



Factors Affecting in Selection of School for Upcoming Generation: A Case Study of Karachi Urban Areas, Pakistan

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Abstract

This attempt has been made to determine the important factors, which govern the selection of school, matching needs and budgets. Which school is better for kids? Parents have to care many factors while taking decision for every kid who reaches to the school going age. The selection of school for upcoming generation is always been a difficult as well as an high importance decision for some parents, who wish to send their kids to such school which can provide them better return on investment time and cost. This study has been conducted to determine the important factors and problems faced during decision-making for the kids' first time school admission or for the change of school, due to unsatisfactory progress in early age; or change of school due to shifting home because of any good reason, or migration with work liabilities. Collection of data primarily involves oral narrative inquiries, questions and a series of telephonic and face-to-face interviews. Respondents were selected randomly who live in different part of Karachi; having different educational and field of work back grounds. Secondary data collected through Case studies and from Internet. The results reflects that the most important factors to be consider are amongst, the distance of school from kids residence, reputation, size and social status of school, because those factors have been selected as part for the evaluation of school. Also the physical appearance of school is seen as extensive need for kids play and physical growth; while inner system of administration and inter student teacher relations were described as backbone by some respondents. The study reveals that for the selection of school, best criteria is to consider multiple inner administrative factors instead of outer look, size of school and social economic value.

Keywords: Matching needs, return on investment, unsatisfactory progress, up-coming Generation, work liabilities, physical appearance.

Introduction

This study carried out to determine the factors affecting and problems regarding the selection of school for the first time admission or for the change of school in early ages due to Unsatisfactory progress of kids. i. Due to shifting of home because of work place of parents. ii. Some parents try to make decision to select a school as per their own backgrounds. iii. Schools offer very attractive choice of opportunities, and available facilities.

Background: However studies on similar topics done by several observers in UK and US. In those studies various variables were conducted but in this study. We have tried to touch key factors from view point of citizen of Karachi; where a blend of private schools and government schools is available; offering foreign educational levels with new technologies introduced from early classes' also religious education for different religions and beliefs.

In Karachi, there is a different climate and weather of economic situation. Most of the parents have different backgrounds and educational position. This study covers responses from the respondents belongs to different demographic level of Karachi; the availability of many options and many marketing claims, it

is difficult to decide which school to be preferred; this study helps to understand the inner key role factors to help decision makers, that is why this study is different from the other works submitted earlier¹.

This study covers following area. i. What are the major factors, parents consider while selecting a school? ii. What are key qualities as per the perception of parents, kids about an appropriate School?

It also included an overview of the emergent theme and relation between factors affecting in selection of school. Many factors seem important as per the respondent's response, also expressed by some respondents that marketing ethos process has corrupted the educational process. We also learned some negatives that continued in the school education and effectiveness of the very objectives of education and learning's through schools. It is presumed this study may also help providing policy makers with suggestions to improve the highlighted factors for improvement of quality in private education sector; and to have a synchronized education system over the country².

Objective: The selection of school for upcoming generation is always been a serious as well as risky decision for some parents, who don't want to revise their decision so quickly. This study

attempt has been made to determine the importance of most common factors, which need to be care before getting a new admission or shifting the existing school of a child.

Research Question: What are important factor, which need to be taken in consideration while making decision to select a school for kids?

Statement of Problem: Mostly the important decision for selection of school for kids is taken in short time, and if any important factor is neglected, it cause time and effort losses including financial damages to change the school frequently, because of non-satisfaction. Therefore it was thought to make efforts to elaborate key factors affecting selection of school, to help such parents who are planning for schooling of their kids.

Previous Research: Previous studies seem to define the scattered factors, related to quality issues or some specific type of school system, or concern to some foreign state. However those factors have significant role in decision-making. But for academic decision makers it is important to guard against making some opinion based upon only one or few variables, or mediating number of measures of outcome³.

Economies of scale: Researchers support the size of schools, through a common assumption in business, that a bigger organization can perform more efficiently than a small organization, because the increase in size makes decrease in per unit cost (Jewel, 1989). Researches defines that among the many desirable factors, it is not possible to qualify every factor, this is neither possible nor desirable⁴.

School grounds as Learning Environments: The school ground is, for many children, one of the few places where they can interact with their peers in a natural, outdoor environment. Consequently, children could benefit significantly from maximizing the environmental learning opportunities of school grounds. School grounds should be places where children engage in a range of play activities. Play should be fun, active, spontaneous, self-initiated, challenging and linked closely with learning and development. The school ground is the “stage”

where children act out, spontaneously and freely, the events that touch their lives. It is the space where they connect with the social, cultural and ecological domains of childhood. School grounds should promote learning and development^{4,5}.

Material and Methods

In this study we are using exploratory and qualitative approach. Disinger⁵ argued that the goal of understanding of a phenomenon from view point of participants and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data is quantified. Qualitative research involves the use of qualitative data such as interviews, document and participants observations. The methodology used for this research inquiry is case study and primary data. With help of review multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative data, this study edeavours to determine the key factors considered for the decision of school selection⁶.

Collection of data primarily involves oral narrative inquiries interviews. A series of telephonic and face –to– Face interviews. Respondents were selected randomly from different part of Karachi; having different pay scales, different educational and field of work back grounds. The questionnaire questions were guided by naturalistic inquiry paradigm responses. Discussion interviews questions were reasonably objective, yet allow for probing, clarification and follow-up. Respondents were not directed, neither prior informed nor given any defined priority. So there were variations among different interviews. Primary data also collect by visits; as some schools were visited to observe their set up and facilities provided as per claim by administration. Secondary data also gathered from case studies through Internet and educational institutions⁷.

Sample and Sampling: Simple random sampling, respondents were selected randomly on convenience basis from different districts of Karachi. Feedback of 100 respondents was collected through Questionnaire. Detailed interviews were done with respondents who had some past experiences on the research topic.

Independent Variable
School Distance from Residence
School Building Size
Quality of studies
Fees and Contribution
School Quality
Teacher- Student role
School administration
Teachers – Parent relation
School – religion contribution
Social Economic Status

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Dependent Variable
Selection of School

Data Analysis: Data gathered through questionnaire and interviews, mentioned through frequency tables, using percentages. The positive response was collected through selection of “Yes”, and negative response from “No” option.

Variables Identified: The selection of school kept as depending variable, following independent variable was identified, and questionnaire was developed accordingly.

Results and Discussion

Following table shows the percentage analysis on response regarding different groups of factors.

Table-1
Participant’s demographic representation

S/N.	ITEMS	Positive Responses	Negative Responses
Psychological Factors			
1	School Distance from Residence (Q1)	83%	17%
2	School Building Size (Q2)	77%	23%
3	Education Quality (Q3)	94%	6%
4	Teachers – Parents relation (Q10)	100%	0%
5	School – religious affect (Q11)	70%	30%
Performance Factors			
6	School Grading (Q5)	89%	11%
7	Administration role and activeness (Q8)	93%	7%
Sociological Factors			
8	Reputation of school (Q6)	96%	4%
9	Separate Department of Public relation (Q9)	51%	49%
10	Social Economic Status (Q13)	40%	60%
11	Teachers – Student relation (Q7)	93%	7%
Economic Factors			
12	High Cost, fees and contribution (Q4)	26%	74%
13	Different economic classes presence (Q12)	79%	21%
	Public – Private school equation (Q14)	19%	81%
15	Maximum classes/ levels offered by a school (Q15)	83%	17%

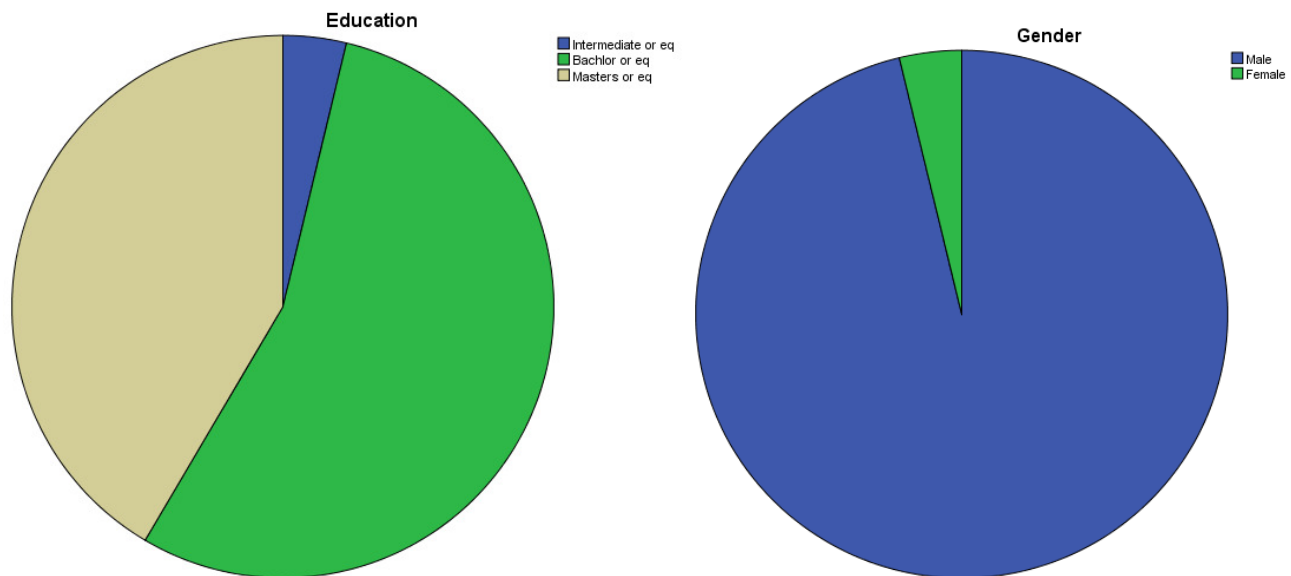


Figure-1
Education and Gender of the Respondents

The above pi-diagrams show the respondents education and gender segmentation, which have been sued in the undertaken study.

The above Pie charts declare that the participants took part in this study was belong to scattered field of work, and living in different areas of Karachi.

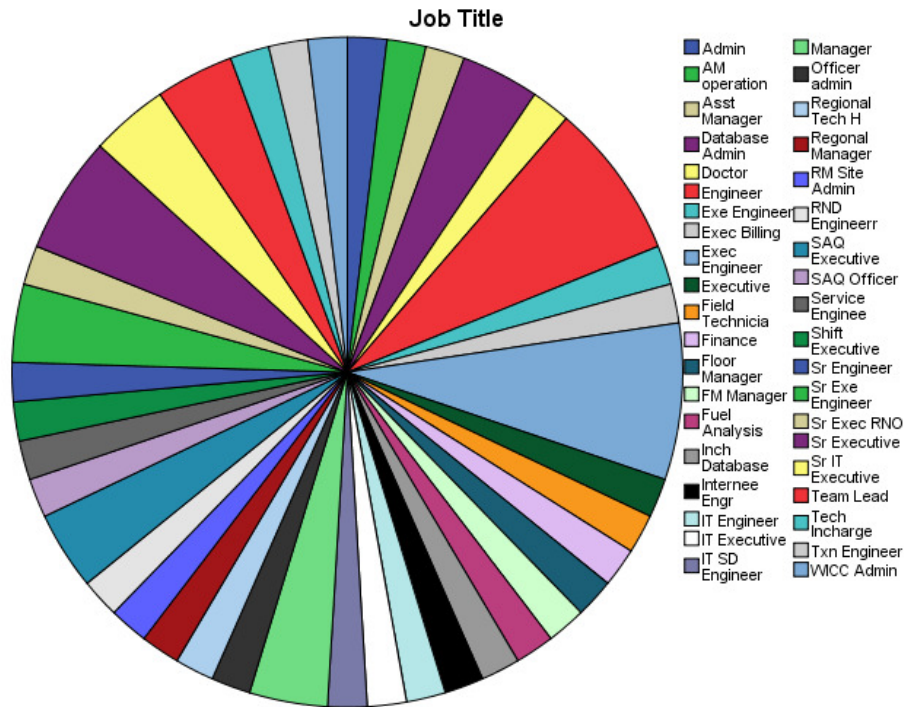


Figure-2
 Job Title of the Respondents

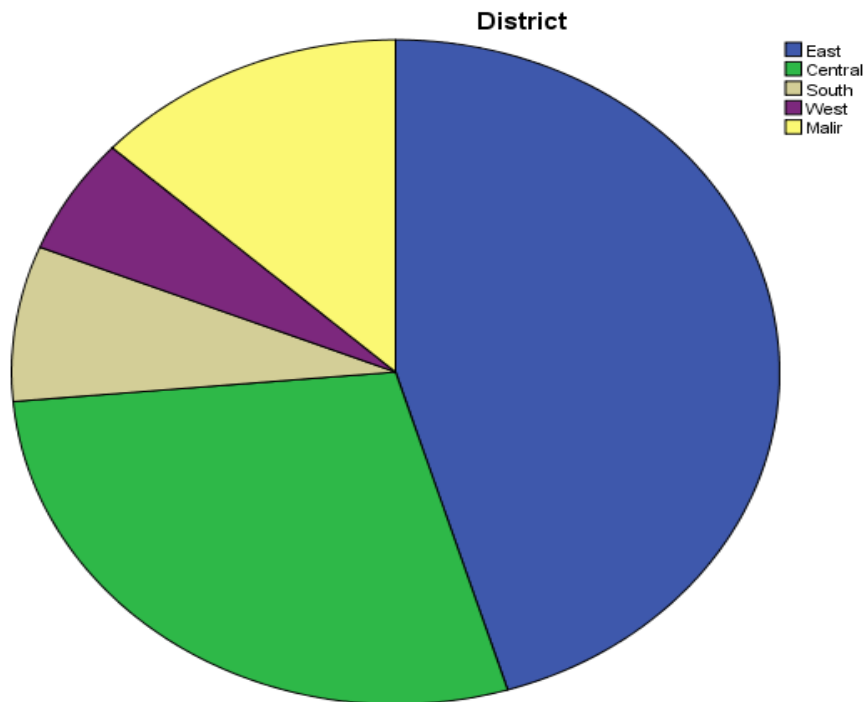


Figure-3
 District-wise allocation

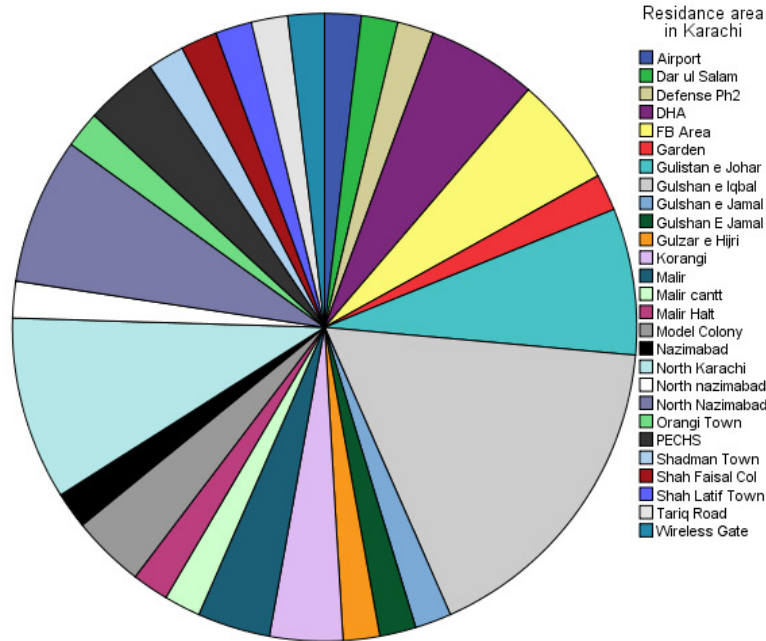


Figure-4
Residential Areas of the Respondents

Respondents from all five districts, and major areas of Karachi took part in this study. Presentation of East and Central districts is higher, because the population size in those districts is higher than others.

Discussion: Findings from the results given above; shows the trend of respondents very clearly. This is can't be denied that there is a big role played by parents in provision of best education to their children. Parents have a large no. of choices now a day's; for selection of school types. But as if the selection is to be made, it requires taking certain factors in account, and evaluating on the background of own experiences and limitations⁸. Some studies concluded and supported to the position of parents, counsellor and teachers and mentors, as they are important agents for career development of students^{9,10}.

Teacher – Parent Role: The research Question also takes in to account the Teacher – parent role gains 100% response in YES from all respondents, that confirms the importance of this factor. Then is the reputation of school, which gained 96% positive response but reputation of school based on many inter polating factors, like school records, good faculty selection, school overall atmosphere, and style of education etc. Later is the quality of education at 94% which is based on qualification of teachers and teaching methods¹¹.

The Teachers – Students relation: The teachers – Students relation has 93% yes response, which defines the effective role of relation, as well as administration role also got 93% yes choice by respondents, which emphasizes the good administration and teachers relation both are merely of equal importance and

those factors are being observed by respondents as of a most required factor¹². While the distance of residence of students selected on 83%, and it reveals that other than the size of school which was given a score of 77% major parents do care on distance, especially due to security reasons because of the situation in Karachi city.

Distance of School: School being near to home gives convenience to accessibility, and require less time in traveling¹³. But there will be a small no. of school to choose in between, if nearest schools option taken as major qualification. However the economic class also considered at 79%, but parent seems least concern to learn the economy class of other students as it was selected on 40%. School effect on religious activities also elaborated by 70% respondents as Yes, and 83% respondents emphasis on the importance of maximum classes offered by school, they are going to choose.

The Size of the School: The size of school, in which this is preassumed, that it may have a proper play ground and open classes with having adequate facilities of sitting and laboratory arrangements, respondents given a significant importance to it¹⁴. The size of class room also reveals the classroom population, what ever if it is for Boys or girls, or mixed gender. Some parents prefer single gender school, especially for girls. The size of school also affects on confidence level of students¹⁵. As per study of Naeem ur Rehman², the income level of parents plays a significant role in selection of school, as well the parents education level. The parents with higher education like Masters level, takes more care for the selection of school. The family size also affects on decision taken by parents¹⁶.

Teacher and Student Ratio: Class size and the ratio between teacher and students are also important factors to remember¹⁷. The official teacher/child ratios in many countries are one teacher to every 29 children maximum¹⁸. However, the Department of Education revealed that this isn't being strictly followed since there are some schools with higher ratios and some schools with lower ones. The teacher/child ratio is important since it can affect the quality of education delivered to children. Lower ratios are viewed as more advantageous. The National Association for the Education of Young Children in the United States recommends a ratio of one teacher to 10 four-year old children. The infant classrooms fail to meet this requirement but it can't be denied that small class sizes are more favorable in the education of children¹⁹.

Size of the Class: Researchers agree that teachers in smaller class sizes are able to perform better since they can conduct individualized instruction^{20, 21,22}. They can interact with their children better too. The Department of Education and Science emphasizes the benefits of lower ratios and even have set ratios in some of their programs²³. For instance, Department of Education recommended having only 15 children to one teacher in infant classes. But then again, this isn't the real scenario in the actual school settings since schools encounter many problems such as having very limited local and national resources.

The Cultural Ethos: The cultural ethos of the school must be given due consideration²⁴. It's a fact that in Pakistan society today is more culturally diverse than before. This is recognized by the government which is why the National Children's Education Strategy states those children must be taught to value and respect social and cultural diversities in society so that Travellers as well as other minority groups can develop and enhance their fullest potentials²⁵. Therefore, you have to make sure you choose a school that caters to your child's cultural background. A good example is the religious ethos of a particular school. There are numerous private primary schools, which are managed by a single denomination, mostly by Roman Catholics or some Islamic religious sects.

Religion: Today, there are also many schools governed by other denominations. Some denominational schools prioritize children of their same religion but they also accept those who are of different religions. They're given the choice not to attend religion classes and like activities. Even the parents have the right to withdraw their children from classes, which they think are no longer in line with their own beliefs^{24, 26}.

The Foreign Language: The foreign language is also another factor, which parents must consider. It is a part of the children's culture and is considered an integral part of the educational system. In lower and primary school, children can learn the foreign language while other parents prefer to have their children exposed and educated through this language²⁷.

The common factors were pointed out from the literature review and interviews of respondents are, like distance of school from residence, social class size, teacher's qualification, student's achievements, school grading, attendance of students, student's teacher morale, grade level, discipline problems, social economic model of school etc^{21, 23,25,27}.

Conclusion

The study reveals that for the selection of school, best criteria is to consider multiple inner administrative factors instead of outer look, the parent teacher interactive relation is considered at high rate, while the size of school and social economic value also considered as important factors. However the quality of school and school reputation also selected at high rate but observation evaluate the importance of school administration role as well. But for some people selection set of factors to analyze before admission is different, in which the best is the one, which fits to the individual needs, financial background and environment. Selection of best school for your kids is easy especially, if the above-mentioned factors are taken into consideration. For more information, it would be also a benefit if one may ask fellow parents whose children are going to the same school. One can learn from their experience and what they say about a school. This may help to make decision and right choice in time.

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