarding the adult lives of individuals who were home schooled.

If education is supposed to prepare individuals for anything, then adulthood should be evidence that suggests the merits of a specific type of academic context. Researchers have suggested that home schooled individuals place greater emphasis on family, maintained positive autonomy, exhibited stronger traits of entrepreneurial spirit, and engage in professional occupations greater than individuals who were not home schooled (Knowles & Muchmore, 1995). Other benefits of home schooling included greater percentages of college courses attempted than the general US average, greater engagement of literacy, more participation in community service than the national average, and more political activity (Ray, 2013). In other words, these activities suggest individuals who were home schooled are more likely to practice various aspects acquired through education than those who were educated in other contexts. Parents who value higher education in the form of college may have a positive choice in home school.

Research suggests that home schooled individuals may be better prepared for college and perform better once enrolled. More recent scholarship suggests that these are students who score significantly higher on SAT and ACT tests than traditional students (Snyder, 2013). This same research found that the home-schooled students had higher overall GPAs in college than their peers who were educated in other contexts (Snyder, 2013). Despite a common myth that home schoolers are not widely accepted into colleges and universities, research contradicts such thoughts (Gloeckner & Jones, 2013). Gloeckner and Jones (2013) report that 78% of surveyed admission officers expected these types of students to outperform their peers over the first year of college.

Thus far, the literature review has considered the merits of home schooling. From the standpoint of parental choice, home schooling allows parents to specifically choose

whatever they want for their child, academically speaking. This, then, is the value of

home schooling. If a parent is truly concerned about an education that reflects a family's

values and their child's needs, then this is an opportunity to directly influence academic

direction. The flexibility of such academic contexts allows controlled socialization.

Assignments and coursework can be modeled after the success of AP and IB.

Additionally, newer laws allow home schooled students to participate in some of the

extracurricular offerings of their local school district; thus, a parent can utilize what they

consider best from their tax-supported school system.

Unschool

One of the least-known academic choices parents can make in the US is that of

unschooling. This type of education is based upon the notion that public schools

adversely affect students through boredom, confusion, and fear (Holt, 1982). Initially

understood to be a form of home schooling, unschooling separates itself from the

traditional home school model by shunning school-like activities at home (Gray & Riley,

2015). The National Center for Educational Statistics (2013) reported the number of

unschoolers to be 1,770,700. Essentially, this model of education focuses on curiosity-

driven learning rather than curriculum (Hammer, 2010). In fact, there is no curriculum.

Children learn through their personal interest in their environment. This view of

education understands the importance of personal motivation in the process of education

(Gray & Riley, 2015). Additionally, self-regulation, self-understanding, and intrinsic

motivation are key aspects in unschooling (Kirschner, 2008). From a family's values

standpoint, authentic learning was the primary goal of utilizing such a model (Kirschner,

2008). The complete lack of structure allows for organic growth in whatever direction the individual chooses.

Available Programs for Developmental Priorities

Parents are not limited by academic building locations and settings for their children's needs. There are programs available in both public and private settings that can broaden the appeal of a specific school campus. The programs discussed in this section are commonly thought of as primarily public-school entities, but can also exist in private schools as well.

One accelerated academic program offered in public and private schools is advanced placement (AP). Specifically designed for college-bound students, these courses offer students an opportunity to engage in higher level rigor at local campuses. According to College Board, the non-profit organization which oversees Advanced Placement programs, there has been a 45% increase in total numbers of tests taken between 2004 and 2014 (College Board, 2014). This same research indicates that over four million Advanced Placement tests were taken as of 2014 (College Board, 2014).

AP coursework came about as a result of the Ford Foundation for Advancement of Education's collaboration with three private high schools and universities (Nugent & Karnes, 2002). The Fund for the Advancement of Education contributed to the framework of advanced courses through its financial support of twelve colleges and secondary schools (Rothschild, 1999). The group overseeing the development of eleven subjects was known as School and College Study of Admissions was eventually replaced by College Board in 1955 (Rothschild, 1999).

The AP program has been dramatically broadened since its inception. There are currently thirty-three college courses offered through College Board (Nugent & Karnes, 2002). A secondary level of AP offerings has also been instituted through coursework known as Pre-AP. These courses are meant to provide more rigorous coursework to a broader set of students at lower academic levels (i.e. Freshmen, Sophomore, and Junior years). Whether AP or Pre-AP, College Board engages in teacher training to ensure rigor through a process called Vertical Teaming (Nugent & Karnes, 2002). Vertical Teaming is a method by which College Board ensures the appropriate academic scaffolding exists in moving students across AP coursework. Ultimately, the AP programs allow parents to choose an academic track that may be more in line with their educational values. This is not the only program to offer such coursework.

Another program offered in public and private schools is International Baccalaureate (IB). Its development resulted from a desire to give better legitimacy to academic work completed by students who were likely to extensively travel internationally (Poezler & Feldhusen, 1997). Like AP work, colleges often recognize successful IB work through college credit (Nugent & Karnes, 2002). IB was developed in Europe as a project of United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Twentieth Century Fund, and Ford Foundation. The rigorous coursework was developed to cultivate critical thinking, tolerance, and cultural understanding on a global level (IBO, 2001; Koetzsch, 1997; Lateer, 1999; Nugent & Karnes, 2002). Unlike AP design, IB programs integrate a semblance of holistic education into learning opportunities. In analyzing themes incorporated into IB education, John Hare (2013) identified an individual's growth in intellectual, emotional

physical, aesthetic, and moral realms. These areas of development clearly connect to Jungian typology of thinking, feeling, sensing, and intuition (Cano, 1999; Kreber, 1998; Montgomery et al., 2012; Yang & Lin, 2004). The audience is no longer limited to international students. Instead, the program has evolved into one that addresses understandings among culturally diverse students who are interested in global perspectives (Clayton, 1998; Nugent & Karnes, 2002).

Like Pre-AP, IB has coursework that is appropriate for students in middle school. This program includes areas of interaction, academic disciplines, and a personal product (Nugent & Karnes, 2002). The Middle Years Program is designed in order to allow for curriculum deemed important by local policymakers (not specifically outlined by IB). Unlike choice afforded by AP programs in secondary schools, IB school has expanded to lower grades further offering parents academic choices.

The Primary Years Program is designed for younger children between the ages of 3 and 12. The aims of this age focused curriculum are to develop children according to the whole child: social, physical, emotional, cultural, and academically (IBO, 2001). Like its program focused on adolescents, the Primary Years Program strives to encourage global awareness and sensitivity. International Baccalaureate, then, is another example where public education is attempting to offer parents greater choice for their children.

Gifted and talented education can trace its roots as far back as the 19th century as British researchers attempted to understand gifted individuals (Hollingworth, 1942). In the United States, the roots of gifted education were observed in grade advancement in public schools as far back as 1884 and the development of schools meant to address special classes (Jolly, 2005). Just as public education was inspired to new heights

following the launch of Sputnik, specific academic focus like gifted education also received increased interest (National Association of Gifted Children, 2008). Through the years, no Federal mandate has ensured the continuation of gifted education. From 1988 to 2011, the Javits Act was a Federal program that funded special projects for innovation in gifted education. However, in 2011, the Javits Act was defunded as the result of financial necessity. States placed a focus on *No Child Left Behind* legislation with greater emphasis on low test performers (Gentry, 2006; National Association of Gifted Children, 2008; Renzulli, 2005). Essentially, education of gifted and talented students remains the domain of individual states (Herring, 1991).

At its core, GT is supposed to develop higher levels of potential in all students through more advanced experiences (Renzulli, 1988). One manner that rigor can be accomplished within this framework is through accelerated curriculum (Feldhusen, 1994; Reis & Renzulli, 2010; Winebrenner & Devlin, 2001). Additionally, students' potential is enhanced when they engage in meaningful research, problem solving tasks, and opportunities to share learning opportunities (Winebrenner & Devlin, 2001). Furthermore, researchers in GT acknowledge that individual interests will change over time, thus development in individual strengths will naturally increase knowledge (Reis & Renzulli, 2004).

Specific learning opportunities can function under the banner of GT education. For example, mentorships can aid in students' experiences when they work directly with field experts within the students' interests (Runions & Smyth, 1985; Van Tassel-Baska, 2005). Summer programs sponsored by colleges and universities can offer unique opportunities to engage students in high interest programs with academic experts

(Feldhusen, 1994; Olszewski-Kubillus & Lee, 2004; Van Tassel-Baska, 2005). Saturday enrichment programs offered by colleges and universities offer challenges to GT students beyond their daily academic endeavors (Feldhausen, 1994; Olszewski-Kubillus & Lee, 2004). Clearly, gifted and talented education gives parents and students another opportunity when considering personal values and needs of the child.

Programs that are often connected to gifted and talented (GT) education utilize creative problem-solving opportunities. Future Solving Program, Destination Imagination, and Odyssey of the Mind are examples of such opportunities where creative problem solving (CPS) opportunities are integrated into explicit learning environments. CPS can be understood to be a tri-componential construct whereby groups of individuals seek solutions to problems through goal creation, identification of unique and potential solutions to those problems, and the creation of a plan for action (Treffinger & Isaksen, 2005).

Special education services in the US were federally mandated by 1975 (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996). Prior to 1975, individual states haphazardly enforced their own statutes for educating children with disabilities (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996). Federal funding in 1975 in the form of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act culminated in 1990 with the focus on Individuals with Disabilities Education Act which gave new power to aid local school districts in the education of children with disabilities (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996).

Summary of Chapter

Parents face difficult decisions related to school placements as related to their children's needs. Values related to cognitive, social and emotional, psychomotor, and

creative and intuition can guide these decisions. Five current models of education are available to parents which include public schools, private schools, homeschools, unschools, and microschools. Furthermore, there may be programs that can enhance learning experiences such as AP, IB, and gifted and talented education. Previous research has extensively investigated why parents choose specific contexts; however, this same field of research has neglected the subjective nature of parent values and priorities.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Education serves as one of the most important aspects of an individual's childhood and adolescence. The purpose of this study was to describe the subjective values of parents in relation to the developmental needs of their children. Furthermore, school choices made by parents were aligned to the subjective values. This chapter presents the framework for the chosen methodology, its ethical considerations, the participants, instrumentation, and procedures. Finally, the unique methodological data analysis will be described.

Rationale for Q Methodology

Q methodology seeks to describe the subjective views of participants and is described in classic and recent texts by Stephenson (1953), Brown (1980), McKeown and Thomas (2013), and Watts and Stenner (2012). Created by William Stephenson in 1953, this combination of statistical and qualitative inquiry differs from approaches known as R methodology. While R analyses are based on trait-based measurement, Q method correlates between- person relationships (Stephen, 1985). The methodology goes beyond the statistical methods to facilitate a deep understanding of the various sources of results reflecting a more qualitative approach to presenting findings. The purpose of this methodology is not to test hypotheses, but to allow the researcher to make discovering

the previously unknown. Constructs are not imposed before analysis, but emerge as the researcher conducts his investigation and performs a deep data analysis (Smith, 2000).

The creation of a measurement instrument is the result of sampling all possible opinions about the topic of study. The full, possible collection is known as the concourse and is the initial step involved in conducting a Q experiment. The concourse is then sampled to allow as diverse and representative opinions as possible that will be sorted by participants. A Fisherian design is recommended to garner this diversity and representation of the concourse (McKeown & Thomas, 2013). For this study, I used a theoretical framework as a one by four (1 x 4) design of ten statements in each cell to represent different aspects of child developmental needs resulting in the Q set. Participants, or the P set, sort the Q set into a range of agreement based upon the conditions of instruction. The selection of participants is purposive. In other words, individuals who sort statements are chosen based upon specific criteria relevant to the purpose of the study.

To date, the research into parental school choice has largely relied upon Likert-type rating scales. These types of inquiries have failed to take into account the subjective viewpoints of parents, especially as they relate to values and the developmental needs of their children. My research addressed this gap to foster a better understanding of parental values as they relate to decisions made based upon developmental needs of children.

Participants

Following IRB approval (Appendix A) for the study procedures and of my interactions with participants, I contacted parents of elementary children, secondary school-age children, and parents whose children have graduated from secondary school in

the last year. These parents were chosen to reflect the variety of school settings. A three-pronged approach was used to recruit participants. First, I contacted parents known to me who have children in public, private, and home school contexts. Secondly, I provided the parents who participated with my contact information in the event they knew other parents who might be interested in participating in the study as a means of snowball effect. Third, I employed social media techniques to recruit parents/guardians of students in home school, microschool, and unschool settings. These three groups have support sites posted in Facebook and Reddit. In both cases, I used my personal Facebook account and messaged these groups in order to gauge interest. Parents who participate in unschooling maintain blogs that encourage inquiry into their academic practices. Like Facebook and Reddit, I contacted these individuals via email in order to seek their interest in participation. Some parents were contacted for a post sort interview to assist with my interpretation of multiple sources of data

Instrument Development

The concourse for this study was created through literature related to educational priorities to meet the needs of children, informal interviews with parents enrolling children in a variety of school contexts, and artifacts from a variety of schools. In addition to research and developmental literature related to educational needs, I read books by John Taylor Gatto (2003), Tobin Hart (2003, 2009, 2014a, 2014b), John Holt (1982), George B. Leonard (1968), and Parker Palmer (1993) to contribute statements for the concourse. These writers focus on holistic education, historical educational studies, and humanistic psychology. Additionally, informal conversations with parents of school-age children attending public, private, and home schools contributed to the creation of

statements. I reviewed the materials from public and private schools and read substantial

material from the internet describing home schools, unschools, and microschools. The

reason the internet was used for school artifacts is that much of the information from

recent school contexts has not been studied and is not represented in the research

literature. After finding nearly 200 diverse statements or items, I organized the

statements within a developmental model of holistic theory that would assist in garnering

a broad representation of the concourse of needs of children addressed by school

contexts. The theoretical model used to formulate broad developmental areas of needs

for children included the four areas of cognitive, affective (including social and

emotional developmental areas), psychomotor, and creative/intuition (including spiritual

development). Further work was done to focus the statements by eliminating redundant

items, rephrasing items to match the condition of instruction, and assuring the language

of parents was evident in all statements. The resulting Q set was a total of 40 statements

(10 in each area).

 The sorting was conducted once under the condition of instruction, "What are the

priorities for your child's education?" This question prompts parents to think about what

they consider important and through the use of Q methodology allows the researcher the

ability to describe parental values using the Q set of holistic needs of children and youth.

The forced-choice form board was designed with eleven columns. The distribution of

statements within each row was 2, 2, 3, 4, 6, 6, 6, 4, 3, 2, and 2. These columns were

determined to be -5, -4, -3, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the data analysis.

 In addition to sorting, participants filled out a demographic survey (Appendix B).

The demographic survey asked for gender, race, level of education, and school context

type utilized for their children's education. Furthermore, the demographic form ascertained the school choice for the parent/guardian and the educational programs that apply to children, parents, and families.   Such information allowed me to make connections between parents' subjective values and their school choices.

Procedures

Data collection began following IRB approval. An IRB approved flyer with study purpose and rights of participants was provided to participants before the sorting interview. Participants were given the statements and the sorting board. Standard sorting instructions were used (McKeown & Thomas, 2013) and field notes were taken for any comments provided during sorting by the participants. All sorts were recorded and the demographic surveys were completed by participants. Preliminary analysis of the relationships among Q sorts was conducted as data were collected. The total number of participants was 29 parents. Final analysis was conducted following the completion of data collection.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with the first few completed sorts using a free computer program (PQMethod available from qmethod.org) designed for Q methodology. The program correlated each of the Q sorts to all other Q sorts resulting in a correlation matrix. The correlation matrix reflected the relationships among the various sorts and provides some initial ideas about how to proceed with the statistical method of factor analysis. Factor analysis generated factor loadings that are, "…in effect, correlation coefficients. They indicated the extent to which each sort is similar or dissimilar to the composite factor array…for that type" (McKeown & Thomas, 2013, p. 50). The issue of

factors retained is debated; however, according to Watts and Stenner (2012), one factor for every six sorts is appropriate. McKeown and Thomas (2013) add to the discussion by suggesting the retaining of all factors whose eigenvalue is one or greater as long as the factors are meaningful in the context of the research. Meaningful factors are considered stable when the factor has at least two to five sorts to define the factor (Brown, 1980). Rotation of factors assists in aligning the best solution. The final statistical procedure is the calculation of z-scores for all statements within each factor retained. At this point, the factor is now an array of statements. The stage of Q methodology that goes beyond the statistics is the interpretation of factor arrays. I organized the z-scores of statements in the order of the sorting board and used comparisons of statements generated by the program to determine statements that are distinguishing for an array (more like that array than the other arrays) and consensus statements. Interpretation of data required using all possible information provided by the Q sorters, including data on the demographic form, artifacts from schools, field notes, and post-sort interviews.

Bias

Researchers must seek to avoid and account for personal biases throughout the research process (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). One bias that necessitated particular attention was my interest in the school choice movement. School choice and the language associated with this movement continually manifested itself throughout the early iterations of this dissertation even though this was not a study on school choice. Another bias I had to control for was my personal identity as a religious and spiritual person (Hill & Maltby, 2009). My familiarity with some participants' personal religious and spiritual beliefs necessitated assistance to ensure analysis was bias-free. My

dissertation advisor and a doctoral student-peer assisted in reviewing multiple drafts of my study to ensure I focused on the developmental needs of children and did not unduly focus on the religious and spiritual nature of parental values.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter is to report the findings of the statistical analysis and the subsequent interpretation of the data considering the research questions. The factor analysis is the foundation for the interpretation of all data sources to address the purpose of this study, which was to describe the values of parents in relation to the developmental needs of their children. The following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the values of parents/guardians related to meeting educational needs for their children and families?

2. In what ways do values align with school setting choices?

3. How does a theory of holistic education guide the understanding of parental values?

This chapter is organized to begin with a detailed description of the participants. Following the description of participant characteristics is a discussion of the statistical data analysis. Next, the distinct viewpoints of participants are presented as interpreted with factor names and themes. Finally, after the interpretation of all data sources in response to the first research question, analyses will be presented as dictated by the subsequent two research questions.

Description of Participants

Research participants included 29 parents from urban areas of Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Texas. Every effort was made to garner perspectives from parents of children educated in public, private, home, micro, and unschooling contexts. These efforts included contacting parents personally known to the researcher, snowball effect for getting recommendations for other parents, and social media broadcasts. However, the 29 research participants represent only the three schooling contexts of public, private, and home school. Despite repeated efforts with key contacts to recruit parents from microschooling and unschooling contexts, no parents with children in these school contexts accepted invitations to participate.

All participants are parents of school-age children in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Furthermore, these participants identified as the educational decision maker within their family. In some cases, participants indicated they made educational decisions with their partner. Among the participants were 18 females and 11 males. Age groups ranged in the 20s, 30s, and 40s. Accordingly, there were three sorters in the 20-age group, 17 in the 30-age group, and nine in the 40-age group. Participants identified as either Native American (n=3) or Caucasian (n=26).

Additional information provided by participants included family structure. Family structure was described in one of three types: a two-parent family, single parent, or multiple parents. Of the 29 sorters, 22 identified as two-parent households. One of the two-parent participants included further distinction of her family structure by indicating the role of the stepfather as an active participant in the child's education, but who did not sort and was an active participant in the child's education. Another two-parent

participant indicated that a grandparent served as an important part of the family

structure, though he was not identified specifically as a parent. Single parent households

were represented by five sorters. Multi-parent households included two sorters. One of

these sorters was not the biological mother, but an aunt who took custodial guardianship

to avoid state intervention. This participant indicated the biological mother had limited

interaction with the child while the biological father had none. The other multiple parent

participant identified as poly-amorous. In other words, this individual identified as being

simultaneously partnered with two men living in the same household. One of the men

was charged with homeschooling the children.

Further demographic information provided by participants indicated parents'

levels of education. All 29 participants indicated their highest level of education as either

having High School/GED, Some College, Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctorate degrees.

Among participants of homeschooled children (n=10), three indicated Some College, two

indicated a Bachelor's and five indicated a Master's. Participants whose children

attended private school (n=7) indicated that two completed Some College, two completed

a Bachelor's degree, two completed a Master's degree, and one completed a Doctorate.

Among the parents or guardians of public school children (n=12), eight indicated they

had Some College, two had a Bachelor's degree, one had a Master's degree, and one had

completed High School.

Data Analyses

The statistical data analyses were conducted with the use of PQMethod

(Schmolck & Atkinson, 2014), which included correlation of all sorts to each other,

factor analysis and rotation of the correlation matrix, and *z*-score calculation for

statements within each factor. After exploration with centroid factor analysis and judgmental rotation (Brown, 1980), a strong first factor was evident with little success in rotation. Therefore, I chose to explore principal component analysis (PCA) followed by varimax rotation. After calculating two-, three-, and four-factor solutions, a three-factor solution was retained for rotation. Significance for determining the relationship of the sort to the factor was calculated for $p < .01$ as $2.58(1 / \sqrt{N})$, where N equals the number of statements in the Q set (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012) resulting in .32 for 40 statements in the Q set However, in order to determine which of the sorts to use as defining sorts or those that best identified the factor and at the same time eliminating the occurrence of sorts achieving significance on more than one factor (confounded sorts), a significance level was increased to .48 in order to capture more participant perspective and defining sorts. Finally, factor scores were calculated by z-scores of all statements within each of the factor solutions.

Of the 29 sorts, 24 achieved significance on a single factor and were considered defining sorts for that factor, while five sorts did not achieve significance on any one factor and were not used in the z-score calculations. Overall, 11 sorts defined the first factor, six defined the second, and seven sorts were used to define the third (see Table 1). Exemplar sorts for each factor were chosen by a high factor loading on one factor in relation to other factor loadings. These individuals were chosen for post-sort interviews. Only those who participated in post-sort interviews are noted as exemplars on Table 1, which denotes the three exemplars for Factor 1, and two exemplar interviewees for both Factors 2 and 3.

Table 1

*Factor Matrix with X Marking Defining Sorts and * Marking Exemplar Sorters*

Sort	Gender	Race	School Context	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
15	Female	CAU	Private	**.7702X***	.0260	.3750
27	Female	CAU	Home	**.7615X**	.3256	-.0140
14	Female	CAU	Private	**.7343X***	-.2056	-.0103
26	Male	CAU	Home	**.7122X**	.1450	.2396
4	Female	CAU	Private	**.6963X**	-.3343	.0238
24	Male	CAU	Home	**.6620X**	.1774	.1400
13	Female	CAU	Public	**.6612X***	-.1389	.1352
12	Male	CAU	Home	**.6428X**	.3528	-.0523
11	Male	CAU	Private	**.5953X**	-.3295	.1789
8	Male	CAU	Public	**.5328X**	.2580	.2298
28	Female	CAU	Home	**.5287X**	.2659	.2591
6	Female	CAU	Public	.0823	**.7617X***	.1802
17	Female	CAU	Private	-.0478	**.7406X**	.2345
3	Female	CAU	Home	.1665	**.7398X***	-.1172
19	Female	CAU	Public	.1256	**.6547X**	.0715
20	Male	CAU	Public	.1171	**.6040**	.4823
18	Female	CAU	Public	-.0276	**.5718X**	.3601
23	Female	NAI	Public	.0834	.1095	**.7479X**
22	Female	NAI	Public	-.1692	.2737	**.6972X***
16	Female	CAU	Public	.1765	-.0257	**.6870X**

1	Female	NAI	Public	-.2898	.4496	**.6797X**
29	Female	CAU	Home	.4546	.1465	**.5424X***
7	Female	CAU	Home	.4216	-.0682	**.5255X**
9	Male	CAU	Private	.3132	-.0496	**.4860X**
2	Female	CAU	Private	-.1545	.3737	-.0621
5	Male	CAU	Public	.0700	.3477	.3983
10	Male	CAU	Home	.4279	.1412	.4458
21	Male	CAU	Public	.2485	.3954	.3225
25	Male	CAU	Home	.3121	.0260	.3750

Note: Defining sorts for each factor are in boldface. CAU=Caucasian; NAI=Native American Indian

Interpretation of Data: Research Question 1

Following the statistical method portion of Q methodology, I used the statistical comparison output and other data sources to begin the process of interpretation of all data, which led to conceptual themes and factor names. Data sources included field notes taken during the sorting interview, artifacts regarding the school contexts, and information collected through follow-up interviews with parents whose sorts indicated an exemplar representation of the factor. Comparison data is the relationship of statements across factors. Distinguishing statements are those with z-scores for one factor that are significantly different from the other two factors. Consensus statements are those statements that are not significantly different across factors. In other words, the z-score of all three factor groups was the same. Through interpretation of the statement in the clusters, concepts, or themes, I can discover that consensus statements might hold the same rank for the factors, but the meaning of the statements could be interpreted differently across factors.

The three factors are presented here in response to the first research question: What are the values of parents/guardians related to meeting educational needs for their children and families? Each of the three factors is presented as its factor name, followed by the demographics of the parents whose sorts defined the factor, and the in-depth interpretation of all data sources. The factors were named values for *Reverence in Tradition, Diversity in Experiences,* and *Morality in Decisions.*

Reverence in Tradition Values

Reverence in Tradition was defined by 11 sorters, and the demographics of these participants are shown in Table 2. Five of the participants were male and six were female. One sorter was in their 20s, five were in their 30s, and four were in their 40s. Only one of the parents had not completed some level of college, while five had finished a Bachelor's degree, four had completed a Master's degree, and one had finished her doctorate. All 11 participants of this viewpoint identified as Caucasian. Three sorts (sorters 13, 14, and 15) were identified as exemplars; however, one sorter had two children in different school contexts and sorted twice, one sort for each child, and participated in one post-sort interview. Both of her sorts (13/14) were considered exemplars for this viewpoint. Children of these participants attended private school (n=4), public school (n=2), and home school (n=5).

Table 2

Demographics of Defining Sorters for Reverence in Tradition

Sorter	Gender	Education	Child Age/Gender	School	Number of Siblings
15	Female	Doctorate	8 year girl	Private	1
27	Female	Bachelor's	16 year boy	Home	3

14	Female	Bachelor's	9 year girl	Private	2
26	Male	Bachelor's	13 year girl	Home	4
4	Female	Bachelor's	11 year boy	Private	2
24	Male	Master's	10 year boy	Home	1
13	Female	Bachelor's	11 year girl	Public	2
12	Male	Master's	14 year girl	Home	3
11	Male	Master's	4 year girl	Private	1
8	Male	Some College	7 year boy	Public	2
28	Female	Master's	8 year boy	Home	4

The interpretation of data is described with three general conceptual themes that integrate to define *Reverence in Tradition* as a viewpoint of these 11 parents for the priorities for their children. Table 3 exhibits the statement placement in the ends of the factor array with the supporting data of the position in the array and the standardized score of the statement. Distinguishing statements and consensus statements are noted. The themes are evident in these data, supported by qualitative data, and summarized as priority needs for a strong religious or spiritual belief in learning, holding the needs of family firm in education of children, and keeping knowledge on an insular and traditional level of factual-information. These themes collectively support *Reverence in Tradition* as they reflect perspectives consistent with historically religious, spiritual, and family designs. Their family structure was two-parent families with both a mother and a father except for one single parent. An understanding of family religious beliefs and a need to make decisions in the family's best interest is characteristic in *Reverence in Tradition*.

Participants express a desire for learning aligned with parental beliefs particularly when some parental clarification of knowledge is necessary.

Table 3

Reverence in Tradition Statements with Distinguishing Statements Indicated in Bold

Statement	Array Position	z Score
Most Like Statements		
7. Belief that a divine power directly affects ability to learn deep and important truths.	**+5**	**2.05**
36. The necessity of personal spiritual development	**+5**	**1.74**
10. Kindness and compassion in learning and making decisions.	**+4**	**1.74**
1. Must learn that choices have positive and negative consequences	+4	1.57
8. Learn to be a good person by treating others with respect	+3	0.85
28. Facilitates a sense of satisfaction in a job well-done*	+3	1.06
35. Individual learning based upon my child's interests and strengths	+3	0.94
Most Unlike Statements	Array Position	*z Score*
5. Providing structure that prevents my child's natural tendencies to misbehave	-3	-1.48
9. Ideas that may not be supported by the family but lead to reinforcing the family's beliefs (like evolution leading to science skills)	-3	-0.78
20. Opportunities to question boundaries and limits	-3	-0.93
4. Instruction that is supported at a central educational space	-4	-1.51
6. Environment where anti-bullying efforts help my child explore and express their true selves	-4	-1.62
13. Safety on playgrounds and sports fields my family uses	**-5**	**-1.97**

19. Learning that is connected to popular social thinking   -5   -2.64

The need for children to have the guiding light of the divine and unseen powers is a focus for the personal development for the child. This theme is supported predominantly by the following five statements:

> 7. Belief that a divine power directly affects ability to learn deep and important truths (Array Position +5, *z*-score 2.05)
> 36. Necessity of personal spiritual development (+5, 1.74)
> 8. Learn to be a good person by treating others with respect (+3, 0.85)
> 20. Opportunities to question boundaries and limits (-3, -0.93)
> 19. Learning that is connected to popular thinking (-5, -2.64)

The spiritual needs defined for children of these sorters can be understood through their religious involvement. Ten of the 11 sorters indicated strong support for local churches through regular attendance (field notes and post-sort interviews). Furthermore, the 11th sorter indicated alignment with Christian beliefs, but did not regularly attend church (Sorter 8, post-sort interview). Faith was discussed by a 44-year-old female Caucasian who indicated private school was their family's choice because education "is created to glorify God" (Sorter 4, open question response). This reflects her belief that learning involves attaining knowledge and understanding that is in alignment with God's desire, and is supported by her son's private school's philosophy which reads, "…to carry out the educational mission of the Church" (Web artifact).

Unlike Sorter 4, Sorter 28 chose home school and described the need for her child to experience "socialization with faith-based families" (Sorter 28, open question response). For Sorters 4 and 28, school context emphasized spiritual development. The conservative religious orientation of both schools, home and private, would discourage

students from questioning the boundaries and limits understood by their religious traditions. This idea reflects the spiritual nature that was consistently and explicitly supported by four other participants who reference faith or God as an integral part of their child's academic and personal development (Sorters 12, 14, 15, 28 open question response). Specifically, sorter 14 indicated that the goal for her child was to live out a life of "faith and obedience to God as prescribed by the Church and God's truth" (post-sort interview).

Another 40-year old female placed her child in private school because, "My child knows who they [sic] are and they [sic] are secure in that because they [sic] are strong willed" (Sorter 15, post-sort interview). She cited an incident where her child told other children to stop bullying a younger child. The daughter did the right thing because she considered "…how Jesus would want us to treat others" (Sorter 15, post-sort interview), and "That is an emphasis in our family" (Sorter 15, post-sort interview). Sorter 15 emphasized her child's self-knowledge because of the family's religious environment at home, school, and local church and indicated that "Education takes place everywhere" (Sorter 15, post-sort interview). *Reverence in Tradition* rejects Statement 19's focus on popular thinking because the child's need is to focus on a reverence for conventional learning.

Another predominant theme for the needs of children for *Reverence in Tradition* is the importance of family. Family is evident by the following statements:

16. Teachers that model my family's beliefs (+2, 0.58)
21. Obedience and respect for me, the parent and our family (+1, 0.42)
19. Learning that is connected to popular social thinking (-5, -2.64)

Obedience and respect were key words to sorters of this viewpoint. A 40-year-old male sorter whose child was home schooled indicated that "…we wanted to avoid public school at younger ages, because we did not feel like they were fostering the kind of respect for adults and others that we use at home" (Sorter 25, field notes). This supports Statements 21 and 19 (Table 3) because it reflects his family's emphasis on supporting and learning respect through education and personal interaction. Another participant demonstrated the value of family in yet a different manner. The 38-year-old male who home schooled indicated choice because of "like minded families" (Sorter 12, open response). He specifically said it was important to he and his wife that their children, all of whom are home schooled, be exposed to families where "respect of parents and love of each other-family and friends" were understood to be emphasized (Sorter 12, field notes).

An exemplar sorter captured this insular to family theme by saying "…all my daughter learns at school is discussed after school in the car or around the dining room table. Sometimes we will correct information that we think is incorrect when it relates to science or biblical teaching" (Sorter 15, post-sort interview). This same sorter indicated that this was not a common occurrence, and furthermore said that the teacher has often helped engage the child in behavioral modification in support of the family's desires (Sorter 15, post-sort interview). The religious nature of her daughter's private school allowed the teacher and parents to actively communicate to accomplish like-minded goals regarding respect. Communication like this supports Statement 16 where teachers model family's beliefs. Sorter 13 echoed Sorter 15's use of "table talk" by saying, "I have lots of time to deal with this…anything that doesn't match what we believe at home" (Sorter 13, field notes). Sorts from 13 and 14 are the same individual sorting for different

children placed in different school contexts. What is interesting about her post-sort interview is that she is consistent with her answers regarding both children considered for each individual sort. Both children represented in the sorts are female elementary school students. However, the younger daughter attends a religious private school while the older attends public school. Sorter 13/14 suggested in the post-sort interview that they sometimes encounter religious disagreement from her privately educated daughter and scientifically questionable material from her daughter in public school (Sorter 13/14, field notes). In either case, disagreement in understanding was addressed at home from either father or mother. The strongest comment made by this sorter reflected the ultimate input by parents when she said, "Kids need to be equipped from their parents and not from public school" (Sorter 13/14 field notes). This was a response regarding her daughter who attends public school.

Another conceptual theme evident in *Reverence in Tradition* is the notion of insular and traditional levels of factual knowledge. Five statements that support this theme include:

10. Kindness and compassion in learning and making decisions (+4, 1.57)
29. Ignores fads of pop culture in favor of academic studies (+2, 0.59)
19. Learning that is connected to social popular social thinking (-5, -2.64)
6. Environment where anti bullying efforts help my child explore and express their true selves (-4, -1.62)
4. Instruction that is supported at a central education space (-4, -1.51)

The belief that education is an opportunity to protect children from the harshness of the world and society was suggested by a 44-year-old female (Sorter 4, field notes) who wants her children to be in a specific religious environment. The religious context she chose reflected a desire to control the types of people her son encountered. As a self-

identifying Catholic, Sorter 4 wanted focus on the time-honored traditions of her church as opposed to what she viewed as popular anti-religious sentiment (post-sort interview). Her desire was to insulate her son from what she considered the heretical teachings of public schools (Sorter 4, field notes). Her viewpoint clearly rejected the idea of popular social thinking (Statement 19).

Sorter 13/14 rejected social thinking by implicitly connecting statements 19 and 6 regarding anti-bullying campaigns. She suggested that she had witnessed the failure of anti-bullying efforts in her daughter's school despite the "huge" emphasis placed upon such programs, and found them "off-putting…and perpetuating the problem" (Sorter 13, post-sort interview). Statement 4 was understood to be applied to fit of location.

Sorter 26, a 41-year-old male said that home school was the best "fit" among geographical considerations since his family does not live near a centralized school building, and their church interaction required a long commute (open response question). Geographical considerations aside, the mere fact that homeschooled children are primarily educated at home suggests that there is no support for a centralized educational space. The rejection of centralized educational space is also supported by the fact that all home schooling sorters utilized some sort of co-op as an opportunity to socialize and receive academic support in areas where a parent may not have experience. Sorter 27, a 46-year-old female illuminated insulation in the form of a desire to provide an education that motivated her son. This resulted in a home school setting that provided opportunities with "some currently at home and some outside classes through co-op" (Sorter 27, open response).

Insular knowledge involves a traditional approach to learning. The clearest indication of traditional thinking is reflected in a quote from Sorter 13/14 who indicated that parents are the adults best suited for their learning (Sorter 13/14, field notes). Likewise, the religious emphasis given for contexts of education supports the kindness and compassion of Statement 10 over situations of bullying or other negative social interactions among children in schools. Other sorters reflected strong ideas of tradition. Sorter 24, a 47-year-old male, indicated a reliance upon "specific intelligence level of first child" as the reason for homeschooling (Sorter 24, open response question). I asked a follow-up question in order to clarify if he was familiar with the construct of human intelligence, and he was able to describe the process of determining the older sister's intelligence. Furthermore, his academic training in medicine gave him a background in traditional understanding of human intelligence (Sorter 24, field notes). Sorter 24, then, relied upon traditional needs by educating according to classical understandings of human intelligence. Furthermore, he explained home school was utilized because it allowed for opportunities to participate in higher learning activities at the local university. The use of traditional understandings of intelligence align with Statement 29 and reject Statement 19 as this family relied upon classical understandings for educational guidance. Statement 29 is also reflected in sorters' ideal educational setting.

Two sorters, 15 and 11, identified their ideal educational setting as a classical educational model (open response question). Both sorters' children attended schools that espoused classical educational models (Web artifact) that emphasized spirituality. Sorter 11 further illuminated the idea of traditional needs by viewing education as a "…joint venture between school and caregiver with an emphasis on classical education" (Sorter

11, field notes). He indicated an understanding of classical education to be one that emphasizes memorization at young ages (field notes). Another parent called into question why a child should be sent to a private school for any other reason than traditional modes of education (Sorter 15, post-sort interview). Sorter 15, an exemplar captured the strongest sentiment in favor of tradition by saying that education aligned with popular social thinking was "Dumb" and expressed doubt that a private school employing such methods would succeed since popular thinking was subject to fail due to social instability (post-sort interview).

Diversity in Experiences Values

Diversity in Experiences was defined by six sorters, and the demographics of participants are shown in Table 4. Five sorters identified as female and one as male. Five sorters indicated they were in their 30s and one identified as being in her 40s. Four sorters indicated a two-parent family structure while one identified as a single mother. The other sorter identified as polyamorous. Four participants had completed Some College, one finished a Bachelor's, and one had completed a Master's degree. All six participants identified as Caucasian. Sorters 6 and 3 were identified as the two exemplars. Children of participants attended private school (n=1), public school (n=4), and home school (n=1).

Table 4
Demographics of Defining Sorts for Diversity in Experiences

Sorter	Gender	Education	Child Age/Gender	School	Number of Siblings
6	Female	Bachelor's	8 year girl	Public	0
17	Female	Some College	11 year boy	Private	0

60

3	Female	Master's	13 year boy	Home	1
19	Female	Some College	9 year girl	Public	2
20	Male	Some College	9 year girl	Public	1
18	Female	Some College	17 year girl	Home	2

The interpretation of data is described with three general conceptual themes that integrate to demonstrate the educational needs for *Diversity in Experiences.* Table 5 demonstrates the statement placement in the ends of the factor array with supporting data. Distinguishing statements and consensus statements are noted. The themes are evident in these data, supported by qualitative data, and summarized as having an interest in giving children myriad opportunities for interactional education, hands-on activities and connections to make learning more applicable in real-life situations, and open-ended environments where learning is cultivated by open boundaries. *Diversity in Experiences* reflects a perspective consistent with parents who want their children to be challenged by different ideas and beliefs. Overall, the needs of children are viewed as a priority rather than specific, external frameworks of emphasis similar to the family and religion priorities of *Reverence in Tradition.* Parents who share this perspective are more interested in providing their child many opportunities to engage in hands-on learning and a plethora of situated learning events through varied educational strategies and natural interaction. Learning connected to popular social thinking may be most unlike this perspective, but social interaction is an integral part of contributing to the developmental needs of a child. *Diversity in Experiences* reflects a desire to meaningfully integrate their children into a world of multifarious people and ideas. Positive interactions with one's community and nature are emphasized. Accordingly, this viewpoint encourages children

to pursue personal interests in learning and meaningfully engage in their communities as

further opportunities for personal growth.

Table 5

Diversity in Experiences Statements with Distinguishing Statements Indicated in Bold

Statement	Array Position	z Score
Most Like Statements		
23. Skills that last a lifetime such as creativity and curiosity	+5	1.49
38. Exposure to diverse types of peoples with diverse perspectives on life and learning	**+5**	**2.11**
18. Opportunities to be exposed to physical mental, and spiritual challenges with care	**+4**	**1.18**
20.Opportunities to question boundaries and limits	**+4**	**1.39**
33. Educational strategies using multiple forms of technology	**+3**	**1.02**
35. Individual learning based upon my child's interests and strengths	+3	0.98
39. Learning that connects from one subject to another even when those connections are not clearly made	**+3**	**0.97**
28. Facilitates a sense of satisfaction in a job well-done*	+1	0.42
Most Unlike Statements	Array Position	*z Score*
2. That I am involved with the study	**-3**	**-1.18**
24. Emphasizes the natural order of things	**-3**	**-1.19**
34. Tasks are completed because of respect for authority	-3	-1.10
5. Providing structure that prevents my child's natural tendencies to behave	-4	-1.28
19. Learning that is connected to popular thinking	**-5**	**-1.36**
16. Teachers that model my family's beliefs	-5	-1.74

Parents that share this perspective illuminated a need for diverse learning

opportunities. Six statements that support this theme include:

38. Exposure to diverse types of peoples with diverse perspectives on life and living (+5, 2.11)
20. Opportunities to question boundaries and limits (+4, 1.39)
18. Opportunities to be exposed to physical, mental, and spiritual challenges with care (+4, 1.18)
33. Educational strategies using multiple forms of technology (+3, 1.02)
30. Opportunities to engage in community activities (+2, 0.74)
2. That I am involved in planning the studies (-3, -1.18)

Both exemplar sorts support the necessity of open learning experiences. Exemplar sorter

6, a 49-year-old female who used public school, believed her daughter's school to be a

good one and emphasized the need to always question everything and "encourage kids to

think for themselves" (post-sort interview). Her desire to question everything supported

Statement 20 since she actively encouraged her daughter to challenge boundaries. The

other exemplar was a 36-year-old female that home schooled. She reviewed state,

national, and collegiate entrance standards to create an educational environment best

preparing her child to become an adult (Sorter 3, open response question). Her desire

was to emphasize a home-based education accompanied by "…opportunities for

experiential learning, elsewhere" (Sorter 3, post-sort interview).

Sorter 3 identified as a spiritual person, but not in the tradition of Western

religious belief (post-sort interview). Experiential learning for her son took place in the

form of simply doing something different if the opportunity arose (post-sort interview).

She gave the example of allowing her child to simply get up and go play in a nearby field

if he showed interest (post-sort interview). Her example displayed a desire to allow for

challenging of time boundaries. Educational time was indicated to be a fluid schedule

(Sorter 3, field notes). Furthermore, Sorter 3 indicated a business enterprise that allowed

her children to interact with groups of people that engage in non-traditional sexual performances. Though she would not allow her child to observe the rituals of her customers, she allowed social interactions with patrons before performances began (post-sort interview). She viewed this as a learning experience for her children which supported interactions with diverse kinds of people.

Sorter 21, a 34-year-old male indicated preference for a diverse education that included "…subjects without political and social influences" (open response question). Public education was a popular educational context for Sorter 20, a 36-year-old male who "…wanted a diverse educational experience, and felt that public ed [sic] provides this opportunity" (open response question). He expounded on this idea by suggesting that public schools were the likeliest places for new ideas and a diversity of interactions for his daughter (Sorter 20, field notes). Both Sorters 20 and 21 used public education for their children and valued the diversity provided. Finally, Sorter 17, a 31-year-old female understood that respecting others and religion are not "obligations to be placed on the school" (open response). Instead, she suggested that opportunities to engage with other people in diverse settings would guide her son to better learning opportunities (Sorter 17, field notes). Diversity and opportunity were critical elements in this theme.

Further information is critical in understanding the open nature of exemplar Sorter 3. She was the only research participant that indicated a family structure unique to the other participants. Their entire family structure supported the notion of experiential openness as she and her two partners identified as polyamorous. These parents functioned in a triad that was different from two-parent family structures indicated by most of the research participants. One of the males was identified as "Dad" while the

other one was called "Papa" (Sorter 3, field notes). One of the males, Papa, was charged with homeschooling the two children while Dad was involved in generating income. Sorter 3 further indicated that her multiple husbands were unlike other polyamorous relationships since their personal friends usually had multiple wives (post-sort interview).

The sorters who share this viewpoint not only desire many different types of opportunities to interact with others and the external world, but also encourage depth in learning. Four statements support depth in learning:

> 39. Learning that is connects from one subject to another even when the connections are not clearly made (+3, 0.97)
> 1. Must learn that choices have positive and negative consequences (+2, 0.74)
> 40. Deeper understanding in many subject areas (+1, 0.69)
> 19. Learning that is connected to popular social thinking (-4, -1.36)

Sorter 17 specifically indicated the importance of "hands on activities done at my son's school because that makes a deeper connection in his brain and to other things, too" (open response question). Like Sorter 17, Sorter 3 emphasized "hands on" learning to achieve deeper learning as it makes deeper connections across different medium (field notes). Both Sorters 17 and 3 used the word "deeper" in terms of hands on learning (Sorter 13, 3, field notes). This illuminated their belief that deep experiential learning is directly facilitated by tactile involvement.

Sorter 2 expanded on depth learning by claiming "function in life" is a critical aspect in education, a statement that aligns with learning the positive and negative consequences of choice (open response question). Her emphasis on hands-on learning and learned consequences were critical in an expanded view of education. Sorter 6 said that "we should always be questioning everything" (post-sort interview). She emphasized the need to continually revise personal thinking as scientific studies

discovered new knowledge and cited the nature of human relationships (post-sort

interview). Not only does this support the ideas of depth discussed by previous sorters,

but also supports the connectedness of learning from one discipline to another.

Specifically, she linked the nature of human relationships from one idea to another, even

while those connections are not made clear until science gives credible connections (post-

sort interview).

Unlike *Reverence in Tradition,* explicitly religious in many areas, *Diversity in*

Experiences indicated a desire to avoid focus upon a divine nature and unseen powers,

thus the secular theme. The four statements that underscore the theme of secular include:

> 38. Exposure to diverse types of peoples with diverse perspectives on life and
> living (+5, 2.11)
> 20. Opportunities to question boundaries and limits (+4, 1.39)
> 7. Belief that a divine power directly affects ability to learn deep and important
> truths (-1, -2.31)
> 3. Learning about unseen powers in the universe (-2, -0.80)

Statements 38 and 20 stand in contrast to *Reverence in Tradition*. These sorters

embraced a diversity of lives and beliefs that might not overtly connect to religious and

spiritual ideals. Three sorters mentioned a desire to avoid explicitly religious education

(Sorters 6, 18, 20, open response question). Sorter 17 verbally indicated that she

considered herself religious, but reflected anti-religious sentiment in education by saying,

"School is not for teaching religious ideas" (field notes). Another sorter indicated that he

would, "…love a private school which offered non-religious ed [sic]" (Sorter 20, field

notes). This same individual emphasized that he did not consider himself a religious

individual (Sorter 20, field notes). The two exemplar sorts indicated the strongest non-

religious distinction. Sorter 6 simply believed that "God has nothing to do with affecting

learning abilities and deep truths" (post-sort interview). She emphasized hard work as

opposed to innate ability, though she did believe that some children are born with a

"stronger intellect" (Sorter 6, post-sort interview). Sorter 3 concurred in her belief that a

divine power did not endow us with intellect. She illuminated this connection by saying,

"…not that I don't have faith. My belief in God is not in his hands-on aspect of

everything. Education-that is on us" (Sorter 3, post-sort interview).

Morality in Decisions

     Morality in Decisions was defined by seven sorters, and the demographics are

shown in Table 6. Six participants were female and one male. Two sorters were in their

20s, four were in their 30s, and one was in their 40s. Six parents completed Some

College, and one completed High School; however, none of the sorters completed a

Bachelor's degree. Three participants identified as Native American while the other four

identified as Caucasian. Two individuals, Sorters 22 and 29, were identified as having

exemplar defining sorts for the perspective and were interviewed. Children of these

participants attended private school (n=1), public school (n=4), and home school (n=2).

Table 6

Demographics of Defining Sorters for Morality in Decisions

Sorter	Gender	Education	Child Age/Gender	School	Number of Siblings
23	Female	High School	10 year boy	Public	1
22	Female	Some College	7 year girl	Public	1
16	Female	Some College	9 year boy	Public	3
1	Female	Some College	7 year girl	Public	1
29	Female	Some College	7 year boy	Home	3
7	Female	Some College	7 year girl	Home	1
9	Male	Some College	8 year boy	Private	2

The interpretation of data sources concluded with three conceptual themes that integrated to describe the perspective of *Morality in Decisions.* This viewpoint has an emphasis on compassion and respect for others, individual thinking and learning good decision making, and a trust for school curriculum. Starting at home and extending to society, *Morality in Decisions* believes that showing respect to parents and family extends to interactions with others into the entirety of the lifespan. The need of a curriculum based on individual strengths and interests is thought to promote creativity. Though they desire a respectful child, they expect good citizenship to occur through moral imperative rather than following a divine dictum or interaction with teachers. Furthermore, *Morality in Decisions* accommodates a trust in the ways that the school curriculum develops decision makers.

Table 7
Morality in Decisions Statements with Distinguishing Statements Indicated in Bold

Statement	Array Position	*z* Score
Most Like Statements		
8. Learn to be a good person by treating others with respect.	**+5**	**2.20**
21. Obedience and respect for me, the parent, and our family.	**+5**	**2.25**
5. Providing structure that prevents my child's natural tendencies to misbehave.	**+4**	**1.68**
35. Individual learning based upon my child's interest and strengths.	**+4**	**1.66**
1. Must learn that choices have positive and negative consequences.	+3	1.59
23. Skills that last a lifetime such as creativity and curiosity.	+3	1.06
9. Kindness and compassion in learning and making decisions.	+3	0.96
28. Facilitates a sense of satisfaction in a job well-done*	+3	0.71

	Array Position	z Score
34. Tasks are completed because of respect for authority	+2	0.69
22. Learning that builds on previous learning not unneeded review	0	-0.23
Most Unlike Statements	**Array Position**	***z* Score**
7. Belief that a divine power directly affects ability to learn deep and important truths.	**-3**	**-1.14**
32. Emphasizes knowledge for specific future employment.	**-3**	**-0.86**
3. Learning about unseen powers in the universe.	**-4**	**-1.42**
4. Instruction that is supported at a central educational space.	-4	-0.89
16. Teachers that model my family's beliefs.	-4	-1.22
9. Ideas that may not be supported by the family, but lead to reinforcing the family's beliefs (like evolution leading to science skills).	**-5**	**-1.82**
19. Learning that is connected to popular social thinking.	**-5**	**-2.01**

Morality in Decisions is a group of parents whose desire is to raise respectful children who can see the needs of others. This is supported by statements that emphasize respect for one's parents and others:

21. Obedience and respect for me, the parent, and our family (+5, 2.25).
8. Learn to be a good person by treating others with respect (+5, 2.20).
5. Providing structure that prevents my child's natural tendencies to misbehave (+4, 1.68).
6. Environment where anti-bullying efforts help my child explore and express their true selves (+2, 0.86)
34. Tasks are completed because of respect for authority (+2, 0.69)

Sorter 16, a 29-year-old female whose child attended public school indicated a need for structure by saying, "I value education standards as well as morals" (open response

question). Sorter 7, a 31-year-old female that home schooled, illuminated compassion when interacting with others because her daughter, "…is very sensitive to others needs/issues/etc which has made her a prime target for bullies" (open response question). She chose home school as a means of removing her daughter from a climate that did little to diminish poor treatment among peers (Sorter 7, field notes). The focus for these participants was encouraging their children to positively engage with others with respect and compassion.

Not only does this perspective desire citizenship, but fosters student interests through individual learning and thinking. In other words, these parents seek to instill in their children a sense of curiosity through autonomy and creativity. The following statements support curiosity:

35. Individual learning based upon my child's strengths and interests (+4, 1.66)
22. Learning that builds on previous learning and not unneeded review (0, -0.23)
9. Ideas that may not be supported by the family but lead to reinforcing the family's beliefs (-5, -1.82)
19. Learning that is based upon popular social thinking (-5, -2.01)

An exemplar sorter for this perspective expressed concern over the lack of autonomy by saying that her children, "…learn how to do all things, read, write, whatever, according to their interest. So that is what we need to do is create interest" (Sorter 29, post-sort interview). She connected this to a rejection of learning based upon popular social thinking by saying that such beliefs "hit me as keeping up with the Joneses" (Sorter 29, post-sort interview). Furthermore, though she homeschooled and utilized a local home school co-op, she openly admitted to rejecting the same "legalistic beliefs held by other families in the co-op" (Sorter 29, post-sort interview).

Trust as a conceptual theme relates to school context, because children are being taught to be thinkers. The following statements support the notion of trust in the school:

8. Learn to be a good person by treating others with respect (+5, 2.20)
21. Obedience and respect for me, the parent, and our family (+5. 2.25)
35. Individual learning based upon my child's interest and strengths (+4, 1.66)
1. Must learn that choices have positive and negative consequences (+3, 1.59)
16. Teachers that model my family's beliefs (-4, -1.22)
9. Ideas that may not be supported by the family, but lead to reinforcing the family's beliefs (like evolution leading to science skills) (-5, -1.82)
19. Learning that is connected to popular social thinking (-5, -2.01)

Sorter 16, a 29-year-old female indicated a trust and belief in public schools to do a good job in translating the instruction of morality and structure, and she trusted public school to give effective instruction in making good decisions (field notes). Sorter 29, a 37-year-old female who homeschooled her child understood popular social thinking to focus on computer adaptive learning. She indicated that such learning was disgusting and suggested that "Our founding fathers and Charlotte Mason did it better" (post-sort interview). Her trust was instilled in the ability of home school curriculum to model what she perceived to be historically beneficial moral lessons (Sorter 29, post-sort interview). When it came to natural order, Sorter 29 understood this to mean that everything followed a sequential path according to the individual child. She trusted the context of home school to allow her child's natural abilities to develop into coherent academic applications (Sorter 29, field notes). The other exemplar sorter, 22, a 27-year-old female that used public school, declared that unseen powers in the universe and divine powers affecting ability to learn to be "irrelevant" (post-sort interview). She trusted her daughter's public school to meaningfully engage her daughter in the learning process (field notes).

Consensus Statement

Statement 28 does not distinguish between any pair of factors and is known as a consensus statement. Statement 28 reads, "Facilitates a sense of satisfaction in a job well-done." The priority of satisfaction appears in Array Position 3 for *Reverence in Tradition (z* score=1.06), Array Position 1 for *Diversity in* Experiences (*z* score=0.42) and Array Position 2 for *Morality in Decision Making* (*z* score=0.71). Job satisfaction serves as an important value across the three perspectives, though a clear understanding of job satisfaction was beyond the scope of this research.

Research Question 2

Of the 29 sorts, 24 were considered defining sorts for *Reverence in Tradition, Diversity in Experiences, and Morality in Decisions*. The second research question considered in what ways values align with school setting choices. This section explores school choice setting through the needs described by parents who reflect *Reverence in Tradition*, *Diversity in Experiences*, and *Morality in Decisions* (Table 8).

Table 8

School Context by Values

School Context	*Reverence in Tradition*	*Diversity in Experiences*	*Morality in Decisions*
Public School	2	4	4
Private School	4	1	1
Homeschool	5	1	2
Total	11	6	7

Reverence in Tradition places emphasis on spiritual learning, family, and insular and traditional information. All three school contexts were represented. Though all three

contexts were represented by this viewpoint, nine of the 11 sorters for this research chose private and homeschooling contexts for the developmental needs of their children.

Diversity in Experiences places an emphasis on openness, depth of learning, and boundary-free thinking. Though all three school contexts were represented by this viewpoint, four of the six sorters chose public school contexts as the best settings to meet the developmental needs of their children.

Morality in Decisions illuminate the alignment between respect, curiosity, and good faith. While all school contexts were represented in this value for developmental needs of children, public school was chosen as the predominant location for the transmission and support for *Morality in Decisions*. Four of the seven sorters aligned with public school.

Research Question 3

The third research question was how a theory of holistic education guided the understanding of parental values in relation to the developmental needs for children. The response to this research question is demonstrated with a figure for each viewpoint showing the distribution of the four areas of holistic needs of children. Red represents cognitive development, yellow is the key for social and emotional statements, blue is psychomotor statements, and green represents the intuitive, creative and spiritual area of development. In addition to color-coding, letters within each box indicate domain: C=Cognitive, SE=Social/Emotional, P=Psychomotor, ICS=Intuitive, Creative, Spiritual.

Figure 1 represents the distribution of statements color-coded by holistic domain. Parents that shared *Reverence in Tradition* valued statements aligned with Intuition, Creative, and Spiritual development. Statements 7 and 36 in array 5 specifically

reference belief in a divine power and personal spiritual development (Appendix B).

This is consistent with an emphasis on personal spiritual development and education that

aligns with religious family needs. Statement 18 in array 2 emphasizes care when

approaching challenges in spiritual development (Appendix B). Conversely, this

viewpoint did not find alignment with statements connected to the Social and Emotional

domain nor did they prioritize values connected to psychomotor development. Parents

that share *Reverence in Tradition* overwhelmingly aligned with the spiritual nature of

Intuition and Creativity.

C=Cognitive SE=Social Emotional P=Psychomotor ICS=Intuitive, Creative, Spiritual

Figure 1

Reverence in Tradition Color and Letter Coded by Domain

				ICS	SE	SE				
				P	ICS	ICS				
			C	P	SE	CSE	C			
		ICS	C	P	C	P	SE	C		
ICS	SE	C	SE	P	C	C	C	P	ICS	P
ICS	SE	C	ICS	P	P	ICS	SE	P	ICS	SE

| -5 | -4 | -3 | -2 | -1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Most Unlike   Most Like

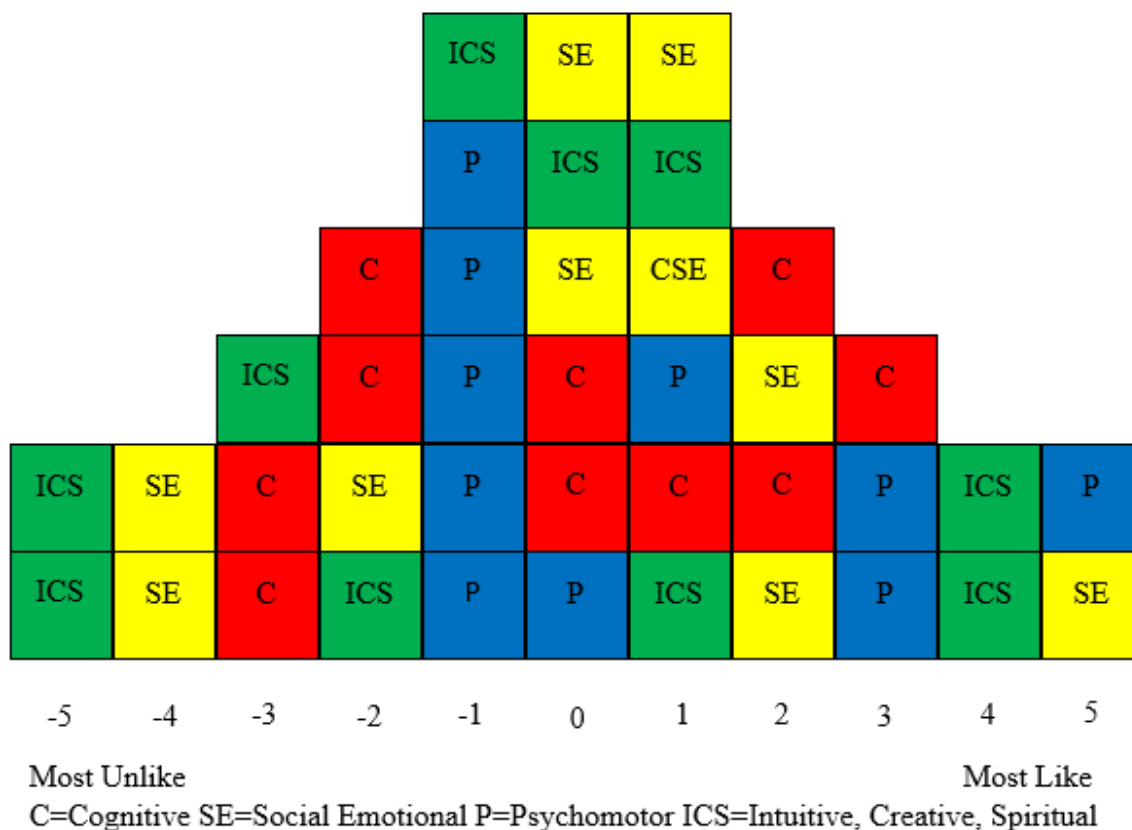C=Cognitive SE=Social Emotional P=Psychomotor ICS=Intuitive, Creative, Spiritual

Figure 2

Diversity in Experiences Color and Letter Coded by Domain

Diversity in Experiences reflected values across the four developmental domains. The ability to integrate psychomotor development (blue) is evident in the pursuit to give learning freedoms to children. Statement 23 in array 5 places an emphasis on lifelong creativity. Statements 33 and 35 are rank-ordered in array 3. These statements support efforts in technology and personal interests. However, these needs are not the same as *Reverence in Tradition*. Spiritual development is not a priority since statement 7 appears in Most Unlike Me, array -5. Parents did not prioritize in teachers reflecting their own values as evidenced by Statement 16 in Most Unlike Me. Furthermore, *Diversity in Experiences* understand the benefits of creativity that is not wholly dependent upon the acquisition of factual knowledge, a point reflective of the Cognitive domain. Half of

statements in the Cognitive domain are in Most Like Me. Statements 1, 38, and 39

prioritize facts, connection among subjects, and the positive and negative nature of

decision-making. Parents who align with this viewpoint are similar to *Reverence in*

Tradition as they do not strongly align with statements connected to the Social and

Emotional domain. Despite Social and Emotional statements being spread across the

entire rank-ordered process, *Diversity in Experiences* placed statement 38 in array 5.

Statement 5 prioritizes interaction in community.

     Morality in Decisions emphasizes development in the Cognitive and Psychomotor

domains (Figure 3). These sorters do not align with the Intuition and Creative domain as

most of the spiritual statements were sorted into the "Most Unlike" factor arrays.

					ICS	P	SE			
				SE	ICS	SE				
		ICS	ICS	ICS	P	C				
	ICS	SE	C	C	P	C	P			
SE	ICS	SE	C	P	SE	C	SE	P	P	SE
P	ICS	C	C	P	ICS	ICS	P	C	SE	C
-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5

Most Unlike   Most Like

C=Cognitive SE=Social Emotional P=Psychomotor ICS=Intuitive, Creative, Spiritual
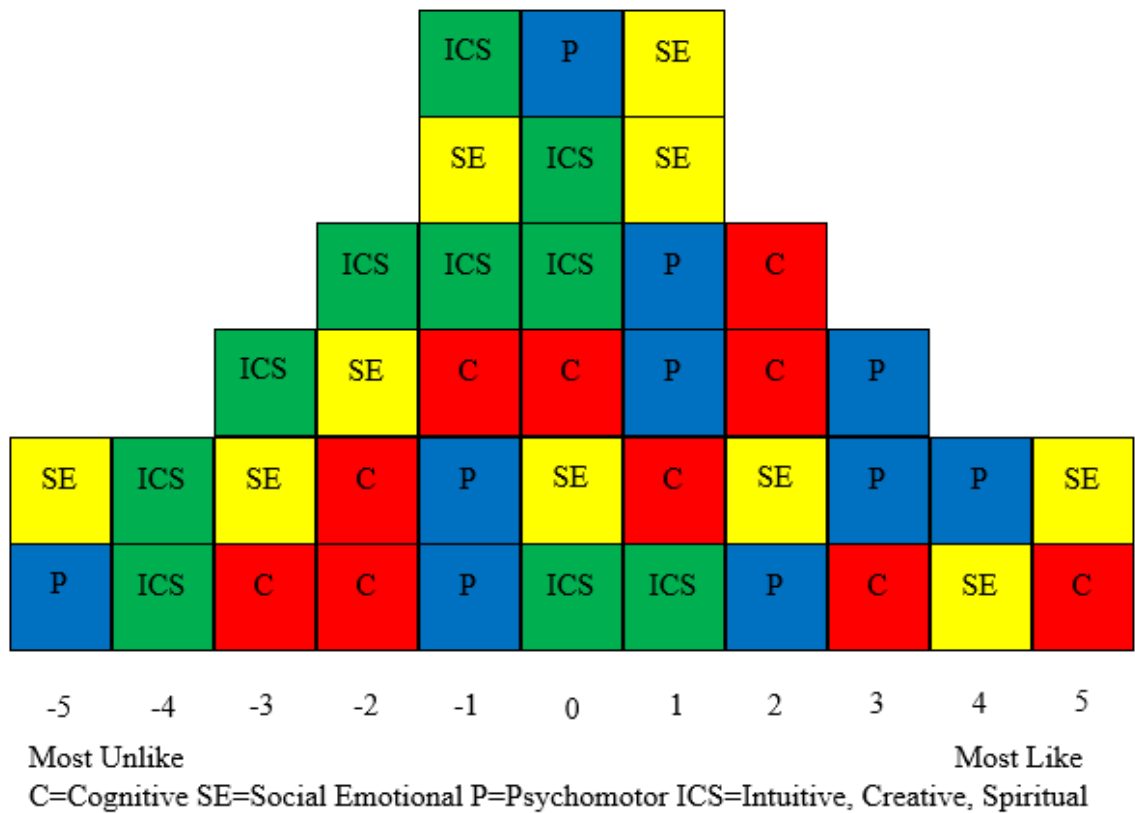
Figure 3

Morality in Decisions Color and Letter Coded by Domain

Traditional forms of religion and spirituality do not influence *Morality in Decisions*. No Intuition and Creative statements were prioritized in arrays 2-5. Unlike *Reverence in Tradition* and *Diversity in* Experiences, most statements prioritizing intuition and creativity appeared in Most Unlike Me. A combination of domains undergirds moral imperative in exhibiting respect for others. Statements prioritized in arrays 3-5 reflected a need to be a good person who was obedient, kind, and made good choices.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to describe the subjective values of parents in relation to the developmental needs of children. Each participant was identified as the decision maker regarding school setting for the child of interest. This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, establishes conclusions based upon the findings, and elaborates on the implications for understanding parents' values for the education of their children. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research.

Summary of the Findings

Using Q methodology (Brown, 1980; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Stephenson, 1953; Watts & Stenner, 2012), parents rank-ordered 40 statements derived from a sampling of the concourse constructed from a variety of sources. Developmental needs of children were taken from books by Gatto (2003), Hart (2003, 2009, 2014a, 2014b), Holt (1982), Leonard (1968), and Palmer (1993). Research articles that contributed to the concourse included Four Arrows and Miller (2012), Hastings and Weinstein (2008), Mahmoudi et al. (2012), Martin (1997), Montgomery et al. (2012), Puhl et al. (2016), Tomporowski et al. (2015), and Zeehandelaar and Northern (2013). Furthermore, informal conversations with parents whose children attended public, private, and homeschool contexts were integral in securing the vast number of statements sampled for

the Q set or instrument development. Instruments used in the study included the Q set (Appendix B) and the demographic survey (Appendix C) to form the basis of the interpretation of data. Other sources of data included field notes during the sorting interview, school artifacts in the form of public and private websites, and post-sort interviews of parents whose sorts were exemplars of the factor. A thorough interpretation of the resultant factor arrays followed the statistical analysis of the data using PQmethod.

Three viewpoints were interpreted using all data sources and were named *Reverence in Tradition*, *Diversity in Experiences*, and *Morality in Decisions*. Each viewpoint assists in understanding parents' values towards the education of their children. These perspectives respond to the first research question, "What are the values of parents/guardians related to meeting educational needs of their children?" *Reverence in Tradition* focuses on the intuition and creative domain in holistic education predominantly for the spiritual aspect of personal development. *Reverence in Tradition* views education through the lens of personal faith, family values, and insular and traditional knowledge. On the other hand, *Diversity in Experiences* espouses openness, depth, and unlimited learning horizons. The open-minded approach incorporates all four domains of holistic education in pursuit of ultimacy, the highest state a human can aspire (Forbes, 2003). *Morality in Decisions* supports positive citizenship, curiosity, and good-faith. This is accomplished through three of the four holistic domains: cognitive, intuition and creativity, and social and emotional.

Conclusions

Three conclusions emerge from this research. First, though there are three ways that parents who enroll children in public, private, or home schools express the priorities

for the developmental needs of their children, all three school contexts are represented in

each perspective. It seems no matter what the priorities are for the developmental needs

of their children, parents could effectively utilize any of the three contexts for education.

In other words, public, private, or home schools could be contexts for the education of

their children. Another way to understand this conclusion is to state that parents that

value spiritual development could educate their children in a public school that reinforced

the family's spiritual values. Conversely, a non-religious person could educate their

children in a private school that emphasized creativity and positive moral growth.

Another conclusion from this research is that values strongly align with school

setting choices. For example, *Reverence in Tradition* parents provide hints about the role

of religion and spirituality in educational values. Most of the children in the first

perspective were educated through private or home schools. *Reverence in Tradition*

supports previous findings where parents chose school contexts explicitly and solely

based upon religious beliefs (Carper, 2000; Johnson, 2013; McDowell et al., 2000).

Unlike *Reverence in Tradition*, *Diversity in Experiences* and *Morality in Decisions* were

more often educated in public schools. The second two perspectives provide hints about

parents' values of education reflected in the culture and curriculum of public schools.

Some parents seek diverse educational opportunities to meet the perceived needs of their

children. They often choose public education because it provides opportunities for

interaction among diverse types of peoples and ideas (Stuart Wells, Fox, Cordova-Cobo,

2016). Public school curriculum is more likely to integrate programs specifically

addressing the needs of gifted and talented learners (National Association of Gifted

Children, 2008). The size of public schools also contributes to the diversity of teachers.

School size gives children a greater opportunity to encounter individual teachers that facilitate gifted and talented student learning, especially in light of funding concerns (Csikszentmihalyi & Wolfe, 2015). Diverse learning experiences support previous research that encourages student autonomy in learning (Bridgeland, Dilulio, Streeter, & Mason, 2008; Harris & Larsen, 2015; Shumow, 1997; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). *Morality in Decisions* parents prioritize the moral decision-making process. For these parents, public school serves as the best setting for this process because parents may value the life-long nature of moral development. Moral decision making can be connected to YEPs and SEL (Bridgeland et al., 2013; Morton & Montgomery, 2013; Puhl et al., 2016; Zeehandelaar & Northern, 2013). Student empowerment programs adopted by public schools help facilitate the respectful treatment of all people, a life-long goal for parents sharing *Morality in Decisions*. Opportunities for socialization assist in the moral-decision making process (Eccles, 2007). Opportunities exist for positive decision making in public school classrooms where teachers allow student leadership to naturally emerge through student-led conversations (Sun, Anderson, Lin & Morris, 2015). Moral development through public education can also be understood through stage theories as proposed by Kohlberg (1970) rather than issues likely considered to be of a spiritual nature in religious private and home schools.

Finally, holistic education viewed through the lens of a four-quadrant model serves as an effective tool in understanding parent values for the education of their children. Parents prioritized development by domain as it related to the needs of their children; however, emphases varied by viewpoint. *Reverence in Tradition* recognizes the need for intuition and creativity with an emphasis on spiritual development. *Diversity in*

Experiences illuminates the ability to integrate all domains into learning opportunities. Furthermore, though *Diversity in Experiences* values creativity and intuition, the value is not spiritually focused like it is for *Reverence in Tradition*. Finally, cognitive development serves as an integral part of *Morality in Decisions* as it fosters positive decision-making skills. Though all three school contexts are represented in each perspective, holistic education provides a way to understand how subtleties within each domain illuminate differences among viewpoints.

Implications

The purpose of this study was to describe the subjective values of parents in relation to the developmental needs of children. This research yielded three perspectives that give greater understanding in parental values for the education of their children. The use of a four-quadrant model of holistic education provides implications for theory. Furthermore, the finding that public, private, and home school contexts were represented in each perspective suggests implications for practice.

Implications for Theory

This study concludes that a four-quadrant model of holistic education serves as an effective theory for understanding parental values. No prior research has utilized this model to gain understanding of parent values for the education of their children. While much has been written about the benefits of holistic education, further research is necessary in order best understand how the four-quadrant model functions together to meet the specific developmental needs of children as understood by their parents (Forbes, 2003). For example, the nature of spirituality and religion needs further investigation

since definitions concerning these constructs is diverse by context and geographical location (Hill & Maltby, 2009).

Despite the myriad research exploring school choice and parent choice, only Parker (2015) has used a holistic and subjective approach to investigate parents' values related to choice among private school types. Her three-factor solution suggested that parents valued a focus on personal values and beliefs related to religion and character development, a desire for a strong academic environment, and a need for a safe and selective social environment. Unlike Parker (2015), my research findings expanded the inquiry into parental values to diverse contexts beyond private schools. Additionally, my research findings provided parents the opportunity to prioritize developmental needs of children. My findings mirror Parker's (2015) despite the addition of public and home school contexts. Subjects in her research valued religion, character development, and selective social environments. Participants in my research were religious individuals concerned about personal spiritual development, interaction within diverse social environments, and character development. *Reverence in Tradition* was like Parker's (2015) focus on personal values and beliefs because spirituality was the cornerstone for both sets of participants. *Diversity in Experiences* is aligned with the need for a strong academic environment because only a well-planned curriculum can offer the unique challenges of diversity and creativity. *Morality in Decisions* is akin to the need for a safe and selective environment because public education is a socially controlled environment where children can develop positive decision-making skills free from the significant social consequences adults may suffer.

Implications for Practice

The conclusions of the findings of this study lead to several ways to influence working with parents of school-age children. It must be emphasized that all three school contexts were represented in the three viewpoints. Administrators of schools may recognize the deeply spiritual nature of *Reverence of Tradition* and design specific strategies to integrate spiritual and religious values in a manner that embraces diverse beliefs. Although a topic of political concern in a country that separates church and state, it may be that school clubs of similar interest could be encouraged.

The existence of international travel and exchange programs can align with the priorities and values of *Diversity in Experiences*. Teachers with broad life experiences may be most able to integrate travel talks, multicultural experiences, and perspectives unique to individuals with broader life experience. Infusing creative activities into the required curriculum may meet the values of these parents.

School projects that have a focus on community engagement and service learning meet the needs of *Morality in Decisions* parent-groups. These activities may include Habitat for Humanity or work in local homeless shelters as a means of emphasizing the need to help others and value social programs that assist individuals that are less fortunate.

Overall, this research speaks to opportunities policy-makers, stakeholders, and administrators have in making connections within their local communities. Media portrayals of specific groups of people may suggest there are significant problems in educating children in common spaces like public education. This research suggests that there are common values among different types of people, thus an opportunity to appeal

to those common values as a means of joining children from different belief systems in communal learning opportunities.

Suggestions for Future Research

The connection between Parker's (2015) and my study findings indicate there is much to be done in terms of future research. First, both sets of participants were homogenous. Her study was homogenous by design whereas mine was based upon availability. Further studies would need to include more diverse types of parents. For example, only religious homeschooling parents participated in my study. Non-religious homeschoolers represent only about 25% of the homeschooling population (Kaleem, 2016); however, their contribution towards understanding parental values is critical to have a balanced understanding of needs. Neither microschool nor unschooling parents participated in this research. The recent advent of microschooling likely contributed to a lack of participation. Unschoolers represent a significant perspective that chose not to participate despite my personal attempts through website posts, social media, and informal conversations by individuals identifying as unschoolers.

Further research may have a different Q-set to capture subtleties unavailable through my study. Specifically, a future study is needed to better understand the various components included in each of the holistic domains. For example, religion and spiritual concerns were folded into the broad area of creativity and intuition. A direct focus on spirituality in the intuition and creative domain would assist in better understanding parents' subjective values related to the constructs within spirituality and the developmental needs of children. Likewise, the creative aspects for those aligned with *Diversity in Experiences* could enhance understandings related to priorities of creativity

and intuition.

Finally, further research should be conducted to better understand sorters defining *Morality in Decisions.* The only three Native American sorters aligned with *Morality in Decisions*. Likewise, all sorters in *Morality in Decisions* indicated they had completed high school. None had finished a two or four-year degree. Further research would could assist in understanding moral development among diverse types of people. Additionally, research into the role of personal education and its effects upon educational values could provide insight into parental values for the education of their children.

Concluding Comments

Postman (1995) suggested the goal of public education should have been to support the "American Creed" or the unique contribution all people could make towards a unified spirit in the US. He suggested that once efforts undermined this goal, American public education no longer functioned to unify the diverse groups of peoples living across the US. Though his criticism was philosophically practical, Postman raised an important question related to current education. Public education continues to be the most popular mode for imparting academic knowledge to children, but the numbers of students using home and private schools continues to rise. Parents, administrators, and policymakers need to be aware of parent values for the education of their children if they hope to encourage home and privately schooled children back to public settings. It is interesting that all three school contexts would be represented in each perspective. This suggests to me that there is not an unbridgeable gap in joining unlike people together for learning together and growing closer in communities. It is possible that the use of a four-quadrant model for education may offer one solution to the splintering "American Creed" and

specific needs of children.

Something to consider is that home and privately educated children continue to increase in numbers. The homeschool movement began on the West Coast as a response against perceived governmental indoctrination; however, these were not parents making choices based upon religious convictions (Johnson, 2013; Van Galen, 1986). They were against what they believed to be pedagogical government brain washing their children. Currently, the homeschool movement is largely a religious response against perceptions of a loss of morality (Dreher, 2017; Engber, 2015; Mohler, 2011).

This research suggests that religious and non-religious parents do not need to isolate their children from one another for the purposes of education, and that holistic education can unite unlike people in academic contexts. Honeck and Johnson (2016) provide a framework for encouraging parents to consider what qualities align with family and their child's needs. Holistic education would help facilitate the discussion since parents could be able to "find" their values represented in the four domains. Furthermore, specific religious or philosophical beliefs could be reinforced at home as families engage in conversations related to learning. Moral education need not be tied to specific social issues, but focused on treating others with care and respect (universal benefits). It is necessary for educators and policymakers to gain meaningful input from parents so academic goals align with parent values. Though it was not my intention, this study contributed to educational choice literature because it gave parents the opportunity to prioritize values. The failure to integrate all four developmental domains will further remove residents of the US from Postman's "American Creed." Public education can still be a place where unlike people engage in meaningful conversations that validate

their familial beliefs, support autonomous learning opportunities, and encourage positive

moral decision-making skills, all for the greater good of an American ideal.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Friday, December 02, 2016

IRB Application No ED16177

Proposal Title: PARENTAL VALUES FOR THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN: A Q METHODOLOGICAL STUDY

Reviewed and Exempt
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved   Protocol Expires: 12/1/2019

Principal
Investigator(s):

Chris Beswick   Diane Montgomery
4144 S Birmingham Ave   424 Willard
Tulsa, OK 74105   Stillwater, OK 74078
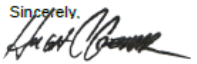
The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

☐ The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Scott Hall (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

Hugh Crethar, Chair
Institutional Review Board

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Appendix B

Confidential Questions about You

1. What is your gender: _____
2. What is your age (in years)? _____
3. Please check the item that best reflects your ethnicity (check all that apply):
   - _____ African-American   _____ Asian-American
   - _____ Hispanic/Latino(a)   _____ American-Indian
   - _____ White   _____ Other, please specify_____

4. What is your highest level of education:
   - _____ High School Diploma/GED _____ Masters degree
   - _____ Some college   _____ Doctorate
   - _____ Bachelors degree   _____ Other, please specify_____

5. What type of educational setting did you choose for your child?
   - _____ Public School   _____ Microschool
   - _____ Home School   _____ Private School, religious affiliation _____
   - _____ Unschool   _____ Other, please specify_____

6. How did you choose the educational context in which your child is educated?

7. What is your ideal educational setting for this child?

8. What is this child's gender _____ and age _____?

9. In what special education activities or provisions is this child enrolled (check all that apply)?

   - _____ Art classes   _____ Special education services, _____
   - _____ Advanced Placement   _____ Team sports, specify: _____
   - _____ Band, choir, voice, etc.   _____ Individual sports, specify: _____
   - _____ Drama, theatre   _____ Other, please specify_____

10. Who lives at home with this child (include the child)?

Appendix C

Statement	Reverence in Tradition		Diversity in Experiences		Morality in Decision Making	
	AP	*z*	AP	*z*	AP	*z*
1. Must learn that choices have positive and negative consequences	4	1.53	2	0.74	3	1.59
2. That I am involved in planning the studies	-1	-0.31	-3	-1.18	-2	-0.61
3. Learning about unseen powers in the universe	1	0.52	-2	-0.76	-4	-1.42
4. Instruction that is supported at a central educational space	-4	-1.51	-2	-0.80	-3	-0.89
5. Providing structure that prevents my child's natural tendencies to misbehave	-3	-1.48	-4	-1.28	4	1.68
6. Environment where anti-bullying efforts help my child explore and express their true selves	-4	-1.62	-1	-0.43	2	0.86
7. Belief that a divine power directly affects ability to learn deep and important truths	5	2.05	-5	-2.31	-3	-1.14
8. Learn to be a good person by treating others with respect	3	0.85	2	0.85	5	2.20
9. Ideas that may not be supported by the family, but lead to reinforcing the family's beliefs (like evolution leading to science skills)	-3	-0.78	-1	-0.40	-5	-1.82
10. Kindness and compassion in learning and making decisions	3	1.57	1	0.67	3	0.96
11. Opportunities to play, act, and move in physical ways	0	0.12	0	0.40	1	0.24
12. Develop knowledge in specific content areas from competent instructors	1	0.31	0	0.39	0	-0.13
13. Safety on playgrounds and sports fields my family uses	-5	-1.97	-1	-0.71	-1	-0.25
14. Participation in organizations that contribute to society	-2	-0.69	1	0.61	1	0.22
15. Showing interest by completing tasks that are not assigned	-1	-0.40	-1	-0.39	-1	-0.37

16. Teachers that model my family's beliefs	2	0.58	-5	-1.74	-4	-1.22
17. Time to experiment in nature	0	0.09	1	0.61	0	-0.09
18. Opportunities to be exposed to physical, mental, and spiritual challenges with care	2	0.63	4	1.18	1	0.30
19. Learning that is connected to popular social thinking	-5	-2.64	-4	-1.36	-5	-2.01
20. Opportunities to question boundaries and limits	-3	-0.93	4	1.39	-1	-0.51
21. Obedience and respect for me, the parent and our family	1	0.42	-2	-1.07	5	2.25
22. Learning that builds on previous learning not unneeded review	1	0.42	-1	-0.32	0	-0.23
23. Skills that last a lifetime such as creativity and curiosity	2	0.73	5	1.49	3	1.06
24. Emphasizes the natural order of things	0	0.09	-3	-1.19	-1	-0.48
25. Opportunities to socialize with other students	0	0.07	0	0.03	0	-0.12
26. Environment that encourages competition through fairness and justice	-1	-0.43	0	-0.13	-2	-0.63
27. Encourages deep self-reflection in the midst of learning	-1	-0.15	0	0.01	0	-0.20
28. Facilitates a sense of satisfaction in a job well-done	3	1.06	1	0.42	2	0.71
29. Ignores fads of pop culture in favor of academic studies	2	0.59	-2	-1.05	-2	-0.59
30. Opportunities to engage in community activities.	-2	-0.60	2	0.74	-1	-0.48
31. Curriculum that focuses on science and math	1	0.39	1	0.69	1	0.25
32. Emphasizes knowledge for specific future employment	-1	-0.23	0	0.10	-3	-0.86
33. Educational strategies using multiple forms of technology	-2	-0.51	3	1.02	1	0.24
34. Tasks are completed because of respect for authority	-2	-1.10	-3	-1.10	2	0.69
35. Individual learning based upon my child's interest and strengths	3	0.94	3	0.98	4	1.66
36. The necessity of personal spiritual development	5	1.74	-1	-0.72	-2	-0.79

37. Reading about knowledge that is based on information and facts	0	0.02	2	0.84	2	0.50
38. Exposure to diverse types of peoples with diverse perspectives on life and living	-1	-0.21	5	2.11	1	-0.01
39. Learning that connects from one subject to another even when those connections are not clearly made	1	0.30	3	0.97	-1	-0.42
40. Deeper understanding in many subject areas	0	0.17	1	0.69	0	-0.16

VITA

Christopher Sean Beswick

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

PARENTAL VALUES FOR THE EDUCATION OF THEIR CHILDREN

Educational Psychology

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Psychology at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in July 2017.

Completed the requirements for the Master of Education at University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, Oklahoma, 2011.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science English History at Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas, 2000.

Experience: High School English Teacher (2000-2011); Teaching Assistant (2011-2013); Instructor of Psychology (2015-2017)

Professional Memberships: American Psychological Association, American Educational Research Association