

Religion, Spirituality and Religious Education

Introduction

- Presentation composed of two major parts, distinct but related
- Part 1: Popular distinction between religion and spirituality
- Part 2: Academic distinction between ‘Theology’, ‘Religious Studies’, and ‘Religious Education’

Part 1: Popular distinction between religion and spirituality

- Quotations from youth
- Elements in the distinction
- Sampling of general and youth surveys on religion
- Reflections and challenges

Part 1: Quotations from youth

From Maureen, 18 (Inquirer News Service)

“I give more importance to my spirituality and my whole being. Religion is man-made, and therefore flawed. It’s a formality, though, that man needs in order to have something concrete to believe in. I don’t think religion is essential in life, but spirituality is definitely essential, because that’s where morality and a good heart stems from. I have nothing against religion though, if you believe that it will complement your spirituality.”

Part 1: Quotations from youth

From anonymous

“I think one main purpose of establishing religions, aside from giving people hope of cure, is to instill proper values and morals in their followers. Some people completely embrace the religion they were born into. I’d like to keep an open mind about other religions out there. Soon, maybe when I graduate next year, I’d like to check out the teachings, values, beliefs of other religions. I’m not saying I don’t like being Catholic. But I want to be able to choose my religion and not accept it blindly because my parents/society says so.”

Part 1: Quotations from youth

From Christian, 18

“Religion is not supposed to control our lives.”

From CJ

“Your faith will save you; your religion won’t.”

Part 1: Elements in the distinction

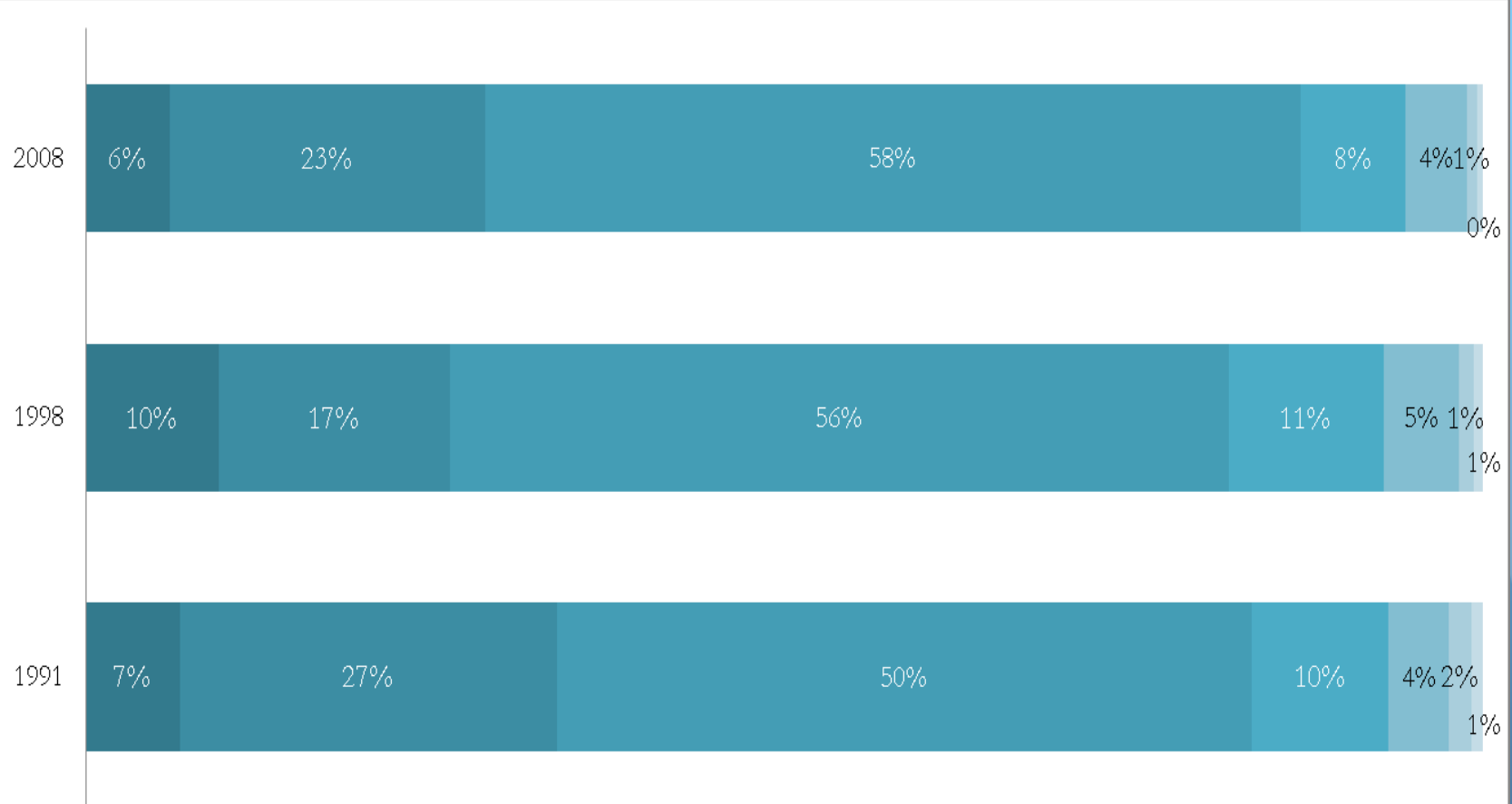
- Focus on personal meaning, relevance and choice
- Decrease in regard for and affiliation with institutions
- Objective reasons for institutional decline: great social changes due to globalization, technology, urbanization, migration etc.
- Subjective reasons for lack of affective bond with institutions: being disillusioned with them or seeing them as irrelevant (1960s vs Gen XYZ)

Part 1: Surveys

International Social Survey Program (ISSP)

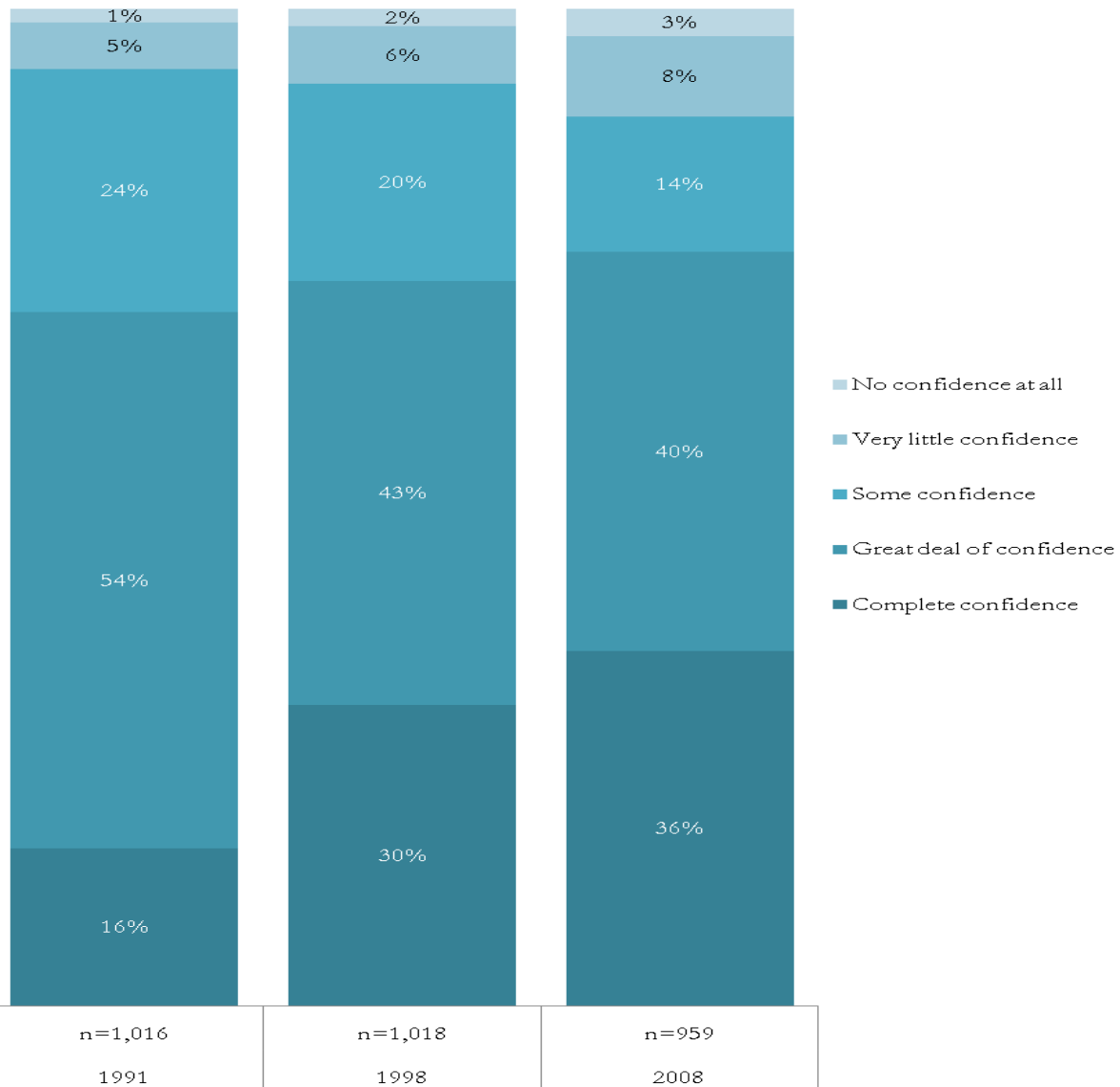
- Religion I (1991), II (1998), & III (2008)
- Philippine version of survey locally administered by the Social Weather Stations
- 1200 local respondents, 80% Catholic (close to national average)

“Would you describe yourself as ...?”

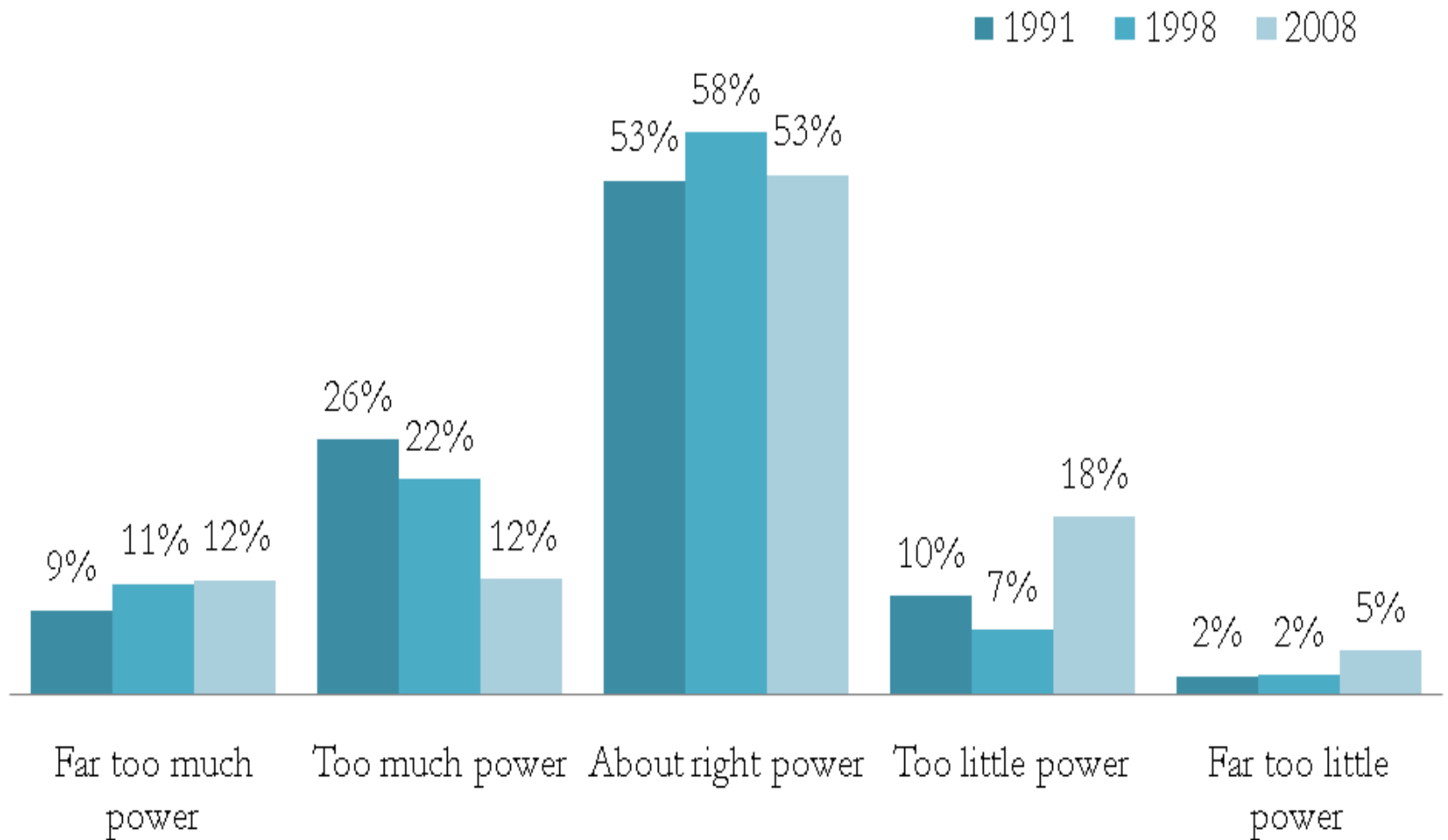


- Extremely religious
- Somewhat religious
- Somewhat non-religious
- Very non-religious
- Very religious
- Neither religious nor non-religious
- Extremely non-religious

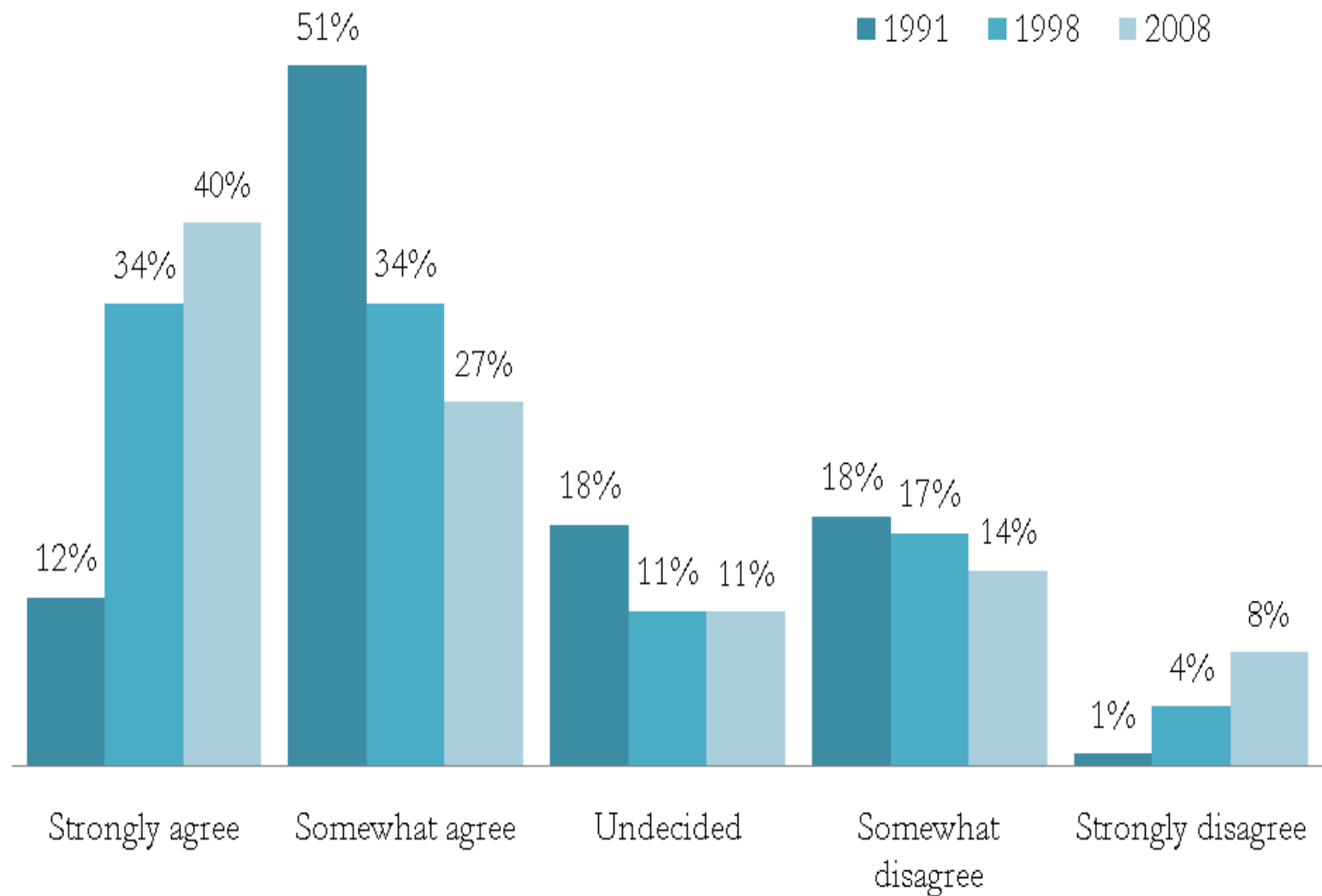
Confidence in Church among Catholic respondents



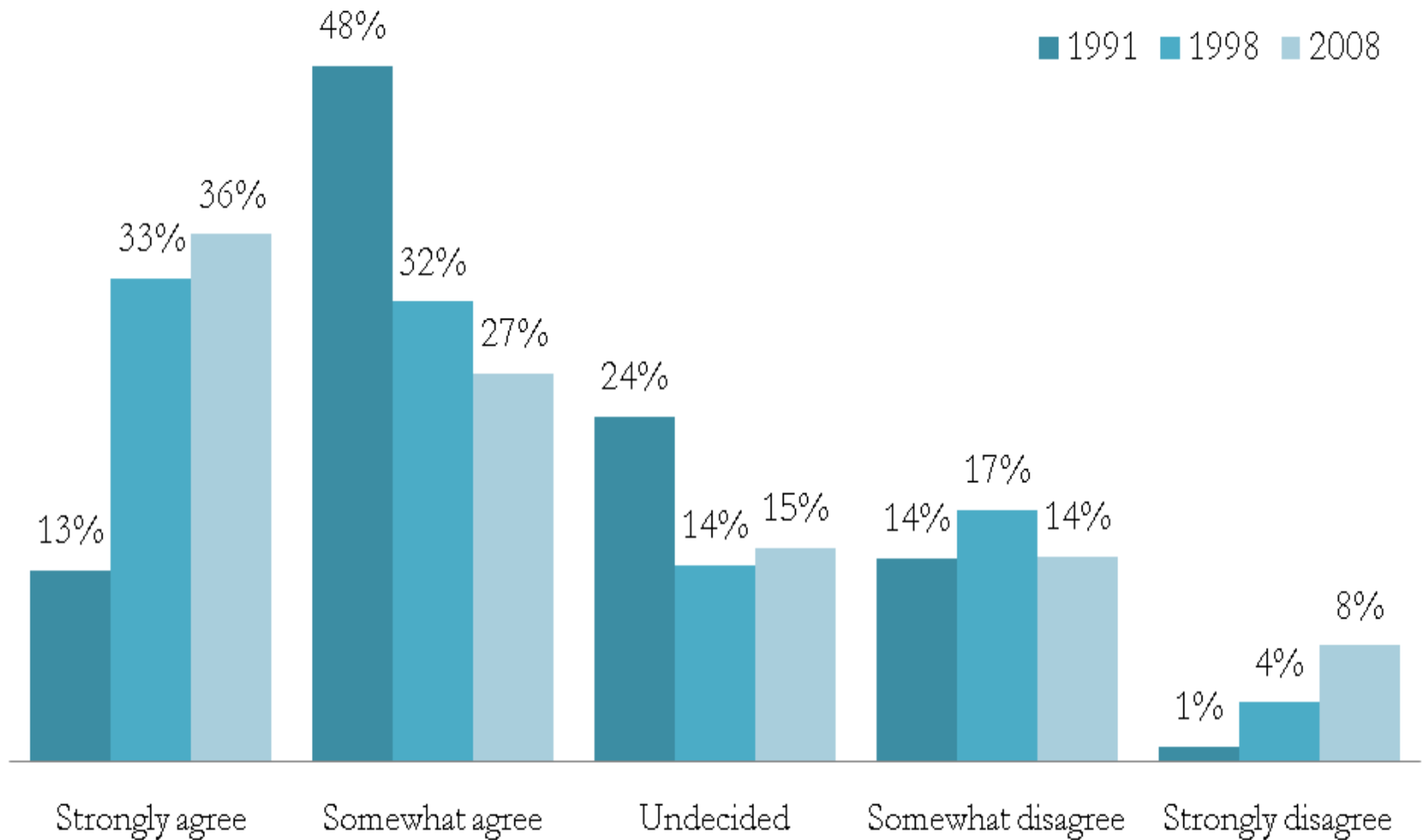
Perceived power of the Church



Agree or Disagree: Religious leaders should NOT try to influence how people vote in elections.



Agree or Disagree: Religious leaders should NOT try to influence government decisions.



The following questions were asked of respondents only in the 2008 wave of the ISSP “Religion” survey (Religion III):

How often do you participate in church activities other than services?	%
NEVER	25.9
Less than once a year	16.6
About once or twice a year	9.3
Several times a year	6.7
About once or twice a month	11.7
Two to three times a month	6.8
Nearly every week	6.3
Every week	11.4
Several times a week	5.2
No answer	.01

Suppose a law were passed which conflicted with your religious principles & teachings. Would you ...	%
... definitely follow the law?	31.4
... probably follow the law?	25.9
... probably follow your religious principles?	27.2
... definitely follow your religious principles?	11.7
I have no religious principles.	3.7
Can't choose.	.1
No answer.	.0

Data points to a Philippine Catholic population that is still religious and devout, and with which the institutional church still has substantial political and cultural capital. However, it also suggests a need for further integral evangelization, to impress upon Catholics the close bond between faith and action, and the necessity of faith-inspired social and political involvement.

Part 1: Surveys

Youth Survey (2001)

- Catholic Church membership may decrease in the next generation. Fewer youths affiliate themselves with the Catholic Church compared to the national average among adults (76% vs 84% SWS surveys)

Part 1: Surveys

- The proportion of those who consider themselves Roman Catholic is lowest in Mindanao where the most number of Muslims are found, and among the lower classes, especially Class E (64%).

Part 1: Surveys

- Contrary to popular belief, we are no longer a nation of believers we are reputed to be. While still a big majority of the youth assert their belief in God or a Supreme Being (88%), only a minority acknowledge the existence of heaven (42%), hell (21%) or life after death (21%).

Part 1: Surveys

- Approximately one out of two attend major religious services regularly (at least once a week-56%). Many of those who regularly attend religious services are from the Visayas (62%), the upper class and among females. Mass/service attendance is also higher in the 13-21 age group.

Part 1: Surveys

- Church involvement among the youth is low (18%). The few who are involved are choir members (81%) or servers during mass/service (4%).

Part 1: Surveys

- The youth trust priests and nuns almost equally (73% and 70%). The youth in Mindanao are less trustful. The upper class have a relatively low level of trust in them even when there are more believers among them. The older the respondent, the less trustful they are.

Part 1: Reflections/Challenges

- The need for new evangelization and catechesis on all levels
- Church religious practice must be able to address the needs of the laity especially the youth
- Growing to be Christian interreligiously

Part 2: Academic distinctions

- Problem of mapping and aligning domains of study and academic programs
- Overview of the development of “theology” and “religious studies” (clarity of “religious education” as domain)

Part 2: Historical overview

19th century developments

- Theology as science (Berlin school)
 - Desire for legitimation as an intellectual and academic field using the paradigm of natural sciences in contrast to an earlier model (Athens school)

Part 2: Historical overview

19th century developments

- Phenomenological approach to the study of religions
 - discovery of other religions
 - Wach, Eliade, Otto
- Emergence of “Religious Studies”

Part 2: Historical overview

- Traditional distinction between “theology” and “religious studies”
 - theology as “confessional” and “theistic”
 - “religious studies” as “agnostic” and multidisciplinary

Part 2: Contemporary developments

- Greater sense of secularity and the separation of church and state
- Increased awareness and experience of religious plurality

Part 2: Contemporary developments

- Greater diversity in fields and programs (e.g. comparative theology, Buddhist theology, etc)
- Need for interaction between theology and religious studies