

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TASKS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLING
AS PERCEIVED BY PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS
OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN A
BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

by

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE TASKS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLING AS PERCEIVED BY PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN A BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

This study was an attempt to find out what parents, educators and students of public and private secondary schools perceived as the primary tasks of education in a British Columbia School District in 1974. A concomitant purpose was to compare the perceptions of respondents from the public and private schools.

The Tasks of Secondary Education Opinionnaire (TSE) adapted from Downey, Seager and Slagle was used in this study. The instrument was field-tested on a sample of parents, educators and students from public and private schools to see if the items added discriminated between respondents from public and private schools where true differences existed. After minor changes, the opinionnaire was submitted to a systematic sample of parents, educators and students from five public and two private schools in the Abbotsford School District. Tasks of education were rank-ordered by respondents and each rank assigned a numerical value: eight for the most important, seven for the next two, and so on to one for the least important item. Means

and ranks were composed for each of the twenty tasks.

An analysis of variance (F test) revealed significant differences, accepted at the .05 confidence level, on 17 of the 20 items between public and private school respondents. The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient indicated high overall agreement between respondent groups from public schools, as well as from private schools, but relatively low correlation between respondents from public and private groups.

The Intellectual Dimension was considered slightly more important than the others by parents and educators from public schools and parents and students from private schools. The Social Dimension was most important to public school students; the Personal, to private school educators. Of least importance to public and private school educators and private school parents was the Productive Dimension; to public school students and parents, the Personal; and to private school students, the Social.

Further investigations related to the limitations of this study are to what extent other aspects of the private schools reflect the underlying philosophy, and what effects the private schools have on students academically and in the choice of life goals.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"What purposes are the schools to serve?" is a recurring question of concern especially to three groups directly involved in education: parents, educators and students. Emphasis on what the important tasks of education are has varied historically and geographically (Spears, 1973, Bent, Kronenberg and Boardman, 1970, Stockley, 1969, Connell, 1961, Downey, 1960). However, Downey, Seager and Slagle (Downey, 1960) found that in the synthesis of a considerable body of literature on the tasks of public education there was more redundancy than originality.

Evidence of the varied expectations parents and educators have in one school district in British Columbia is found in the establishment of two separate or private schools (with a third one under construction) that purport to provide an alternative to public education. This study was an attempt to investigate what parents, educators and students of private, as well as public schools, perceive to be the primary tasks of secondary education.

The study attempted to compare the perceptions of a sample of parents, educators and students of two private schools, the Mennonite Educational Institute (MEI) and the Abbotsford Christian School (ACS) with those from the five Abbotsford secondary schools.

The Importance of the Study

Hertzler (1971) hypothesizes that establishing a religious separate school reflects different choices and priorities in education. One way of testing the hypothesis is to examine how parents, educators and students perceived the tasks of education. If their perception differs significantly from that of the public school respondents, then the private schools could theoretically justify their existence.

Another question worthy of consideration is: Does the existence of private schools indicate that the public schools are not reflecting the expectations of parents, educators and students? An examination of the opinions of the respondents from public schools could provide an answer and could provide information for educational policymakers in the school district.

A number of British Columbia school districts including Surrey, Victoria and Vancouver are moving in the direction of giving parents a choice between several types of schools.

If the trend toward an alternate education within the school district exists, then educational policymakers need to examine the perceptions parents, educators and students have of the tasks of education.

The Abbotsford School District in British Columbia, Canada, was chosen for this study since the Mennonite Educational Institute, the Abbotsford Christian School and the Community Baptist Christian Academy (to begin operation in September, 1974) provide an alternative education to that available in the public schools. It is in this district, particularly, that the ranking of goals or tasks may serve to justify current practice in public and private schools as well as to stimulate discussion for evaluation and improvement.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to identify the principal tasks of secondary education as perceived by a sample of parents, educators and students of the two private and the five public secondary schools in the Fraser Valley School District of Abbotsford, British Columbia, in 1974.

More specifically, this study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. What do parents, educators and students of private and public schools perceive as the primary tasks of secondary education?

2. To what extent do the parents, educators and students agree on the principal tasks of education?
3. To what extent do the respondents from private schools agree with those from public schools?

In summary, this study attempted to test the null hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between the perceptions of parents, educators and students from public and private secondary schools on any of the twenty items of the Tasks of Secondary Education (TSE) Opinionnaire. Mean rankings on each item for each group were compared using analysis of variance (F test) with differences being accepted as significant at the .05 confidence level.

Definition of Terms

Task. For the purposes of this study, task is defined as the objective or goal toward which the functioning of the secondary school is directed.

Secondary School. As used in this study, Secondary School refers to the school or part of the school enrolling students in any grade from eight to twelve, inclusive. The following schools were involved in this study:

Abbotsford Senior Secondary School

Abbotsford Junior Secondary School

Yale Junior Secondary School

W. J. Mouat Junior Secondary School
Clearbrook Junior Secondary School
Mennonite Educational Institute
Abbotsford Christian School

Private School. As used in this study, Private School refers to a school not funded out of tax revenue; one that requires a student tuition fee. The private schools involved were:

Mennonite Educational Institute
Abbotsford Christian School

Educators. For the purposes of this study, Educators refers to principals, teachers, counsellors and librarians in the secondary school. It does not include district supervisory staff.

Limitations, Delimitations, Assumptions

Limitations. Adapting the Tasks of Public Education (TPE) Opinionnaire (Downey, 1960) for use with respondents from both public and private schools places limitations on validity, generalizability and comparability. The instrument adaptations and the field test are discussed in Chapter 3.

Delimitations. The major delimitation is that this study is conducted in one school district, at one particular point in time, where some alternatives to public

secondary school education exist. It may, therefore, be limited in its generalizability to other school districts. It would have its prime value in providing information to educational policymakers and educators in the Abbotsford School District.

Assumptions. (1) The instrument used was assumed to have a degree of validity and reliability suitable for the present study. (2) It was assumed that the sample of respondents was a sufficient measure of the importance they placed on the tasks of education.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE AND RESEARCH

Introduction

Schooling For What? Don Parker asks--sex, money, war, peace? (Parker, 1970). The question of what purposes the schools are to serve has been asked and studied since the existence of schools. Controversy over the question has generated innumerable treatises which could not all be reviewed here. Some reviews of the aims or purposes of schools are found in standard textbooks (e.g., Ulich, The History of Educational Thought, 1950, or Bent, Kronenberg and Broadman, Principles of Secondary Education, 1970) or in previous studies on the tasks of education (e.g., Downey, 1960, or Stockley, 1969). An attempt will be made in this chapter to review a few of the statements concerning the purposes of public and private secondary school education and relate these to the purposes of this study.

Early Statements of Aims

Classical Greek education, primarily adult-centred, emphasized "the necessity of sound interaction between body and mind" (Ulich, 1950). Christian education considered preparing man for immortality as more important than preparing him for this life. The medieval teacher regarded

his task primarily as that of transmitting knowledge and ideals. The Renaissance brought a fusion of classical and traditional ideas with the emphasis that instruction should be more closely related to life. Through the Scientific Age the educational aim of "usefulness and reality" developed. Locke, spokesman in the Age of Reason, "demanded a method of education apt to encourage initiative, independent judgment, observation, and critical use of reason" (Ulich, 1950). And so one could go on with the statements of Spencer, Rousseau, Franklin, Jefferson, Emerson and Dewey. Many of these early statements of the purposes of education were respondent to the "vision" of the time or society; generally, they were applied under conditions which today would be considered nonpublic education.

Aims of Public Secondary Education

Since the beginning of the 1900's many of the earlier aims of education have been formulated more specifically to indicate what the school's purposes are. The National Education Association, dedicated "to upgrade the quality of American education and to give it direction" (NEA, 1963), was perhaps one of the first with its statement, in 1918, of the Seven Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education:

1. Health
 2. Command of fundamental processes
 3. Worthy home membership
 4. Vocation
 5. Civic education
 6. Worthy use of leisure
 7. Ethical character
- (Cited in Spears, 1973)

The NEA followed the 1918 statement with further revised statements of purpose in 1938 and 1961 through the Educational Policies Commission. Their 1938 statement listed specific objectives under four major categories: 1) Self-realization, 2) Human relationships, 3) Economic efficiency, and 4) Civic responsibility. In their 1961 study, the Educational Policies Commission made a study of all statements of aims and found what they regarded as one central aim: "The development of the rational powers of all pupils" (Bent, et al., 1970). It was this commission that, in 1951, focused particular attention on the responsibility for moral and spiritual values in education (Heffernan, 1969).

The White House Conference on Education, held in the fall of 1955, considered, among other aspects, the question "What Should Our Schools Accomplish?" and developed a list of tasks that the school should be responsible for. The Conference Report assigned first responsibility to the development of the intellectual powers. It then stated that a primary responsibility of any local school authority was ". . . to establish priorities of significance among basic general education, specialized education of all kinds, and extra curricular activities" (Conference Report, 1956).

Downey, Seager and Slagle (Downey, 1960) synthesized a considerable body of literature on the purposes of public education and the tasks of the public schools. They then categorized the goals of education under four major dimensions:

A. Intellectual Elements

1. Possession of knowledge: Concepts:
A fund of information.
2. Communication of knowledge: Skills:
To acquire and transmit.
3. Creation of knowledge: Habits:
Discrimination and imagination.
4. Desire for knowledge: Values:
A love of truth.

B. Social Elements

5. Man to Man: Cooperation in day-to-day relations.
6. Man to State: Civic rights and duties.
7. Man to Country: Loyalty to one's own country.
8. Man to World: Inter-relationships of people.

C. Personal Elements

9. Physical: Bodily health and development.
10. Emotional: Mental health and stability.
11. Ethical: Moral integrity.
12. Aesthetic: Cultural and leisure pursuits.

D. Productive Elements

13. Vocation-selection: Information and guidance.
14. Vocation-preparation: Training and placement.
15. Home and Family: Housekeeping, do-it-yourself,
family life.
16. Consumer: Personal buying, selling and
investment.

(Downey, 1960, pp. 22-23)

The four major categories thus identify the common thread among the many stated aims. However, at various times and in particular places, some aims are stressed more than others. The 1960 Royal Commission on Education in British Columbia recommended (after Sputnik):

That the primary or general aim of the educational system of British Columbia should be that of promoting the intellectual development of the pupils, and that this should be the major emphasis throughout the whole school programme.

(Chant, et al., 1960, pp. 17-18)

Is the intellectual goal still as valued today as it was in 1960? Are other goals more important today to some groups of people? Educational policymakers need to examine the goals of education periodically, both locally and in relation to the rest of the province and nation to ascertain what expectations parents, educators and students have of the school. They would also want to know to what extent these groups agree on the tasks of secondary education in order to plan for the educational needs and expectations of those most vitally concerned or affected, namely, parents, educators and students. One of the main purposes of this study was to survey the opinions of parents, educators and students in one school district, in regard to the tasks of secondary education.

Aims of Private Secondary Education

Every society is directed and sustained by a core of values which represents its ideals, its standards, and its norms of what is desirable. There are also, in every society, values which are a reflection of human preferences, of what people actually want and seek to obtain. These operational values develop from personal needs and sometimes conflict with society's normative values (NEA, 1963, p. 6-7).

This conflict of values could result in changing the educational system or in establishing alternatives to "society's normative values." Private schools present one such alternative. While supporters of private schools may ascribe varying degrees of importance to, say, the four broad dimensions of education as Downey (1960) outlines them: intellectual, social, personal and productive, they

may want to place a higher priority on any one of them than the local public school may be doing or they may want to approach the dimensions of education through different methods or the private schools may want, as most church schools do, to add the religious dimension to tasks of education.

The private school that is established for religious reasons may not be unique in desiring a religious-ethical purpose for its school. Whitehead (1927) makes this claim:

We can be content with no less than the old summary of educational ideal which has been current at any time from the dawn of civilization. The essence of education is that it be religious. . . . A religious education is an education which inculcates duty and reverence. Duty arises from our potential control over the course of events. . . . (pp. 25-26).

Although the public schools may see education, in its broadest sense, as religious, according to Whitehead's statement, the religious private school generally wants a particular emphasis and control in the religious education as well as the general education. By establishing their own schools, parents can exercise the control that they desire.

The Mennonite Educational Institute and the Abbotsford Christian School, according to their school brochures, want to be able to exercise control over the setting or atmosphere in which learning will take place by selecting Christian teachers "who attempt to apply Biblical principles to all

aspects of life" (MEI, Statement of Objectives), or who "present all subject matter in the light of God's Word" (ACS). Thus, through the selection of teachers, these schools attempt to ensure that their value system and their pervasive beliefs are going to provide the philosophical base for education. The Mennonite Educational Institute's Statement of Objectives (Appendix A) would indicate that the religious environment is viewed as inseparable from a good education in the secular subjects although the importance of individual tasks of education may be subordinated to the religious purpose of the school. Kraushaar (1972) would support a view that the underlying philosophy of the school is of greater concern than the individual task. His contention is that

The parent who chooses a church school as 'best' usually assigns top priority to education in a religious environment but looks also for a good education in the secular subjects; he may in fact believe they are inseparable (p. 7).

When ranking the purposes of the school, other research suggests that the private or parochial school respondents will place a different emphasis on the intellectual, social, personal and productive dimensions of education than will respondents from the public schools. Neuwien (1966) hypothesizes

that religious-moral objectives would rank first, the intellectual objectives second and the social, vocational, and patriotic objectives about equally but clearly behind the first- and second-rated objectives (p. 229).

He found that the student respondents, with one important exception, confirmed the hypothesis; the exception was the vocational goal which ranked second. In a five-place ranking the students assigned first-place ranks in the following manner: Moral-religious (60.5%), Occupational-vocational (14.3%), Intellectual-academic (12.3%), Friendship-social (6.4%) and Civic-patriotic (6.0%).

Robinson (1973), in a study of public secondary schools in West Vancouver, B.C., and Downey (1960), in a study of public schools in various centres in the U. S. and in Alberta both found that of the four dimensions of education ranked in their studies (the Intellectual, the Social, the Personal, and the Productive) by parents, educators and students, the Intellectual dimension was ranked first and the Productive last.

Hertzler, chairman of the Philosophy of Christian Education Research Committee of the Mennonite Church, outlines four elements of the educational process which parallel Downey's (1960) major dimensions. These elements are:

1. Background information and perspective--history, customs, tradition;
2. teaching of values--the experience of what people have considered important;
3. training in the skills needed to function in society and
4. structuring a personal view of reality.

(Hertzler, 1971, pp. 20-23)

However, underlying these elements is a distinct philosophy of education which Hertzler (1971) summarizes as:

1. The people of God are a distinct people with a distinct calling and unique educational goal. They must educate to:
 - a. transmit their history ;
 - b. train youth in the skills needed to carry on the work considered important;
 - c. teach the values they consider important;
 - d. help the young develop [their] own personal view of reality.
2. The task of education is carried on not only in schools, but it is the work of the whole people. In fact, it is only as they are practiced by the group that values taught in schools can be expected to be taken seriously.
3. The educational task is seen as a part of the people's faithfulness to God and thus should be subjected to regular scrutiny to keep it in touch with the goals and needs of the people of God.
4. The ultimate purpose of education as practiced by the people of God is to aid in living as a reconciled and reconciling people (p. 29).

Hertzler (1971) emphasizes that Mennonite values run counter to those of the prevailing culture and that their religious values are distinctly "Christian". He theorizes that this background and perspective would dictate different choices and priorities in education from those of the public school.

The stated philosophy as well as the statements of objectives provide a rationale for the existence and function of the religious private schools. This study attempted, in part, to examine to what extent the philosophy and theory was reflected in how parents, educators and students perceived the tasks of education. The study also compared the perceptions of public and private school respondents

regarding the tasks of secondary education. If the theory regarding the purpose of education agrees with the perception, and if the perceptions of private school respondents differ significantly from those of the public school respondents, then the Mennonite Educational Institute and the Abbotsford Christian School, with a similar philosophy, could provide evidence to justify their existence with respect to the tasks of education.

Summary

This chapter attempted to review some of the literature about the aims of education. There is considerable commonality when examining statements of the aims of public education but emphasis on which tasks are most important has varied with time, events and culture. The aims of education for the private school differ, not so much in the selection of tasks to include, as they do in the underlying philosophy and in the amount of importance that should be attached to a particular purpose of education--in the case of the schools in this study, the religious purpose.

The MEI registration brochure (1974) states that, "The MEI provides an effective alternative to a purely secular approach to education and life." Is this alternative evident when one examines the tasks of secondary education? This study attempted to answer that question.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Required

To investigate the problem, it was necessary to obtain data from a sample of the population of the Abbotsford School District representing both the private and the public secondary schools. Data was obtained by means of the Tasks of Secondary Education Opinionnaire in June, 1974.

The Population

The population used in this study included all teachers, principals, counsellors and librarians in public and private secondary schools (educators), all secondary school students enrolled in grades eight to twelve, inclusive, and all parents with students in the secondary school, both public and private, in the Abbotsford School District, British Columbia, Canada.

The Sample

The sample included all the students and educators of the MEI, the students and educators of grades 8, 9 and 10 at the ACS, and a sample of 20% of the parents who had students attending the MEI and the ACS. A sample

of approximately 12% was drawn from the parents, educators and students from the public secondary schools in the Abbotsford School District.

The sampling procedure used for the public school respondents was based on a selection procedure which involved calculating a value for the sampling unit (k) from the size of the population (N) and the desired size of the sample (n). The formula $K = N/n$ was used. In this study N equaled approximately 3000 parents (one home as one parent), 3000 students and 280 educators. The desired number was approximately 400 parents, 400 students and 35 educators so k value was 8. Every 8th person was selected from class or school lists after having started with a randomly chosen number between one and 8, inclusive. The random number chosen was 2 so the second number was 10, the third, 18, until the desired number had been reached. The advantages were especially important since in a number of schools the homeroom or first class teacher was responsible for selecting the sample.

For sampling the parents of students in the private schools, the selection procedure described above was used but with a k value of 5. N was approximately 520 and n , 105.

The quota sampling used in this study follows the suggestions of Selltitz, Jahoda and Deutsch (1959) that the critical requirement for a sample

. . . is not that the various population strata be sampled in their correct proportions, but rather that there be enough cases from each stratum to make possible an estimate of the population stratum value (p. 518)

The sample was small enough to keep cost and follow-up manageable and yet sufficiently large enough to allow conclusions to be drawn with some confidence.

The sample of parents from the public schools varied slightly from the sample of parents with students at MEI or ACS regarding education and income. Of the parents from the public schools, 69.3% reported an education of grade 12 or less while 68.6% of the private school parents had a similar education. Of the public school parents, 34.8% reported incomes of less than \$10,000; 28.4%, more than \$15,000. Of the private school parents 31.4% reported incomes below \$10,000, while 37.1% reported incomes of over \$15,000.

The Instrument

The instrument used in this study was the Tasks of Secondary Education (TSE) adapted by the researcher from the Tasks of Public Education (TPE) Opinionnaire constructed by Downey, Seager and Slagle in 1958 (Downey, 1960). Since this study involved secondary education, only that part of the TPE concerned with secondary education was used.

In constructing the TPE Opinionnaire, Downey, Seager and Slagle made an exhaustive study of the literature and research reporting previous attempts to define the tasks of public education. Through the synthesis of the literature, they chose sixteen tasks which best expressed the possible varied tasks of the secondary school as well as deciding on a rank-order instrument (Downey, 1960). The sixteen tasks and items were grouped under four dimensions: The Intellectual, the Social, the Personal and the Productive.

The adapted TSE Opinionnaire included four additional tasks to the sixteen in the TPE, one in each of the four dimensions.

Respondents were asked to rank-order the twenty randomly arranged items descriptive of each task from most important to least important, in terms of:

The ONE most important task
The next TWO most important tasks
The next THREE most important tasks
The next FOUR most important tasks
The next FOUR most important tasks
The next THREE most important tasks
The next TWO most important tasks
The ONE least important task

Opportunity for a write-in comment was provided on the opinionnaire. Respondents were also asked to provide certain information relating to personal characteristics but their name was not required.

Adaptation and Field Test of the Instrument

Since this study involved private as well as public secondary schools, it was necessary to adapt the TPE Opinionnaire to include items reflecting the religious dimension of the private school. The statements of philosophy and objectives provided by the MEI and ACS were reviewed and four items--three religious and one family--were added to the TPE Opinionnaire, one to each of the four dimensions (Figure 1). Since the statements added to the opinionnaire were adapted from the private schools' stated aims, it was assumed that they had face validity. However, to test the effect of their inclusion with the other sixteen items, the TSE Opinionnaire was administered to a sample of grade nine students, their parents and some educators from a Langley Junior Secondary school and from the Abbotsford Christian School. The opinionnaire was distributed to ten randomly chosen educators and sent home to parents with the students. The completed opinionnaires were returned the following morning. The TSE Opinionnaire was personally administered to the students who were timed in order to establish an approximate completion time. They were also asked if any of the written instructions were not clear. Their comments, along with those of the parents and educators, resulted in some modifications of the terminology used in the instructions as well as minor modifications to the format of the opinionnaire. A total of 36 students (19 public, 17 private), 19 parents (10 public, 9 private) and 9 educators (5 public, 4 private) constituted the field test sample.

SECONDARY EDUCATION: DIMENSIONS, TASKS
AND ITEMS (TSE OPINIONNAIRE)

DIMENSION	TASK	ITEM
INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION	1. Possession of Knowledge	1. A fund of information about many things
	2. Communication of Knowledge	2. Efficient use of the 3 R's - the basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge
	3. Creation of Knowledge	3. The habit of weighing facts and imaginatively applying them to the solution of problems
	4. Desire for Knowledge	4. A continuing desire for knowledge - the inquiring mind
	5. Religious Knowledge	5. Knowledge of the Bible, God and His relationship to people*
SOCIAL DIMENSION	6. Man to Family	6. An appreciation for the home and the values of family living
	7. Man to Fellow Man	7. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony
	8. Man to State	8. An understanding of government and a sense of civic responsibility
	9. Man to Country	9. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life
	10. Man to World	10. Knowledge of world affairs and the inter-relationship among peoples
PERSONAL DIMENSION	11. Physical	11. A well-cared for, well-developed body
	12. Emotional	12. An emotionally stable person - prepared for life's realities
	13. Ethical	13. A sense of right and wrong - a moral standard of behavior
	14. Religious	14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy*
	15. Aesthetic	15. Enjoyment of cultural activities - the finer things of life
PRODUCTIVE DIMENSION	16. Vocation - Service	16. Emphasis on life work that will be of service to God and society*
	17. Vocation - Selective	17. Information and guidance for wise occupational choice
	18. Vocation - Preparative	18. Specialized training for placement in a specific job
	19. Home and Family	19. The homemaking and handyman skills related to family life
	20. Consumer	20. Management of personal finances and wise buying habits

*Added items

From the overall ranking assigned to the TSE items, the specific ranking assigned to the items that were added to the opinionnaire are shown in Table 1.

The religious items added to the Intellectual, Personal and Productive Dimensions of the TPE Opinionnaire became the three top ranking items chosen by the parents, educators and students of the private school while those items became the three lowest ranking for respondents from public schools with the exception of the personal-religious item which the public educators ranked 11th. The item from the Social Dimension, man to family, was ranked, overall, slightly above the 10th rank by all respondents except educators from the private school who ranked it 13th.

It was concluded from the field test of the TSE Opinionnaire that the religious items that were added were sufficiently sensitive and viable to discriminate between respondents from public and private schools where true differences existed.

Limitations of the Instrument

The ranking system employed for the TSE Opinionnaire has the advantage that it is more discriminating than the approval-disapproval scale. That is, it gives a clear indication of the order of importance that is assigned to each task by the respondent. However, although the

TABLE 1
RANKS OF ADDED ITEMS ON FIELD TEST
OF THE TSE OPINIONNAIRE

DIMENSIONS AND TASKS	PARENTS		EDUCATORS		STUDENTS	
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private
INTELLECTUAL						
Religious Knowledge	19.5	3	19	2	19	2
SOCIAL						
Man to Family	7.5	6	8.5	13	10	9
PERSONAL						
Religious	18	2	11	3	20	1
PRODUCTIVE						
Vocation- Service	19.5	1	18	1	18	3

respondent may indicate the order of importance for all twenty items he may feel that the school should be concerned with only some of the tasks that have been given the top rankings. The write-in comments provided some evidence of this limitation.

Another limitation of the opinionnaire is that it offered the respondent twenty tasks of secondary education to choose from in his ranking; it is possible that some task of prime importance to an individual would not be included in the items. Past research on the sixteen item TPE Opinionnaire has shown that the instrument was successful in accommodating the views of most respondents (Downey, 1960). The write-in comment gave little indication that the twenty items did not accommodate an individual's frame of reference by being too limited in the tasks that were listed.

Perhaps the greatest limitation of the TSE Opinionnaire was that it was adapted to attempt to accommodate respondents from both public and private schools. Respondents from the public school largely rejected the religious items as tasks of the secondary school--indeed, achieving the religious tasks may well be prohibited in the public school. Conversely, respondents from private schools gave highest rankings to the religious items. The comments of some respondents from the private school indicated that unless the religious goals were achieved, the private school had

little purpose for existence and so rank-ordering became conditional upon the school meeting the first ordered tasks. However, since the respondent was to rank-order the tasks without attempting to qualify the purposes for ranking, the opinionnaire was considered adequate for providing the desired information.

Procedure

Permission was obtained from the District Superintendent of Schools, the Board of School Trustees, Abbotsford School District, and the principals of the participating public and private secondary schools to undertake this study.

The data gathering instrument, The Tasks of Secondary Education (TSE), was distributed in person to each of the five public and two private schools participating in the study. The results were collected a week to ten days later.

All secondary students and educators at the MEI and the ACS were asked to complete the opinionnaire. Returns were obtained from 420 students (94.0%) and 19 educators (90.5%). Lists of parents enrolling students at the MEI and the ACS were obtained and opinionnaires were mailed with a covering letter and a stamped, self-addressed envelope, to every fifth name on the list. Opinionnaires were mailed to 103 parents and returns obtained from 37 (36.9%).

Opinionnaires delivered to the public secondary schools were distributed with an accompanying letter asking homeroom or first class teachers to select every eighth person in attendance starting with the second. These pupils were given

one opinionnaire to complete and return to a marked box located at the office and another opinionnaire to take home for parents to complete and return in the stamped, self-addressed envelope. The TSE Opinionnaire to parents was distributed by this method since permission to obtain addresses of parents was not granted by some principals. Time did not permit requesting the School Board for specific permission to release the addresses of parents. This method of sending the instrument to parents had the disadvantage of making follow-up, especially after students were dismissed for the year, virtually impossible. It is interesting to note that of the 318 opinionnaires sent home in this manner, 125 were returned (39.5%), a slightly higher percentage than for those mailed home. Students returned a total of 143 opinionnaires (45.0).

Every eight public school teacher selected by the sampling method described was given an opinionnaire to complete and mail back. Since the initial number of returns were deemed inadequate, a subsequent follow-up with the distribution of an additional 30 opinionnaires yielded a total of 26 returns from the public educators (55.3%).

The rate of return compares favourably with the response obtained by Robinson (1973) in a study conducted in West Vancouver, B. C. But since returns are rather low, especially from parents, considerable caution should be exercised in the interpretation of the data.

Data Treatment

Respondents were asked to rank-order the twenty tasks of secondary education into eight groups (Figure 2). A numerical value was assigned to each category; eight for the item chosen as most important, seven for the next two most important items, and so on to the one least important item which was assigned a numerical value of one. The aggregate of the assigned value of different individuals and of different groups could then be calculated for each of the TSE items.

From the aggregate value, means were calculated and each group's overall rank order of the TSE items indicated. Comparisons were then made between the six groups of respondents--parents, educators and students from public and private secondary schools--on the mean rankings on each of the twenty items using an analysis of variance (F test) with differences being accepted as significant at the .05 level of confidence. The Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient was used to test for overall differences of opinion between groups with differences being accepted as significant at the .05 level of confidence.

FIGURE 2

ORDERING CATEGORIES FOR THE TSE ITEMS

- The ONE most important task
- The next TWO most important tasks
- The next THREE most important tasks
- The next FOUR
- The next FOUR
- The next THREE most important tasks
- The next TWO most important tasks
- The ONE least important task

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS: REPORTED AND DISCUSSED

The purpose of this study was to attempt to answer the following questions:

1. What do parents, educators and students of private and public schools perceive as the primary tasks of secondary education?
2. To what extent do the parents, educators and students agree on the principal tasks of education?
3. To what extent do the respondents from private schools agree with those from public schools on individual items?

Analysis of variance was used to test the hypothesis that there would be no differences, significant at the .05 confidence level, between the mean rankings of parents, educators and students from public and private secondary schools on any of the twenty items of the Tasks of Secondary Education Opinionnaire.

Findings

Table 2 indicates items for which significant differences acceptable at the .05 confidence level exist. Significant differences existed between public and private respondents on all tasks except 9, 13 and 15. Significant

TABLE 2
SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES ON TSE ITEMS

A - Between Public and Private Schools
B - Between Parents, Educators and Students
C - Overall

Dimension	Task	A	B	C
INTELLECTUAL	1. Possession of Knowledge	S	S	S
	2. Communication of Knowledge	S	S	S
	3. Creation of Knowledge	S	S	NS
	4. Desire for Knowledge	S	S	S
	5. Religious Knowledge	S	S	S
SOCIAL	6. Man to Family	S	NS	S
	7. Man to Fellow Man	S	S	NS
	8. Man to State	S	NS	NS
	9. Man to Country	NS	S	NS
	10. Man to World	S	NS	NS
PERSONAL	11. Physical	S	S	NS
	12. Emotional	S	S	NS
	13. Ethical	NS	S	NS
	14. Religious	S	S	S
	15. Aesthetic	NS	S	NS
PRODUCTIVE	16. Vocation - Service	S	S	S
	17. Vocation - Selective	S	S	NS
	18. Vocation - Preparative	S	S	NS
	19. Home and Family	S	S	NS
	20. Consumer	S	S	NS

S- significant $p > .05$
NS - not significant

differences existed between parents, educators and students on all items except 6, 8 and 10. Overall significant differences, when comparing all groups existed on items 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 14 and 16.

The null hypothesis that there would be no significant difference between respondents from public and private schools on each of the twenty items is rejected except for the following items:

9. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life.
13. A sense of right and wrong--a moral standard of behavior.
15. Enjoyment of cultural activities and the finer things of life.

Items 9 and 15 were both considered low priorities when ranking the tasks of education. Item 13 was ranked near the 75th percentile by all respondent groups.

Discussion of Findings

As described in Chapter 3, the TSE Opinionnaire had twenty items to rank-order. These items composed four dimensions: the Intellectual, the Social, the Personal and the Productive. Table 3 provides a summary of the means and ranks assigned to the TSE items by parents, educators and students of public and private secondary schools. Figures 3 and 4 provide, in graphic form, the means assigned to the TSE items by public and private school respondents.

Public school parents and educators ranked the Intellectual Dimension somewhat higher than the others.

TABLE 3
TASKS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION: MEANS AND RANKS
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

(Public: Parents = 125; Educators = 26; Students = 143)
 (Private: Parents = 37; Educators = 19; Students = 420)

DIMENSION	TASK	PARENTS PUBLIC		EDUCATORS PUBLIC		STUDENTS PUBLIC		PARENTS PRIVATE		EDUCATORS PRIVATE		STUDENTS PRIVATE	
		X	R	X	R	X	R	X	R	X	R	X	R
INTELLECTUAL	1. Possession of Knowledge	4.16	12	4.44	11	4.91	6	3.11	19	2.06	20	4.01	14
	2. Communication of Knowledge	6.03	1	5.92	3	4.92	5	5.22	6	5.16	8	4.48	10
	3. Creation of Knowledge	5.14	7	5.81	4	4.84	10	4.69	9	5.00	9	4.11	13
	4. Desire for Knowledge	5.63	3	6.69	1	5.66	2	4.03	13	4.32	10	4.83	6
	5. Religious Knowledge	3.36	19	1.84	20	2.90	20	6.37	2	6.21	2	5.80	1
SOCIAL	6. Man to Family	4.55	10	4.08	13	4.40	11	5.06	7	5.26	7	4.40	11
	7. Man to Fellow Man	5.68	2	6.42	2	5.78	1	5.94	4	5.74	5	5.54	4
	8. Man to State	4.12	13	4.69	9	4.24	15	4.17	12	4.00	12	3.70	19
	9. Men to Country	3.67	17½	3.16	19	4.36	12	3.94	14	2.90	17	3.77	18
	10. Man to World	4.62	9	5.04	7	4.87	8	4.23	11	4.05	11	4.28	12
PERSONAL	11. Physical	3.74	16½	4.72	8	4.35	13	3.36	17	3.90	14	3.87	17
	12. Emotional	5.17	6	5.69	5	5.07	4	4.80	8	5.67	6	4.71	8
	13. Ethical	5.28	4	5.27	6	4.91	7	5.34	5	5.79	4	5.00	5
	14. Religious	3.67	17½	3.42	17½	3.16	19	6.14	3	7.84	1	5.70	3
	15. Aesthetic	3.12	20	3.96	14	3.68	17	2.88	20	4.00	12	3.24	20
PRODUCTIVE	16. Vocation-Service	4.27	11	3.50	16	3.63	18	6.74	1	6.05	3	5.74	2
	17. Vocation-Selective	5.22	5	4.46	10	4.87	9	4.31	10	3.63	15	4.48	9
	18. Vocation-Preparative	4.86	8	3.76	15	5.12	3	3.67	15	2.58	19	4.73	7
	19. Home and Family	3.87	15	3.42	17½	4.19	16	3.29	18	2.79	18	3.91	16
	20. Consumer	4.06	14	4.12	12	4.31	14	3.60	16	3.21	16	3.96	15

FIGURE 3
 MEANS OF PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS FROM PUBLIC
 SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON TSE OPINIONNAIRE ITEMS

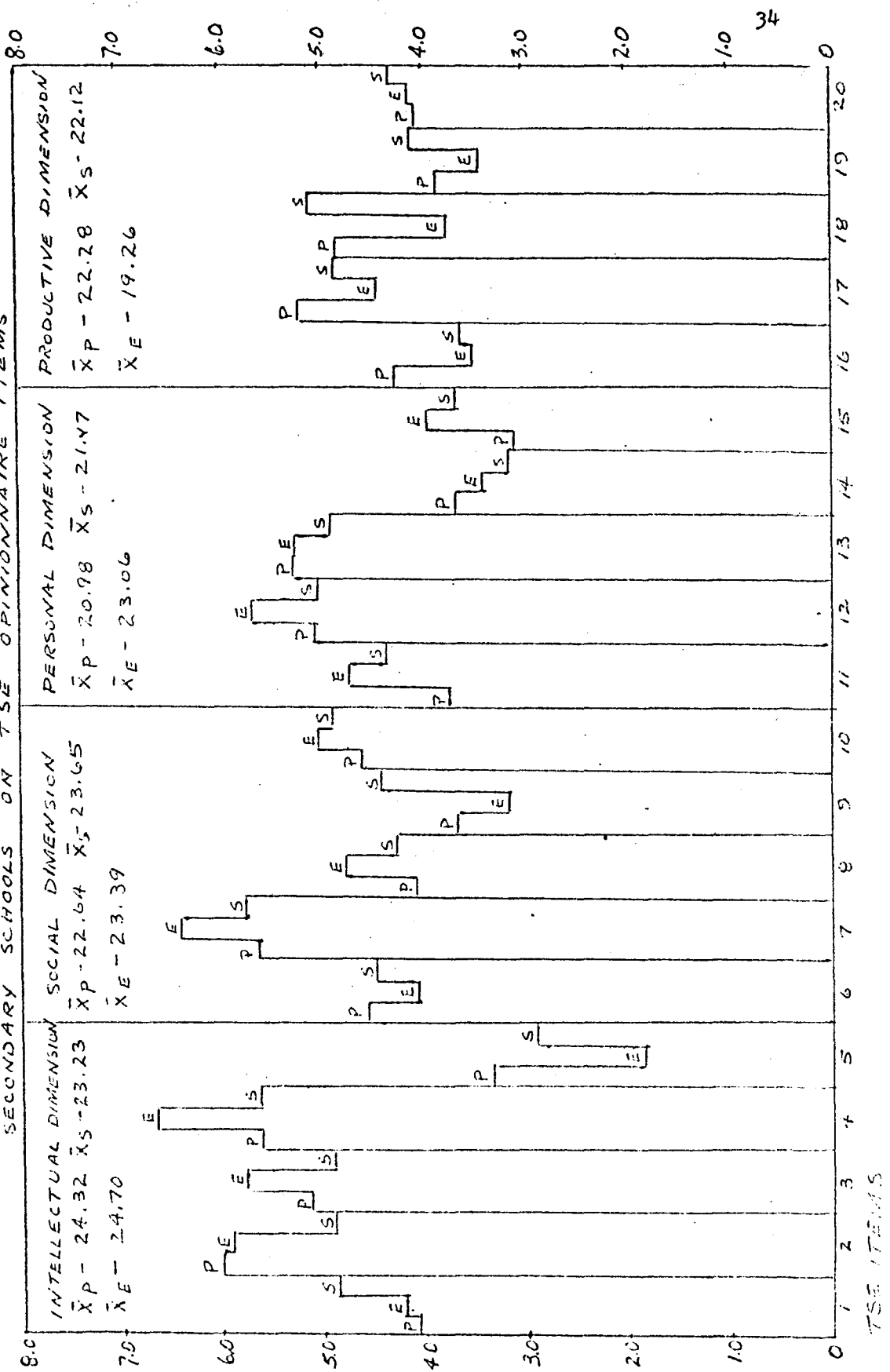
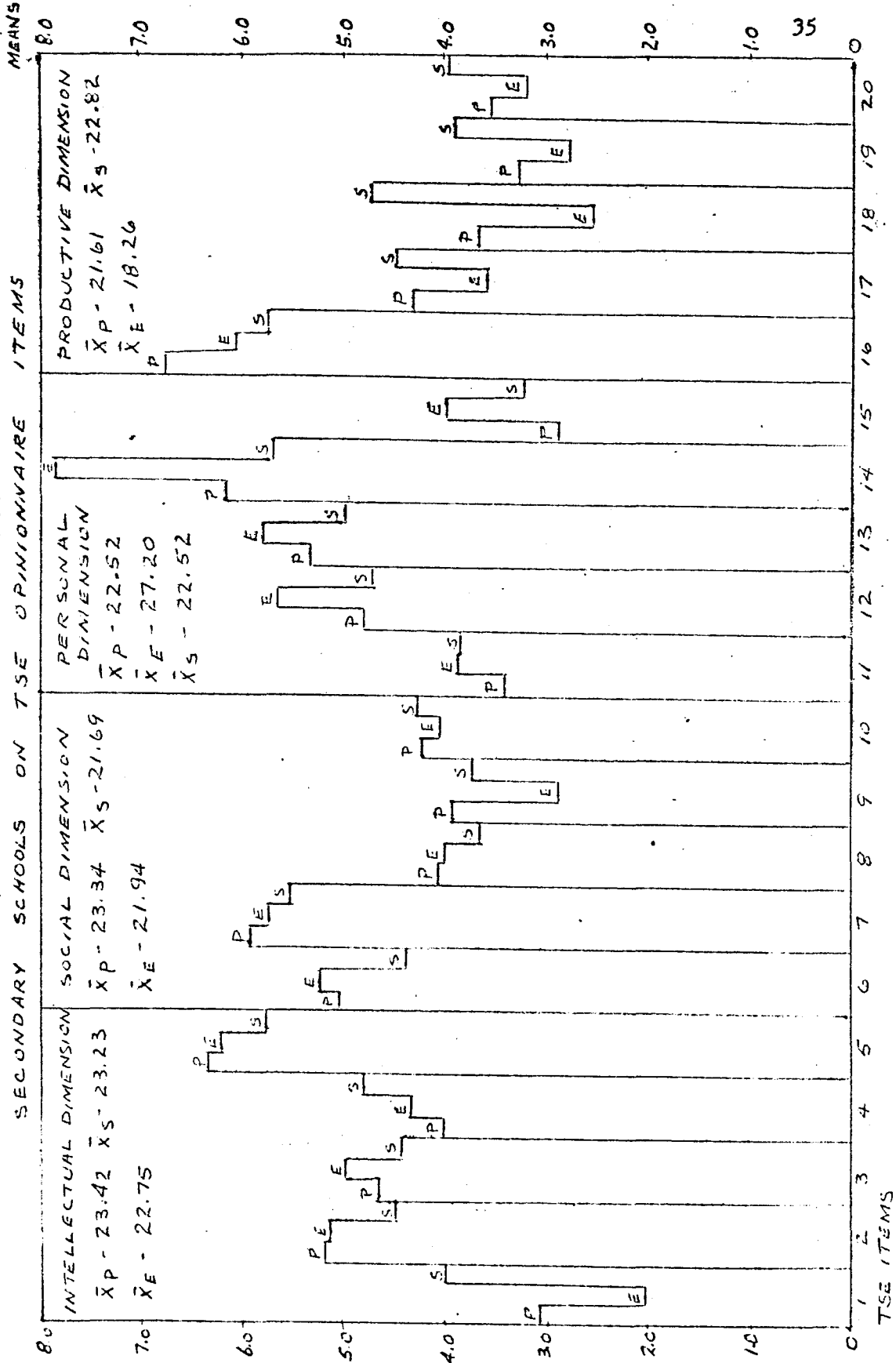


FIGURE 4
 MEANS OF PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS FROM PRIVATE
 SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON TSE OPINIONNAIRE ITEMS



Public school parents ranked the Personal Dimension lowest, while educators ranked the Productive one lowest. Public school students' ranking was fairly even for all four dimensions with the Social somewhat higher and the Personal somewhat lower than the others.

Private school parents and students ranked the Intellectual Dimension higher than the others; the educators considered the Personal Dimension as most important. Parents and educators ranked the Productive Dimension lowest; students the Personal Dimension.

Opinions of Parents, Educators and Students
Regarding Tasks of Secondary Education

Public Schools: Parents. Public school parents as a group ascribed somewhat higher importance to the Intellectual Dimension than to the other three, assigning two of the five highest rankings to this dimension. They judged the Personal Dimension to be least important, assigning three of the five lowest rankings to this dimension.

The four items parents placed greatest importance on were:

2. Efficient use of the 3 R's (\bar{X} 6.03)
7. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony (\bar{X} 5.68)
4. A continuing desire for knowledge--the inquiring mind (\bar{X} 5.63)
13. A sense of right and wrong--a moral standard of behavior (\bar{X} 5.28)

The four tasks ranked lowest by parents of public school students were:

15. Enjoyment of cultural activities--the finer things of life (\bar{X} 3.12)
5. Knowledge of the Bible, God and His relationship to people (\bar{X} 3.36)
9. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life (\bar{X} 3.67)
14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy (\bar{X} 3.67)

The comments of parents provide some interesting background to support their rank-ordering. The most frequent comment provided an explanation for the low rank given to the religious tasks. The following illustrate that position:

These three [religious items] are of vital importance, but I cannot see a public school having central responsibility here.

Even though I find [task 5] the most important thing in any person's life, I did not list it first as a task of the Secondary Education because I feel that it is the primary task of the home and church, although it should be included in Education. . . .

In my opinion, religion and its teachings start in the home and play only a very small part in the Secondary Education System. By the time students reach the Secondary level, students themselves have decided how important a part religion will play in their lives.

Some parents suggested, by their comments, the dilemma of ranking religious tasks for a public school.

If it was possible to place [tasks 5, 14, and 16] in the first place, I personally feel that all the rest would come much easier, because in so many homes these three values are left out entirely.

I also feel that if these three were put in first place a strong religious controversy would be created which would hamper in applying the rest.

Finally, there were a few parents who wanted the public school to do essentially what parents requested of the private school--to ". . . carry on the principles taught in the home."

Public Schools: Educators. The educators, as the parents of the public secondary school students, judged the Intellectual Dimension as the most important, assigning three of the five highest rankings to this dimension. They ascribed least importance to the Productive Dimension, assigning two of the five lowest rankings to this dimension.

The four tasks educators ranked highest were:

4. A continuing desire for knowledge--the inquiring mind (\bar{X} 6.69)
7. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony (\bar{X} 6.42)
2. Efficient use of the 3 R's (\bar{X} 5.92)
3. The habit of weighting facts and imaginatively applying them to the solution of problems (\bar{X} 5.81)

The religious items, which were largely rejected by the educators as purposes of the secondary school, were two of the four lowest ranking tasks.

5. Knowledge of the Bible, God . . . (\bar{X} 1.84)
9. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life (\bar{X} 3.16)
14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy (\bar{X} 3.42)
19. The homemaking and handyman skills related to family life (\bar{X} 3.42)

Public Schools: Students. The public secondary school students placed slightly more overall importance on the Social than the Intellectual Dimension although two of the five highest rankings were given to the Intellectual Dimension. Students placed less importance on the Personal Dimension than on the others, assigning two of the five lowest rankings to this dimension.

The four items students considered most important were:

7. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony (\bar{X} 5.78)
4. A continuing desire for knowledge--the inquiring mind (\bar{X} 5.66)
18. Specialized training for placement in a specific job (\bar{X} 5.12)
12. An emotionally stable person--prepared for life's realities (\bar{X} 5.07)

All three religious tasks were among the four lowest ranking items:

5. Knowledge of the Bible, God . . . (\bar{X} 2.90)
14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy (\bar{X} 3.16)
16. Emphasis on life work that will be of service to God and society (\bar{X} 3.63)
15. Enjoyment of cultural activities-- (\bar{X} 3.68)

Private Schools: Parents. Parents sending their students to either of the private schools involved in this study placed slightly more overall importance on the Intellectual Dimension than the Social Dimension, although only one of the highest five rankings was assigned to the

Intellectual Dimension. They placed somewhat less overall importance on the Productive Dimension than on the others, assigning two of the five lowest rankings to this dimension.

The four individual tasks the parents considered most important were:

16. Emphasis on life work that will be of service to God and society (\bar{X} 6.74)
5. Knowledge of the Bible, God . . . (\bar{X} 6.37)
14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy (\bar{X} 6.14)
7. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony (\bar{X} 5.94)

The four tasks they considered least important were:

15. Enjoyment of cultural activities-- (\bar{X} 2.88)
1. A fund of information about many things (\bar{X} 3.11)
19. The homemaking and handyman skills related to family life (\bar{X} 3.29)
11. A well-cared for, well-developed body (\bar{X} 3.36)

A comment, typical of several supporting a high ranking for the Vocation-Service task and a low ranking for the Possession of Knowledge task, was:

What good is knowledge, if the possessor has no purpose? That which really differentiates one person from another, is none other than their purpose or goal. Firstly set the goal, then develop and attain all the information, academic or experiential, that will give power to reach the goal. All education should be that which sets the highest of goals and the truest of goals and then supplies the basics for the attaining of same.

Private Schools: Educators. The educators judged the Personal Dimension of greatest overall importance, assigning two of the five highest rankings to this dimension. The Productive Dimension was judged by them as least important. Three of the five lowest rankings were assigned to this dimension.

Of the four individual tasks that were considered of prime importance, the Religious-Personal received almost unanimous first place choice. These four items were ranked as most important:

14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy (\bar{X} 7.84)
5. Knowledge of the Bible, God . . . (\bar{X} 6.21)
16. Emphasis on life work that will be of service to God and society (\bar{X} 6.05)
13. A sense of right and wrong--a moral standard of behavior (\bar{X} 5.79)

The four tasks deemed least important were:

1. A fund of information about many things (\bar{X} 2.06)
18. Specialized training for placement in a specific job (\bar{X} 2.56)
19. The homemaking and handyman skills related to family life (\bar{X} 2.79)
9. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life (\bar{X} 2.90)

Private Schools: Students. Students from private schools, as did their parents, placed almost equal importance on the four dimensions. The Intellectual Dimension, however, was judged to be somewhat more important than the others and

the Social Dimension somewhat less important than the others.

The four individual tasks they considered to be of paramount importance were:

5. Knowledge of the Bible, God . . . (\bar{X} 5.80)
16. Emphasis on life work that will be of service to God and society (\bar{X} 5.74)
14. Develop Christian values and life-philosophy (\bar{X} 5.70)
7. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony (\bar{X} 5.54)

The tasks students considered to be of least importance were:

15. Enjoyment of cultural activities-- (\bar{X} 3.24)
8. An understanding of government and a sense of civic responsibility (\bar{X} 3.70)
9. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life (\bar{X} 3.77)
11. A well-cared for, well-developed body (\bar{X} 3.87)

Summary

Parents and educators of public schools both selected as most important a task from the Intellectual Dimension-- Communication of Knowledge and Desire for Knowledge, respectively; public school students considered man's relationship to fellow man, from the Social Dimension, as most important.

Parents of students in private schools felt it was most important for the school to place emphasis on life work that would be of service to God and society, from the Vocational Dimension. Private school educators considered

their prime task to develop Christian values and life-philosophy, while students ranked the Religious Knowledge task highest.

Within Group Differences

A further inspection of the ranks assigned to the TSE items (Table 3) reveals that a major difference of importance is attached to some items when comparing respondent groups. An arbitrary figure of a full quarter difference (e.g., 3rd to 8th) was chosen as an indicator of a major difference.

Public Schools. Parents considered three productive tasks as more important than educators by at least five ranks:

16. Vocation-Service (5 ranks)
17. Vocation-Selective (5 ranks)
18. Vocation-Preparative (7 ranks)

Educators considered these tasks as more important than parents:

8. Man to State (5 ranks)
11. Physical (8 ranks)
15. Aesthetic (6 ranks)

Parents considered only one task, Vocation-Service (7 ranks), as more important than students. Students considered the following three as more important than their parents:

1. Possession of Knowledge (5 ranks)
9. Man to Country (5.5 ranks)
18. Vocation-preparative (5 ranks)

Compared with students, educators considered the following as more important:

3. Creation of Knowledge (6 ranks)
8. Man to State (6 ranks)
11. Physical (5 ranks)

The students considered these three tasks as more important than educators:

1. Possession of Knowledge (5 ranks)
9. Man to Country (7 ranks)
18. Vocation-Preparative (12 ranks--the largest difference found among the group comparisons, equalling that of student/educator comparison from private schools on this task.)

Private Schools. When comparing parents and educators, parents indicated a major difference on only one task: 17. Vocation-Selective (5 ranks). Educators, similarly, indicated a major difference of importance on one task: 15. Aesthetic (8 ranks).

Parents, when compared with students, considered "An understanding of government and a sense of civic responsibility" as more important (7 ranks). Students placed greater importance on the following tasks:

1. Possession of Knowledge (5 ranks)
4. Desire for Knowledge (7 ranks)
18. Vocation-Preparative (8 ranks)

Educators considered two tasks of greater importance than students:

8. Man to State (7 ranks)
15. Aesthetic (6 ranks)

Students ranked the following tasks as more important than educators:

1. Possession of Knowledge (6 ranks)
17. Vocation-Selective (6 ranks)
18. Vocation-Preparative (12 ranks)

Generally, students placed somewhat more importance on acquiring knowledge than did parents and educators. They placed considerably more importance on the vocational purpose of the school.

Within Group Agreement

Table 4 (Appendix B) shows the mean ranking and standard deviation from the mean ranking for each group on the TSE items. It was expected, although not hypothesized, that within group agreement of respondents from the private school would be greater than that of public school respondents.

An inspection of Table 4 indicates that agreement on individual tasks is higher for parents and educators from the private schools than it is for parents and educators from public schools. Parents of private school students were in closer agreement with each other than were parents of public school students on 16 of the 20 items; private school educators agreed more closely on 15 of the

20 items. The public and private school students were equally divided indicating a random probability distribution.

Overall Agreement on TSE Opinionnaire

The overall correlation between the groups of respondents is indicated in Table 5. Rankings of parents, educators and students from the public school have a high correlation as do the rankings of the three groups from the private school (significant at the .05 level of confidence). The correlations between public and private respondents would suggest that the samples come from two different populations since there is little agreement between any paired groups from public or private respondents on the overall rank ordering of the twenty TSE items.

Opinionnaire Comments

One of the interesting aspects of the study was the written comments of the respondents. Comments were entered on 115 of the 770 opinionnaires returned and related to various topics. The most frequent response (74) related to explaining or clarifying the respondents' rank ordering and of these about half (36) concerned the religious items on the TSE Opinionnaire.

Another frequent topic for comment was the school curriculum (18 comments). Students generally complained that there was too much emphasis on theory and not enough on the practical aspect of education--"I think it is important to learn to do things with your hands not only

TABLE 5
 RANK ORDER CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PRIVATE
 AND PUBLIC GROUPS ON TSE ITEMS

GROUP	PARENTS (public)	EDUCATORS (public)	STUDENTS (public)	PARENTS (private)	EDUCATORS (private)	STUDENTS (private)
PARENTS (public)	1.00					
EDUCATORS (public)	.82*	1.00				
STUDENTS (public)	.91*	.81*	1.00			
PARENTS (private)	.43*	.28	.15	1.00		
EDUCATORS (private)	.26	.27	.01	.89*	1.00	
STUDENTS (private)	.44*	.16	.25	.84*	.77*	1.00

*Significant at the .05 level (two-tailed test)

with your mind". A number of students wanted specific job training: "Secondary education should leave most of the 3 R's out and concentrate on vocational and specialized job selection." Some students expressed the opposite view: "I think in high school you should be exposed to as many things as possible, not trained for a specific job right away."

A number of respondents (16) used the comment to criticize the school, the teachers or the educational system. One example to illustrate:

Because the emotional development of the young person and his moral code are so important, I think that it is wrong for educators that are personally living immoral lives and are emotionally unstable to be intrusted with the lives of our children. We should not only look for well trained educators, but also for good wholesome ones. Watch for: the jokes used; the things made light of; the values upheld.

Finally, there were those who criticized the study: "Have you nothing better to do?"; who offered suggestions: "I would have included a yes-no response to see if it is actually possible to attain these goals of education"; and those who provided well-wishes and encouragement.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was an attempt to find out what parents, educators and students of public and private secondary schools perceived as the primary tasks of education in a British Columbia School District in 1974. A concomitant purpose was to compare the perceptions of respondents from the public and private schools.

The Tasks of Secondary Education Opinionnaire adapted from Downey, Seager and Slagle (Downey, 1960) was used in this study. The instrument was field-tested on a sample of parents, educators and students from public and private schools to see if the items added discriminated between respondents from public and private schools where true differences existed. After a few further modifications, the TSE Opinionnaire was submitted to a sample of parents, educators and students from five public and two private schools in the Abbotsford School District. Tasks of education were rank-ordered by the respondents. Each rank was assigned a numerical value: 8 for the most important, 7 for the next two, and so on to one for the least important item. Means and ranks for each group were composed for each of the twenty tasks.

Findings

An analysis of variance was performed for public and private respondents for each of the 20 tasks of education. Significant differences, accepted at the .05 confidence level, were indicated on seventeen of the items. The null hypothesis that there would be no significant differences between respondents from public and private schools on each of the twenty items was rejected except for three items:

- Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life
- A sense of right and wrong--a moral standard of behavior
- Enjoyment of cultural activities and the finer things of life

The Intellectual Dimension was considered slightly more important than the other dimensions by four groups: parents and educators from public schools and parents and students from private schools. Public educators gave the highest overall ranking to the Intellectual Dimension. Public school students considered the Social Dimension most important; private school educators, the Personal Dimension.

The Productive Dimension was considered to be of least overall importance to public and private school educators and private school parents. Public school students and parents considered the Personal Dimension of least importance; private school students, the Social Dimension.

Conclusions and Implications

Neuwien's hypothesis (1966) that private school respondents would rank the religious-moral objectives first is supported by this study. The three religious items received the three highest rankings by all private school respondents. Contrary to Neuwien's hypothesis, the intellectual objective was not clearly second; rather, the personal objective received a somewhat higher ranking. The productive objectives, overall, were ranked lowest.

It may be important to note that the private school educators ranked the Personal Dimension as considerably more important than the Intellectual, although it was ranked second, while public school educators ranked the Intellectual Dimension as most important and the Social as second. Private school parents did not agree with the educators of their schools on the importance of the Personal Dimension since they ranked both the Intellectual and the Social as more important than the Personal Dimension.

Hertzler (1971) states that the underlying philosophy of Mennonite education runs counter to the prevailing culture and so he theorizes that this would dictate different priorities in education from those of the public school. The results of this study would suggest that the public and private school respondents come from different population samples when considering the tasks of secondary education. Private school parents, educators and students have different expectations for the private school than

corresponding groups in public schools have for public school. Their differences can primarily, but not entirely, be accounted for by private school respondents placing high importance on the religious items and public school respondents considering these items of low importance in terms of tasks for the public school. However, the results would suggest that parents do not want the religious tasks omitted entirely from the tasks of education. The standard deviation, especially of public school parents and students, would indicate that a considerable number of them ranked the religious tasks as important but the disagreement as to the importance of the religious tasks would suggest that implementing them in public school would be controversial.

If parents consider the religious tasks as most important they can enroll their children in one of the private schools which purport to offer ". . . an effective alternative to a purely secular approach to education and life." That the two private schools, the MEI and the ACS, offer an alternative is obviously evident from the results of this study by the high priority given to the religious tasks of education. A question that arises is to what extent these findings are a result of the religious items on the TSE Opinionnaire and to what extent they reflect true differences of opinion. While the TSE Opinionnaire revealed the obvious religious priorities of the private schools, further study would be needed to examine what underlying similarities or differences there exist between public and private schools that the opinionnaire did not reveal.

Students considered the preparation for a specific vocation of greater importance than did educators by 12 ranks. The educational policymakers should recognize that their expectations differ from student expectations and, to some extent, parent expectations in preparing students for a vocation. This difference should be considered in planning and discussing educational programs.

Another area of some discrepancy between the expectations of students and educators is in the Intellectual Dimension. Students suggest, by their ranking order, that they associate learning with "possessing knowledge" to a greater extent than educators do; educators place the emphasis on creating knowledge. Private educators ranked possession of knowledge as least important on the TSE Opinionnaire.

There is also considerable discrepancy, especially in the private schools, in expectations for the aesthetic goals of the school. Private school parents and students ranked the enjoyment of cultural activities as the least important while educators ranked it twelfth. Man's sense of civic responsibility is another task which students considered of much less importance than did the educators.

School policymakers would do well to consider the implications of the major discrepant rankings of parents, educators and students, whether it be in adopting new courses, changing existing ones, shifting emphasis, embarking on a public relations program or just continuing with the recognition that student and parent expectations differ from their own.

Several factors place limitations on the findings of this study. Although a representative sample was intended, the returns, except for private school educators and students, were low (37% to 55%) so that one cannot assume that the respondents constitute a representative sample. The sample was not representative also in that of the public school parents who responded, 34.7% were male, 65.3%, female; of the private school parents who responded, 62.9% were male, 37.1% were female. Therefore, the comparisons made and the conclusions drawn from the data are based on the respondents who may not be a representative sample of the total population.

Recommendations for Further Study

This study investigated the opinions of a sample of public and private school parents, educators and students on how they perceived the tasks of secondary education. The perceptions of private school respondents would provide support to justify the existence of private schools. Further studies could investigate to what extent instructional practices, curriculum content, or students' beliefs and attitudes reflect the underlying philosophy of the private schools. Studies could also examine the perceived tasks of secondary education on relation to certain variables: income, education, religious beliefs, life goals and occupations. This study could be replicated, in part, and additional dimensions explored by an interview study. Since there are a considerable number of students in the public schools

from a Mennonite background, studies could be conducted to compare underlying beliefs and attitudes of Mennonite students and parents from public and private schools.

Other related questions to examine are: (1) Do students who attend private schools differ significantly from their counterparts in public schools in their behavior, their attitude toward school, parents, society and life goals? (2) What are the effects on a student, both short term and long term, of having been the object of ". . . an effective alternative to a purely secular approach to education and life. . . . based on a Christian world view"?

Case studies on individual private and public schools could yield information that might help to clarify some of the stated or assumed purposes of the school. For example, the MEI and the ACS lack some of the vocational-preparative course electives that are available in the public schools. To what extent is the emphasis then shifted to academic preparation for post-secondary education? A study of what choices students make upon leaving the secondary school could be used to examine or support the school's goals.

Respondents rejected some items as tasks of the school. Investigations could be made to suggest what tasks would best be taught by the school, the home, the church, or other social institutions. "The schools are trying to do too much," one parent, who was also an educator, commented. What would aid or hinder the schools in achieving the educational goals to meet the present and future demands of society?

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APPENDIX A

FIGURE 5

MENNONITE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE

A STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

1. To provide for a wholesome atmosphere through the presence of Christian teachers and students who attempt to apply Biblical principles to all aspects of life.
2. To help the student to commit his life to growth in a relationship to Christ which results in a Christian life - philosophy and character reflected in personality and attitude.
3. To communicate to the student the primary importance of the Bible for the development of a proper concept of knowledge and for a guide to everyday life.
4. To confront each student with the spectrum of knowledge - social and natural sciences, arts, and humanities - and to stimulate each student to explore his potential for creativity in disciplined thought, communication, and living.
5. To lead the student to adequate self-understanding, self-evaluation, and self-acceptance.
6. To enlarge the student's capacity to relate to others with sensitivity and respect, and to form meaningful relationships.
7. To promote in the student qualities of responsible citizenship and a willing respect for law and authority.
8. To help each adolescent in his particular stage of physical, social and emotional development with emphasis upon proper health habits and recreative leisure pursuits.
9. To promote a relationship of cooperation and understanding between the parents and the school in matters of mutual concern.
10. To foster in the student an appreciation for his home and the values of Christian family living and to encourage him to participate more fully in the life and the mission of the church.

APPENDIX B

TABLE 4

TSE OPINIONNAIRE:
MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

TASK 1 - Possession of Knowledge

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	3.906	1.797
Public	4.163	1.720
Private	3.114	1.827
Educators	3.442	1.790
Public	4.440	1.502
Private	2.056	1.110
Students	4.249	1.775
Public	4.909	1.691
Private	4.010	1.747

TASK 2 - Communication of Knowledge

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.831	1.724
Public	6.033	1.696
Private	5.222	1.675
Educators	5.600	1.514
Public	5.923	1.671
Private	5.158	1.167
Students	4.592	1.816
Public	4.923	1.646
Private	4.480	1.859

TABLE 4 (continued)

TASK 3 - Creation of Knowledge

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.025	1.5144
Public	5.137	1.537
Private	4.694	1.564
Educators	5.467	1.179
Public	5.808	1.167
Private	5.000	1.054
Students	4.294	1.670
Public	4.838	1.679
Private	4.108	1.628

TASK 4 - Desire for Knowledge

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.281	1.933
Public	5.629	1.837
Private	4.029	1.678
Educators	5.685	1.844
Public	6.692	1.350
Private	4.316	1.529
Students	5.052	1.835
Public	5.657	1.773
Private	4.834	1.810

TASK 5 - Religious Knowledge

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.031	2.435
Public	3.361	2.207
Private	6.371	1.592
Educators	3.727	2.472
Public	1.840	1.248
Private	6.211	1.032
Students	5.068	2.181
Public	2.908	1.967
Private	5.803	1.714

TABLE 4 (continued)

TASK 6 - Man to Family

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.673	1.516
Public	4.553	1.553
Private	5.059	1.347
Educators	4.578	1.406
Public	4.077	1.573
Private	5.263	0.733
Students	4.403	1.505
Public	4.401	1.478
Private	4.403	1.516

TASK 7 - Man to Fellow Man

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.712	1.210
Public	5.677	1.220
Private	5.941	1.099
Educators	6.133	1.140
Public	6.423	1.206
Private	5.737	0.933
Students	5.603	1.557
Public	5.783	1.606
Private	5.542	1.537

TASK 8 - Man to State

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.131	1.155
Public	4.122	1.171
Private	4.171	1.124
Educators	4.400	0.936
Public	4.692	0.928
Private	4.000	0.882
Students	3.839	1.443
Public	4.241	1.242
Private	3.703	1.482

TABLE 4 (continued)

TASK 9 - Man to Country

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	3.759	1.495
Public	3.672	1.446
Private	3.941	1.613
Educators	3.045	1.293
Public	3.160	1.143
Private	2.895	1.487
Students	3.922	1.674
Public	4.364	1.672
Private	3.771	1.650

TASK 10 - Man to World

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.540	1.318
Public	4.621	1.304
Private	4.229	1.285
Educators	4.622	1.211
Public	5.038	1.113
Private	4.053	1.129
Students	4.430	1.503
Public	4.873	1.501
Private	4.279	1.476

TASK 11 - Physical

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	3.662	1.483
Public	3.738	1.470
Private	3.364	1.558
Educators	4.364	1.601
Public	4.720	1.595
Private	3.895	1.524
Students	3.993	1.663
Public	4.348	1.577
Private	3.872	1.676

TABLE 4 (continued)

TASK 12 - Emotional

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.081	1.466
Public	5.169	1.496
Private	4.800	1.368
Educators	5.682	1.137
Public	5.692	1.225
Private	5.667	1.029
Students	4.799	1.701
Public	5.070	1.704
Private	4.706	1.692

TASK 13 - Ethical

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.296	1.601
Public	5.279	1.653
Private	5.343	1.474
Educators	5.489	1.254
Public	5.269	1.343
Private	5.789	1.084
Students	4.973	1.544
Public	4.908	1.630
Private	4.995	1.515

TASK 14 - Religious

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.226	2.000
Public	3.672	1.727
Private	6.143	1.648
Educators	5.289	2.599
Public	3.423	1.793
Private	7.842	0.375
Students	5.059	2.083
Public	3.157	1.760
Private	5.696	1.773

TABLE 4 (continued)

TASK 15 - Aesthetic

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	3.082	1.134
Public	3.122	1.480
Private	2.879	1.244
Educators	3.977	0.976
Public	3.960	0.889
Private	4.000	1.106
Students	3.353	1.704
Public	3.678	1.604
Private	3.242	1.725

TASK 16 - Vocation - Service

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.829	2.387
Public	4.273	2.320
Private	6.743	1.379
Educators	4.578	2.179
Public	3.500	2.038
Private	6.052	1.268
Students	5.180	2.057
Public	3.629	2.054
Private	2.738	1.750

TASK 17 - Vocation - Selective

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	5.102	1.369
Public	5.218	1.383
Private	4.314	1.105
Educators	4.111	1.092
Public	4.462	1.104
Private	3.632	0.895
Students	4.570	1.525
Public	4.865	1.550
Private	4.182	1.506

TABLE 4 (continued)

TASK 18 - Vocation - Preparative

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	4.571	1.774
Public	4.862	1.776
Private	3.667	1.434
Educators	3.250	1.433
Public	3.760	1.451
Private	2.579	1.121
Students	4.831	1.828
Public	5.119	1.705
Private	4.733	1.859

TASK 19 - Home and Family

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	3.761	1.394
Public	3.870	1.414
Private	3.294	1.219
Educators	3.156	1.278
Public	3.423	1.137
Private	2.789	1.396
Students	3.984	1.517
Public	4.191	1.576
Private	3.914	1.532

TASK 20 - Consumer

GROUP	MEAN	STD DEV.
Parents	3.981	1.447
Public	4.056	1.461
Private	3.600	1.288
Educators	3.727	1.246
Public	4.120	1.269
Private	3.211	1.032
Students	4.048	1.493
Public	4.310	1.479
Private	3.960	1.488

APPENDIX C

THE TASKS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Dear Student:

I am asking for about twenty minutes of your time to complete an opinionnaire on THE TASKS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

The opinionnaire is designed to find out what you think are the important tasks of secondary school education. It is not a test of knowledge or skill.

The opinionnaire consists of two sections. In the first section, you are asked to provide certain information about yourself - but your name is not required. In the second section, you are asked to rank twenty tasks of secondary education in order of importance to you starting with the most important.

I thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the opinionnaire. The information will be useful for planning and evaluating educational goals.

Yours truly,

W. G. Thielmann
Simon Fraser University
Graduate Studies

THE TASKS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

Dear Parents and Educators:

I am asking for about twenty minutes of your time to complete an opinionnaire on THE TASKS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION.

The opinionnaire is designed to find out what you think are the important tasks of secondary school education (grades 8 to 12). It is not a test of knowledge or skill. Your response will be used in a study (1) to compare opinions of parents, educators and students and (2) to compare opinions from those in private schools with those in public schools.

The opinionnaire consists of two sections. In the first section, you are asked to provide certain information about yourself - but, you will note, your name is not required. Information and opinions will not be identified with individuals. In the second section, you are asked to rank twenty tasks of secondary education in order of importance to you starting with the most important.

The Board of School Trustees, Abbotsford School District, Mr. W. J. Mouat, District Superintendent of Schools and the principals of the participating public and private secondary schools have agreed to cooperate with me in this study which is undertaken as part of a Graduate Programme at Simon Fraser University. The information (which will be filed with the School Board and the private schools) could prove useful for evaluating and planning educational goals.

If you have any inquiries about the purposes of this study, you are invited to call 853-4525 after 5:00 p.m.

I thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the opinionnaire. I wish it returned tomorrow.

Yours truly,

Walter G. Thielmann
Simon Fraser University
Graduate Studies

Note: If you wish a summary of the results you may call the number above or enclose your name and address on a separate sheet of paper.

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF

YOUR NAME IS
NOT REQUIREDCheck the Spaces That Apply To You

1. I am completing the opinionnaire as a: Parent _____
 Educator _____
 Student _____
2. School associated with: Abbotsford School District _____
 Mennonite Educational Inst. _____
 Abbotsford Christian School _____
 Other _____
3. Sex: Male _____
 Female _____
4. Religious affiliation: _____
5. For STUDENTS: check grade enrolled in - 8 _____
 9 _____
 10 _____
 11 _____
 12 _____
6. For EDUCATORS: a) years of teaching 3 or less _____
 4 to 10 _____
 more than 10 _____
 b) University degree completed yes _____
 no _____
7. For PARENTS: a) education completed: grade 9 or less _____
 grade 10 to 12 _____
 some post high school _____
 University or College _____
 b) annual income for head of household: _____
 less than \$10,000 _____
 \$10,000 to \$15,000 _____
 \$15,000 to \$20,000 _____
 over \$20,000 _____

THE TASKS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

1. A continuing desire for knowledge - the inquiring mind.	11. Knowledge of world affairs and the inter-relationship among peoples.
2. A fund of information about many things.	12. Management of personal finances and wise buying habits.
3. Emphasis on life work that will be of service to God and society.	13. Information and guidance for wise occupational choice.
4. Loyalty to Canada and the Canadian way of life.	14. An emotionally stable person - prepared for life's realities.
5. A feeling for other people and the ability to live and work in harmony.	15. Enjoyment of cultural activities - the finer things of life.
6. Specialized training for placement on a specific job.	16. Knowledge of the Bible, God and His relationship to people.
7. Efficient use of the 3 R's - the basic tools for acquiring and communicating knowledge.	17. An understanding of government and a sense of civic responsibility.
8. The habit of weighing facts and imaginatively applying them to the solution of problems.	18. A well-cared for, well-developed body.
9. An appreciation for the home and the values of family living.	19. Develop Christian values and life philosophy.
10. The homemaking and handyman skills related to family life.	20. A sense of right and wrong - a moral standard of behavior.

Adapted from
Downey, Seager and Slagle

Instructions

To complete the opinionnaire you are asked to study the 20 tasks of secondary education listed on the opposite page. You could ask, "What do I expect the school to do?" Decide which tasks you would consider to be most important, which least important and which would rank somewhere inbetween. Then on the form below, rank the items from most important to least important according to your opinion. Place the task numbers in the boxes below. Use each number only once.

The ONE most important task

The next TWO most important tasks

The next THREE most important tasks

The next FOUR

The next FOUR

The next THREE most important tasks

The next TWO most important tasks

The ONE least important task

COMMENT:

APPENDIX D

2339 Imperial Street
Clearbrook, B. C.
May 8, 1974

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I wish to obtain your permission to conduct a study of "The Tasks of Secondary Education" in your school with a sample of parents, educators and students. The study could provide some valuable insight into questions of central importance to educational policy-makers in the school district. A copy of the study would be presented to the school board.

I am attaching a copy of part of my research proposal and the opinionnaire I intend to use.

Yours truly,

Walter G. Thielmann
Graduate Studies, SFU

Comment:



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
2343 MCCALLUM ROAD
ABBOTSFORD

May 14th, 1974.

Mr. Walter G. Thielmann,
2339 Imperial Street,
Clearbrook, B.C.

Dear Mr. Thielmann:

The Board of School Trustees and the Secondary Principals have agreed to co-operate with you in your Master's Degree study to the extent that you may sample opinion of students and parents and teachers in the Secondary Schools, that is in Abbotsford Senior Secondary, Abbotsford Junior Secondary, Clearbrook Junior Secondary, Yale Junior Secondary and W.J. Mouat Secondary Schools.

Speaking on behalf of the Principals I will assure you that the Principals feel that the sampling method is a good one, but they have distinct reservations about the instrument you are going to use to sample opinion. They are somewhat dissapointed in this, but feel that they would like to give you some support in your Master's Degree Programme. They feel that there is a question as to how valid the results produced by this method will be and there is a question in the minds of the Principals who were present as to what is going to happen to the results once you have them. I have been asked by the Secondary Principals to tell you this and I am giving you this information at their specific request.

The Principals want me to make it clear to you that this must not involve a great deal of extra work on behalf of Principals and staff during the next two months and there is just no way they can give that time. They feel that you must make certain that your instructions are clear enough so that they can be followed by parents and students who are asked to answer the questionnaire.

Yours very truly,

W.J. Mouat,
District Superintendent of Schools.