

rather than economic, political, or social factors at the national level (Kamens et al. 1996), implying that public education systems are moving toward a convergence around curricular choices. Public school systems around the world have responded to different reform movements as the national ideology, centralization of government power, and economic system have demanded, but the goal of providing free basic education for all citizens has persisted.

SEE ALSO: *Brown v. Board of Education*; Coleman, James; Early Childhood; Education; Massive Resistance; School Segregation, Desegregation; Schools, Common; Schools, Religious

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schools, religious

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Religion and education have a long common history, dating back to prehistoric times. Religion and religious practices require structures for the preparation, initiation, and training of new members and of priests and teachers. For that reason, religious groups in premodern societies sooner or later took the responsibility of organizing the socialization of their new members and of their religious specialists. This does not mean that all education in premodern societies was organized by religious organizations. Non-religious authorities, including kings, lords, cities, and guilds, organized a part of the socialization of the new societal members (for instance, warrior schools, apprenticeships, and academies for the training of bureaucrats), but in most premodern societies the major part of education outside the family was organized by or on behalf of religious organizations. One can argue that most schools in premodern societies were religious schools. Education was organized and financed by religious organizations, the content of education was controlled by religious authorities, and, in most cases, teachers were incorporated into these religious organizations, e.g., as monks or members of rank. This was true not only for schools at a basic level, but also for higher levels of education.

The transition from premodern to modern societies in Europe and North America between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries led in most societies to a struggle between the state and the established church over the organization, financing, and content of education. This struggle was inspired by growing skepticism regarding religious teaching during the Enlightenment, by the increasing need for knowledge and skills not related to the needs of the

churches (growing technological sophistication, modern languages), and by the need of states, instead of a partly hostile church, to define the content of citizenship. It is important to note that this struggle between the state and the established churches took a different path in Anglo-Saxon countries than in continental European societies (Archer 1984). In those European societies that were influenced by the French Revolution (including the United States), a legal and often constitutional separation between church and state was introduced at some point. Depending on the conditions of this separation and on the political parties involved, public and religious schools were allowed and sometimes partly or fully funded by the state. Although *de facto* separation between church and state emerged during the nineteenth century in many Anglo-Saxon societies, with the exception of the United States, there was no constitutional separation between church and state in these societies. This made the distinction between public and private schools less clear. One consequence of the distinction between public and religious schools was the growing need of churches for the direct socialization of their new members, for which there had become less room in the public schools. Sunday schools, Qur'an schools, and the like emerged beginning in the nineteenth century in modern societies, but they were set up purely for religious socialization and no longer for the general education of their pupils. Although these institutions for religious socialization are often called schools, they should not be confused with religious schools, which are schools with mainly the same educational goals and programs as public schools, but which are organized and maintained by a private body that also has religious goals.

As a consequence of the struggle between the church and the state in many European societies, modern religious schools have different relations with the state. Within the educational systems of western industrial societies, schools can be roughly categorized on two dimensions. On the one hand, the issue is who makes decisions concerning the organization and curricula that schools provide; on the other hand, the source of funding for this education is key. In relation to the first issue, two types of religious

schools have emerged in most western countries. As a result of the struggle between the state and the established church, states have taken on the responsibility of organizing education. Here lies the root of public education that is fully governed and financed by public agencies (Archer 1984). At the same time, religious schools have been established or maintained by the efforts of churches and other religious institutions. However, it is important to note that non-religious ideological and commercial organizations have also established private schools. Although schools of this type often still have to comply with government regulations to a certain extent, partly depending on the amount of financial support received from the government, the crucial decisions regarding the schools' affairs are made by private entities. Within this private sector, religious schools can again be classified as either government-dependent or government-independent by the extent to which they are subsidized by the state. Governmental subsidization of religious schools is secured by law in many countries, either in the constitution, as in The Netherlands and Germany, or in common law, as in France and Hungary. In many cases, this right results from claims of mostly religious groups to education based on the values and ideologies of the parents who are members of these groups and who are considered to be responsible for the way their children are raised. Alongside these religious government-dependent schools, there exist in a number of countries, including Italy and the United States, religious schools that do not receive any government support. These schools finance themselves by means of pupil fees, donations, private sponsoring, and the like. Again, the two dimensions – governance and financing – cannot be considered to be completely independent of each other. When the amount of governmental financial support of private schools becomes larger, these governments will also demand a higher degree of influence on the programs that the schools offer. However, even schools that are completely independent financially will generally not be entirely free to determine the contents of their programs and will have to comply with minimal requirements on quality and safety. Moreover, the social context will also place constraints on schools' freedom. For

example, diplomas that meet generally accepted standards have become indispensable in modern societies.

Public and religious schools can be seen as the result of two different approaches to schooling. According to one point of view, schooling is an instrument of society as a whole (as represented by the central state) to prepare individuals for a life within society, independent of their social background, and in which religious convictions are considered to be a private matter. Public schools result from this point of view. The competing standpoint states that schools are an instrument not just of society but of parents and the social and cultural groups to which they belong. The aim of schooling according to this point of view is to offer young people an education that is in accordance with the religious way of life of their parents and their environment. Religious schools, more or less subsidized by the state, are the consequence of this approach (Coleman & Hoffer 1987; Godwin & Kemerer 2002).

Catholic schools are not the only examples of religious schools. Depending on the religious history and composition of a society, religious schools can also be Protestant, either related to a specific Protestant denomination (Lutheran, Evangelical, Baptist) or more general. The same holds for the *de facto* degree of orthodoxy of religious schools; it can be quite strong in some religious schools, while hardly existing in others. Religious schools are not only Christian. Depending on the history of a society, religious schools can also be Hindu, Islamic, Jewish, or other religions. "Parochial school" is therefore a misleading phrase, because it refers only to schools organized within the Catholic tradition. Despite the increasing irrelevance of church and religion in the everyday lives of most Europeans, religious schools have not dwindled. On the contrary, the religious school sector in societies with relatively religiously inactive populations is growing or is strongly overrepresented. This is true not only for societies that traditionally have had such schools, but also for those in which religious schools were abolished under communist regimes (Hungary, the new German Länder). One possible explanation is that the teachings of religious schools are generally more effective than those of public schools

because religious schools, although they no longer strive for the religious socialization of students, still try to attain other non-cognitive goals, such as tolerance, social cooperation, and discipline, that are valued by unreligious parents. There also are other explanations for the rise of religious schools in the former communist societies, including distrust of the state as provider of collective goods like education, the lower effectiveness of public schools as a consequence of malfunctioning state bureaucracies, and a lower level of community building by parents and teachers around public schools than around religious schools.

Empirical evidence of the higher effectiveness of teaching in religious schools is increasing although not yet conclusive. Differences in school success and cognitive outcomes clearly exist between public and religious schools in modern societies on both sides of the Atlantic, but these differences are not very large and are not always found when comparing individual schools. However, these differences cannot be explained by the different social composition of the student populations or by other obvious social characteristics of pupils, parents, schools, or neighborhoods. Given the high level of state support for religious schools in European societies and the relatively low school fees, differences in school effectiveness of religious and non-religious public schools cannot be explained by large financial contributions from parents whose children attend religious schools. In various continental European countries the law forbids large financial contributions from parents as a condition for obtaining state grants. Spending levels are mostly equal across the public and the state-funded private school sectors because, in most cases, that is an essential element of the compromise between the state and the churches.

However, significant differences in non-cognitive achievements, often the main argument for the existence of state-funded religious schools, are hardly found in modern societies. There also exist a number of indications in multiple societies that children often attend religious schools for academic or social – not religious – reasons, whatever the policies of the schools. The two last points contradict the *raison d'être* of state-funded religious schools,

because the right of parents to determine the moral and religious education of their children has always been more or less explicitly the basis of state recognition and funding of religious schools. The higher cognitive effectiveness of state-funded religious schools also contradicts the *raison d'être* of religious schools, which maintain throughout that they do not want to compete with state schools for better academic outcomes.

The best explanation of the higher cognitive effectiveness of religious schools involves the different school climates in public and religious schools. A school climate (or culture) specifies different patterns of behavior for teachers and students. These patterns, which form the basis of a school climate, indicate shared beliefs about what students should learn, the proper norms of instruction, and how students and teachers should relate to each other. They affect the effectiveness of teaching and learning within schools and may also affect teacher morale, which can also influence teaching effectiveness. The school climate argument shows some resemblance to Coleman and Hoffer's social capital explanation (Coleman et al. 1982; Coleman & Hoffer 1987). They distinguish between two types of communities as related to schools: functional communities and value communities. The members of functional communities constitute a structural system of social interaction; they encounter each other in different kinds of social situations and know each other personally. In contrast, value communities are communities in which members (parents and teachers) share values and expectations regarding education but which are not functional communities; outside the school, there is no structural interaction or social network between the members. According to Coleman and Hoffer, functional communities like religious schools can be beneficial to their members because of the social capital they offer. Because there is interaction between parents inside and outside the religious school, norms can be maintained that create a stable and positive school climate, improving the pupils' scholastic achievement.

SEE ALSO: Economy, Religion and; Educational Inequality; Religion; School Choice; School Climate; Social Capital and Education

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schools, single-sex

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Single-sex schools refer to education at the elementary, secondary, or post-secondary level in which males or females attend school exclusively with members of their own sex. Alternatively, males and females may attend all classes separately even though they may be housed in the same facilities, a phenomenon referred to as a dual academy. A related though different phenomenon is single-sex classes, whereby schools that are otherwise coeducational provide separate classes for males and/or females in selected subjects.

Most people take coeducation for granted. Typically, their own schooling has been coeducational; often, they have little awareness of single-sex schools. Our political culture reinforces the taken-for-granted character of American coeducation. It implies that schools reflecting the variety of society exemplify what is best about democratic societies. Many people also take for granted that coeducation provides