

Article

Does Home or School Matter More? The Effect of Family and Institutional Socialization on Religiosity: The Case of Hungarian Youth

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Abstract: The proportion of people who receive a religious upbringing at home and attend religious educational institutions varies across time and space. It is debatable how effectively various forms of religious socialization contribute to shaping one's religious identity. In Hungary, the proportion of young people receiving a religious upbringing is declining, but the church-run school sector is growing, which is accompanied by an increase in the proportion of pupils in a church-run school who do not receive a religious upbringing at home. This provides an opportunity to compare the impact of different socialization settings on religiosity. In the present study, we investigate how religious upbringing at home, church school attendance, and participation in religious education affect the different dimensions of young people's religiosity, hypothesizing that religious education within the family is decisive; but without it, the effect of the church school cannot be observed. For the analysis, we used data from the questionnaire-based Hungarian Youth Survey 2016 and 2020. Our results show that the influence of religious upbringing at home is dominant, but church schools significantly support young people's religious identity and practice without having an impact on the content of young people's beliefs and value preferences.

Keywords: religious upbringing; church schools; religious education; religiosity



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1. Introduction

In examining the impact of schools that are maintained by churches, denominations, and religious organizations, some education researchers seek to find out whether they are indeed able to reduce the achievement gaps between children from families of different social status, as the Coleman hypothesis claims [1–6]. Other researchers deal with the role of schools in the transmission of culture, looking at the school effect primarily from the perspective of religious socialization [7,8]. Other dimensions of the culture-shaping impact of church-maintained schools could also be investigated, such as worldview, moral views, political views, and voluntary engagement [9,10]. However, the two approaches are not unrelated. School performance can be influenced by the religiosity of students or their families; moreover, the effectiveness of schools is related to the religious composition of parents and students in an institution [11]. Researchers have explained this relationship by arguing that the achievement advantage of religious school students is due to the relationship network of those who are connected through religiosity at school, as well as the achievement motivation that is fostered by the religious culture of the school [5,12]. However, little is known about the impact of schools on students' religiosity. The authors of this study aim to determine the extent to which contemporary denominational schools and formal and informal religious education influence the religiosity, values, and everyday behavior patterns of their students. For the analysis, the Hungarian Youth 2020 database was used, supplemented in places with results from the 2016 survey.

2. Church Schools as Agents of Religious Socialization

Seeking to define the role of the family and school in religious education, we can build on the concept and theories of religious socialization. Classical theories of religious socialization are based on the premise that religious socialization is the reproduction of the worldview, norms, and customs of previous generations during the upbringing of new generations, manifest in both following a religious-spiritual model within the family and institutional religious education at schools and churches [13]. This classical approach clearly identifies the agents that exert influence and regards the individual as a passive recipient who is embedded within the framework of established structures. A large body of research agrees that the influence of the family cannot be outweighed by anything else, but the concept of family religious upbringing can be realized in many ways depending on the family subculture [14–18].

In addition to the family, the literature identifies other important agents in the process of religious socialization. Opting for church schools (which are faith-based schools that are usually state-funded and run by churches, denominations, and religious organizations) and participation in religious education can be understood as a decision by parents to channel their children into social networks permeated by religious culture [19,20]. The hypothesis of the channeling effect suggests that church schools have no special effect on the religiosity of students. This is supported by Rogero-García & Andrés-Candelas [21], who state that church-run schools attract children of religious parents. The situation is different in those countries where the majority of schools, at some school levels up to three quarters, are maintained by churches (e.g., in the Netherlands and Belgium). In such cases, the positive effect of schools on religiosity is small even during the school years; the proportion of students who identify themselves as religious or practice their religiosity is extremely low [22]. Since students attend religiously diverse classrooms, (where religious activity differs by ethno-religious groups), the expression of religiosity is not supported, and religious education is being pushed back even at denominational schools, students, parents, and teachers characterized by religious disaffiliation. Thus, the student composition strongly influences the school's effect on religiosity. This is somewhat contradicted by the finding that Christian students' commitment to their religion proved to be stronger in classrooms with a higher proportion of Muslim classmates [23]. It seems that the proportion of church-run schools in the school system influences the religious composition of schools and the effectiveness of religious education.

When comparing the impact of religious education in schools internationally, one cannot avoid the question as to whether it is voluntary or compulsory for all, and its effectiveness is also influenced by whether or not it is single-confessional, multi-confessional, or non-confessional [24,25]. A picture of the impact of religious education can be drawn by comparing generations of adults who have and have not received compulsory religious education, and it can be concluded that the religiosity of cohorts has declined in parallel with phasing out compulsory religious education [26]. A negative reception of compulsory religious education in schools has been shown for male children in vocational education whose parents have low educational attainment and for the non-religious [27]. At the same time, the effectiveness of optional religious education for low-status students has been registered not only in cognitive and affective dimensions but also in the field of religious practice [28]. In Hungary, no large-scale analyses have examined the impact of religious education in comparison to that of different socialization agents, but literature on religious pedagogy emphasizes that the aim of religious education is primarily to offer knowledge. Nevertheless, it is clear that, even for the children of interested parents, not all religious education will develop into sustainable faith [29,30].

Peer and local church social networks, which are less frequently studied but important agents of religious socialization, are repeatedly reorganized over the course of one's life, putting the individual in a position of reflection [6,20]. Considering recent interpretations of religious socialization, it is clear that young people's religious views and practices do not correspond to "ecclesiastically fixed forms of religiosity" (pp.72) [31]. During the analysis

of religious life course interviews, we pointed out that several instances of religious change may have occurred already by the middle of adolescence, and that reflective and non-reflective forms of religious transmission can be distinguished in the religious categories of quantitative research. Thus, religious socialization cannot be described as a reproductive process, but as multiple religious identities constructed through individual or communal participation [32–34].

In order to separate the influence of family and school on religiosity, several studies have attempted to follow the development of religious socialization during or after schooling [14,35,36]. Many argue that schooling has no independent effect because religious parents, in an effort to preserve the integrity of the plausibility structures that sustain religiosity, seek to choose such a school where the culture and transmitted worldview do not conflict with family culture [14,20,37]. Sander [38], examining the impact of Catholic schooling on the religiosity of young and middle-aged people, found that students of religious schools were more likely to practice their religion regularly in their later lives than those who had not attended such an institution and that the more years they had attended denominational educational institutions, the stronger this effect was. Whether the student attended a church school at the primary or secondary level may also be an influential factor [35]. Researchers have also detected differences by school denomination in the effect of church schools on adult religiosity. However, this may be due to the school culture of different denominations, the role of religious education in the institution's mission statement, and the school's everyday religious practices [37]. Among the characteristics of church schools that influence the outcome of religious socialization, mention should be made of the composition of the school's student body, which in this case is not a key factor through socio-economic status, but through the religiosity of schoolmates [6]. Regnerus et al. [39] demonstrated a clear influence of schools on religiosity through schoolmates' religious practice and perceptions of religiosity. Few studies have examined the impact of church schools on the religiosity of non-religious students or of those with other faiths. One study has revealed that although Muslim parents in Belgium choose Catholic schools because of the conservative school culture, Muslim students are not encouraged by the Catholic ethos, which otherwise has a positive effect on Catholic children [40]. Other researchers have found that the positive impact of church schools does not extend to disadvantaged pupils, who are more likely to be non-religious [41].

Among Hungarian students of church-run secondary schools, the proportion of students from families that fully adhered to the teaching of the church was around 40 percent at the turn of the millennium [6]. At the time, half of the students came from non-religious families, but 60 percent of them had regular, active communal religious practice during their student years. This was mainly explained by the temporary impact of school customs, but it was uncertain whether this would persist in the long term.

In the two decades since then, the proportion of young people who have received a religious upbringing, who claim to adhere to the teachings of the church, and who regularly attend church has decreased [42]. It can be assumed that the expansion of church-run education has allowed more students from non-religious backgrounds to enter church institutions, which necessitates further studies on the impact of church schools on students from families of diverse religious backgrounds. Some research has been conducted on the effectiveness of religious socialization, the impact of religious upbringing in families, and religious education in schools based on the data from the Hungarian Youth Surveys [43–45]. Analyses comparing students in denominational schools with their peers have shown the independent effect of denominational schooling, above all on being religious “in one's own way”, after controlling for the effect of the religious nature of upbringing in the family [43,45]. Regarding values, a significant difference was also found between religious and non-religious students [46] and between those who chose to attend a religious school and those who did not [45], but to a lesser extent than for the adult population as a whole [47].

Regarding the religious socialization potential of church-run institutions, it should be noted that the church school sector is characterized by strong denominational and regional diversity. Additionally, the school culture of institutions that have recently been taken over by the church and those that have been church schools for decades can be very different. The socialization potential of schools is clearly contingent on the main religious elements of school culture being identifiable by students and parents [48]. As the church education sector has undergone steady expansion in recent decades, there are many institutions that have turned denominational relatively recently with yet unestablished cultures. Although the majority of teachers in church schools claim to adhere to the teaching of their church and a common core can be discerned in their understanding of the functions and identity of the church school, a number of additional factors influence the perception of the school's role, including the religious composition of the teaching staff according to their religious and denominational identity, and the challenges arising from the social, regional, and local context of the institution [49,50].

3. The Context of the Study

The Hungarian education system is historically part of the European continental model of education policy, i.e., the organization and maintenance of the education system is a state responsibility. In Central Europe, however, former central governments, aspiring to modernize their countries, readily relied on the well-established, centuries-old educational traditions of the churches to build a centralized education system. In Hungary, by the second half of the 19th century (1868), the state had already introduced compulsory education with universal and obligatory religious education. In the middle of the 20th century, half of primary schools and 40% of secondary schools were run by a Roman Catholic Church or other Christian church.

When the countries of Central and Eastern Europe came under Soviet control in the mid-20th century, religious education and church schools were banned one after the other, and atheist education became compulsory in state-run school systems. In Hungary, only 10 secondary schools were allowed to operate as a demonstration of religious freedom. After the fall of the bipolar world order in the 1990s, which brought liberation to post-Soviet countries, Hungarian educational policymakers extended the right to found schools, allowing foundational, private, and church schools to open. On the initiative of local religious communities and churches, some of the former church schools were reopened and, by the turn of the millennium, 5% of primary school students and 10% of secondary school students were attending church-run institutions. In the 2010s, a second wave of expansion took place, mainly involving the takeover of schools struggling with difficulties, in many places on the initiative of the local government and the state.

Now, at the end of the third decade following the reorganization of the church-run school network, the share of the ecclesiastical sector in Hungary is medium by international standards, below the size of the share of church institutions in France, Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium. The share of kindergartens run by churches or religious organizations and the share of children attending church kindergartens is nearly 9%. Regarding primary schools, both the proportion of school sites and that of students attending church institutions is 15%. As for secondary schools, churches run 29% of the school sites, where 25% of all secondary school students study. Among the different types of vocational secondary schools, the proportion of church schools is 15%, with 11% of students in vocational education (Table 1). Church-run universities and colleges account for 8% of students. In accordance with the denominational composition of the population, the Catholic and the Reformed Churches run most of the church schools in Hungary, but a number of smaller churches and religious communities also play a role in the church-maintained sector.

Table 1. The proportion of institutions of public education run by churches and religious organizations and the proportion of students attending them at the time of the survey.

	Kindergarten	Primary School	Grammar School	Vocational Grammar School	Vocational Secondary School	Vocational School
proportion of church-run school sites	8.2%	15.2%	29.7%	17.2%	15.0%	8.0%
number of church-run school sites	378	546	255	118	75	16
proportion of children/students	8.1%	15.4%	25.3%	11.7%	8.6%	5.9%
number of children/students	26,891	111,681	54,972	21,149	7837	414

Source: Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Education database 2019/20, own computations.

The regional distribution of the church sector shows that the number of church institutions has increased more in regions with lower socio-economic development. The population of these regions is characterized by a higher proportion of low-status and non-religious people. We have also observed that in regions with generally lower proportions of religious populations, religious parents are more likely to choose a church school with a student composition different from that of a state school. This is because, as elsewhere in the world, religious parents seek schools that are dominated by a religious culture [20,37].

The socialization potential of church schools is enhanced if students attend church institutions at several levels throughout their studies. Despite the expansion of the sector, the network of institutions is still not dense enough to ensure that all pupils at all school levels have access to church institutions. While one-third of the institutions in the ecclesiastical sector are complexes of several school types, two-thirds of primary schools do not have a local or nearby secondary institution to which pupils can transfer. Given the multi-denominational nature of the country and previous research showing that people who choose a church school prefer a school run by their denomination, this further narrows the range of church schools available locally. The school networks of different denominations are not so dense that it could lead to the segregation and pillarization of church schools described by Miedema [51].

Our research question pertains to the extent to which the religiosity of young adults over the last three decades has been due to family upbringing and church schooling, as well as in-school and out-of-school religious education.

4. Materials and Method

The impact of religious upbringing and education on the religiosity of young people is investigated using data from the Hungarian Youth Survey 2020, the sixth installment of the Hungarian Youth Survey series launched in 2000. The secondary analysis of a national database with a large number of cases is a procedure often used by educational researchers [52,53]. In our study, we formulated unique research questions that had not been explored before using the same dataset. The survey was commissioned by the New Generation Centre Nonprofit Ltd. and was conducted on a sample of 8000 young people aged 15–29 in Hungary. The large sample size allows for independent analysis of relatively small sub-samples. This is true even if most of the questions on religion were not asked of the whole sample but of a sub-sample of 2000 people, which is itself representative of the population. The target group was born between 1991 and 2005, and their primary school education typically lasted between 1997 and 2019 [42,54,55]. For specific questions, the analysis is supplemented with data from the 2016 survey, which was collected in the same way, and for which the population was composed of those born between 1987 and 2001.

Our research question concerns the impact of religious upbringing at home, participation in religious education, and attendance at a religious educational institution on religiosity as operationalized by the dimensions of religious self-perception (identification),

belief content (belief), religious practice in a community (ritual), and value orientation (consequences). The first three of the four dimensions are consistent with the approach taken in our previous comprehensive work on the interrelationship between religion and modernization [56]. The dimension of consequence is the fifth of the five dimensions of religiosity defined by [57], which refers to the impact of religion on the life of the individual.

Based on the literature, we hypothesize that (H1) the independently detectable effect of religious upbringing within the family will be strongly positive, (H2) the independently detectable effect of attending church will be positive, and (H3) that religious education will have a weak positive, independent effect. Limitations of the study include the retrospective questions, the subjective perception of religiosity, and the lack of additional information (e.g., whether respondents attended an institution of their own denomination, how many years they attended a denominational institution, and reasons for their choice of institution). Nevertheless, our analysis can help to understand the impact of some agents of religious socialization on later religiosity.

5. Results

5.1. Descriptive Analysis of Religious Socialization

According to the 2020 survey, around one-fifth (20.2%) of the age group surveyed said they had received a religious upbringing at home, and 9% had attended a religious kindergarten, school, or higher education institution at some point. Most of the respondents who attended at least one church-run institution went to a church primary school, while just over half of them went to a denominational secondary school and even fewer to a religious kindergarten. The proportion of students attending church-run higher education was negligible compared to the total sample (Figure 1).

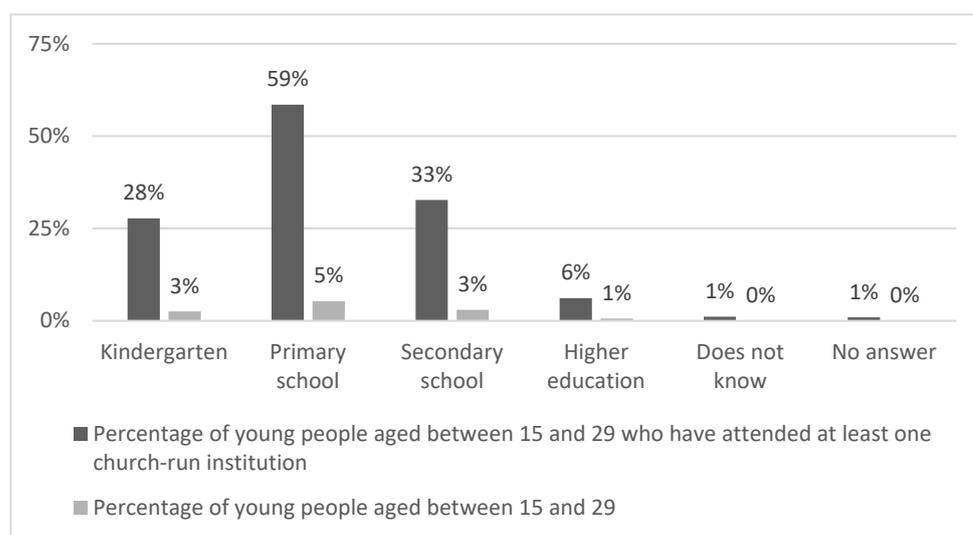


Figure 1. The proportion of participants who attended church-run institutions at different levels and the proportion who attended at least one church-run institution ($n = 182$; $n = 2000$). Source: Hungarian Youth Survey, 2020, own computations.

There are no data on the denomination of respondents' schools, nor is there any evidence of pillarization, i.e., young people adhering to church-run institutions as they progress through consecutive levels of schooling. A total of 60% of those who had attended a church kindergarten continued their education in a church primary school, but of those who had attended a church primary school, under one in six continued to a church secondary school. Thus, just over a quarter (27%) of those who went to a church secondary school came from a church primary school.

Although the number of students in church education has doubled since 2010, this increase is not reflected in the 2020 figures. Among respondents aged 15–19 at the time of

the survey, the proportion of those attending denominational institutions is not significantly higher than for the same age group ten years before, who had achieved completion or were nearing completion of their primary and secondary education by 2010 (Figure 2).

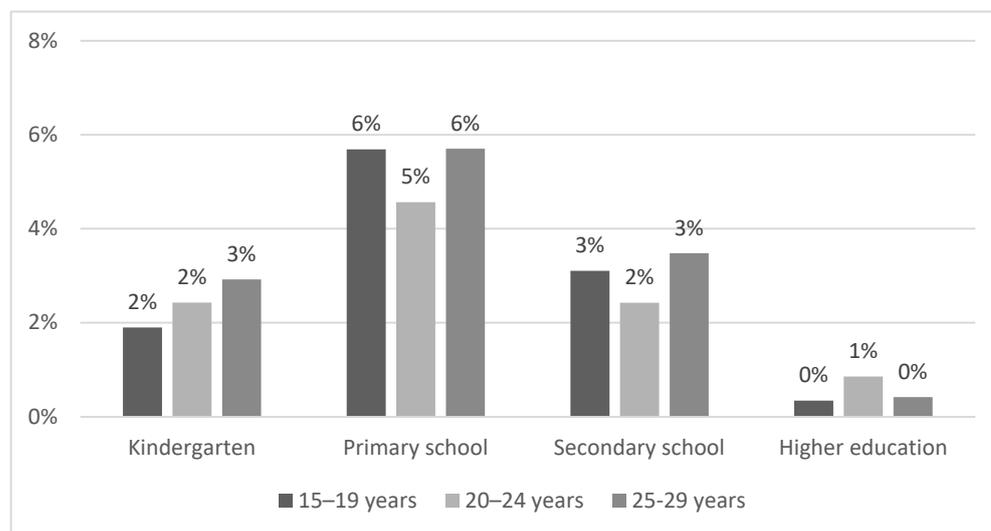


Figure 2. The proportion of young people who have attended church-run institutions at different levels within the 15–29 age range by age subgroups (n = 2000). Source: Hungarian Youth Survey, 2020, own computations.

In line with the correlation described in the literature, the proportion of those who have attended a church-run kindergarten or educational institution is higher among those who claim to have received a religious upbringing than among the entire 15–29 age group. Even so, only slightly over a quarter of young people with a religious upbringing have attended or are attending a religious institution.

At different levels of church education, however, there is a clear majority of those who have received a religious upbringing at home. There is little difference in this respect, with 70%, 63%, and 65% of those attending church kindergartens, primary, and secondary schools, respectively, having received a religious upbringing at home. (Due to the small sample size, it was not possible to analyze these subsamples separately). Church higher education, however, does not fit into this pattern as only one-third of its students were raised in religious families. However, within the younger age groups, the proportion of children from non-religious families is higher than among young people aged 25–29 (Figure 3). This is presumably related to the increasing number of church school students from age group to age group—even if this could not be demonstrated in the present sample.

The third important area of religious socialization is religious education. While the questionnaire of the Hungarian Youth Survey in 2016 used three questions to inquire about participant involvement in it, namely about religious education in schools, in parishes or congregations, and about other forms of religious education, the 2020 survey only included a single combined question on whether the respondent had ever attended religious education or any training/lectures where they could learn about religious teaching. The 2016 surveys clearly showed that, of the three possible categories, school and church-based religious education were the two most common forms of organized faith education for young people, whereas the third category was seen as a complementary, optional opportunity, attended by only 3% of the 15–29-year-old age group. The complementary nature of these courses is demonstrated by the fact that 96% of those who participated in them also attended (at the time of the survey or previously) religious education in schools and/or churches.

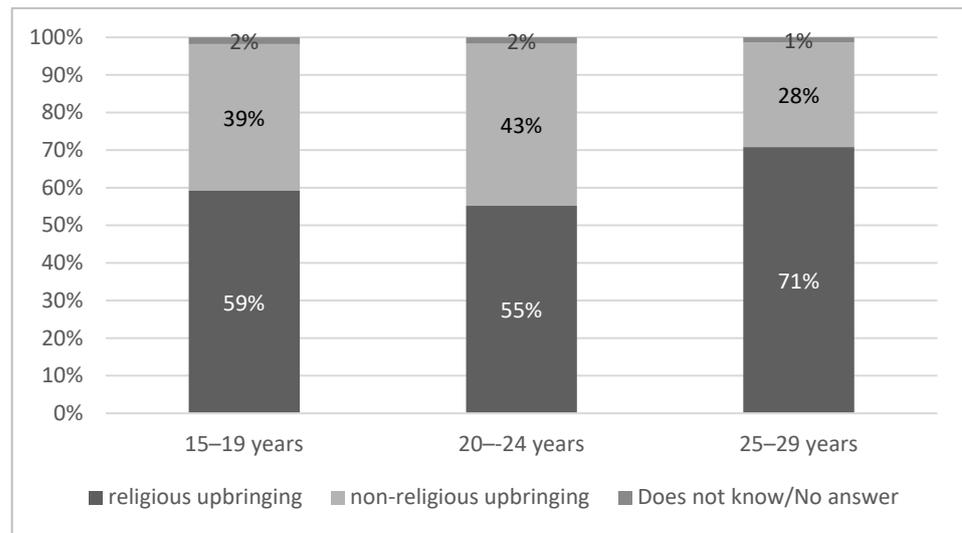


Figure 3. The proportion of students who have received a religious upbringing among students of church-run educational institutions by age group (n = 182). Source: Hungarian Youth Survey, 2020, own computations.

In 2016, over one-third (36%) of young people attended one of two traditional forms of religious education. Nearly half of them (16% of all youths) had been introduced to religious faith exclusively in a school setting, while a large proportion of those who attended religious education in a congregation/parish did so at school as well. In 2020, slightly fewer respondents said they had attended a faith-related training course than in 2016. This is surprising given that a growing amount of young people attended religious education as part of the compulsory religious or ethics education that schools introduced in 2013. The slight decrease observed despite this may be due to the changed wording of the questions (Figure 4).

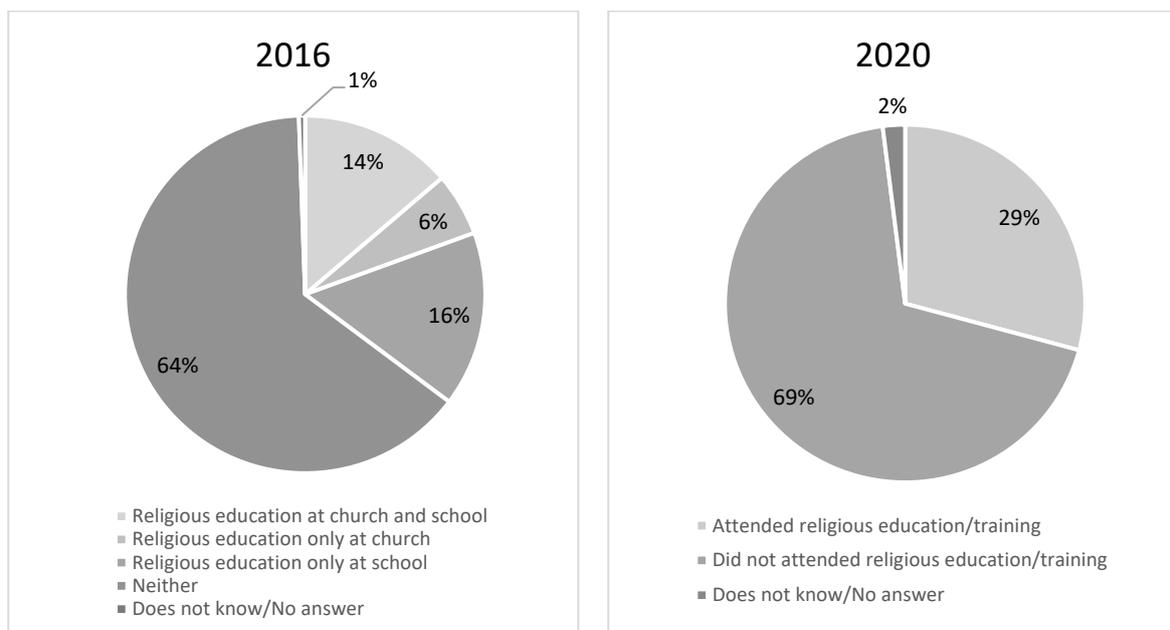


Figure 4. Participation in religious education in schools and congregations/parishes in 2016 and 2020 (n = 8000, n = 2000). Source: Hungarian Youth Survey, 2020, own computations.

Ethics or religious education as required optional subjects (one class per week) were introduced in 2013 in the first and fifth grades of primary schools, and in the seventh grade

of six-year secondary schools. This measure raised concerns that religious education in schools might reduce the number of students attending church-based religious education to a certain extent [29]. Although the sample of the 2016 database contained only respondents from four grades involved in religious education in schools, no such decrease was observed. As for the 2020 survey, the question did not make it possible to distinguish between school-based and parish/congregational religious education. However, both studies allowed the observation of how participation in religious education itself is related to later religiosity in young adulthood.

Participation in religious education is more closely related to religious upbringing at home than attendance at a church educational institution. While slightly over a quarter of those who had received a religious upbringing attended church schools, the vast majority of them (78%) were involved in various forms of religious education, as opposed to those who had not been brought up in religious families. However, it is also true that in the latter group, around one in six young people attended some form of religious education (Figure 5).

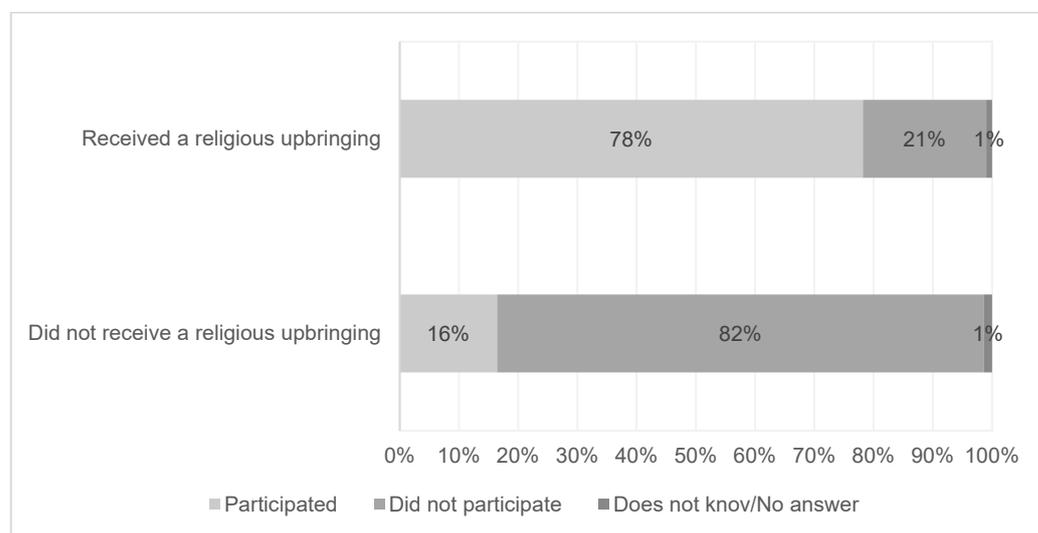


Figure 5. Participation in religious education or religion-related training by religious upbringing (n = 1957). Source: Hungarian Youth Survey, 2020, own computations.

So far, we have explored the extent to which young people born between 1991 and 2005 in Hungary are characterized by the three general forms of religious socialization, namely the transmission of religion within the family, attendance at denominational institutions, and participation in religious education. To put it simply, slightly less than one-third of them participate(d) in religious education, slightly more than one-fifth received a religious upbringing at home, and slightly less than 10% attend(ed) a church-run kindergarten or educational institution. There is considerable overlap between these groups, but they are by no means identical. In the following section of the paper, we will examine the relationship between different forms of religious socialization and the religiosity and values of these youths.

5.2. Agents of Religious Socialization and Their Effect on Religiosity

Disentangling the different mechanisms of religious socialization requires a multivariate analysis. Before doing so, we would like to use an example of a bivariate analysis to highlight the different effects of different socialization agents. The impact of religious upbringing at home and attending a denominational school on religiosity has been discussed in several previous papers [43,45]. Below, we present and analyze an updated version of our earlier model [45]. (Figure 6). Based on religious upbringing at home and attending a church school, respondents can be divided into four groups. These groups

were described according to where they placed their religiosity on the five-point religious self-rating scale [58].

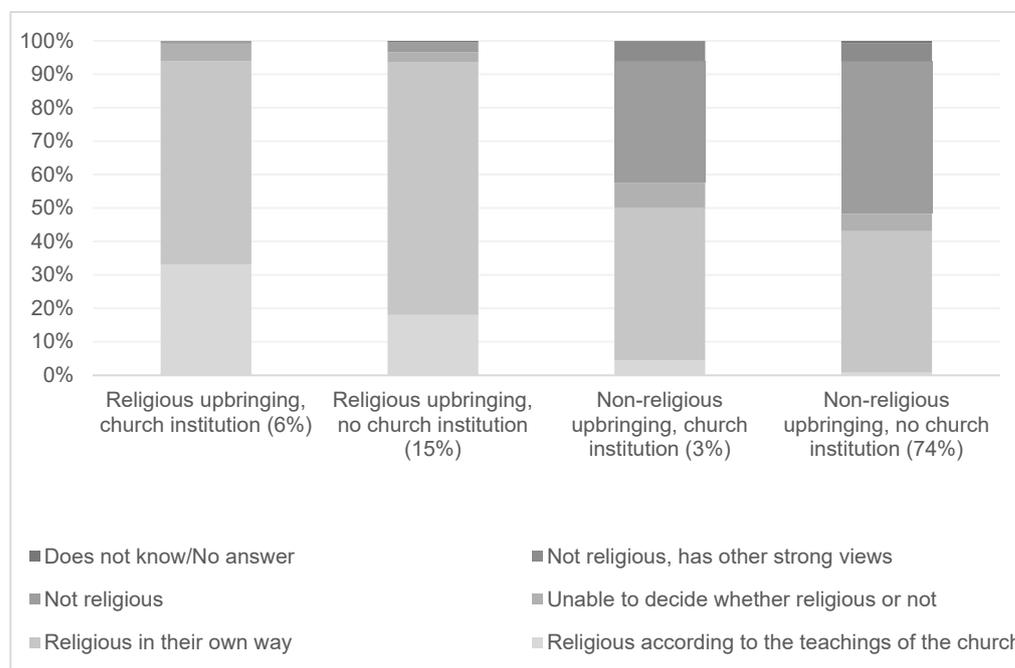


Figure 6. The distribution of different types of religiosity in groups identified on the basis of religious upbringing at home and attendance at church-run educational institutions (n = 1947). Source: Hungarian Youth Survey 2020, own computations.

The figure shows that the more types of religious socialization young people are exposed to, the more likely they are to later consider themselves religious in accordance with the teachings of the church. The impact of church schools amplifies the impact of religious upbringing at home, but religious upbringing is itself a strong predictor of later religiosity. Those who say they received a religious upbringing at home are more than 90 percent likely to identify as religious in later life, regardless of whether they attended a church school. The effect of a church kindergarten or school is that if one has attended such an institution, one is more likely to adhere to the teaching of the church rather than have individualized faith “in one’s own way” [58]. However, even those who have had a religious upbringing at home and attended a church institution are more likely to define themselves as being religious ‘in their own way’ rather than adhering to the teachings of the church.

Those who did not have a religious upbringing in their families are much less likely to consider themselves religious later on compared to those who did, and their religiosity is almost certainly not in accordance with the teachings of the church. The effect of church schooling is manifest here in such a way that someone who has attended such institutions without a religious upbringing in the family is slightly more likely to be religious than not. The difference, however, is insignificant. By contrast, the majority of those who had neither a religious upbringing nor denominational school socialization do not become religious. At the same time, two further observations can be made. Firstly, more than 40% of those who did not receive any form of religious socialization in the family or at school claim to be religious in their own way later, which is presumably due to the influence of secondary socialization agents such as peer groups [6]. Secondly, even in this group, those who are “non-religious, with other strong views” are still a small minority. Atheistic (possibly anti-religious) attitudes are therefore not prevalent among those who have not been socialized in a religious context.

In interpreting the figure above, the possibility of reverse causality cannot be ignored. When it appears that going to a church institution combined with a religious upbringing makes later ‘churchgoing’ religiosity more likely than having received a religious upbringing at home only, it is possible that this is not a reflection of the effect of church institutions but of the quality of religious upbringing at home. A more devoted religiosity at home, extending to all aspects of life, might be the common cause of both being enrolled in a religious institution and becoming a young adult who claims to be committed to their religion. Unfortunately, the database under study does not offer the possibility to investigate these causal mechanisms in more depth or to separate the types of religious upbringing in families.

In the section below, linear, logistic, and ordinal regression models are used to estimate the effect of each socialization agent on the different manifestations of religiosity and on value preferences as a consequential dimension [57]. In addition to the types of religious identity assessed through self-perception, the relationship between religious socialization and religiosity is examined in a complex way through the dimensions of religious practice (frequency of church attendance), faith (Christian and non-Christian beliefs), and consequential dimensions (value orientation). The variables used to operationalize the first three dimensions are the most used questions [56]. The consequential dimension, on the other hand, offers a broader range of measurement possibilities, including areas such as emotional and physical health, psychological well-being, and personal, marital, and family happiness [59,60]. For our present investigation, taking account of the scope of the questionnaire, we selected value preferences.

We first present the results of measuring the effect of socialization agents on religious beliefs in a linear regression model; secondly, we investigate the effect of socialization agents on the frequency of church attendance in an ordinal regression model, followed by the results of a logistic regression model that measure the effect of socialization agents on religious self-perception.

In all models, important sociodemographic variables (gender, age, rural/urban residence) were included in the analysis in order to remove their indirect effects on religious socialization variables. Since a significant proportion of the 15–29 age group has not yet completed their education, we did not include educational attainment in the models, though we did include that of their parents.

The content dimension of beliefs was examined based on six questions from the Hungarian Youth 2020 survey. Factor analysis clearly separated belief in Christian and non-Christian doctrines. The former includes belief in God, heaven, and hell, while the latter includes belief in horoscopes, the Kabbalah, talismans, and reincarnation.

Demographic variables alone have a relatively low explanatory power in the dimensions of belief, religious practice, and religious self-perception. Most noteworthy is the gender of respondents, which plays a role in both types of religious belief: girls and women are slightly more likely than boys and men to believe in various forms of transcendence. A similar gender effect was also found for the frequency of church attendance. The other effect often detected was the place of residence. Those living in smaller places were more likely to have more frequent church attendance and a religious identity—not explicitly in accordance with church doctrine—but less likely to have non-Christian beliefs than those living in the capital.

Looking at the two types of belief in the first model, the explanatory power of religious socialization, as measured by the coefficient of determination, is significantly greater for Christian beliefs than for non-Christian ones. For the latter, only one type of socialization agent has a positive but weak effect: participation in religious education. In contrast, the effect of a religious upbringing at home is negative, i.e., it has a slight “protective function” against alternative beliefs. Attendance at a church institution showed no significant positive or negative relationship with non-Christian beliefs.

The relatively high explanatory power for Christian beliefs can be attributed to two main factors: mainly religious upbringing at home and participation in religious education.

A similar regression analysis on the 2016 data revealed that, among the types of religious education, the effect of parish and congregational religious education was significant, while that of school education was not (the different questioning of the 2020 survey did not enable verification of these results). The effect of church school attendance was not found to be significant. Thus, it appears that neither religious education at school nor attendance at a church institution alone makes young people more receptive to Christian beliefs (Table 2).

Table 2. Linear regression models for different types of religious beliefs among young Hungarians (standardized beta regression coefficients).

Dependent Variable:	Factor of Christian Beliefs	Factor of Non-Christian Beliefs
Gender (1 = male, 2 = female)	0.050 *	0.186 **
Age	0.029	−0.006
Place of residence (reference category: Budapest)		
city with county rights	0.035	− 0.092 **
town	0.009	−0.048
village	0.014	− 0.150 **
Mother's education (reference category: max. primary school)		
vocational school	− 0.099 *	−0.070
secondary school (matriculation exam)	−0.073	− 0.112 *
higher education	−0.057	− 0.131 **
Father's education (reference category: max. primary school)		
vocational school	−0.059	0.004
secondary school (matriculation exam)	−0.049	0.071
higher education	0.002	0.022
Religious upbringing at home (1 = yes, 0 = no)	0.349 **	− 0.092 **
Church kindergarten, school, higher education (1 = yes, 0 = no)	0.032	0.009
Religious education (1 = yes, 0 = no)	0.228 **	0.093 **
<i>Adjusted R² total</i>	0.292	0.054
<i>Change in adjusted R² when adding variables of religious socialization</i>	0.269	0.006
<i>N</i>	1751	1751

** Beta coefficient is significant at a 0.01 level. * Beta coefficient is significant at a 0.05 level. Source: Hungarian Youth Survey 2020, own computations.

The second model produced a different result. In the ordinal regression model, the effect on the frequency of church attendance is different: all three religious socialization variables have a significant effect. Again, the most important role is clearly played by religious upbringing at home. Additionally, however, the higher frequency of churchgoing can be made slightly probable by participation in either religious education or attendance at a church school alone. Church schools do not make regular religious practice compulsory, except for participation in some religious community events linked to school celebrations every year. There are church schools that organize a compulsory weekly community event, but even for the school-age group, the compulsory nature of these does not explain the impact of church schools on regular church attendance.

We constructed two logistic regression models for religious self-perception. In the first, we contrasted religiosity adhering to church teaching with all other categories and, in the second, we made regression estimates for belonging to a combined category of two types of religiosity (religious in some way).

The explanatory power of the models, as measured by Nagelkerke's R^2 , is satisfactory. Again, socio-demographic variables alone play an insignificant role. In addition to the effect of the place of residence already mentioned, increasing age and the presence of a father with a degree both have a positive effect on religiosity in the broader sense.

Religious upbringing at home also plays a major, but not exclusive, role in the development of religious identity. If the influence of other variables is controlled for, those who

are raised in a religious home are 21 times more likely to define themselves as religious in accordance with the teaching of the church and nearly 13 times more likely to say they are religious in a broader sense than those who do not come from religious families. In addition, attending a church school significantly increases the likelihood of developing a religious identity in accordance with the teaching of the church (by almost twofold), while participation in religious education increases the likelihood of developing a religious identity in a broader sense by almost threefold (Table 3).

Table 3. Binary logistic and ordinal regression models for religious self-perception and frequency of church attendance among young Hungarians (odds ratios).

Dependent Variable:	Religious in Accordance with the Teaching of the Church	Religious in Accordance with the Teaching of the Church or in His/Her Own Way	Frequency of Church Attendance
	binary logistic regression		ordinal regression
Gender (reference category: male)	1.121	1.110	1.462 **
Age	1.022	1.034 **	1.016
Place of residence (reference category: Budapest)			
city with county rights	0.892	0.931	2.168 **
town	1.037	2.108 **	1.796 **
village	1.157	1.963 **	2.081 **
Mother's education (reference category: max. primary school)			
vocational school	0.543	1.316	0.725
secondary school (matriculation exam)	0.502	1.397	0.804
higher education	1.735	0.863	0.691
Father's education (reference category: max. primary school)			
vocational school	0.769	1.157	0.699
secondary school (matriculation exam)	0.559	1.087	0.793
higher education	1.140	2.449 **	1.228
Religious upbringing at home (1 = yes, 0 = no)	21.197 **	12.730 **	4.450 **
Church-run kindergarten, school, higher education (1 = yes, 0 = no)	1.977 *	0.693	1.453 *
Religious education (1 = yes, 0 = no)	1.800	2.732 **	2.780 **
<i>Nagelkerke's pseudo R² total</i>	0.398	0.308	0.281
<i>Change in Nagelkerke's pseudo R² when adding variables of religious socialization</i>	0.318	0.251	0.224
N	1848	1848	1838

** Odds ratio is significant at a 0.01 level. * Odds ratio is significant at a 0.05 level. Source: Hungarian Youth Survey 2020, own computations.

Overall, the regression models reveal that the effect of all factors other than religious upbringing at home is much weaker, regardless of which religiosity indicator is considered. The independent effect of church schools was detected in religious practice and religiosity in accordance with church doctrine, whereas they did not significantly contribute to the development of the content dimension of faith. The positive effect of religious education was detected in all aspects of religion, except for religiosity in accordance with the teaching of the church (where the effect was not significant). However, we know from the 2016 research results—not reported here—that the positive effect of religious education at school as a required subject on young people's religiosity was only detectable for religiosity in a broader sense and through a weak "protective effect" against non-Christian beliefs, which did not pair with enhanced Christian faith.

Finally, we examined whether statistical analysis could capture the effect of different types of religious socialization on values (Table 4). In doing so, we analyzed the impact of each type for the three value dimensions (referred to as factors below) that we had earlier

identified [45] based on the questions on value preference in the Hungarian Youth Survey 2016 using similar linear regression models to the ones we had applied previously. (In developing the final factor structure, two items—talent and (youth) community—were dropped from the original block of 19 items, because they did not correlate with any of the three factors in a such a significant way that would have made their classification clear. As in the previous analyses, the three factors were named general-post-materialistic, conservative, and new-materialistic value types, which included the following items; general-post-materialistic: family security, peaceful world, love/happiness, freedom, true friendship, inner harmony, security of homeland, equality, freedom from prejudice, interesting life. Conservative: religious faith, respect for tradition, obedience/sense of duty, nation, order. New materialistic: power, wealth. For more, see Pusztai [45].

Table 4. Linear regression models for value factors (standardized regression coefficients).

	General-Post-Materialistic	Conservative	New Materialistic
Gender (1 = male, 2 = female)	0.025 *	0.042 **	−0.047 **
Age	0.014	−0.002	−0.039 **
Place of residence (reference category: Budapest)			
city with county rights	−0.001	−0.076 **	0.055 **
town	−0.022	−0.075 **	−0.006
village	0.020	−0.047 **	−0.055 **
Mother’s education (reference category: max. primary school)			
vocational school	−0.002	0.079 **	0.001
secondary school (matriculation exam)	0.044	0.090 **	−0.029
higher education	0.008	0.055 *	−0.067 **
Father’s education (reference category: max. primary school)			
vocational school	0.083 **	−0.032	−0.091 **
secondary school (matriculation exam)	0.051 *	−0.015	−0.034
higher education	0.080 **	−0.008	0.004
Has received a religious upbringing	−0.007	0.124 **	0.074 **
Church kindergarten	0.015	0.029 *	0.023
Church primary school	−0.042 **	0.014	0.016
Church secondary school	0.010	−0.002	−0.035 **
Church higher education	−0.013	0.017	0.026 *
Religious education at school	0.057 **	−0.009	−0.066 **
Religious education at church	0.122 **	0.007	−0.072 **
Other training related to religion	0.012	0.005	0.007
<i>Adjusted R²</i>	<i>0.030</i>	<i>0.028</i>	<i>0.028</i>
<i>N</i>	<i>7110</i>	<i>7110</i>	<i>7110</i>

* The coefficient is significant at a 5% level. ** The coefficient is significant at a 5% level. Source: Hungarian Youth Survey 2016, own computations.

In general, we find that religious socialization—complemented by some socio-demographic variables—does little to explain differences in young people’s values, whichever of the three value factors is in question. This is indicated by the R^2 values of around 3%. Some significant effects are deceptive, as even weak correlations are prone to seem significant in analyses with sample sizes of more than 7000. If only beta coefficients stronger than 0.1 are considered, only two socialization effects can be identified: religious education at church has a positive effect on the general-post-materialistic factor and religious education at home on the conservative factor (which is expected, since religious belief as a value belongs there). At the same time, neither attendance at church institutions nor participation in religious education at school has any meaningful effect on the individual value dimensions.

6. Discussion

This study has sought to determine the extent of the religious socialization potential of church schools for young people from families with diverse religious backgrounds. Data from the Hungarian Youth 2020 survey have been analyzed and supplemented with the conclusions drawn from previous installments of the survey. We have examined the extent to which various religious socialization agents play a role in the lives of young people. About one-fifth of respondents have received a religious upbringing at home. This proportion is twice as high for the total adult Hungarian population; while in the young age group, the proportion of those who have received a religious upbringing has been gradually decreasing from 39% in 2000 to 35% in 2008, 27% in 2012, and 23% in 2016 [45,46].

Less than a tenth of respondents have attended a denominational educational institution, and only a few of them remained in a school belonging to the church sector at several consecutive levels of education. The share of multi-institutional complexes in the ecclesiastical sector is relatively high, but in localities (where the majority of church-run institutions are situated) there are no alternative institutions available. Only a quarter of those brought up in religious families have attended a religious educational institution, i.e., for the majority of young people claiming to have received a religious upbringing, this did not automatically result in the choice of a denominational educational institution as the place of their education. However, the overwhelming majority of those attending religious schools have already received a religious upbringing at home. In addition, there are also non-religious pupils in church schools. Less than a third of respondents, but four-fifths of those raised at home to be religious, have received religious education. Over half of the respondents who have received a religious upbringing at home have participated in religious education both at school and at church.

All three of our hypotheses about the identification of factors that support young people's becoming religious have been confirmed and the following conclusions have been drawn. In accordance with former research [14–18] our first hypothesis on the dominant effect of religious upbringing in the family, can be confirmed, as we have found in the Hungarian data that religious upbringing alone is a strong predictor of a young person's later religiosity. Those who receive a religious upbringing at home have an incomparably higher chance of later becoming followers of the teaching of the church, or at least of being religious in their own way. The choice of Christian beliefs and the preference for conservative values are also supported by the religious family background. There is therefore no doubt that religious upbringing at home has an exceptionally strong and widespread influence.

The influence of socialization agents outside the family is weaker. Regarding our second hypothesis on the influence of church schooling, we can confirm that those who attend church institutions for a certain period are more likely to identify themselves as religious in accordance with the teaching of the church than those who do not. Contrary to the results of [20,21], we were able to show the independent effect of the church school during our analysis. Even those young people who attend church schools without receiving a religious upbringing at home are slightly more likely to become religious, so there is evidence of an independent religious socialization effect of church schools. The positive effect of church school attendance applies not only to religious practice at school age but also to later religious practice in the community, i.e., it develops a bond with the religious community and a habit of belonging to this network of relationships. This confirms Arolts' results that religious education at school has an impact on adult faith as well [26]. It does not, however, necessarily support the development of specific value preferences, i.e., the commitment to traditional conservative values prevalent in the previous decades seems to be fading. This may be explained by the fact that, in schools that have been taken over by the church recently, there has been no time for a distinct school culture to emerge, which is likely also delayed by the heterogeneous religious composition of teachers and students. Despite the religious heterogeneity, the schools insist on religious education and, in contrast to the church schools in Belgium and the Netherlands, are able to influence the

students' religious practice [21]. The fact that no school impact can be demonstrated in the area of value-preferences testifies to the slight weakening of the effect of the church school. In relation to our third hypothesis, in accordance with the findings of Arold and colleagues [26], we found that participation in religious education clearly increases the likelihood of developing a religious identity that adheres to the teaching of the church. It also leaves its mark on value preferences and supports the emergence of a post-materialistic value system, which is more open and modern than traditional conservative values, and which at the same time gives protection against a more recent materialistic value system.

Furthermore, our earlier data from 2016 showed that religious education at schools, which had been introduced not long before the time of the survey and which therefore only affected a small proportion of respondents, contributed perceptibly to young people becoming religious in their own way, even though it did not lead to religiosity in the ecclesiastical sense. Further, the first signs of religious knowledge are also evident in the fact that information students have learnt during religious education seems to be useful in identifying beliefs that are alien to the Christian faith. At the same time, religious practice and value preferences are not impacted.

The analysis has clearly outlined the impact of church educational services on young people and has been able to separate the impact of church schools and religious education from that of religious upbringing within the family. However, the main limitations of the research are the lack of data on the religious composition of the student body of each school and the religiosity of other agents of influence, e.g., peer groups, friends, other youth voluntary communities. Yet the influence of these socialization agents can be suspected from the data, since even in the absence of religious upbringing in the family and education in church schools, young people can become religious, especially religious in their own way.

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