

Factors Affecting the Selection of Schools by Parents/Guardians

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Abstract: Admission of a child is a stressful activity not only for the parents but also for the child itself. It creates a competition among small children right from the very beginning i.e., at Nursery level. Even Right to Education does not guarantee the admission, what guarantees an admission is, a donation, if parents are alumni, famous person's approach or sometime lottery method brings a charm. Every year during the month of February and March, Parents standing in line for hours outside the various Private Schools to get an admission of their child is a common sight where in many seats in government Schools goes vacant. So, what is it that attracts parents to private schools rather than government schools?

Admission is not an important decision to make for parents because they want to give quality education and other facilities too from the very beginning of their early age. Surveying helped to figure out the concerns that parents have regarding their child's admission. It is difficult task to study the scholastic and co-scholastic curriculum of each and every school and then takes up the decision by keeping the list priority wise. There are several reasons behind parents' decision of choosing private schools over government schools. Parents wants their child to get individual attention and it is possible in private school where at primary stage the class strength is not more than 15-20 students on an average. Most of the private schools work on three ways partnership model which is involving parents, teachers and children to give the children a comfortable environment to learn better. The surveying helps to figure out more factors like few parents said that they want their children to learn not to run in the competition of scoring high. So, they prefer schools where there is no judgment over child's marks. The children are promoted to next class based on their evaluation basically based on observation. Children are not only observed on their pace of learning but also their active participation in other activities too. So, parents prefer school with balanced program which focuses on both curricular and co-curricular activities.

My presentation will concentrate on the factors which are leading towards parents choosing private schools for their wards over government schools. I will highlight the reasons for which parents are more inclined in putting their wards in private schools spending a mammoth amount of money rather than government aided schools. Private schools are using different techniques to attract parents and whether they are really keeping their promise or not? The expectations of parents are high but the question arise that do they really get the school that satisfies the entire requirement at the end?

Keywords: admission, schools

1. Introduction

The proposed research work will focus on the factors which are leading the parents in choosing private schools for their wards over government schools. An effort will be made to find out the reasons for which parents are more inclined in putting their wards in private schools spending a huge amount of money rather than government aided schools. Private schools are adopting different marketing techniques to attract parents and whether they are really keeping their promises or not, is a matter of great concern for all?

Admission of a child is a stressful activity, not only for the parents but also for the child itself. It creates an unnecessary sense of competition among small children right from the beginning i.e., from the nursery level. Even Right to Education does not guarantee the admission, what guarantees an admission is, either a donation, if parents are alumni, recommendation from influential person's or sometimes, the lottery method brings a charm. Every year, during the month of February and March, it is an usual sign seeing parents standing in the queue for hours, outside various private schools, to get their children admitted in those schools. It is a common sight that many seats in government schools are lying vacant. So, what are the underlying reasons that attract parents to private schools rather than government schools?

2. Research methodology

1. Selection of private and government schools for analysis.
2. Undertaking rigorous study about the schools from locally available data or data available on their website, or from the government site, etc.
3. Preparation of and administering proper questionnaire for getting feedback from the head of the institutions.
4. Preparation of and administering questionnaire for getting feedback from parents whose wards are studying in those schools
5. Compilation and evaluation of data to check the expectations and satisfactions of the parents from school
6. Application of a proper statistical method.
7. Conclusion and suggestion.

The paper identifies several factors that influence the

decision of parent while choosing school for their ward-

A. *Social Background and Status*

Socioeconomic indicators are a large contributing consideration experienced by parents when deciding on the right school to send their children. Indicators of social background include:

- The status composition of parents' education;
- Parents' occupational status;
- Income; and
- Family material possessions; and

All of these factors influence a parents' satisfaction with their choice of school for their children, as they consider the career status options likely to eventuate for their child (particularly as a direct result from their schooling experiences) and their long term well-being.

This research indicates that there is social class 'creaming' or conglomeration, as parents with wider social networks and more access to information are more likely to actively participate in the selection process. Income level becomes an important factor which affects the parents' choice in their children's education, due to the level of financial contribution towards quality schooling.

B. *Cost*

Affordability plays a vital role in choosing a school for their ward as it a long term decision and they must have a clear vision on how much they can invest in their education including other expenses like projects, seminars, workshop, miscellaneous expenses etc.

C. *School Syllabus*

Subjects offered by Private Schools may differ from that of a Public School, or even amongst individual Private Schools. According to this research, the differences in vocational subjects offered is a key indicator of the schools' capacity to prime their students for further study (i.e. tertiary university studies). Schools with an emphasis on university actively help their students pave their future career path.

Many parents choose a school for their child based on religious factors, and this can also influence course offerings. Non-denominational schools may not offer and/or use valuable curriculum time in 'religious education' subjects, or worship services. Whilst religion is important to many, the emphasizing of this factor when selecting schools differs from one family to another; it is a matter of personal preference.

D. *School Environment and Facilities*

The facilities on offer to students and the state of the school grounds are also another strong influence on a parent's choice of school. Generally speaking, school buildings are favoured on a well located, accessible and appealing site. This will include the facilities and surrounding environment provided for students to concentrate, learn, and play. The significance in providing a profound learning culture in a school and for the

child are of paramount importance to many parents.

A highly valued educational environment is one that has a strong and complex organizational structure of influential education providers and their founding relationships:

At the top, school management and leadership (i.e. the Principal is an influencer of school culture); School organization and class management (i.e. in the respectful and vital relationships in communications between individual students and their Teacher(s), including Teachers' quality, experience and effectiveness); At the foundation, the school is not a place that focuses only on academic outcomes, but also highlights the aspects of personal and social development among peers; a school must include the elements of convenience, safety, and desirability.

E. *School Performances*

There is a clear link between a schools' student performance and environment; parents are likely to send their children to a Private School based on the academic performance of the students at that school.

F. *Quality of Education*

Throughout many industrialized countries, Private Schools are expected to provide a better quality of education than Public Schools (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2005). Nurahimah (2010) stated that the quality of supervision can either increase or decrease a Teachers' efficacy – the right balance needs to be achieved for optimal results. Certainly, Private Schools have greater autonomy and immediacy in influencing Teacher effectiveness, professional learning, and the mutually respectful quality of Teacher and student relationships. These factors are the key to providing quality learning environments for children.

G. *Proximity and Locality*

Parents often select a school due to its accessibility. It is important for parents to be involved with their children's education because the road between school and home is frequently traversed. In addition, research respondents from this study who admit the importance of location, are essentially people who need to have necessary resources to travel back and forth or people who stay far away from school location.

3. Conclusion

While choosing a school for their ward parents consider different factors and always compare them with other associate available options. Parents also look up for the wellbeing of their ward and making them future ready. The factors which work behind their decision is that if they choose this school it will make their son/daughter ready for taking admission in a good college and eventually will help them to get a good job in future.

As they always consider the above mentioned points and that's why they always come to choose a good private school rather than a government aided school. After conduction a survey the following mentioned points have come up regarding

non selection of government run schools by parents-

- Poor infrastructure
- Poor quality of teaching staff
- No stress on extra or co-curricular activities
- Over engagement of teachers in other government assignments
- No stress on holistic development of the child
- Negligence in conducting proper classes
- No stress on proper evaluation pattern

Keeping in mind the above mentioned points a parent always ends up in choosing a good private school for his/her ward according to his/her affordability and access.

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