

Educating Today and Tomorrow

A Renewing Passion

Challenges, Strategies and Perspectives

that emerge from the Responses to the Questionnaire

of the *Instrumentum Laboris*

Rome 2015

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Foreword

Following detailed investigation by a team of researchers of the “Scuola di Alta Formazione *Educazione all'incontro e alla solidarietà*” (EIS) of the “Libera Università Maria Santissima Assunta” (LUMSA), we now publish the results deriving from our analysis of the data that emerged from the questionnaire contained in the *Instrumentum Laboris* “Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion”, which was published by the Congregation for Catholic Education in 2014. Using tools of modern computerizing applied to the social sciences allowed us to form a complete picture. The quantitative method was backed up by qualitative analysis, which – thanks to the techniques of sociology and social psychology – enabled us to understand fully the strengths and the weaknesses within the structures of education.

The study of semantic fields and co-occurrences, moreover, brought to the fore some *recurring themes* aimed at delivering an educational formation that is holistic, inclusive, oriented to service and dedication to the community. Statistical methods confirmed some of the more difficult themes, while presenting further subdivisions according to the various respondents, thus demonstrating the *liveliness of charisms* within our dedication to Catholic education (religious congregations, individual dioceses and Bishops' Conferences, educational organizations, parents' associations, alumni).

This synopsis offers us a dynamic view of Catholic education in schools and universities, and encourages us to move, courageously and inventively, beyond whatever stands in our way (be it local or structural). We hope, therefore, that this publication, in offering its contribution, may lead to further investigation so as to favour a renewed and more effective passion for education.

The Congregation for Catholic Education is grateful to the Postgraduate School for the Development of Civic Society (EIS) of LUMSA University, directed by Prof. Italo Fiorin, who with a group of collaborators have worked on the answers to the questionnaire of the *Instrumentum laboris* presented in this publication.

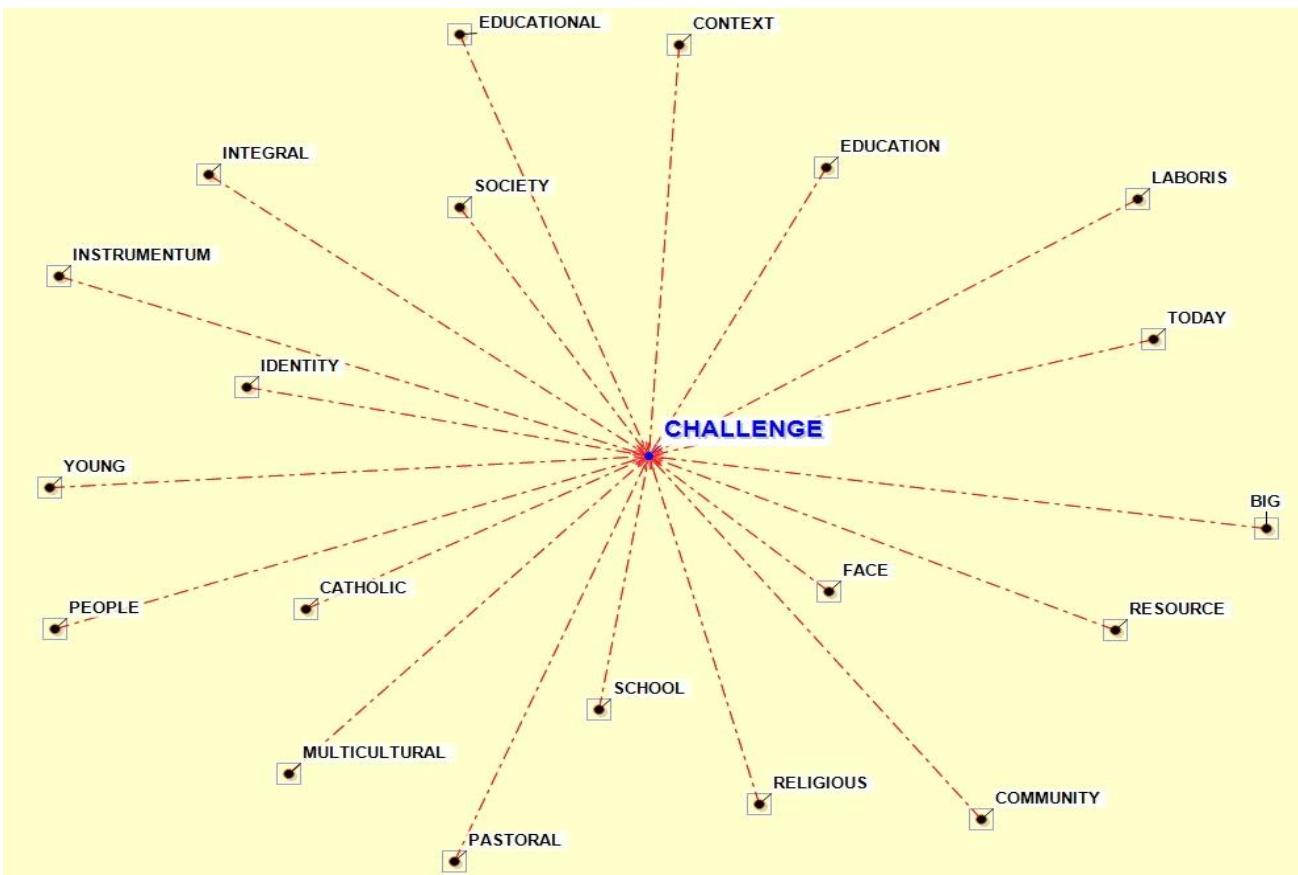
1. The challenges of today and tomorrow

The *Instrumentum Laboris* introduces a number of distinct challenges for Catholic schools and universities. The questionnaire requested by the Congregation for Catholic Education asks you to specify which of them are perceived as more challenging in specific contexts, what is the approach of Catholic schools and universities with respect to these challenges, and – to summarize - what are the most positive aspects of the experience of Catholic schools and universities in the nation of the respondents, and what are, instead, the most critical ones. Finally, what strategic and operational guidelines have already been proposed or could be proposed in the future.

The use of a mixed method, quantity- and quality-based, supported by the use of a software for the semantic analysis of language (cf. the Methodological Appendix), has allowed us to identify and discuss the main challenges and strategies that emerge from the responses to the questionnaire.

The figure below summarizes the conceptual map that could be drafted around the keyword "challenge":

Figure 1 – Concept map of the current challenges for Catholic schools and universities in the world



Source: our processing of responses to the questionnaire

This concept map allows to summarize a reality which is extremely diverse throughout the world. The different categories of stakeholders who responded to the questionnaire (Catholic Bishops' conferences, commissions for Catholic education, dioceses, religious congregations, associations, Catholic schools, and Catholic universities) contended that ***the major educational challenges faced today by the world's Catholic schools and universities, in a multicultural society in profound change, can be traced back to a single matrix: creating a workable model of holistic education for young people, which preserves the institutional identity of an educational community of evangelization.***

This unitary matrix deals with the multiple challenges touched upon in the *Instrumentum Laboris* and solicited by the questions in Part One (identity and mission), Part Two (stakeholders), and Part Three (formation) of the questionnaire.

In the specific and distinctive context of Catholic education, the students and their families, teachers (both lay and religious), direction and leadership figures (coordinators, principals / presidents, directors), priests and bishops, form an educational community of evangelization whose distinguishing features can be summarized in the following points:

- Catholic schools and universities are primarily communities and not just working organizations, because the involvement of stakeholders and their identification with the

institution's aims are determined by a set of values that form the Christian identity;

- Schools and universities are educational communities and not simply educational and training services because the focus of their mission concerns a holistic education of young people. Their self-professed aim is to help the students mature in their human potential, on the cognitive, affective, social, professional, ethical, and spiritual levels. This they achieve by working together with the students' families, in an educational partnership; in principle, even when these families are unable to support financially what it costs to provide these services;
- Catholic schools and universities are educating communities of evangelization because they deliberately set themselves to be instruments that provide an experience of the Church, thus offering a significant contribution especially to the local Church communities, by "*grafting into people and culture the anthropological and ethical values that are needed to build a united and fraternal society*" (*Instrumentum Laboris*).

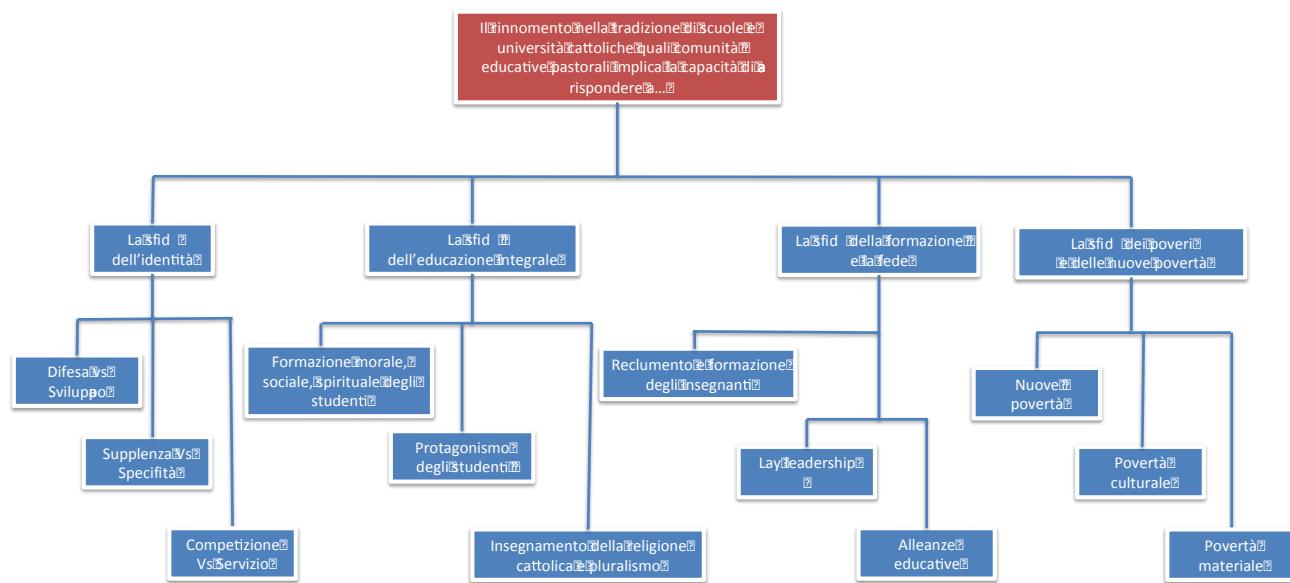
The term 'challenge' implies a drive for change; the need to react strategically to 'the new'; to rethink methods, know-how and what means are necessary for moving Catholic educational institutions further along the path in pursuit of their distinctive mission. Meanwhile, the renewal, which is faithful to tradition, of our evangelizing educational communities depends on whether they can adapt to those challenges that Catholic schools and universities face in the specific circumstances within which they operate. There are profound differences in the various circumstances of Catholic education throughout the world – on the cultural, social, economic, political and juridical levels. The dynamics of change move in different directions, acquiring momentum; and moving forward, they leave distinctive traces on Catholic education. Thus, our evangelizing educational communities, though they have an underlying common identity, are each marked with unique traits by their own different circumstances. Therefore, we must analyze both the major, common directions of change in our increasingly globalized world, as well as the individual circumstances that affect, in their own ways, what local educational systems must focus on. This analysis is the prerequisite that allows us to understand the challenges we face, and put in place strategies to address them, in ways that cross the borders of the various circumstance in which Catholic education operates.

From a global perspective, the diagram below summarize the main challenges highlighted by the Catholic institutions that responded to the questionnaire. They mentioned the opportunities, but also the potential threats to our common focal point, i.e. the evangelizing educational community:

1. The **challenge of identity** looks at the original reasons that led to the foundation of a Catholic school or university, as well as the need for continual reflection on how the institution's circumstances have changed and how this impacts on the institution's mission.
2. The **challenge of holistic education** refers to the pillars of Christian identity, which in practice is expressed in the moral, social and spiritual development of young people; in the students's willingness to engage; and in the teaching of the Catholic religion in circumstances marked by an increasing cultural pluralism and – in some cases – by an explicit or implicit hostility.
3. The **challenge of education and the faith** concerns three main conditions that emerge from the questionnaire as real enabling factors: the recruitment and training of teachers; lay leadership in Catholic schools and universities; and the forging of educational alliances with the students' families as well as with others in dialogue with our educational communities.

4. The challenge of the suburbs, the poor, and the new forms of poverty needs to be looked at from two perspectives: the spiritual and the material (lack of means and resources), thus demonstrating the attention that Catholic educational institutions must have towards the weakest in society.

Diagram 2 - The main challenges emerging from the answers to the questionnaire



2. The challenge of identity

A crucial theme relates to the identity of Catholic schools and universities. We cannot simply reflect once and for all on the original reasons that led to founding a Catholic school or university and leave it at that. We need to reflect continually on this point. In fact, this awareness allows us to grasp ever more clearly the original idea's basic fruitfulness, helping us to develop its presence and mission. Moreover, with the passing of time, the cultural and social circumstances can change and new problems can arise; and to address them it is not enough to look to the past. We must rise up to meet today's new challenges.

The questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* raises this issue in the first question, by linking identity with mission. The mission stems from identity: it puts it into practice.

Our reflection on these questions today takes place in a very different context from that of fifty years ago, when the Council's Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* was promulgated. The cultural landscape has changed profoundly.

This new landscape is the background to which the Congregation for Catholic Education's document framed its questions. From within this landscape, the various respondents (stakeholders) offered their answers.

Within the plurality of different cultural, social and economic contexts in which the various educational institutions operate, what are the institutions' defining characteristics, the traits that they must not weaken or forget? What are their main problems, and how can we face them effectively?

Between Defending Tradition and Development

Many answers to the questionnaire highlighted the respondents' awareness of how identity is now subject to significant challenges and threats. They indicated the risk of a weakening identity and the need for our commitment to defending, preserving and upholding it.

Our analysis of the responses reveals some tension between conservation and innovation. On the one hand, there is a (we could say) defensive concern, aimed at preserving traditional values. On the other hand, there is a concern for opening out, being committed to reinterpreting what the our presence means, in circumstances that are radically transformed when compared to those of the past, and therefore demanding a rethink of our mission.

The concern for keeping true to one's own identity can assume a defensive tone. Thus, the impression is given that identity is a sort of protective armour, a fortress that guards our cherished traditional values, which are threatened by the dangers of secularization, unbridled capitalism, as well as cultural and religious relativism. Faced with such dangers and pitfalls, and the cold wind of secularization that sweeps away every reminder of the sacred and the transcendent, we may be tempted to run away.

Card. Bergoglio wrote : “*To profess a belief and support a certain idea of the human being may not seem a particularly attractive attitude in this age of relativism and collapse of certainties : the fewer our means of security, the more we are likely to be convinced in the end that the only firm and safe footing is that offered us by the slogans of consumption and appearance. The worst option is to entrench ourselves in our own little world while issuing bitter judgments about the conditions that are prevailing in society. We cannot turn into a priori "sceptics" (which is not the same as applying our own critical thinking, but rather its obtuse variant) and congratulate ourselves on our doctrinal clarity and our incorruptible defence of the truth, for this eventually leads only to our own personal satisfaction. Instead, we must launch positive messages: we should be the first to live in fullness, becoming witnesses and builders of a new way of being men and women. But this will not happen if we persevere in scepticism : we must convince ourselves that things not only "can" change, but that the revolution that we move forward is of vital necessity.*”¹

If, according to Pope Francis, the worst solution is “*to entrench ourselves in our own little world*”, there are also those who seem to believe that the defence of identity consists in a sort of positional warfare. For this reason, we remain in the trenches, we seek refuge inside the fortress of our certainties that must be preserved, guarded and isolated. This, however, is a minority position, and is not the prevailing attitude that emerges from our analysis of the responses we received. The majority of respondents considered the fortress to be more a temptation than a solution. Instead, the answers to the questionnaire revealed much critical reflection, as well as a commitment to reviving our identity in proactive ways and with new terminology. The call to identity becomes the source of a renewed way of being missionaries. As was mentioned by a text sent from Belgium, the school

¹ Jorge Mario Bergoglio, “Educare, un impegno condiviso”, in *Educazione*, Corriere della Sera edizioni, Milano, 2014, pp. 95-96 (original title : *Educar: testimonio de la Verdad. Mensajes a los Educadores*, Editorial Claretiana, Buenos Aires, 2013).

community of a Catholic institution is not formed by traditionalist Christians, who make timid concessions to modernity because they must, but by people who are fully immersed in the reality of their own time. They do not deny the values of modernity, and perceive scientific, democratic and social achievements as being their own. However, they are also aware of something else: they recognize the incompleteness of these values for being able to satisfy fully the demands of reason, the pursuit of happiness and the need for meaning. Turning the 'trench' temptation on its head, the Belgian text says: "*Our community is not made up of Christians who are open to modernity; it is made up of modern people who are open to a presence that can be replaced (or placed in competition) with the knowledge acquired outside of it. Rather, it must be understood as an added value. Furthermore, it is light, because it is not imposed, but it is heavy because of its implications for fundamental issues.*"

Between Filling in Gaps and Offering Something Specific

Therefore, it is not a question of simply defending our identity, digging trenches, and putting up protecting fences. We must commit ourselves to deepening the meaning of our presence in today's reality, making our presence more relevant. This is all the more necessary whenever we operate in an environment where there is no lack of educational provision, and where the State provides schools and universities that anyone can attend. Particularly in rich countries, there is no need for anyone to fill in the gaps in education, since many players provide a schooling service and there is no shortage of universities.

Almost as a challenge, in France (General Secretariat of French Schools) they wonder : "*Do we still need Catholic schools?*". Do we need Catholic schools, when there is no lack of a supply of schools and universities? Does it still make sense to invest in personnel and material resources, when religious congregations or dioceses lack the means, and there are so many other problems, many other urgent needs to which to direct our attention? Why maintain institutions that perhaps have great tradition but that were created to meet challenges that today no longer exist, since illiteracy has been defeated, poverty is not as rampant as in past centuries, and the public sector fully covers the demand for education?

More or less explicitly, this question can be found in many texts that we received.

We can summarize as follows the long list of reasons for providing an affirmative answer to the question about the meaning of Catholic schools and universities in today's circumstances :

- The need to proclaim the Gospel in a secularized society, responding to the call of the Universal Church;
- Social restructuring, considering the primary mission of the school to be that of combatting inequality and disadvantage that penalize the poor;
- Giving life to the local area, because schools have a responsibility beyond their own walls, which covers the wider social community;
- Inclusion in the workforce, in those circumstances in which the scourge of unemployment is particularly widespread; as well as battling against our young people dropping out of education without any qualifications;
- Contributions to academic research and innovation, to improve the community's quality of life and to contribute to the development of the common good.

If we examine the above reasons, we find two types of justification.

- a) In many cases even today, Catholic schools and universities are engaged in ways that

- substitute or assist the State, when the State's action is insufficient;
- b) Even when there is no need to substitute the State, Catholic schools and universities have a reason to exist because they carry forward evangelization, and thus share in the universal mission of the Church.

You could say, following the parable of the talents, that identity is a treasure that is not preserved by hiding it in a safe place, but by 'trafficking' it, offering it as a gift, which does not end there but multiplies.

The presence of Catholic schools is not justified on the basis of an inert tradition, but as a response to the problems of today. To that end, there is no point in setting ourselves to compete with a country's public educational and social policies and activity. Rather, we should cooperate with the latter (as, for example, in fighting premature school abandonment, or in supporting social and labour market integration) – but with one specific exception, which is intrinsically and fundamentally bound up with Catholic identity: the proclamation of the Gospel.

Between Competition and Service

We must bear in mind the link between the mission of Catholic schools and universities and the proclamation of the Gospel. As we shall see, this proclamation cannot be achieved with one-size-fits-all, but must pay heed to the social, cultural and political circumstances in which it operates. This link between mission and proclamation is both original and foundational; when it is forgotten or fades away, the risks are severe.

A risk seen as particularly insidious is that of seeing the offer of Catholic educational institutions to be in competition with State or private schools and universities. This happens when the dominant value is to consider a university or school's academic quality, with reference only to those criteria used to draw charts and comparisons between schools, in whatever public or private system, or to move a university to a high position in the ranking-scale of reference.

We have not found any Catholic school or university that fails to assert, in principle, its Christian inspiration. However, in many cases this reference is merely formal or, more often, generates educational activity that is parallel or marginal to the study programmes or academic curricula.

Many text received reminded us that academic quality and concern for evangelization must go hand-in-hand. It is not enough to attend only to didactic quality or student services, while neglecting the task of evangelization.

The problem is not solved by combining school education with Christian education, but by illuminating the educational processes with a Christian vision of life, as well as by promoting a harmonious, holistic personal education – one that is not reduced or limited to disciplinary or professional sectorial skills. Otherwise, it is like proceeding along two parallel tracks that do not meet: one track for spiritual and religious formation, provided for by a limited number of events (catechesis, prayer times, required theological studies, etc.); and the other track for pursuing excellence, by means of quality teaching and, in the case of universities, research.

The following paragraph, from a document sent by a diocese in Brazil, shows how many Catholic schools and universities lack a clear idea about their own identity. In such cases, the contribution to evangelization is negligible.

"In general, Catholic schools and universities fail to express a clear Catholic identity, and their

contribution to religious formation and evangelization is insignificant. However, it goes without saying that a number of Catholic schools and universities (and other institutions of higher education) with links to the Church excel in contributing to the Church's mission. Catholic schools are now more typically comprised of students and teachers who inhabit a rampantly secular and pluralistic world, one with a decreasing awareness of God, with a minimal sense of belonging to the Church at parish level, or any practical involvement with the institutional Church outside of school" (Brazil, diocese).

What the school/university offers must necessarily be distinct. In this way, we avoid ambiguity when answering the very question that students (or their families) pose to the Catholic schools. In fact, we must bravely ask ourselves why students and parents choose Catholic schools and universities, and why they are prepared to pay otherwise avoidable financial costs, given the other options available to them that are often much cheaper.

Figures are always important. The high, constant demand is a sign that Catholic schools and universities have grown in esteem. At the same time, we must also reflect judiciously on this. Can we really be satisfied just because our educational institutions are sought after, appreciated for the quality of their teaching, their abundant resources and equipment, the beauty of their study halls and sports facilities?

As highlighted in a recent study sponsored by FIUC, Catholic universities often attract students because they are perceived as the best universities for career purposes.

One risks creating or strengthening a vicious circle, the result of two conditions: the question that young people ask of Catholic universities (similarly, one can also apply this situation to high schools), the result of highly individualistic criteria, strengthens a supply that aims to satisfy the demand, thus transforming the institution into a service on demand. The student is then reduced to being a customer, uncritically adopting a commercial idea of educational service.²

This risk's insidious nature is criticized in many of the contributions we received, from many parts of the world. The fact that many non-Catholics choose Catholic schools is a good thing. However, vigilance is required to prevent ambiguity in the relationship between supply and demand. For example, the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, noted that many families are ready to choose Catholic schools or universities even if the parents are not Catholic, with the consequence of a strong growth in numbers. The Australian bishops then raised the urgent need for these institutions to have a clear identity, considering the risk that they could lose or dilute their specific nature by playing it down vis-à-vis the dominant values.

Between Functionalistic Reductionism and Holistic Education

One of the most common concerns raised, to the point of considering it perhaps the challenge of challenges, is provoked by the economic and social framework of the entire global village in which we live today. The subordination of means to the incontestable end of profit; the prevalence of the standard of profit as a measure of all choices; the intensification of individualistic competition; looser links of solidarity; the adulation of efficiency, optimization and, eventually, success at all costs – all this appears to be the biggest threat to promoting a more human approach. Education is challenged in its deepest values (the primacy of the person, the value of the community, the search for the common good, care for the weak and concern for the least, cooperation and solidarity, etc.).

² cfr: FIUC, *Youth Cultures in Catholic Universities*. This publication presents the results of a research, conducted in 55 countries, about the cultures of students who attend Catholic universities.

The document “Educating Today and Tomorrow” is well aware of this problem when it says that “*The school should not give in to this technocratic and economic logic, even if it is under the pressure of external powers and it is exposed to attempts at manipulation by the market, and this is particularly true in the case of Catholic schools.*”³

This danger is perceived acutely by all stakeholders: those from Europe; from North America; from Australia; as well as those who work in areas where there are few economic resources, and where - notably Latin America - there is a acute awareness of social concerns. Catholic education must reaffirm the value of the human person as its specific contribution to a society that nurtures the value of competitive individualism and legitimizes - indeed boosts - inequality. Attention to the human person leads us to respect the ideas of others; it educates us to open debate, discussion and research, in an atmosphere of friendship and cooperation.

Nobody doubts, for example, that the development of science and technology creates new possibilities for people's lives, or that virtual reality enables the growth of trade and, therefore, has great potential for enhancing contacts, cooperation and improvement. However, none of this is automatic: in fact, those who are poorest, both culturally and economically, do not know how to use it, but instead tend to be used.

When we listen to what we hear from Latin America, from Africa or from other regions of the world, we perceive there to be a great commitment to social concerns, which is recognized by those who turn to Catholic schools and universities. For example, in Brazil, where the supply of State education is largely guaranteed, the question of why many Brazilians support Catholic education is answered by saying that the latter helps to build a more human, more just and more united society. In a world suffering from the impact of major social change and globalization, in which the institution of the family is in deep crisis, where the culture of “emptying” and lack of interior depth prevails, we need to rediscover the meaning of life. Catholic schools, with their values, seek to respond to these challenges, and Catholic universities aim to stand out for their quality education and not only for the quality of their academic research. The belief strongly held is that everything must lead to an encounter with the living Jesus. In general, one sense an effort to create an alliance between lived faith and daily life, especially in those areas characterized by high levels of social fragility.

When listening to these many voices, one can outline some features that are common to the identity of Catholic schools and universities :

- a strong sense of vitality, a life of faith that pervades the whole person;
 - a sense of social justice and a search for the common good, the building of a united and fraternal society;
 - the involvement of students in activities outside the school, with visits to institutions that are most in need, aid to poor communities, solidarity campaigns, thus linking educational curricula with supportive services;
 - a Christian sense of community, a family atmosphere, and hospitality;
 - the pursuit of quality in interpersonal relationships;
 - the importance of synergy among families, school and students, to overcome difficulties;
 - the realization that education is not merely knowledge, but is also experience and practice.
- To know is to know how to act.

Faced with a society perceived as fragmented, individualistic and arid, the fundamental concern for

³ Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating Today and Tomorrow. A Renewing Passion*, Vatican City, 2014.

education is for the holistic formation of the human person. The learning experience should be characterized by many opportunities available to young people so as to grow and develop their skills and talents. There should be a carefully balanced attention to their cognitive, emotional, social, professional, ethical and spiritual dimensions. Each student should be encouraged to develop his/her talents in an atmosphere of cooperation and solidarity.

As many contributions highlighted, attention to the human person is closely linked with the school or university's identity, because a primary concern for the human person reflects the centrality given to the person of Jesus Christ. Jesus' humanity is the reference point for all that is human, and the desire of Catholic schools and universities is for people to meet this humanity. The very heart of a Catholic university or school's identity is the person of Jesus Christ.

"We firmly believe that the heart of Catholic education is the person of Jesus Christ. Everything that happens in Catholic schools and universities should lead to an encounter with the person of Jesus, the living Christ" (Argentina, a religious congregation).

To Witness is to Evangelize

Many Catholic schools and universities operate in particularly difficult areas, where Catholicism (and, more generally, Christianity) is not only in the minority, but where there are no guarantees for freedom of expression. These regions of the world provided us with many truly important contributions, which help us to explore the theme of identity and its relationship with missionary activity.

The pattern varies, and there are considerable differences among countries, even among those sharing the same religion and dominant culture, as, for example, in the case of Islamic countries.

In all these situations we avoid using the word 'evangelization' so as not to be accused of proselytizing. However, leaders believe that their commitment to education is part of the evangelizing mission of the Church. The best approach to mission is witness, not proclamation. "To evangelize through our witness" – this indication occurs frequently in the texts, and is worth further consideration.

In most of these educational institutions, Catholic students are only a minority. Often the Catholic teachers, too, are a minority; they work with colleagues belonging to other religions, with whom they share not only the curriculum, but their concern for education. Many responses to the questionnaire tell us that this experience is seen not only as a problem, but also as an opportunity for dialogue, encounter and shared commitment to the common good. What happens then? A document sent by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Bangladesh explains it very well. As soon as people enter a Catholic school, they perceive a difference compared to other institutions. The difference is not that the school has an abundance of resources available, nor is it about glamour. What they perceive is rather "the sense of the presence of the divine." How this can be is difficult to put into words, but it is easily detectable in facts:

"There is an atmosphere of seriousness which is manifested by order, cleanliness, and a certain frugality as against disorder and wastefulness that can easily be found outside, in the consumerist society. Respect for each one - old and young, students, non-teaching staff and teachers - is another hallmark of these institutions. In this way the institutions 'serve the people of God and mankind in the efforts they undertake to access truth' (Instrumentum Laboris). The sacred VISION of Catholic schools is to be clearly understood, lived, and shared by all stakeholders. In the face of various

changes in government policies, the identity of Catholic institutions has to be established more firmly, and this dialogue with others is a must, and witnessing through Christian living is imperative” (Bangladesh Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

From the contributions received from the various places whose only form of mission is that of silent witness, the following common traits have been highlighted:

- a cultivation of respect for the identity of others;
- the promotion of dialogue and cooperation;
- a special attention to the civic, moral, intellectual and spiritual dimensions;
- enrolment that is open to all, without distinction;
- the promotion of partnership with the students’ families;
- an openness to movements and associations, working in the field of education, to being present in the school;
- being able to count on a body of committed teachers.

Even in these difficult circumstances, Catholic schools and universities are constantly concerned to provide a quality service, if possible better than the one offered by other public or non-Catholic institutions. However, the fact that their mission is to evangelize enjoys priority.

Whenever possible, they practise forms of dialogue and live side-by-side in a spirit of religious tolerance. School meetings usually include parents of different faiths. These are opportunities for dialogue and sharing. In Mali, there are training centres (Islamic-Christian Centre, on faith and encounter) established to promote interreligious and intercultural dialogue. Whenever possible, intercultural dialogue is promoted as part of the curriculum.

The fact of being unable to express oneself with all the freedom that one would like, when operating in conditions of an underground Church, forces a deepening and prioritizing of our missionary concern. Often, the mode of communication is almost exclusively that of witness.

The Laity, Problem or Resource?

“The promotion of the mission of consecrated persons and the lay faithful is still limited. We need more encouragement and partnership, along with service, to carry out mission to our students with particular zest” (Brazil, a school).

In the document of the Congregation, the word ‘mission’ is linked to that of ‘identity’. This indicates that the mission is a way of expressing one’s identity, introducing it into one’s environment by means of choices we make and the actions we perform, which can transform identity into proclamation. To whom is this mission entrusted? In the first place, to administrators and directors of schools and universities, to the staff and, most particularly, to teachers. However, a profound change has taken place here. Today, the presence of lay people far exceeds that of religious personnel, even in schools with a long Catholic tradition. Because of the vocations crisis, religious personnel has been replaced by lay personnel, in a widespread and significant way. This shift has affected not only teachers, but also the senior staff.

Furthermore, in many parts of the world where Catholics are a minority, not only the teachers are lay people, but they belong to a different religion. Also, the school population in these countries is often made up of a large majority of non-Catholic pupils, and even non-Christians, of other religious

faiths. We are, therefore, faced with a complex picture, which poses problems that are not easy to resolve.

Many documents we received are greatly concerned for this presence of the laity, which has become so dominant. They are worried about the disappearance of religious personnel, perceived as a guarantor of the institute's identity and, in the case of religious congregations, of the charism of the founder or foundress. Even in schools or universities in countries with a strong Catholic tradition, the word 'mission' would seem to be considered naturally associated with the condition of men and women religious and less attributable to the laity.

The solution that has been suggested by many is to invite the laity to become involved, through sharing, in a greater awareness of the institution's Catholic identity and the charism that inspired it. However, according to many, this option - which involves formation, shared moments of spirituality and constant spiritual accompaniment – is not sufficiently practised. Yet, if it is true that schools and universities attract students and enjoy an excellent reputation, and that the local Church authorities appreciate and support them, then obviously the contribution of the laity is essential, since they represent the majority of the teaching staff. However, it would seem that lay personnel, not only those of other religions but also Catholics, are a kind of 'lesser evil' instead of a great opportunity. However, others see matters more positively, giving hope for a beneficial developments; these experiences indicate the way we can move forward. There are many experiences of real involvement and close collaboration between lay and religious personnel. It is important for the lay members of staff to know about the founder's charism, to feel part of the school's mission, and to have their roles and responsibilities recognized and accepted as gifts.

Community: Haven or Project?

If it is Catholic education's task to develop the human person in a holistic manner, then the most favourable environment is that of a community. *Gravissimum Educationis* recalled this with great clarity when it said that, while Catholic schools and universities pursue the same cultural goals of all schools and universities, their distinctive feature is "*to create to a school community whose atmosphere is permeated by the Gospel spirit of freedom and charity.*"

Catholic schools and universities – in their organization, in their way of being, in their management, and in their educational and relational aspects – follow the values of community. Community is a response to the challenge of individualism; it is a hallmark of our schools' identity.

Many texts received recalled the value of community, and how important it is that Catholic schools and universities give their utmost attention to following this model. Very many texts made mention of this aim, with very practical examples. They highlighted that community should be a value that is openly declared; it is one of the school's primary purposes.

"Faced with the individualism that consumes our society, it becomes increasingly important for Catholic schools to be true communities of life animated by the Holy Spirit" (Mexico, a religious congregation).

However, despite the unanimous recognition of community's importance, the contributions received understood the concept in different ways. Some ambiguity, then, needs to be dispelled. As suitably highlighted by some texts that were sent, a simple juxtaposition of interests will not be enough to transform the school into a community. In such a case, the result is merely to satisfy individual needs, through solid regulations that define rights, duties and rules of conduct, thus ensuring peaceful

coexistence. However, in this case, the individual sphere of the various stakeholders is left intact, and is untouched by any deeper sharing.

“The concept of educational community that belongs to our tradition is still widely used in our educational projects, but at the risk sometimes of erroneous meanings. The community is not a simple juxtaposition of interests and various contributions, where every player seeks to defend his/her prerogatives” (France, a school).

If a community is not merely the result of compliance with ‘house rules’, nor can it be understood as a protected, safe haven. Parents often choose a Catholic school because it guarantees a tranquil environment, because it protects from the dangers of society, because it is ‘serious’ and offers quality, so that it can better promote individual success. These are common requests, which are not difficult to understand; however, it is important that they evolve and not be reinforced. One should be careful not to present and make people perceive the educational community as a ‘haven, as is often the case. The community does not have a formal meaning: it is a value because it is a living experience, and this requires a work of community building, corresponding to a choice, demanding a commitment from all its members. The idea of an educational community is something much more important, a benchmark by which all efforts and concerns are measured. In fact, it is only in an educational institution designed in this way that one can experience the proper environment for learning, for interpersonal relationships and for the inclusion of all. Such an ideal should not only be communicated by a school’s educational aims or the educational offering of a university, it should be a concern shared by students, teachers, parents, social community and Church community.

The Catholic school is called to be, first and foremost, a community of faith and life. In this way, it becomes an antidote against our society’s individualism and consumerism. Its characteristic atmosphere is that of the family. This applies even when most of the students are not Catholic: building a community must be a shared commitment.

In Brazil, in Argentina, and indeed throughout Latin America, there seems to be a very powerful movement toward reclaiming an awareness of Catholic schools and universities’ identity. People there have indicated that the way to do this, in whatever educational institution, is by training teachers and, especially, by establishing a true Christian community. An educational community must be where educators and families take their active parts. It must know how to engage students and be characterized by a family atmosphere that is both official and participatory. Such a community will have education focus on caring for people’s needs, especially of those most in need. It is able to establish means for ensuring solidarity with young people and with the poorest students’ families. It will be a community that is born of a passion for education, of deeply sharing the same values, where there is room and shelter for all, without excluding the poor and needy. It is a community that requires building up and development, which is not something limited to the teaching staff and students, but includes all those who form part of it, particularly the students’ families and the wider social community.

“The passion for their work is a clear sign of their commitment and dedication to the community. It feeds our sense of belonging, sharing our work based on integration, diversity, inclusion, and being open and honest to all who listen to this community” (Uruguay, a religious congregation).

It could be said that a community is, simultaneously, both an aim and a means of education. The goal is to build communities in schools and universities; but also to build up, through the school or university community, the wider social community.

However, there is still much to be done. As the Brazilian Catholic Bishops' Conference has said, the face of our Catholic institutions is not always sufficiently 'Catholic' and clearly recognizable. And, returning to the theme of identity, we must not forget what one text received clearly noted: "*We are very clear about our Christian identity and our goal is explicitly to evangelize. If you do not have this clear objective, evangelization in our Catholic schools becomes meaningless*" (Spain, a school).

3. The Challenge of Holistic Education

The *Instrumentis Laboris* starts off by stating that contemporary society is affected by several problems that are causing what is described as an “educational emergency” (p.3). It presents Catholic institutions with the challenge to help foster anthropological and ethical values in individual consciences and cultures, identified as necessary for building a society based on fraternity and solidarity.

The *Instrumentis Laboris* describes Catholic institutions as places where people “learn to live their lives, achieve cultural growth, receive vocational training and engage in the pursuit of the common good ... provide the occasion and opportunity to understand the present time and imagine the future of society and mankind” (...) “Catholic schools and universities are educational communities where learning thrives on the integration between research, thinking and life experiences” (p.6). Schools should be places where individuals influence each other.

The document presents a number of “quality hallmarks” that Catholic institutions must be able to ensure, namely:

- Respect for individual dignity and uniqueness
- Opportunities to grow/ learn
- A balanced focus on different aspects of learning (e.g. cognitive, affective, social, ethical, spiritual and professional)
- Encouragement to develop talents in a climate of co-operation and solidarity
- Promotion of research
- Respect for ideas, openness to dialogue, the ability to interact and work together in a spirit of freedom and care.

These quality hallmarks emphasize a holistic approach to the development of the person. It is an education – formal, informal and non-formal – that encourages people to develop the values and virtues necessary for a healthy and joyful life, a life that has and gives meaning to all as they set about to address issues pertinent to growth.

Teaching as an Instrument of Education

Focusing on the ‘what’ students learn and the ‘how’ they learn is important. The focus needs to be on teaching methods that nurture particular values – esteem, trust, respect and friendliness, as against “individualism, antagonism and mutual coldness” (*Instrumentum Laboris*, p.7). This implies that there is a focus and concerted effort on creating education programmes that can become meaningful if they allow individuals – children, adolescents and adults – the opportunity to grow individually and collectively. The aim is not only to focus on transmitting information and knowledge, but also on engagement with values and principles in different situations. We do not only look at outcomes (often defined as learning outcomes), but also how we reach them.

The Centrality of Learners

“Learning is not just equivalent to content assimilation, but is an opportunity for self-education, commitment towards self-improvement and the common good” (IL, p. 7). The link between learning and personal and social development is emphasized. Learning is seen as a constant journey, an engagement with self and others.

However, the document takes this a step further, highlighting the importance of the individual as being of service to others. This is a central component of a Catholic institution. The term ‘development’ is directly linked to being Catholic; with providing opportunities for the person to grow from an integral, holistic perspective. The term implies that students need to be exposed to educational experiences that lead to development in the cognitive, affective, social, ethical, spiritual and professional dimensions. At all times, the focus is on human development, the development of ‘the person’, focusing on faith formation and personality development.

At the same time, development is linked to service. It is a journey towards self but one that also depends on being engaged with and for others, hence modelling Christ as servant leader. It is in this way that we can be truly human, one where our faith is lived on a day-to-day basis.

With such ambitious and altruistic aims, the documents received highlighted various determining factors that are needed for this to happen, namely context and authenticity.

The term ‘development’ is central to the scope and meaning of Catholic education. Development is viewed from three main perspectives:

- Development is all about learning; the creation of learning opportunities for all.
- Development needs to be linked to the circumstances faced by the communities in which the various Church congregations operate.
- The professional development and formation of staff.

There is a need to create “intentional learning environments”, which lead to developing an authentic learner formation. This can be achieved by aligning learning through engagements and partnerships with others. We need to cut across boundaries and link schools with parishes, dioceses and other institutions.

The Teaching of Catholic Religious Education

While the principles that Catholic schools uphold may be universal, the implementation of such principles may require different approaches. Hence, context is a critical component.

In developed countries, most Catholic schools are a rather popular choice for parents, and cater for students with a range of abilities and faith heritages. Some schools note quite high percentages of non-Catholics attending. While some schools permit non-Catholics to miss attendance at Religious Education lessons, other schools expect all students to engage with the Catholic beliefs, rituals and values promoted in the curriculum. In some schools, children may opt out of Religious Education classes and instead attend a Values Education programme, which imparts the ideas of universal love, brotherhood, love for nature and for the environment.

There are quite a number of Catholic students who, because they come from disadvantaged backgrounds, cannot afford to attend Catholic schools, in spite of the efforts made to support them. This has major implications for parishes/communities to reach out to the poorest whose only access to a religious education or catechesis is through the diocese or parish. This has to take place after school hours. Such situations highlight the challenge of creating alignment between the various bodies/agencies that clearly focus on supporting the needy within the community.

In some countries, especially developing ones, the situation can be described as quite challenging. Catholic schools mainly serve in deprived areas

The focus is not on working in isolation from each other but actually networking to create different learning opportunities, so as to keep the mission of Catholic education alive – one that has an impact on individuals and society at large. The word ‘connect’ is linked to a sense of readiness, being creative, a willingness to set out and restructure, innovate, discover, adopting new approaches such as becoming more interdisciplinary in one’s teaching.

Catholic schools are very much concerned about the need to engage with the lay members of staff, so that the identity of Church schools is retained while at the same time maintaining the mission of evangelization. There is recognition that, for this to take place, strong connections/alignment are needed among the various entities so that the challenges facing Church education are safeguarded against. While different countries promote diversity in different ways, there is a growing need to help Catholic families facing hardships and finding it difficult to send their children to Catholic schools, given the fees they have to pay. This highlights the importance of creating stronger connections among institutions, and illustrates the need for greater support from government.

University Education and Internationalization

Catholic universities have to operate in a globalized world that is dictated by materialistic and utilitarian goals. At the end of the day, students need to gain an education that leads to a job that will give them the means to live a decent life. The distinctive feature that makes Catholic universities special is that they do not only focus on the teaching of academic subjects and conducting research, but they also focus on development and, as a result, on service. This is the distinctive feature of Catholic universities. This is where they see their mission. Universities speak of adopting a proactive approach to the challenge of providing a Catholic education. Central to the work of Catholic universities is the role of creating opportunities for individual transformation, this being defined as “the true expected result”.

The main intent of most universities is to embrace the Catholic intellectual heritage, which shows itself throughout the curricula of colleges and universities. Various strategies are being used to achieve the goal of integrating the Catholic educational mission with action. The predominant model is through the values of Catholic social teaching, which are integrated into both curricular and extra-curricular activities. In this way, character development takes place. One notes a powerful connection between commitment and university education and education in general. The term ‘commitment’ is powerfully linked to creating a sense of community, of a social mission based on giving a charitable direction to life, of being of service to others. It is a commitment based on the search for truth and based on the Catholic faith. The main features of a Catholic university education are:

- A powerful emphasis on students’ personal development. Catholic colleges and universities excel in integrating intellectual progress with spiritual growth.
- A commitment to issues of social justice and peace. The main ideas related to the word ‘justice’ are the values of love, compassion, integrity, mercy and sensitivity. It reflects a belief in what is right, in serving as agents of change. It is the duty of Catholics to focus on the common good.
- A commitment to establishing supportive and enriching relationships. The institutions that make a difference are proud of the sense of community that is nurtured among staff members

and students, and among students themselves. The documents we received that highlighted this point talked of transformation. People who, through their engagements, become better people, developing the values and attributes of trust, compassion, a sense of giving, empathy, wisdom and insight, etc. As a result, this sense of service grows throughout one's natural life.

This is encouraged through different forms of engagement. There is a focus on students engaging in real-world experiences – a focus on hands-on experiences in different circumstances as the students pursue their studies. It is in such situations that one's commitment to the Catholic faith really shows. It is here that one joins values to life, where one is able to walk the talk.

Such strategies lead to a life dedicated to nurturing a set of values that have meaning and bring meaning to self and to others. Thus, values are considered in depth and lived out. Values are not taken for granted, but are debated through issues that surface in everyday situations, curricular programmes, etc.

A number of universities have developed a series of documents and strategies to provide meaningful programmes. The emphasis is on articulating a clear sense of purpose, living a code of conduct that impacts on individuals and the community. The focus is not on uniformity or conformity, but on developing a purpose-seeking attitude, hence nurturing “a community of seekers”.

Various reports noted the importance of describing their mission as a journey, where institutions need to come together both within provinces/regions and beyond the countries' borders. The importance of networking within communities and institutions is a strong feature in a number of countries, and is stated within their mission and vision of the future of Catholic universities. It is here that the service pillar is nurtured and sustained beyond the life of the school/ university.

While evangelization may not always appear explicitly in any of the university's foundational nor guiding documents, there is evidence of an unequivocal commitment to the harmony of faith, a commitment to being authentically Catholic, to giving public witness to the faith, to providing opportunities for staff and students to grow in the understanding and practice of the Catholic faith, and to integrate faith within all aspects of their life. This implies a focus on an evangelizing role. This is achieved in a variety of ways, mainly through a commitment to promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

University Campus Ministry programmes exist (e.g. in North America and Australia), and provide opportunities for the celebration of the sacraments within the context of a faith community. This is celebrated through, for example, daily liturgy and opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Most universities offer Christian service, either in connection with coursework, or as an extra-curricular programme. These opportunities help to promote the values expressed in the social teaching of the Church.

4. The Challenge of Education and Faith

The *Instrumentum Laboris* invites us to reflect on a well-defined ideal of Catholic educational institutions: despite their differences - caused by diversity in terms of geographic location, size, age, student population, and the specific features of their various socio-economic and cultural contexts - schools and universities are mainly communities of faith and learning.

The challenge for Catholic schools and universities is to preserve the authentic sense of being community, which implies reflecting on what Catholic education today asks especially of teachers in terms of skills development and Christian formation.

Recruitment and Training of Teachers

The answers to the questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* offer a most rich insight into the policies and practices of reagarding the recruitment and training of teachers.

The most critical aspects include the ability to recruit staff members who satisfies, to an acceptable extent, the requirements for being teachers in a school based on Catholic, or Christian, values. In various countries, this has proven very difficult. In an increasingly secular society, it is not easy to find people who, in addition to possessing a teaching qualification, share and live out a Christian life project. Certainly, schools, for their very survival, need teachers with wide skill-sets; in some cases, they are required to teach several subjects and sometimes even in different languages, with a training that allows them to carry out their duties by using new technologies, etc. However, this can mean that priority is given to skills and professional qualifications. The result can be that, little by little, we are incorporating into Catholic institutions teachers who, although not opposed to Catholic values, may lack the depth of a lived experience in the faith that Catholic institutions request of them (Diocese of Getafe, Ecclesiastical Province of Madrid). Also, in consideration of the above, some respondents pointed out that "*The educational community must offer a witness of life that makes the Gospel message attractive and attuned, and must accompany this with more advanced training concerning the Catholic school's identity and evangelizing vocation*" (Coordinating Office for Diocesan Schools, Segorbe-Castellón, Spain; FISM, Italy).

A second aspect, related to the first, is perceived by many to be even more crucial: the training process for teachers. In many countries, the training process for teachers fails to provide pre-service courses or any other special preparation for those who will teach in Catholic schools / universities, yet in these latter, specific educational goals must be implemented. Initial teacher training is uniform and the same for all. Some respondents pointed out that when you ask a teacher, employed in a Catholic school, to use Christian anthropology as his/her standard, you must be aware that you are asking for something that he/she is normally unable to provide (FISM, Italy).

A third aspect, representing a problem at the international level, concerns the school's attractiveness to young people and its ability to retain employees. Especially in Europe, the general opinion is that young teachers, even when enthused by Christianity, prefer to work in State schools, where they find better working conditions and, especially, better pay. Additionally, due to the precarious situation of Catholic schools in many parts of the world, there is a continuous outflow of teachers towards State institutions. Thus, it can be very difficult for a Catholic school to ensure a stable, well-trained and motivated teaching staff.

Faced with these problems, Catholic schools and universities are trying to respond proactively to the challenge of a more secularized teaching staff, as well as the difficulties in attracting and recruiting teachers who are qualified on the professional, moral and religious levels.

From the responses to the questionnaire, there emerged a greater attention to introducing formal systems of human resource management. For example, in Chile, schools have been working together to draft a textbook dedicated to the management of human resources: "... *with minimum steps and guidelines for selection and incorporation of workers and staff.*" According to the Congregation of the Ursulines, much attention has been paid to designing new recruitment procedures that provide for recourse to a variety of tools and methods - including a psychological test, an interview and a short lesson – with the aim to understanding the candidates' different skill-profiles. The Jesuits in South Africa, too, described a similar experience: "*After applications are received, there will be an interview, sometimes a written test and in addition the applicant will have to teach a class.*"

To aid the development of recruitment- and selection- policies for teachers, Catholic schools and universities need to cooperate together more. A respondent to the questionnaire noted that "*unfortunately cooperation among schools run by different Congregations has not come a long way: they share problems, challenges, and prospects, but then their choices follow different paths because they are conditioned by the reality proper to each religious institute.*"

A better and more effective coordination is considered essential for guiding the training processes for teachers for Catholic schools at the early stage of their university studies. Currently, experiences of school-university cooperation seem isolated and uneven, although many cases are documented in response to the questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris*.

Finally, some countries show emerging trends of change that offer development opportunities for other institutions elsewhere in the world. The mechanisms for accreditation and qualification of teachers in developed countries such as Australia seem to respond more to the need for policy planning for recruitment and development of profiles which are consistent with the specific role expectations in Catholic institutions. The collaboration among dioceses, Catholic schools, and universities can be an inter-institutional coordination mechanism which is complementary to the mechanisms of the market as a system of staff selection and recruitment.

Lay Leadership

The *Instrumentum Laboris* defines the role of leaders in terms of institutional support and non-bureaucratic guidance, as true builders of the community in terms of education and faith: "*Managers should be the leaders who make people live education as a shared mission, accompany and organize teachers, promote mutual encouragement and support.*" In addition, the *Instrumentum Laboris* highlights the role of those responsible for Catholic institutions as "spiritual leaders", a point of reference for the bishop in the field of pastoral care. Given the importance and complexity of leadership roles in Catholic institutions, the questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* asks how the recruiting of managers takes place, and how the latter set up and ensure their ongoing, professional and Christian formation/training.

The terms 'leader' and 'leadership' are widely mentioned in the questionnaire responses, in all four sections into which it is divided. In particular, the following relations of co-occurrence take place with respect to the word 'leader':

- *Leader => principal*, emphasizes the role expectations of school managers;

- *Leader => mission*, highlights the role of leaders as catalysts with respect to identity values and institutional mission;
- *Leader => vision*, strengthens the cultural model of leadership, i.e. a model that focuses the actions of leaders on identity values as the basis of a vision of how the educational community of evangelization can develop;
- *Leader => staff*, highlights how the leading role of personnel is the characteristic feature of leadership in education;
- *Leader => training*, stresses the importance of "formation in faith" as the characteristic aspect of professional development for managers of educational institutions;
- *Leader => post-graduate*, mentions the practices implemented in many countries for introducing academic training courses to form managers;
- *Leader => teachers*, emphasizes the role of teachers as educational leaders.

A matter of particular concern that emerges from the questionnaire responses has to do with the identity of Catholic schools and the secularization of leadership. There is a wide variety of Catholic schools, but they share a common element in that each school is an educational community placed under the responsibility of the principal. The educational goals of each school make explicit reference to the Gospel and the teachings of the Catholic Church. They express the values that lies at the basis of the educational community's choices and actions, and take into account all aspects of school life. The principal is responsible for the implementation of these goals, as he/she is called to bring unity, momentum and continuity. The principal is responsible for the specific character of the Catholic school, and has an across-the-board pastoral responsibility that touches all aspects of school life.

The concept of 'spiritual leadership' is very frequently mentioned by the respondents, especially those who work for Catholic schools. The manager develops a Catholic school's spirituality by living out firsthand his/her own professional experience, based on good example and the witness of faith. He/she must also give enough time to promoting a culture of cooperation and a supportive environment, as well as to providing teachers, students and their families with opportunities for formation activities, spiritual meetings, and activities connected with the pastoral care of the diocese.

On the other hand, characterizing educational leadership in terms of values management, spirituality and service opens up a range of issues associated with the growing secularization of staff, including those with managerial roles.

Today, Catholic educational institutions are characterized by many lay people in positions of leadership. Even in higher education, respondents to the questionnaire claimed that this is a growing trend.

How are Catholic educational institutions reacting to the challenge of continuing to build up their identity and community when under lay leadership?

The questionnaires showed a variety of experiences that give us a sense of how significant is this phenomenon, and how critical are recruitment and training for the future of the world's Catholic schools and universities.

There are significant differences in the policies of recruitment and selection depending on whether we are dealing with large dioceses, located in urban or suburban areas, as compared to small

dioceses located in rural areas with few resources available. In the latter case, the options are more limited, and hiring people from outside the Catholic institution becomes more difficult. Respondents to the questionnaire emphasized both the advantages and disadvantages of recruiting internally. One possible advantage is represented by the greater opportunities to know the individuals concerned, and also that the same individuals may possess a more authentic understanding of the institution and its circumstances. However, internal recruitment could simply be a choice dictated by necessity, and by the need to fill a position when there are no external candidates. This was highlighted by the respondents to the questionnaire, in order to emphasize how we must adopt a more rational approach to managing the ‘generational changeover’ by favouring internal recruitment. However, this goes with the proviso that the institution has planned for the change in good time, by identifying and preparing future leaders for their leadership roles.

In a context of growing secularization that also involves leaders, the recruitment and spiritual formation of lay leadership is considered a strategic issue for the development not only of Catholic schools, but also of the world’s Catholic universities.

The investment in postgraduate training of school principals and teachers has been fundamental in developing a strong sense of identity in the school’s Catholic mission. Among respondents to the *Instrumentum Laboris*, Australia proved to be particularly sensitive to lay leadership and its training, as the lay personnel now accounts for more than 99% of the staff. The introduction of post-graduate programmes in educational leadership is now widespread in many parts of the world, as shown by the contributions of the Catholic Bishops’ Conferences of the Arab Countries and of Papua New Guinea.

Shared Leadership

In Catholic schools and universities, leaders must work hard to maintain a focus on results and, at the same time, nurture a climate of tolerance and respect for all religions and cultures. To face this challenge, the very concept of leadership cannot be restricted to a specific figure, to a single person in charge. Especially in Catholic schools and universities, leadership is understood as a quality of the whole community, disseminated at different levels within and outside educational institutions.

While the concept of shared leadership is especially relevant for Catholic educational institutions, we lack significant empirical evidence on what forms of sharing are more effective to support change. In particular, we know little about the relationship between shared leadership and effectiveness of training for young people. The analysis of the responses to the questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* gave early indications on these aspects.

The responses to the questionnaire bring to life a broad concept of ‘educational community of evangelization’, which involves students, parents, teachers, administrators and religious in an atmosphere animated by key values (educational, social, spiritual, etc.), which becomes a real experience of the Church focused on evangelization and the welfare of young people. On the other hand, respondents to the questionnaire did not fail to highlight that community building is a constant challenge in multicultural, multi-religious and increasingly secular contexts, with the growing pressure of secularization. The development of a shared, widespread leadership was indicated as a possible antidote to the prevailing individualism and functional fragmentation of roles and responsibilities.

The ongoing process of secularization is driving change in organizational models. In order to enhance the presence of religious, it is a priority that they be recognized in leadership roles at the

highest level, especially with regard to the external relations vis-à-vis the local Church and community. Additionally, organizational models are evolving towards structures that encourage participation and co-responsibility between laity and religious.

Respondents to the questionnaire suggested that there is still a long way to go. Moving from a shared leadership/management towards a shared mission emerged as an area of concern. The risk is that, even with organizational structures of participation and shared responsibility, or with the distribution of leadership roles at various organizational levels, this all remains on a purely formal level without real implications for shared goals. A religious congregation in Argentina well illustrated this point, emphasizing that “*shared mission is a reality of life in a spirit of communion*”. New organizational and governance patterns are necessary interventions on the structural level, but alone are insufficient. They are likely to remain “empty shells” without a real commitment in the recruiting and training of leaders who share the mission in a spirit of complementarity, cooperation and collegiality along with the religious. On the other hand, respondents also emphasized the fundamental role of consecrated persons in management turnover; they should communicate to the new lay leaders the charism and the specific mission to be pursued.

Governance in the Various Political Contexts of Catholic Education and Educational Partnerships

Catholic schools and universities operate in different countries in different political contexts. The variances in terms of public financing are the most obvious. Some countries have highly developed systems of public support for Catholic education, both direct and indirect through funding for students and their families (scholarships and bursaries, emergency assistance funding, deferred fees schemes for existing students, counselling and other support, etc.).

In other countries no such opportunities exist. Especially in Africa, the respondents reported a lack of interest on the part of politicians and the unreliability of some States and governments, which is often also manifested in an inadequate regulation of relations between Church and State.

Respondents to the questionnaire indicated that the State, as well as other local authorities with administrative jurisdiction in educational matters, frequently display contradictory attitudes vis-à-vis Catholic education. On the one hand, States welcome the economic and cultural resources that the Church provides to society through her educational services. On the other hand, some political ideologies appear highly suspicious of Catholic education, to the extent of questioning its very existence.

In many parts of the world, conflicts between Church and State still focus on the control of the school curriculum and its contents. In particular, the nature and amount of religious education as a specific school subject, as well as the extent to which the curriculum of Catholic schools must meet national targets, are reported as frequent conflict drivers on the African continent, but also in Europe and other parts of the world. It is true that there is appreciation for the quality of the contribution made by Catholic schools to society, and the States formally recognize the rights of freedom also in the field of education. Yet, clearly the affirmation of fundamental freedom only makes sense if governments also provide the financial means required to organize such freedom for parents who are exercising a free choice.

Respondents to the questionnaire indicated that the families’ freedom of choice is not just about the provision of financial resources, but also about a different State regulation – one that is more respectful of the plurality of educational provision and the specific mission of Catholic schools and universities.

In this respect, the challenges for Catholic education in the world are also the challenges that Church leaders are facing now, and will face in the future, as they are called, on the one hand, to exercise leadership within the education systems and, on the other, to exercise leadership *ad extra*, paying attention to constraints and opportunities, with the aim of creating those institutional safeguards and educational partnerships needed for development.

Building Educational Communities Together with the Families

The Second Vatican Council's Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* recognizes the family as the main subject of children's education; parents are seen as the primary educators. Educational institutions, and primarily Catholic institutions, are required to do all that is possible to foster cooperation with them, by promoting all forms of dialogue, participation and shared responsibility.

Without exception, the contributions we received from the various parts of the world all made reference to the family. The answers to the questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* highlighted the importance accorded to parents, the openness towards them, the commitment to promoting their participation and accountability. If schools and universities are inspired, in their organization, by the model of the community, then greater attention should be paid to the family as a part of this community, as an ally in making it more welcoming.

In a community context, the family cannot be conceived as a simple 'client', a recipient of service delivered. Even less can it be considered a counterpart, a bearer of claims and a source of problems. This is well explained by a Spanish document: "*Education needs a significant partnership between parents and educators, so as to offer everyone an education rich in meaning, an education that is open to God, to others and to all life in the world. This partnership is even more necessary because education is a personal relationship. It is in the process that we see revealed transcendental faith, family, Church and ethics, with an emphasis on the community dimension*" (Spain, a school).

Education flourishes in a community-based educational environment, and the family is a player that cannot be overlooked. On the contrary, the family can offer a most significant contribution, and so must be considered a partner in education. However, although this value is basically accepted, and the respondents all expressed this desire, the overall reality looks far more problematic. Partnerships represent a landmark, something to build towards, and where to direct one's efforts, rather than a point of departure.

Particularly schools, which have to deal with children and teenagers, often the most they can do is to substitute for the families rather than involve them. This is so when schools admit students from difficult family situations, who are neglected or abandoned by their parents.

Even when, as in mostly the case, it is possible to work with the families, there are still many obstacles on the road to full cooperation.

Beyond the Concept of a Service On Demand

Often it can be the case that what parents want for their children is very different from what Catholic education wants to offer. Many families turn to Catholic schools because they consider them the most suitable for the quality of education they supply; for their facilities and comfortable classrooms; for the opportunities they offer the students to achieve success; for a secure environment, perceived as safe from social turmoil; or because the school has few students who are immigrants or have disabilities; etc. These families are willing to pay very high fees but, correspondingly, are demanding, and yet uninterested in the school's educational goals.

The questionnaire responses received from all over the world have made us realize just how widespread these problems are.

*“Many families seek out a high school **not for its faith formation**, but for the **emotional support and academic quality** it offers. They fail to value what the school offers in terms of spiritual formation towards the transcendent, both for themselves and for their children”* (Chile, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

As has been recognized, schools subject to these kinds of pressure can run the risk of retreating, of timidity about what they want to offer, or even foregoing those ideals altogether.

The point is not to reject the parents’ demands for quality; the choice is not between a *quality school* and a *community school*. The search for a quality school and for a quality academic education is, in itself, a value; and it calls for maximum effort. However, it should not be seen as the only, or most important, concern. Rather than asking ourselves whether the many requests for enrolment are due to parents acknowledging either the school’s academic quality or else its educational goals, we must encourage their criteria for choosing a school to evolve. This idea is well explained by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Russia:

“It is obvious that only if parents clearly perceive our schools to be offering outstanding quality teaching, will the Church have the possibility of providing meaningful witness through this activity, and of possessing a unique and attractive forum for dialogue. The formation of staff, teachers, administrators and the families of the students is essential” (Russia, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

Another obstacle to encouraging the parents’ participation is an attitude where they delegate everything to a trusted educational institution. In consequence, the parents feel no need to take on a more active role or assume some responsibility. It is enough for them to know that their children are in good hands.

“One of the challenges for many religious schools is to increase the participation of the families, the primary agents in the education of their children. Often parents feel that they enjoy sufficient transparency and choices, and therefore they elect not to cooperate with the school. However, the experience of involving parents in different areas of the school is positive” (Spain, a school).

The concern to involve the students’ families is more evident in schools than in universities. This is understandable, given that universities are attended by young adults. Throughout the world, in fact, this concern is more keenly perceived during the early school years, when parents seem more willing and interested in participating.

“Usually families have more participation when the students are in kindergarten or primary school. At the secondary level, it is more difficult for parents to get involved. Many forget their educational role, instead delegating it to the school” (Peru, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

Nevertheless, many universities are eager to promote parents’ participation and involvement, as witnessed by a university in Taiwan, which is successfully using tutors as facilitators of human relations.

“The university also has a well-established class advisor system, which gives teachers more personal contact with the students. Class-advisors may have contacts with parents and families when there are problems. However, in general, since university students are adults, the university does not involve the parents / families so much in university life.” (Taiwan, a university).

There are various ways for involving families. We can distinguish them into two broad categories: a) actions taken **for** the families; b) activities carried out **with** the families.

In the first case, parents are the recipients of an asymmetrical intervention, in which leadership is in the hands of teachers and managers. This is the most widely used method.

The second method is more difficult to implement : the two parties assume together educational responsibilities, in a genuine partnership.

Formation for Parents

The main method of involving families regards initiatives which are addressed specifically to parents: meetings with experts, conferences, etc.

A common method is to create real ‘schools’ for the parents.

“The parents have a very important role in helping the students, they are the first educators. I know some schools prepare programmes for the parents, for example recollection, meetings, and discussing parenthood.” (Indonesia, a religious congregation).

Formation for parents, as a more or less official experience, is also considered an opportunity offered to those families who wish to deepen their journey of faith.

“Many schools have implemented parents’ schools. This is not a systematic, one-model type school. It is rather a kind of parental involvement in the training and education of their children, but involving a kind of indirect family ministry” (Chile, a diocese).

Equally common is to invite the families to participate in moments of prayer or spiritual reflection, either those addressed to all members of the school or academic community, or others specifically dedicated to the families: *“In primary and secondary schools accompaniment of the family to increase their faith is encouraged, but in busy school life it is not always easy to ensure that this happens. Families are encouraged to participate in the faith life of the school, with varying degrees of success”* (New Zealand, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

“Catholic schools recognize parents as the primary educators of their children. They actively seek and support the involvement of families in their children’s education and in the life of the school through such initiatives as: communal prayer, celebrations, community fund” (Australia, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

Meeting Parents

In addition to these kinds of formal initiatives, there are others that seem to be particularly effective. These work on direct meetings, including visits to the families, allowing the school to understand better the living environment in which the children grow up, as well as their everyday problems and their social and cultural context, etc.

“In some cases (especially in schools) some heads of the schools visit the families of the students to interact and get a first hand knowledge of the background of the students. In some difficult cases the institution goes to the extent of counseling the parents first and then counseling the students. Most schools and universities have student counselors” (Bangladesh, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

Direct meetings show a particular concern, which goes far beyond the limits of formal meetings. Moreover, this can help solve a problem that was reported by many: it can be difficult for parents to

participate in official meetings because, due to economic difficulties, they cannot afford to be absent from their workplace. “*Most Catholic schools have study days for formation of students’ parents. Many schools have lectures for mothers but there are not so many for students’ fathers. Now that, in the majority of cases, both parents are working in order to be able to afford the tuition for a Catholic school, it is increasingly difficult to gather them for study sessions*” (Japan, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

From Initiatives For to Initiatives With Parents

The questionnaire based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* asked whether Catholic schools and universities favoured the families’ participation. The answer is yes. This is evidenced by many contributions that told how, in many ways, they sought to create a relationship based on cooperation, of varying degrees of intensity and significance: listening to the families’ needs, inviting them to formation meetings (formation in the faith, formation about their children’s studies, etc.), participation in events and moments in the life of the institution, one-to-one meetings, etc.

Many families are going through deep crises and require support, solidarity and formation. “*Education requires a strong relationship between students, parents and educators to present a quality education, a life that is good, rich in meaning, open to God and others as well as the world. Many families are going through deep crises and need support, solidarity and formation*” (India, a religious congregation).

However, a desire was expressed to go beyond this basic level of contact and cooperation, which is asymmetrical, and move towards a level of cooperation characterized by greater reciprocity and integration. This is the approach taken in various institutions’ relationships with parents’ associations, which often are a resource not only for the families themselves, but also for the school. “*The role of parents’ associations becomes all the more beneficial, as they help parents to assume responsibility in education and to build a constructive partnership with the school. In Catholic schools this collaboration is based on educational goals*” (Italy, an association).

We would like to move from a relationship of ‘welfare’ (based on the school substituting and supporting the parents) to a true alliance, a partnership of individuals linked to each other by a beneficial interdependence; an association, in its own right, with the idea of sharing the mission and governance of the educational institution.

“*The engagement in authentic partnerships with parents and students is also a priority for the system of schools*” (Australia, a diocese).

“*The schools invite suggestions and co-operation from families/parents, seeing them as partners in pursuing the same goal and involving them in a wide variety of school related programmes and purposes, whether academic, social, artistic and cultural or any other*” (India, a religious congregation).

Furthermore, as the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the United States recalled, the construction of a profound alliance between educational Catholic institutions and the families through support, acknowledgement, and value-enhancement, turns Catholic schools and universities into the main players in the New Evangelization.

“*The Catholic school should reach out to parents as partners in the education of their children. Supporting the family and finding new ways to catechize families as part of educating children is also a part of the New Evangelization*” (USA, Catholic Bishops’ Conference).

Pastoral Dimension

The headword ‘pastoral’ captures a number of words which are directly related to it. The most significant relationships are those associated with the main providers, namely: men and women religious, the parish, the diocese, schools and teachers. Another group of terms - such as animation, action, challenge - implies the way pastoral care is conceptualized in different countries and contexts. The term ‘pastoral’ is also linked to the identity of being Catholic, and the need for training.

The ministry of Catholic schools as instruments of the Church is focused on the pastoral care of students and their families. The policies and structures of Catholic schools are designed to ensure a positive impact on young people whatever their life circumstances. A number of countries have developed pastoral care plans which integrate the roles of home, school and parish.

What stands out in a number of documents is the need to establish and maintain partnerships within and across different bodies to fulfill their mission. In a context that is becoming more and more secularized and pluralistic, the role of Catholic schools and the values they uphold is central not only to retaining what is good, but to giving a sense of meaning and providing direction for today’s youth, who are tomorrow’s leaders.

Catholic education takes on a broader dimension when one looks at Catholic teaching beyond schools. Bearing in mind that Catholic schools do not necessarily attract Catholic students, there are quite a number of Catholic students attending State or non-faith schools. Hence, this leads to a pastoral challenge: that of providing a service that goes beyond the school walls. Naturally, the evangelization of the faith is a way of life, and cannot be tackled from only one perspective or context (e.g. formal schools).

With a commitment to providing a holistic education (one that most Catholic schools pride themselves in addressing), based on the principles of equity and inclusion, one notes that a number of countries (e.g. Australia) have presented, or are presenting, guidelines with regards to best practices concerning the holistic education of even non-Catholic pupils that attend Catholic schools. On the other hand, in a few countries (e.g. Ireland), guidelines have also been produced at a national level for the delivery of Catholic programmes in non-Catholic schools.

In a number of dioceses, schools are involved in various initiatives that assist school leaders to understand and strengthen their role in facilitating effective family, school and community partnerships. Such an accompaniment in the faith is one of the greatest challenges facing Catholic schools. Many laudable efforts have been made to support such faith formation, but it is undoubtedly the case that schools vary in their commitment to faith formation. Pastoral care is often provided by local clergy.

While most developed countries have institutionalized the role of parents through Boards of Management or Boards of Governors, others are still weak in this domain reflecting weak shared governance. Various National Trustee and Management Associations provide for cooperation among Catholic schools. There is a growing realization of the benefits of such networks. There is widespread agreement that a unified voice at national level on key strategic issues will be important for the future of Catholic schools. For example, in Ireland, the Catholic Schools Partnership has been established to provide such a voice at national level.

This reflects a strategic move, both at the micro and macro levels. Given the more market-driven focus on education, in a context where today in most countries the State stipulates the curriculum, the pay and conditions of work for teachers, the length of the school day and year, and the final

assessment of learning outcomes, this means that Catholic schools must devote a lot of time and energy to servicing these State requirements.

At the macro level, it shows that schools believe in the central role of parents and recognizes them as the first educators and, therefore, that they need to be directly/ indirectly involved in their children's education. At a micro level, schools that recognize the important role they can fulfill in the world of today need to have and, therefore, create a voice that speaks for the children that they educate, and for the communities beyond the school that they influence (e.g. kindergartens, old people's homes, catechism sessions - i.e. preparing children for the sacraments, Bible studies, voluntary work, etc.).

From another angle, one can consider the role that alumni associations can play. It is evident that, where these exist and are engaged in university life, they can nurture the faith and transfer their enthusiasm, interest and passion in what they do. The work done in such countries can be a beacon to others, where they either do not exist or are not functioning. They can be an inspiration to them or actually support them (in different ways) in their endeavours.

5. The Challenge of the Poor and the "New Forms of Poverty"

The attention that Catholic schools and universities pay to the poor was continually mentioned in the documents sent by those who responded to the questionnaire.

The main issues that were emphasized were: attention to material poverty and to the lack of resources needed for living a dignified life; the lack of resources that are needed to continue one's studies (i.e. to enrol in Catholic schools and universities that, without large endowments, struggle to deal with such demand, although they would like to be able to satisfy it). A heartfelt concern was also expressed for people with disabilities, as was a concern for people who have special educational needs and, therefore, require special assistance.

Material needs are most noticeable in the poor areas of the world, even if they are also found in richer countries. Concern for the various situations of poverty becomes the primary point of reference, which must be taken on board by the whole community: by the professional and educational community, with responsibility for schools or universities; by the social community in which our Catholic institutions are located; and also by the Church community, which should support Catholic institutions.

Not by Bread Alone

*"But what is poverty? This is usually kept quiet, what is frequently highlighted is that there is not enough money to create jobs, to invest in awareness, in talents, to plan new welfare, to safeguard the environment. This is right, but the real problem is not money because money alone cannot generate development. Lack of money has become an excuse for not hearing the cry of the poor and the suffering of those who have lost the dignity of bringing bread home because they have lost their job. The risk is the indifference that renders us blind, deaf and dumb, present only to ourselves, with a mirror in front of us, such that all that happens is irrelevant. Men and women closed within themselves. There was someone like this who was called Narcissus... Do not take that path! We are called to go further on and to respond to real needs. To go beyond means to expand and not to restrict, to create spaces and not limit oneself to controlling them. To cross over means to free goodness and enjoy its fruit."*⁴

The processes of impoverishment are engulfing an ever larger share of the total population, and they translate into a lack of basic livelihood; for many people, this means their very survival becomes impossible. But that is not all. Beyond the anxiety caused by such an alarming and unjustifiable situation, other forms of poverty must also be considered. These have to do with concerns other than wage differences, minimum income levels, and the criteria we use to measure poverty. For other aspects emerge, relating to human impoverishment, i.e. impoverishment of life's spiritual quality. Today, we use the expression "new forms of poverty" to describe a complex phenomenon, which involves various kinds of need, and not just the primary needs related to the availability of those material goods necessary for survival. In fact, other needs also must be considered, as well as those institutions and political authorities whose responsibility it is to see to those needs (health care, hygiene, welfare, education, etc.). Furthermore, people have relational, cultural and spiritual needs, related to the crisis of community ties, the weakening of affective interpersonal relationships, questions of solidarity and the spreading of social exclusion, etc. Finally, but by no means least, there is the need to give meaning to one's life.

⁴ Pope Francis, *La trappola di Narciso*, L'Osservatore Romano, November 22, 2014.

One's income level remains a key indicator of poverty, but on its own is insufficient. There are other kinds of poverty that cause concern and must be considered. These are the so-called new forms of poverty, which provoke new challenges.

Attention to poverty - old and new, material and spiritual - is a fundamental trait of our educational institutions' identity, an imperative that Catholic schools and universities cannot avoid without losing their very essence.

As a religious congregation in Chile reminded us: "*Colleges and universities have endeavored to provide comprehensive quality education, addressing all dimensions of the human person, without social discrimination, but focusing mainly on the poorest*" (Chile, a religious congregation).

Our commitment to the poor, which, to use an expression that we found in a document of the Salesians, "*makes prophetic*" the presence of Catholic schools and universities, now has to deal with forms of poverty that are not only material. "*It's imperative that the community understands what it is to be an authentically Catholic school*" (Australia, a diocese).

Secularization

Secularization is the breeding ground for a form of spiritual poverty in rapid expansion. If large parts of the world are seeing a major expansion of the threat of fundamentalism, relativism has gained more and more ground in traditionally Christian countries, which are increasingly undermined by a loss of the dimension of the sacred. In mainstream culture and in common thought, God is increasingly less present, and everyday life is dominated by a sense of self-sufficiency that renders any reference to Christian values redundant. These values are often confined to the private sphere, are seen as being a leftover from childhood, or sometimes are decidedly ignored. Widespread cultural and religious pluralism is a habitat that favours relativism. The Catholic religion loses its relevance in an increasingly competitive environment. Here, those who contend for the faithful are not so much other religions, but rather a multiplicity of actors or movements, which influence people's lives by offering them new meaning and values, which are often consumerism, fame, or the pursuit of personal success at any cost. All this helps to transform faith into a private matter, something hidden, no longer shared and spoken of in the social sphere.

In this cultural context, the issue of education emerges as a particular emergency. Hence, the urgent need for Catholic schools and universities to learn to speak to the human heart, and grow in their ability to rekindle the question about the meaning of life and reality, which risks being forgotten.

How, through the educational activity of Catholic schools and universities, do we convey the problem about God to today's secular society?

Uninterest and Disengagement

Many of those who choose Catholic educational institutions do so not because of their faith, nor because they are inspired by the spiritual and humanistic values inherent in such institutions' educational goals. In fact, they show no interest at all in such values. Many parents enroll their children in the hope of entrusting them to an environment full of opportunities, with high-quality educational or academic training, from which they can reasonably expect their children to gain advantage in terms of success and career. How to respond to these disengaged or uninterested Catholic families who want a Catholic education for their children, but consider its very soul to be superfluous, and do not feel the least involved and co-responsible? (Australia, a diocese)

Several contributions we received suggested a greater integration of parish or diocesan pastoral care with school ministry. The aim is to encourage parents to participate in school life and students, both in schools and universities, to assume a pro-active role. Very often this task is entrusted to the priest in charge, at the school or university, even if the vocations crisis brings with it the problem of a lack of personnel, as noted, for example, by a document of the Czech Bishops' Conference. "*The Church, for her part, makes every effort to assign school chaplains to her schools. The Czech Bishops' Conference has organized two national meetings of school chaplains so far, both of them with some ecumenical overlap. Owing to the permanent lack of priests, it is impossible for them to have a school chaplaincy as their only pastoral duty*" (Czech Catholic Bishops' Conference). In any case, pastoral activity that integrates the activities of schools or universities with the local Church is not easy. "*Catholic schools and universities in Spain are concerned about evangelization, not only to provide quality teaching, as we said earlier. However, it is not easy to integrate schools and universities within diocesan pastoral plans, for example*" (Spain, a university).

What approach should school ministry take to help students and their families to deepen the religious meaning of their learning experience within a Catholic school or university? How can we help to help people's choices evolve, so that what prevails is not a utilitarian choice, but a choice for a holistic formation?

Erosion of Identity

"*In the French secular tradition, school programmes make little room for religious content.*" This complaint can be found in a document from France, but such a warning gives voice to many other similar experiences from different parts of the world. The problem is not only that State school programmes are increasingly reluctant to pay attention to the religious dimension; certainly not in confessional terms, but not even as a key element of culture. Such exclusion of religion and faith from our cultural heritage, as a human experience, is an impoverishment that principally affects State school students. However, even Catholic schools are forced to deal with this problem, since it touches them in at least two ways.

Firstly, we have to fight against the dangers of conformity, which leads us to adopt curricula uncritically and without vigilance, and thus surrend the chance to express our own original goals.

"*The first key challenge that Catholic schools must face is the ability to develop educational goals that are highly original and specific in comparison to the other educational goals, such as those offered by public schools or by private, commercial schools*" (Italy, an Association).

A second critical issue is the interference of the State that, in some countries, while granting the Church the right to promote her own educational institutions, seeks to impose its programmes as well as constraints that limit cultural and proactive freedom.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Gabon has complained that hostility against an education that expresses religious identity is also manifested through pressing interference in classroom teaching: "*The recruitment method that slots in many intruders into the Catholic educational system and textbooks imposed by the State mean that school teams fail to offer the faith. There is a challenge for the school community: teachers, parents and principals, together with the students, form one great educational community that is called to cooperate with the institutions of the Church.*"

In such cases, the school community is faced with a most difficult challenge: teachers, parents, students and managers form an educational community that is called to resist, finding strength in its bonds with the Church.

What can we do against State intrusion that tends to impose contents on school curricula to the extend of expunging every possible reference to the spiritual and religious dimensions of human experience?

The Economic Sustainability of Catholic Schools and Universities

The *Instrumentum Laboris* highlights the challenge of sustaining Catholic education. In a scenario of global economic crisis, Catholic schools and universities live daily with the challenge of having to do more and better, but with limited means and resources. The economic crisis has given rise to new forms of poverty even for those who once represented the middle class. On the one hand, this has made school fees unaffordable for many families; on the other hand, it has increased the need for subsidies to education for the poorest, who no longer have any social coverage because of the downsizing of welfare protection by the State.

Sustaining their activities takes on strategic connotations for Catholic schools and universities, and not merely because of factors dependent on the general economic crisis. Indeed, the challenges arising from lack of means and resources have become structural, as they result both from the reduction of (potential) State and private funding, and from the increased production costs of educational services. In particular, the cost of Catholic education is affected by three main structural drivers of change:

- more sophisticated learning environments signify a push towards increased costs in premises, new technology, staff training and expansion of support resources;
- the reduction of religious personnel leads to greater reliance on lay teachers, who tend to be paid more;
- new systems of accountability – with the consequent emphasis on documentation, transparency and procedures – introduce new forms of inflexibility in educational processes, with more upward pressure on the costs of compliance.

Attention to the Weakest and to Families with Economic Difficulties

The *Instrumentum Laboris* reads: “The diversity of learners - those who find themselves in greater difficulties, who are poorer, more fragile or needy, should not be seen as a burden or obstacle, but as the most important students, who should be at the center of schools’ attention and concerns.”

On the other hand, this aspect of the distinctive mission of Catholic schools and universities highlights the challenge created by a lack of means and resources. In fact, our analysis of the questionnaires highlighted the frequent occurrence of the idea “shortage/scarcity” in the responses offered by the different categories of stakeholders. The centrality of this issue is well summarized in the response of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Slovenia. “*The challenge of limited means and resources is the most demanding, since we do not have the proper tools to deal with it. Others are also demanding, but we are already dealing with them with some success*”.

Typically, the response from all over the world – from religious congregations, dioceses, associations, schools and universities – was to mention the shortage of their resources. According to respondents, the effects of the economic crisis have weakened families’ abilities to afford education, even in situations that are not characterized by widespread poverty. In many cases, the subsequent closing of Catholic schools was noted. However, some are increasing their effort and forming new

approaches to meet this challenge, especially in favour of poorer students. The statistical methodology used by this study allowed us to select the more prevalent key themes. The responses to the questionnaire mentioned various strategies for intervention, including the need to develop policies for financial assistance, both directly through scholarships and indirectly through fee differentiation. Particularly interesting was the idea of co-responsibility illustrated by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission. “*Co-responsibility is used by schools in the Congregation to contribute according to their possibility and receive according to their need. Co-responsibility supports schools with mostly low socio-economic families to function with little fee income*” (Australia).

In some countries, such as the U.S.A. and Australia, students have the opportunity to access a governmental loan system, which allows them to defer paying taxes until they have graduated and have a full time job. In other countries no such possibility exists. Especially in Africa, a lack of interest on the part of politicians and the unreliability of some States and governments have been mentioned; one result is a lack of funding and adequate regulation of relations between Church and State.

Given the gravity of the situation, in many parts of the world people are devising new ways of working and new approaches to tuition fees. Some questionnaire responses based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* highlighted the fact that Catholic schools and universities are involved in strategies to reduce fees in order to favour the accessibility to quality education for all. For example, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Morocco suggested a layout of fees based on a careful analysis of the production costs of various services. “*Tuition fees charged to parents are calculated as accurately as possible, so that we have the lowest prices compared to other private schools. However, for valid commercial reasons, we may give discounts (or even in specific cases offer free education) to needy parents. It should be noted, in this context, that we enjoy no help whatsoever from the State or any international organization*”.

It is interesting to note the forms of unconventional ways to support students and families in financial difficulty. The participation of students in the educational community is also mentioned as a key resource to help keep down the level of tuition fees:

- The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Mali claimed that student participation is also reflected in their organizing business activities to raise funds to support cooperative policies of tuition fees. In India, the role of alumni is highlighted: “*Former students are encouraged to be in touch with the school. They participate in certain activities of the school and have an annual gathering. Some of them sponsor the poor and the needy students*”.
- In Bosnia, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference points out that “*school alumni organize regular annual meetings. For this purpose, with the help of their friends in the school system, the Foundation "Za mudrost the plemenitost" ("For wisdom and generosity") was established, which assigns scholarships to former students (up to one hundred per year), thus helping them to choose to continue their education*”.
- In Brazil, “The Blue Education Network” is a philanthropic institution that grants 20% in scholarships for students of all age groups with financial difficulties.
- In Papua New Guinea, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference pointed out that “*many missionary groups identify needy students and are generous in assisting them with school fees and other basic necessities*”.
- The University of Bukavu in the Democratic Republic of Congo stated: “*we have benefited greatly from the support and experience of friends and partners of the Catholic University of Leuven*”.

The themes surrounding the word “scholarship” reveal significant differences among the different continents and Catholic institutions. In some countries, such as Spain, the State has launched aid programmes for students based on their financial situation and academic performance. In contrast, in other countries this does not happen and Catholic institutions have to aid students directly. The local conditions do not always support these scholarship policies. In Venezuela and Uruguay not all Catholic institutions are supported by the State, and although this makes it difficult to produce good support schemes for students and families in need, the basic attitude is to “do everything possible”.

The overall picture that emerged from the responses to the questionnaire highlighted the supportive role played by Catholic schools and universities in assisting students, with a clear movement towards a policy of giving scholarships to students and families in need. In fact, although there are examples of aid schemes based on merit, this is never an absolute standard or an exclusive option. Across the board, scholarship policies are driven by the need to support students and families in financial difficulty.

Finally, given that resources are scarce and considering the growing number of those seeking financial support or a reduction in their school fees, it is important for Catholic schools and universities to develop managerial skills, promoting high professional services in analyzing the financial needs of households. This is an organizational aspect of the problem, whose importance is underlined when we consider the need to rationalize even more the ways in which we differentiate fees and create policies for selecting scholarships.

Conclusion

On 28 October 1965, Pope Paul VI promulgated the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis*, when the circumstances of education in the world – on the cultural, social, political, economic, juridical and technological levels – was profoundly different from the circumstances of today. Indeed, the number of Catholic institutions and enrolled students was at wide variance from our current situation. In 2012, excluding the six million pupils enrolled in pre-schools, Catholic schools and universities around the world welcomed nearly fifty-eight million students, with an average growth of eighty-six per cent between 1971 and 2012, which becomes nearly three hundred per cent just for students enrolled in Catholic universities:

	1971	2012
Primary schools	20.970.642	33.086.798
High schools	8.679.267	18.869.237
Catholic Universities	1.506.562	6.010.640
Total	31.156.471	57.966.675

This has been an extraordinary growth, globally speaking, that, for primary and secondary schools, has been characterized by a rebalancing of the student population from the traditional European and North American geographical areas to other parts of the world, especially Africa and Asia. Catholic universities reported a greater presence of students in all Catholic institutions in the world, with peaks of growth equal to forty-seven times in Africa, and more than seven times in Oceania, Central America and South America.

Within a general context of profound change and, at the same time, greater worldwide impact of Catholic education, the presence of Catholic schools and universities has not changed its significance. However, so as to meet the many challenges of today, we need to redefine, for current circumstances, how they are to be present and serve.

The analysis of the responses to the 149 questionnaires collected and based on the *Instrumentum Laboris* enabled us to offer a general summary of the main challenges in the world of Catholic education today. We could also sum up the initiatives and strategies that have been developed to face these challenges, and their prospective future significance.

As suggested by the *Instrumentum Laboris*, the responses to the questionnaire helped us to reflect on the importance of Catholic education in the context of the New Evangelization. We could ask, from a pastoral point of view, what is the commitment of the Church in this area, and what initiatives of updating and training staff are being promoted in Catholic schools and universities. In these terms, we can say that the *Instrumentum Laboris* is playing the role expected of it, to guide and assist the academic conferences and other Church and cultural events held to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

The questionnaires arrived from sixty-two countries and include 11,600 entries, which are repeated in 222,700 words expressed in the various languages of the respondents. Yet, on both the quantitative and qualitative levels, this is only a small part of the various experiences, viewpoints, perceptions and practices in Catholic educational institutions worldwide.

From the point of view of statistics, our analysis of the responses to the questionnaire may not be able to generalize the investigation's results. Moreover, the responses to the questionnaire did not provide solutions nor give univocal and definitive responses to the questions contained in the *Instrumentum Laboris*. However, the analysis we conducted provides valuable empirical evidence, gathered from all over the world, about the topicality of the principles laid out in the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* and in the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*. These principles offer stimuli for devising new official projects and educational programmes for the future. In particular, what emerges, from our analysis of the questionnaires, as the most interesting element is the revival of some key issues already set out during the Council, which continue to drive worldwide the commitment of Catholic schools and universities:

- What are our institutions' defining characteristics, the traits that we cannot weaken or forget, despite the many different cultural, social and economic circumstances in which our educational institutions operate?
- Can we really be satisfied because our institutions are sought after, appreciated for the quality of their teaching, their abundant material resources and technology, the beauty of their classrooms or sports facilities?
- How to respond to the disengaged or uninterested Catholic families who want a Catholic education for their children, but judge as superfluous what is in fact its very soul, and do not feel the least involved or co-responsible?
- What should be our approach to school ministry, so that we can help students and their families to deepen the religious meaning of education within a Catholic school or university? How can we contribute to changing the way they make their choices, so that their choices are not prevalently utilitarian, but directed towards a holistic formation?

- What can we do against the intrusion of the State that tends to influence the content of school curricula to the extend of expunging every possible reference to the spiritual and religious dimension of human experience?
- How can our current practices of recruitment, training, coaching and sharing instill in teachers, and in an increasingly secular leadership, a profound awareness of Catholic identity and the charism that inspires it?
- How to combine a lack of means and resources with attention to those who are weak, fragile and in need, especially when there are widespread economic problems and with the onset of new forms of poverty?

Since the global scenario is very diverse, Catholic schools and universities, in carrying out their educational activity, must take into account their different situations, and learn to interact with the nuanced realities of their various circumstances.

Some educational institutions operate in countries marked by growing secularization. As recalled by *Evangelii Gaudium*, the process of secularization tends to shrink the faith and the Church to the private and personal sphere; it tends to erase any aspect of transcendence from human thought. Moreover, by fuelling a progressive relativism, it provoke general disorientation, especially among young people. In this context, the main challenges are cultural impoverishment, growing insensitivity to the sacred, the tyrannical logic of out-of-control individualism, profit at any cost, and insensitivity towards the weak and the poor.

Elsewhere, the prevailing circumstance is one of religious plurality, where Catholics are often a small minority. In this case, the challenge is intercultural and interreligious dialogue. Past experience shows how we can meet, respect and value different cultures, and thus cooperate for the benefit of others and of society. These situations place more emphasis on a particular feature of Catholic education: by its very nature, it is intercultural. Catholic schools and universities are called to create a forum for discussing the significance that different peoples, cultures and religions place on their respective symbols. Here one can learn to share universal values such as solidarity, tolerance and freedom.

Finally, in countries interfaith dialogue seems impossible; it is forbidden to show any public expression of religious affiliation other than for the dominant religion. The various local contexts determine the way of presence is shaped. What is required is that we can listen to others' needs, respect their particular cultural expressions, and shape our presence with two principles in mind : consistency with our own identity, and consideration how we can realistically express that in our activities. Even in extreme circumstances, in which the Church is present but silent and where the proclamation of the Gospel is limited to the witness of our lives, there are Catholic schools and universities offering a humanly rich educational environment, quietly building bridges that favour the encounter between cultures and between religions.

In order to fulfil their cultural and educational service, schools and universities must organize themselves so as to be guided by our community values: professional, educational and evangelizing.

The community is the *sine qua non* for human relations that are inspired by respect, dialogue, solidarity and acceptance. It is where we take care of each other, in which 'the little ones' are not discarded, but are placed at the centre of our concerns. In a community, people do not act as

individuals without relationships, indifferent towards each other, or even in direct competition. Because they are form communities, Catholic schools and universities have a central concern for the value of human relations that bind together teachers, students, parents and administrators, with ties of shared values and educational goals.

As *professional* communities, teaching and managerial staff of Catholic schools and universities must learn to think and seek together, to cooperate through interdisciplinary dialogue, and to share best practices.

As *educational* communities, they must be open to parents' and students' participation, encouraging their leadership and accountability, and sharing their journeys of formation in the faith.

As communities of *evangelization*, Catholic schools and universities are part of the wider Christian community and cooperate with the local Church.

The community is not just something to be built and experienced in certain hours of the week, within the school walls. It is also an active player vis-à-vis what lies outside its walls, i.e. its social and cultural context. School and university communities area located in defined areas; they should not be worlds apart from the wider social community, for they are called to act as agents for social improvement.

Catholic schools and universities aim for quality in their students' education, but their concern should not be limited merely to polishing their good reputation. Their educational goals expect knowledge and life to meet together; research and study aim to promote human and social development. In pursuing the holistic formation of their students, they offer a curriculum that, along with cognitive development, promotes emotional, relational and spiritual development, and encourages responsibility towards others and towards the environment. The education of the human person must be harmonious, as Pope Francis often reminds us: mind, hand and heart. The mind to understand, the heart to feel, and the hand to act accordingly - we could say, *to serve*.

Based on the principles expressed in the Declaration *Gravissimum Educationis* and in the Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, the *Instrumentum Laboris* is meant to revive the Church's involvement in education. Following our analysis of the responses to the questionnaire, we can summarize here the main guidelines for the mission of Catholic schools and universities:

- *Research*. We live in a society of knowledge, in which information abounds and is easily accessible, but at the same time there is a great superficiality, especially with regard to moral and meaning-related issues. This requires an education that teaches critical thinking and offers a path for values to mature.

To make our research activity more fruitful, and to improve our shared concern for formation, we must urgently follow, in more practical and flexible ways, what *Gravissimum Educationis* has already recommended: more cooperation between Catholic schools and universities, in all different countries, all over the world. "*Every means should be employed to foster suitable cooperation between Catholic schools, and, between these and other schools, that collaboration should be developed which the good of all mankind requires.*" And again: "*in every university let the various faculties work mutually to this end, insofar as their goal will permit. In addition, let the universities also endeavour to work together by promoting*

international gatherings, by sharing scientific inquiries with one another, by communicating their discoveries to one another, by having exchange of professors for a time and by promoting all else that is conducive to greater assistance” (*Gravissimum Educationis* 12).

- **Witness.** The main justification for the presence of Catholic schools and universities is to witness to the love of Jesus for His people, using the tools of culture and life experience. Furthermore, the dialogue between knowledge and faith, to which universities in particular are called to contribute, is part of the evangelizing activity that promotes peace and human welfare. Witness, understood as coherence of life and passion for others, whom we consider as brothers and sisters in one big human family, is the primary form of communication and, in some cases, the only one possible. Certainly, it is the most valuable.
- **Dialogue.** Dialogue does not mean relativism, but search for mutual understanding and a desire to find points for encounter. The conditions of dialogue are attentive listening, respect, empathy and compassion. Dialogue, within the school and university community, primarily engages teachers towards their students. In relation to the social community in which schools and universities operate, dialogue involves listening to the needs and searching for possible ways to cooperate with a view to the common good. In relation to cultures and religions, dialogue becomes commitment to mutual understanding, respect, listening, and collaboration-building with a view to human development.
- **Service.** The parcels of knowledge gleaned in academia are inert unless used to meet and understand reality. A good school or university education allows people to acquire skills not only within limited sectors, but in more general terms, allowing them to develop their critical thinking, creativity and initiative. The world needs highly skilled professionals; however, although this is very important, it cannot be sufficient. A well skilled person, a harmoniously skilled person, knows how to put his/her expertise at the service of others, and knows how to make such expertise become a resource for everyone. It is most important for schools and universities to help their students understand the reality in which they live. The students must not consider the problems of the human community as being unrelated to what they learn. Their education should lead them to make their knowledge and skills available to others. In so doing, their own learning is improved, made more significant and enriched by experience. “*If we can overcome individualism, we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society*” (*Encyclical Laudato Si’*, 208).
- **Inclusion.** Schools and universities are now highly aware of issues relating to evaluation. They wish to see acknowledged the quality of what they offer, when the various rankings, both domestic and international, are drawn up. This concern they have for quality is praiseworthy, because, over and above the position they obtain in rankings, an institution’s good evaluation means it is working well for its students and the wider social community. However, there is one verification policy not considered by rating agencies, and yet it should be our institutions’ main concern: the real test of whether their service is authentic is their attention to the poor and concern for those in disadvantaged circumstances. There is always the risk that we forget the poor; this calls for maximum vigilance. “*Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people’s pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else’s responsibility and not our own*” (*Evangelii Gaudium* 54). *Evangelii Gaudium* goes on to warn: “*No one must say that they cannot be close to the poor because their own lifestyle demands more attention to other areas. This is an excuse commonly heard in academic,*

business or professional, and even ecclesial circles” (*ibid*, 201). We must never forget that salvation comes to us from the peripheries and not from opulence.

- *Hope*. Educating is an act of hope, a bet on the future that is built on a journey of discovery; a journey of restlessness that moves in the direction of beauty; a journey for the ‘hidden treasure’, whose existence the faith guarantees us. Hope, in the context of education, makes us believe that it is always possible to develop new ways “*of going out of ourselves towards the other*” (Encyclical *Laudato Si’*, 208). We walk in hope, in the midst of many difficulties, without losing joy, in the certainty that the Father will give us all that we require.

Methodological Appendix

This chapter aims to demonstrate and describe the choice of methodology, related to data analysis, and to present the main results of this analysis, giving empirical support to the main themes explored in the document. Specifically, it provides a brief overview of the tools used for analysis (with reference also to the TLAB software). Then, we will describe the kinds of data used for analysis, the sample of persons who responded to the questionnaire, and the exploratory analyses using the available database.

Quantitative and Semi-Automatic Analysis of the Texts

The TLAB software is based on models of psycho-linguistic and textual statistics, which are useful for effectively summarizing and extracting information from large amounts of text. This software is a collection of tools for quantitative textual analysis. Specifically, three types of analysis were used:

- analysis of co-occurrences;
- thematic analysis;
- comparative analysis.

Essentially, in analyzing co-occurrences we focus on word frequency and on the proximity of word groups (whether they are closer or further away in the text). Through thematic analysis, we can select text blocks that emerge as particularly relevant with word sets triggered by a keyword. Comparative analyses, which are implemented through the analysis of specific features (for example, to what extent a word has been over-utilized or under-utilized in a particular geographical area, or by a particular category of subjects), correspondence analysis (which summarizes the entire textual information in a reduced number of factors) and cluster analysis (which groups together e.g. subjects, based on the words used in their responses).

Specifically, *word association* shows us the connections (near and far) of a single word with other words in the text. In graph form, a “central” word is linked with a number of lines to other more or less close/distant words. In this example, the word ‘teachers’ is close to ‘Catholic’, but distant from ‘principals’.

Concept mapping gives us a brief description of the most frequently used words and their mutual proximity in the text. The larger the coloured bubbles, the more frequently words are used in the text. The closer the bubbles, the more the words are close to each other in the text.

Thematic analyses allow us to return to the original text, not through random selections, but through indications of significance: the excerpts are ranked according to how they are representative of a

network of words triggered by a single keyword.

Description of the Sample of Stakeholders Who Completed the Questionnaire

A total of 149 questionnaires were collected, from 62 countries worldwide, practically from all Continents.

Figure 1

Percentages of the responses to the questionnaire received from the different Continents.

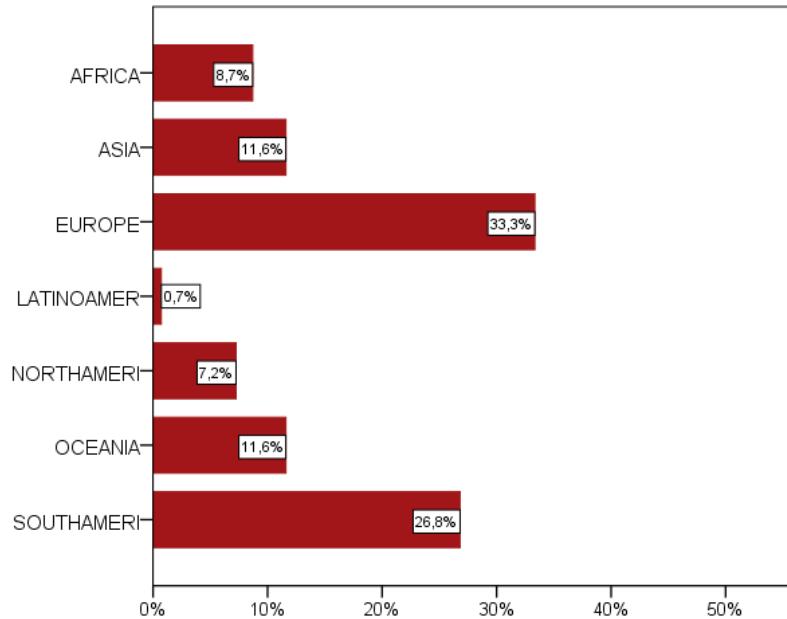
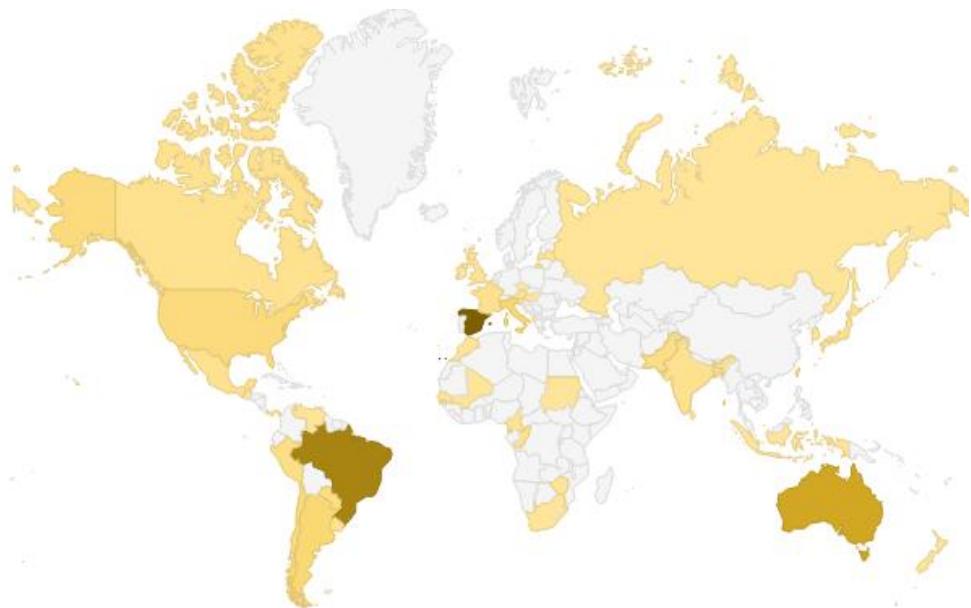


Figure 2

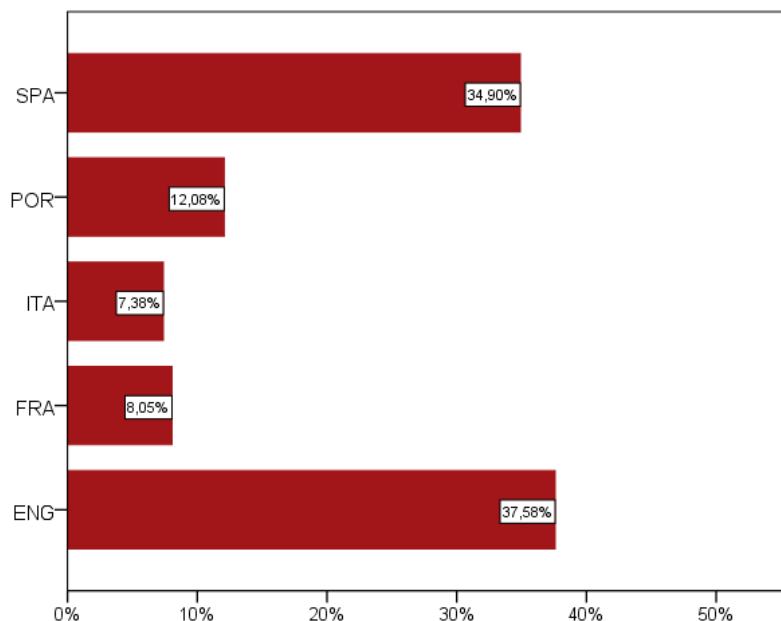
Frequency of questionnaires per participating country (darker colours indicate a greater number of completed questionnaires; grey signifies an absence of questionnaires)



As can be seen from the graphs in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, most of the 149 questionnaires were collected from Europe (about 33%), followed by South America (about 27%). Both Oceania and Asia had around 12%, while Africa and North America were both below 10%. The country from where the most questionnaires came was Spain (15.4%), followed by Brazil (12.8%), Australia (10.1%), Argentina and Italy (both at 3.4%). The remaining countries had percentages between 1% and 2%, which means that the average per country of completed questionnaires was about 2.5% (Fig. 2).

Figure 3

Spread (in percent) of languages used for filling in the questionnaire.



Besides geographical location, it is interesting to note the language used for filling in the questionnaire (Fig. 3): the most widely used languages were English (about 38% of questionnaires) and Spanish (about 34%). Portuguese - although Brazil, as we saw, was one of the countries with the largest number of questionnaires – was only about 12%.

As for official groups of respondents, they were divided into the following six categories: religious associations, Catholic Bishops' Conferences, religious congregations, dioceses, schools, and universities. The graph in Fig. 4 indicates Catholic Bishops' Conferences and religious congregations as the most common types: between 24% and 26%. An intermediate spread is attributed to universities, schools, and dioceses (between 13% and 16%), while religious associations remain in the background (6%).

By cross matching the data of geographical location by continent with those relating to official groups of respondents, it emerged that in Africa most questionnaires were completed by Catholic Bishops' Conferences (66%; none were filled in by associations, dioceses or schools); Asia gave similar results, with Catholic Bishops' Conferences at around 44%, followed closely by the religious congregations (37.5%), and 6.3% for associations. In Europe, too, principally Catholic Bishops' Conferences completed the questionnaire (32.6%), with schools at 24% and dioceses and universities both at 13%. In North America, the list is headed by dioceses (30%) and universities (30%),

followed by religious congregations (20%). In South America, it is headed by religious congregations (27%) and schools (32%). In Oceania, it is headed by dioceses (50%) and Catholic Bishops' Conferences (31%).

Figure 4

Distribution (in percentage) of the types of official respondents that completed the questionnaire.

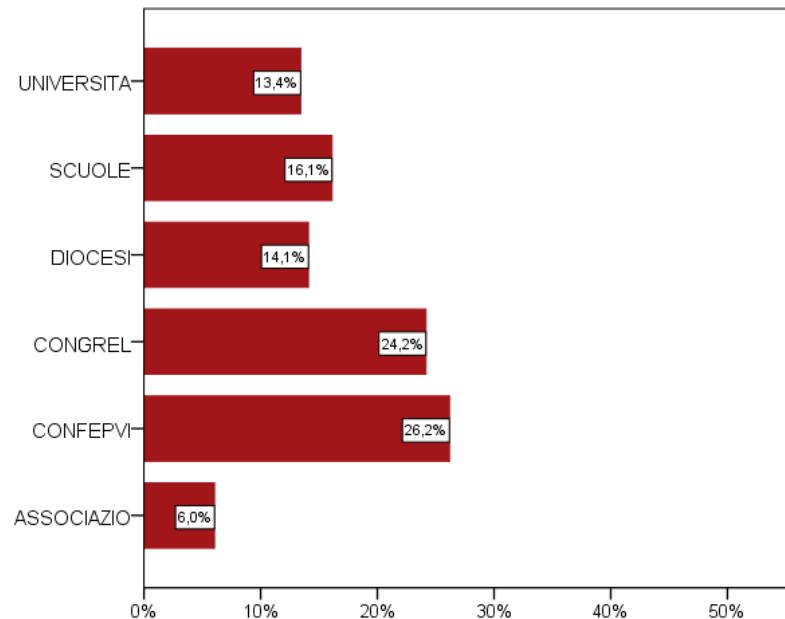
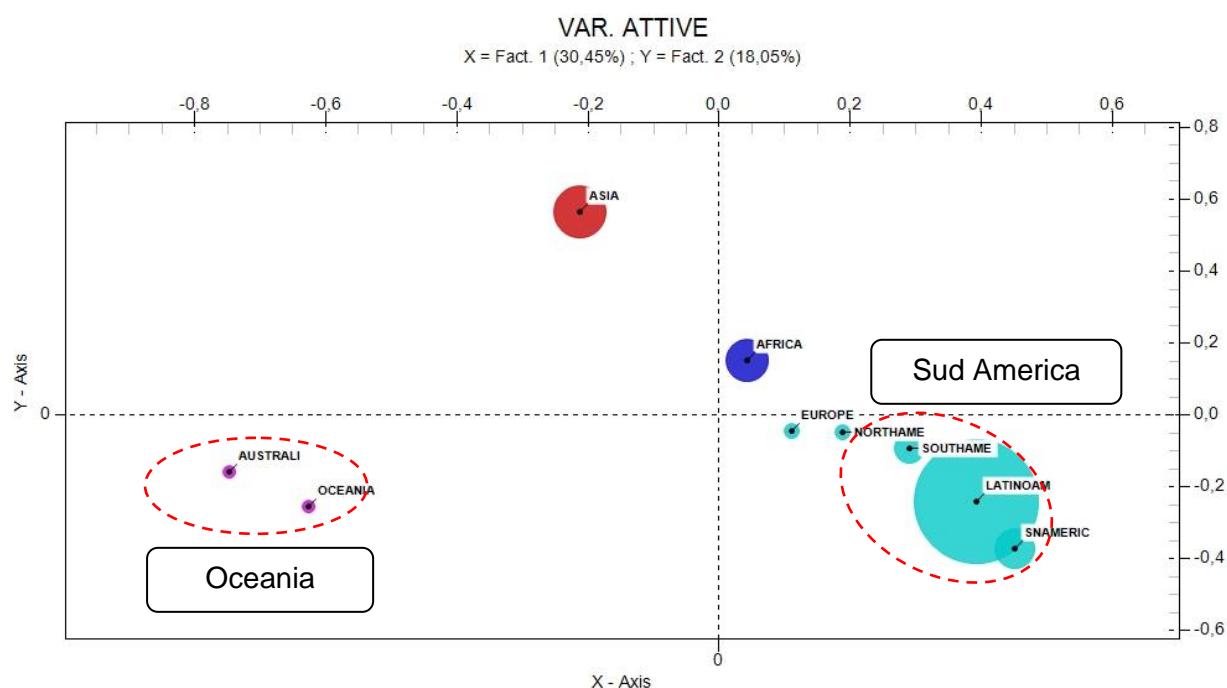


Figure 5

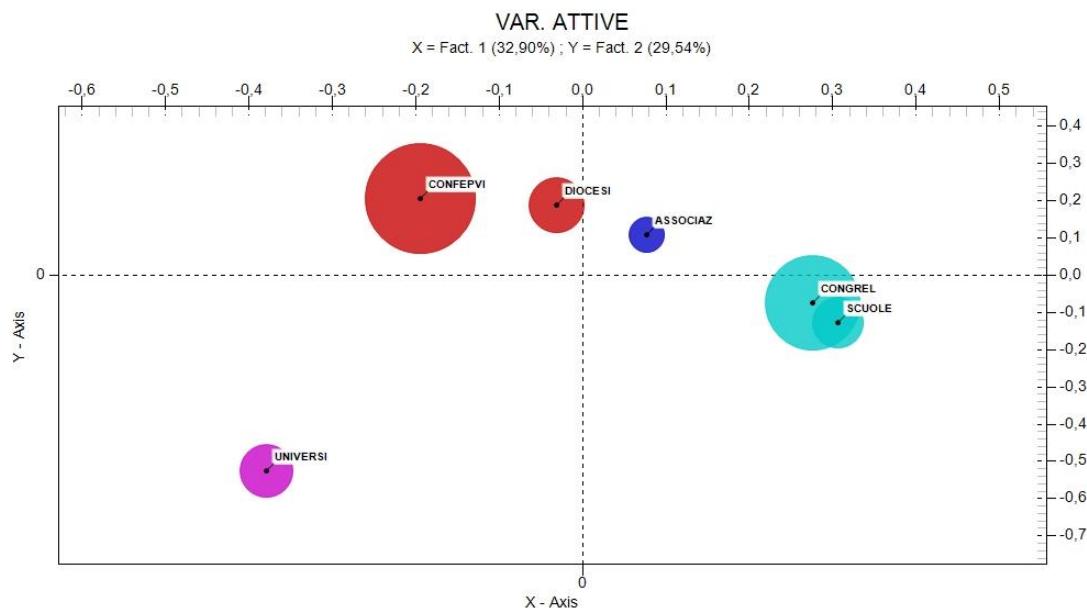
Amount of text produced - and its spread - in the responses to the questionnaires, according to the Continent of origin (TLAB output, correspondence analysis).



Considering the amount of text produced in the responses by the various stakeholders throughout the world, and especially the level of how spread out the respondents are in proportion to their Continents of origin (large areas are characterized by greater spread with respect to their corresponding central areas in the graph). In Fig. 5 we can see the actual “presence” of geographical areas within the one textual corpus, formed from all questionnaires put together. South America (in the lower right quadrant) produced most of the textual data, but also has the greatest internal spread (so countries in the same Continent may be distant from each other as regards the words they use in their responses), followed by Asia and Africa. This finding is partially consistent with the graph in Fig. 2 (the case of Brazil as one of the countries in the world with the highest number of completed questionnaires), but partly it is not, as in the case of Asia, and especially Africa. We will return later to this point; but another element that emerges clearly from the graph is the clear differentiation between the words used, on the one hand, by the European and American block as compared, on the other hand, to the Oceania block; and then between these blocks and Asia, and - in part - Africa.

Figure 6

Amount of text produced - and its spread - in the responses to the questionnaires, according to the Continent of origin (TLAB output, correspondence analysis).



The same kind of exploratory analysis was realized with regard to official respondents (Fig. 6). As can be seen, Bishops' Conferences and religious congregations were the institutions that produced most text in their responses, and also had the greatest spread in the central areas in their graphical representation. Associations, in addition to being few, also produced limited text compared to others. It may also be noted that universities used an almost completely different vocabulary from that used by the other categories. At the same time, we can observe the contrast between Bishops' Conferences and religious congregations, and how schools resemble the latter in terms of the vocabulary used in their responses.

Analysis of Textual Data

The textual data collected with the questionnaires were analyzed through semi-automatic procedures for textual quantitative analysis, using TLAB software. To obtain a “universal” picture of the questionnaires’ contents, the texts that were not originally in English were translated into this language using an automatic translator (Google Translate). Subsequently, the research team tested the quality of these automatic translations throughout the whole corpus, correcting, wherever necessary, those translations that seemed incorrect or inconsistent with the meaning of the actual written texts. The text was then prepared for analysis by assembling a working file made up of 2,482 text cells (each “cell” containing the full answer given by the respondents to the individual questions of the questionnaire - for the software, this text forms the “elementary contexts” to be analyzed).

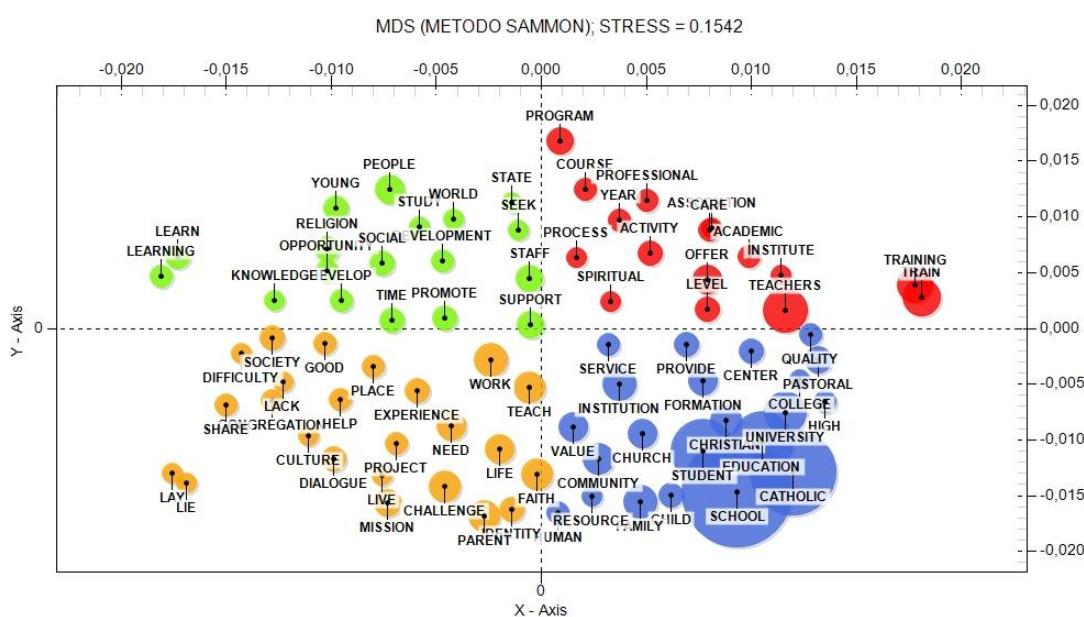
The corpus under analysis is thus composed of 222,700 words, including about 11,600 lemmas (222,700 therefore corresponds to a multiple of 11,600 lemmas). The word most frequently used in the responses is “school” with 4,292 occurrences, followed by “Catholic” with 3,013 occurrences, “student” with 1,898, “education” with 1,822, “university” with 1,104, and “teachers” with 1,055. These first six words are the only ones to exceed 1,000 occurrences in the whole corpus.

Multidimensional Analysis and Concept Maps

The outcome of the multidimensional analysis is shown in Fig. 7. This analysis allows us to summarize the entire textual information contained in the corpus in terms of “proximity vs distance” and “higher vs lower frequency” of words, framed within a Cartesian plane based on two main factors, creating four quadrants, each of a different colour. In the lower right quadrant, we find the top six most frequent words (larger dots) described above, which, as can be seen, are all close to each other, if not overlapping. This means there is a very high probability of finding these words in the same elementary contexts (sentences, paragraphs, etc.) produced by the respondents.

Figure 7

Concept Map as an outcome of the multidimensional analysis of the entire textual corpus.

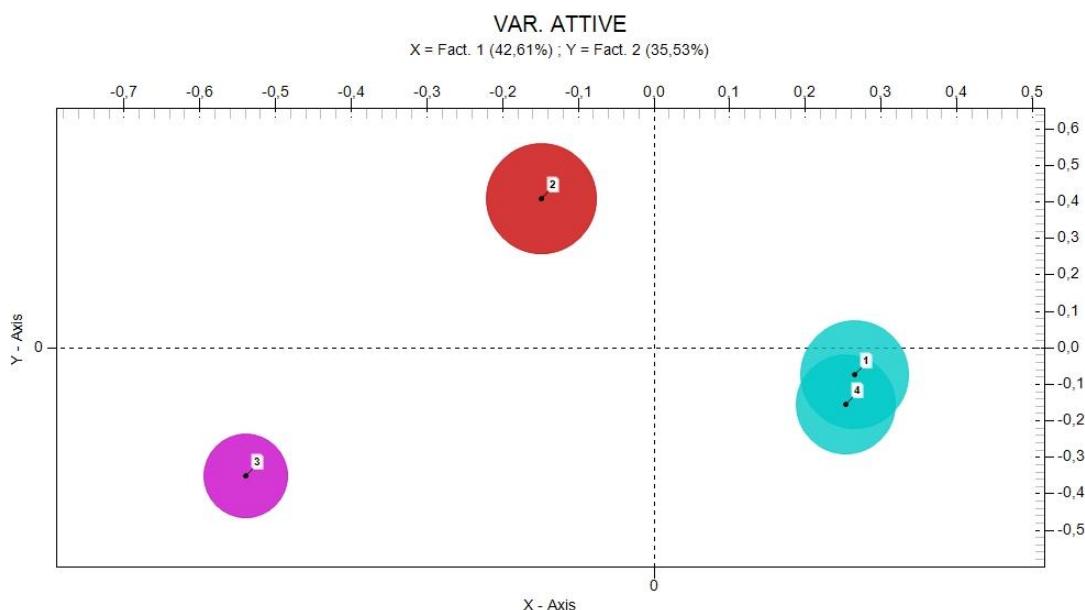


The word “teachers” appears in the upper right quadrant, although in the area bordering the blue quadrant. Please note the distance between the term “teachers” and entries such as “learning”, “knowledge”, “development”, “religion”, “young”, “people” and “study”. On the other axis (Y), can be seen the distance between “programme” and “faith”, a word which, in the orange quadrant, appears close to “identity”, “parent”, “life” and “challenge”.

In this exploratory phase it was useful to evaluate the actual “independence” of the responses to the four main questions (or areas) of the questionnaire. As can be seen from the graph in Fig. 8, there is obviously some overlap of the responses to questions 1 and 4: it is very likely that respondents used in part a common vocabulary to answer these questions. If we look at the spatial locations in the two Cartesian axes, groupings 1 and 4 are opposite to question 3, while the latter is more opposite to question 2, if we take into account the Y axis. Overall, therefore, apart from the partial overlapping of questions 1 and 4, we can consider the texts of the four areas as largely independent, and therefore characteristic of the specific themes treated.

Figure 8

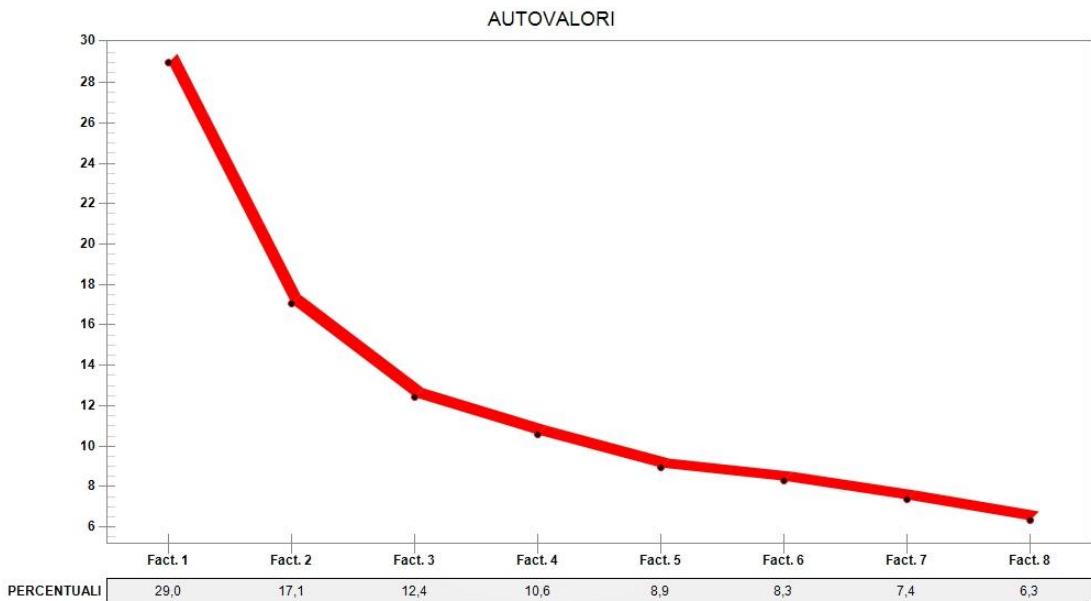
Amount of text produced, and its spread in the responses to the questionnaires, according to the four main questions (TLAB output, correspondence analysis).



Correspondence Analysis

A further analytical exploration of the entire corpus is formed by correspondence analysis, which is the equivalent to the analysis in principal components (APC) for textual data. It is able to summarize the information contained in a complex corpus through a limited number of factors or components.

Figure 9
Screen plots of correspondence analysis on the entire corpus.



As can be seen from the screen plot in Fig. 9, the top three factors account for about 60% of the total variance. Looking at the graph, the transition from the third to the fourth factor shows the greater change of inclination among the first factors; therefore, it is reasonable to select the first three factors for the next analysis.

The first factor, as can be seen from Table 1, is characterized by the dual poles of Oceania and South America. The Oceania pole is characterized by certain structural and formal aspects of educational supply (“staff”, “office”, “accreditation”, etc.), while the South American pole has different points of reference, partly social (“human”, “space”, “network” and “solidarity”), and partly organizational (“institution”, “centre” and “training”). As can be seen from Fig. 10, the first factor (within the South American pole) can be found mainly in Central and South America and in Mediterranean Europe. It is almost totally absent in Australia, for example. Information like this, along with the reading of the responses to the questionnaire, enables us to identify some specific thematic contexts in each geographical area:

Table 1

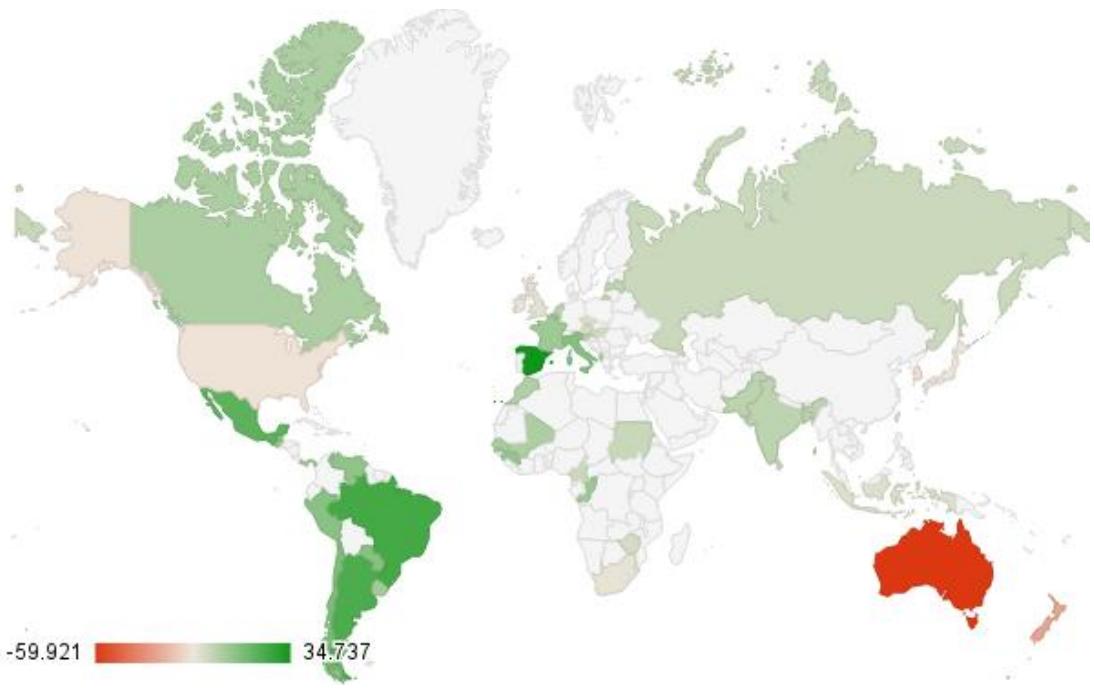
Description of the first factor (dual polarity) extracted from the analysis of correspondences.

POLARITY (-)	CONTR.	POLARITY (+)	CONTR.ASS.
--------------	--------	--------------	------------

ASS.		
SOUTH		
VAR OCEANIA	0,6579 VAR AMERICA	0,1677
---	-----	-----
LEM Catholic	0,0642 LEM Training	0,0165
LEM Australia	0,042 LEM train	0,0159
LEM Australian	0,0358 LEM educational	0,0121
LEM school	0,0289 LEM institution	0,007
LEM Zealand	0,0179 LEM Center	0,0069
LEM Queensland	0,0149 LEM human	0,0057
LEM Tertiary	0,0149 LEM proposal	0,0053
LEM staff	0,0143 LEM space	0,0052
LEM evangelization	0,014 LEM Project	0,0049
LEM Office	0,0133 LEM work	0,0042
LEM Bishop	0,0102 LEM pastoral	0,0041
LEM Shepherd	0,0096 LEM economic	0,0039
LEM accreditation	0,0092 LEM network	0,0037
LEM Program	0,0084 LEM Christian	0,0035
LEM Fee	0,008 LEM reality	0,0034
LEM Leader	0,0079 LEM action	0,0031
LEM Assist	0,0079 LEM solidarity	0,0028

Figure 10

Factor scores for the first factor for each country involved (dark green represents the maximum presence of the factor, dark red the minimum presence, grey shades represent intermediate levels, light grey is lack of information).



The second factor (Fig. 6) once again shows Oceania's polarity as opposed to Asia's. Here again, Oceania is characterized by lemmas and thematic contexts that are different from Asian ones, as Asia is more focused on students and the relationship between faith and education.

From the geographical point of view, the second factor is different in nearly all countries, with various nuances. The most archetypal cases can be found in East Asia, with the abovementioned emphasis on students and the relationship between faith and education.

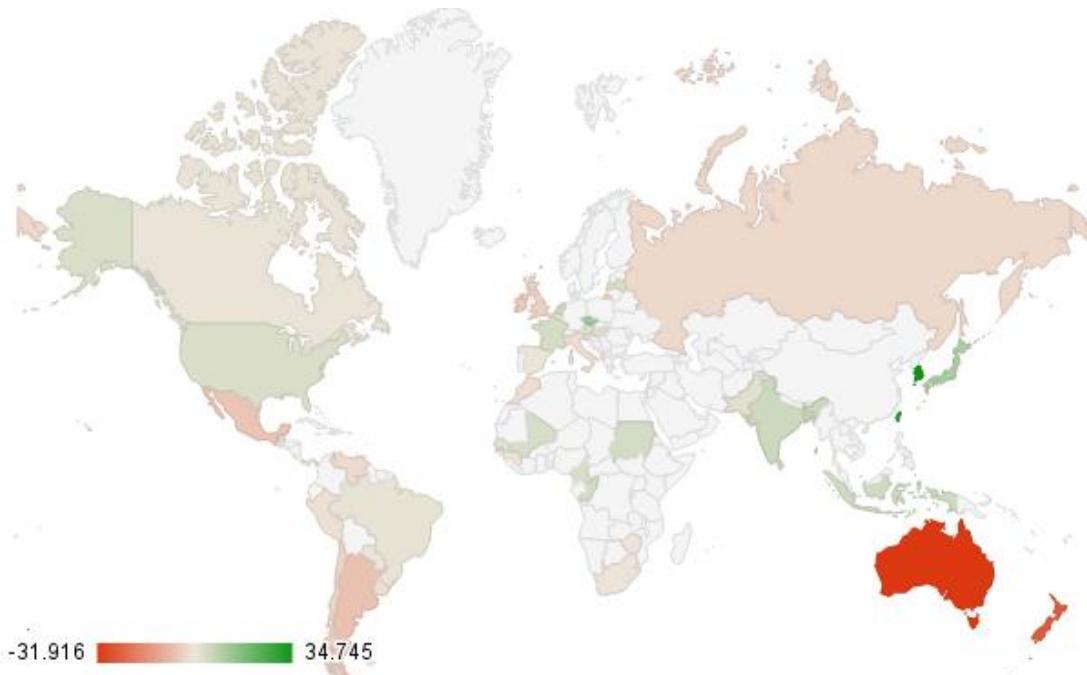
Table 2

Description of the second factor (dual polarity) extracted from the analysis of correspondences.

POLARITY (-))	CONTR. ASS.		CONTR. POLARITY (+) ASS.	
	VAR	OCEANIA	VAR	ASIA
		0,1808		0,7027
---	---	---	---	---
LEM Australia		0,0199	LEM Korea	0,042
LEM Australian		0,0167	LEM Taiwan	0,0339
LEM Zealand		0,0083	LEM Vicariate	0,0229
LEM Queensland		0,007	LEM student	0,0194
LEM Tertiary		0,0069	LEM Muslim	0,0138
LEM process		0,0067	LEM Class	0,0119
LEM evangelisation		0,0057	LEM personality	0,0115
LEM Church		0,0052	LEM club	0,0112
LEM Shepherd		0,005	LEM impart	0,0099
LEM accreditation		0,0049	LEM Bible	0,0095
LEM seek		0,0041	LEM Love	0,0086
LEM engagement		0,0037	LEM Examination	0,0083
LEM Project		0,0035	LEM administrator	0,0082
LEM community		0,0034	LEM program	0,0081
LEM institute		0,0032	LEM association	0,008
LEM reflection		0,003	LEM non-Catholic	0,0079
LEM theology		0,003	LEM	

Figure 11

Factor scores for the second factor for each country involved (dark green represents the maximum presence of the factor, dark red the minimum presence, grey shades represent intermediate levels, light grey is lack of information).



The third factor (Fig. 7) contrasts Europe with South America. At the European pole, we have an insight of the formal and organizational elements, while at the South American pole, words such as “value”, “development”, “process”, and “human” refer to a vision focused on the person in the making.

Table 3

Description of the third factor (dual polarity) extracted from the analysis of correspondences.

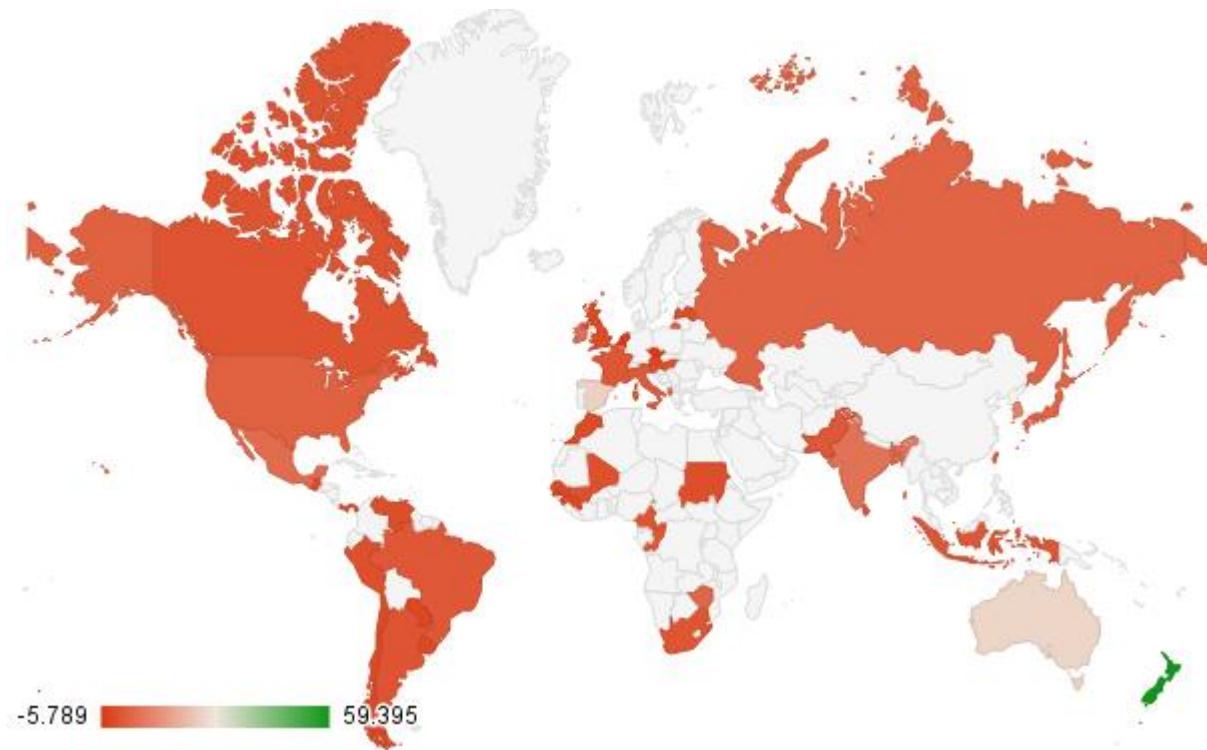
POLARITY (-)	CONTR. ASS.	POLARITY (+)	CONTR.ASS.
SOUTH			
VAR EUROPA	0,4941	VAR AMERICA	0,2452

LEM Center	0,0418 LEM Value	0,0118
LEM French	0,0131 LEM Institution	0,0117
LEM Theological	0,0123 LEM Institutional	0,0098
LEM Year	0,0111 LEM Blue	0,0088
LEM Pupils	0,0104 LEM Development	0,0077
LEM Faculty	0,0103 LEM Education	0,0074
LEM subject	0,0102 LEM Process	0,007
LEM organize	0,0101 LEM UCPel	0,0066
LEM school	0,0095 LEM Brazil	0,0066
LEM Spain	0,0088 LEM Promote	0,0063
LEM Czech	0,0084 LEM Graduate	0,0061
LEM Scotland	0,0084 LEM Principle	0,0059
LEM religion	0,0083 LEM University	0,0056
LEM France	0,0082 LEM Reality	0,0053
LEM Teachers	0,008 LEM Space	0,0052
LEM institute	0,0078 LEM Argentina	0,0052
LEM science	0,0065 LEM Human	0,0052

The third factor, as can be seen from Fig. 12, virtually indicates all countries in red, and dark red, except Spain and New Zealand. This is the factor that shows greatest proximity between Oceania, the Americas and Europe, while at the same time showing major differences within Oceania.

Figure 12

Factor scores for the second factor for each country involved (dark green represents the maximum presence of the factor, dark red the minimum presence, grey shades represent intermediate levels, light grey is lack of information).



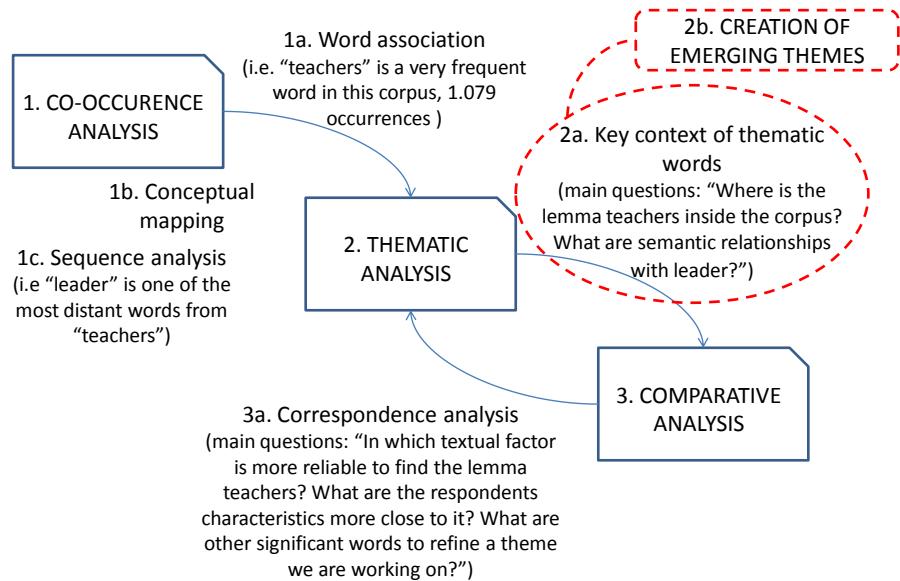
A Typical Analysis Strategy within this Report

In Fig. 13 we can see an example of the analysis path used in this investigation. Usually we start with an analysis of co-occurrences, where we identify the words that are most frequently used (concept maps can be used at this stage), and the network of other words that develops around these most frequently used words (before and after, for example). One can also choose words that, although not frequent in the text, may be significant from a theoretical point of view.

Figure 13

Representation of a typical data analysis path used in this report.

Analysis Path: an example



Subsequently, we check in what context these words are used by means of a thematic analysis, where we analyze the parcels of text that have been entered in the individual questionnaires. In this phase the researchers begin to craft the emerging themes. Afterwards, we explore the themes also by means of correspondence analysis, which summarizes into a minimum number of factors most of the information contained in the text. Through these analyses we can verify that there is a match between the previously crafted themes and the factors that emerge from the correspondence analysis. We can also match the word groupings with the characteristics of respondents (for example, if they are to be found in a given geographical area, or if they belong to a specific institution).