

PARENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS PRIVATE SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Parental motivation and support for home learning programmes, coupled with parental engagement in schooling, is critical to the education of children. Hence, the investigators decided to take this study on Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools. The present study consists of parents of 200 XI standard students studying in higher secondary schools, Nagapattinam District, Tamil Nadu. The samples were selected by using simple random sampling technique. The tool used for this study is Attitude towards Private Schools Inventory, constructed and validated by Hilary N (2014). The major finding of the study shows that Parents of Higher secondary School students have favourable Attitude towards Private Schools.

KEYWORDS: *Parents, Attitude, Private Schools*

INTRODUCTION

The public sector as well as the private sector provide education in India, with power and funding coming from three levels: central, state and local. Free and compulsory education is given as a fundamental right for children between the ages of 6 and 14, according to different articles of the Indian Constitution. In India, the ratio of public schools to private schools is 7:5.

India has made progress in rising the enrollment rate for primary education and extending literacy by 2011 to nearly three-quarters of the population in the 7-10 age group. The strengthened education system in India is frequently cited as one of the key contributors to its economic growth. Much of the development, especially in the areas of higher education and science research, has been attributed to different public institutions. Though higher education enrollment has gradually increased over the past decade, reaching a gross enrollment ratio of 24 percent in 2013, there is still a substantial distance to catch up with developed nations' tertiary education enrollment levels, an obstacle that will need to be addressed in order to continue to reap a demographic dividend from India's comparatively young population.

India has a broad private school system at the primary and secondary levels that complements the government run schools, with 29 percent of students in the 6 to 14 age group accessing private education. Certain technical post-secondary schools are also private.

96.5 percent of all rural children between the ages of 6-14 were enrolled in school as per the Annual Status of Education Study (ASER) 2012. This is the fourth annual survey to record enrollment above 96 percent. Another 2013 study indicated that 22.9 crore students from Class I to XII were enrolled in various approved urban and rural schools in India, reflecting an increase of 23 lakh students over 2002 total enrolment, and a 19 percent increase in girl enrolment.

While India is quantitatively getting closer to universal education, especially in its government-run school system, the quality of its education has been questioned. Some of the reasons for low results include the daily absence of about 25% of teachers. To recognise and develop such colleges, the states of India have implemented tests and education evaluation systems.

Although there are private schools in India, it is necessary to clarify that they are highly restricted in terms of what they can teach, in what form they can operate (it must be a non-profit to run any accredited educational institution) and all other aspects of activity. Therefore, it can be misleading to distinguish government schools and private schools.

Under affirmative action initiatives for the traditionally oppressed Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Groups, a large number of seats are reserved in India's higher education system. There is a limit of 50 per cent of reservations available to these deprived groups in universities, schools, and similar institutions associated with the federal government, and it can differ at the state level. In 2014, Maharashtra had 73% reservations, which is the highest proportion of reservations in India.

Private schools are referred to as independent schools in India, but because some private schools receive government financial assistance, it may be an aided or an unaided school. So, in a strict sense, a private school is an independent school without assistance. For the purposes of this description, only receipt of financial assistance shall be included, not land purchased at a subsidised rate from the government. As education appears in the Concurrent List of Legislative Themes in the Constitution, it is within the jurisdiction of both the union government and the state governments to govern schools. The trend has been to provide broad policy guidance to the union government as the states establish their own rules and regulations for the sector's administration. This has also culminated, among other things, in 30 different examination boards or academic bodies holding tests for school leaving certificates. The CBSE and CISCE, NENBSE and NENBSE are famous examination boards that are present in many states.

Legally, schools can be run in India only by non-profit trusts and societies. To get recognition (a form of licence) from the government, they will have to meet a number of infrastructure and human resource-related requirements. Critics of this method point out that in a nation that has the highest adult illiterate population in the world, this leads to corruption by school inspectors who verify enforcement and to fewer schools. Although the actual scale of private schooling in the country is not captured by official statistics, different studies have revealed the unpopularity of government schools and a growing number of private schools. In rural India, the Annual State of Education Study (ASER), which assesses learning standards, recorded lower academic performance in government schools than in private schools. A main distinction between government and private schools is that in private schools, English is the medium of instruction, while in government schools it is the local language.

Government and Private Schools

In India, private schools that provide primary education have developed at a rapid pace. According to recent figures, private schools account for 25 percent of all primary education enrollment in India. Attendance at these schools in urban areas is not restricted to non-poor citizens or girls. In private schools that charge low fees, a significant number of children belonging to poor households study; almost 30 percent of villages in India have access to a private school within the village itself.

Parents esteem education of high quality and are able to pay for it. In addition to tuition fees, parents pay substantial expense to send a child to a private school to spend money on uniforms and textbooks, which can otherwise be used in a government school free of charge. The low standard of education in public schools is seen as an important explanation for the dramatic rise in the number of private schools. Parents consider that private schools are more responsible and provide higher quality education. The Probe Report (1999) states that "In a private school, teachers are responsible to the director (who can fire them) and to the parents through him or her" (who can withdraw their children). The chain of accountability in a government school is much weaker, as teachers have a permanent job with pay and promotions unrelated to results. The vast bulk of parents interpret this comparison with crystal clarity.

Evidence from studies in a number of developing countries, including India, indicates that private schools' learning results are higher on average than government schools, as measured by test scores. In most research, even after adjusting for a large range of measurable student family, school and teacher characteristics, the private school advantage persists.

Evidence of the comparative standard of public and private schools has contributed to a vigorous political debate on the government's terms and conditions for delivering education. The government school system is argued to be inefficient and unsustainable and fails to impart even minimum skills to students; private schools not only do better, but also have a much lower unit cost of learning. Government school changes range from making teachers and schools responsible for results (using sticks or carrots or both) to making government schools compete with private schools for students (for example, by giving students vouchers to be used in a school of their choice).

While there is a strong argument to be made for changing the government school system, it is important to remember that the research on private schools comes mainly from studies (including this one) focused on data that indicate a connection between the type of school and results and not causation. If students choose colleges, any private school impact can not be attributed to the school. However, private schools will also have a cost advantage of lower per student expenses.

NEED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Parental motivation and support for home learning programmes, coupled with parental engagement in schooling, is critical to the education of children. A increasing body of research demonstrates that developing successful relationships to promote children's learning between parents, families and schools contributes to improved learning outcomes. Parents are their children's first and constant educators. Research also shows that teacher quality is essential for promoting successful parental engagement, including standards and training in parental engagement.

In optimising student participation and achievement, the importance of positive relationships between students, parents, carers, families, schools and the wider community is significant. Broadly viewed, parental involvement consists of family, school and community collaborations, raising parental awareness of the benefits of investing in the education of their children, and providing them with the skills to do so. The investigator agreed, therefore, to take up this study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has the following objectives:-

- To find out the Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference between Male and Female Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference between Rural and Urban Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference between Govt. and Private school Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference between Arts and Science group students' Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference between Nuclear and Joint family Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- To find out whether there is any significant difference among Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools with respect to Parents' Education (Illiterate/School Level/College Level).

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Suitable null hypotheses were framed.

METHOD OF THE STUDY

For the present investigation the investigator adopted normative survey method.

Variables of the Study

Variables are the conditions or characteristics that the researcher manipulates, controls or observes. Independent variable of this study is "Parents' Attitude towards Attitude towards Private Schools"

Sample and Sampling Technique

The present study consists of parents of 200 XI standard students studying in higher secondary schools, Nagappttinam District, Tamil Nadu. The samples were selected by using simple random sampling technique. The sample forms a representative sample of the entire population.

Tool Used

The tool used for this study is Attitude towards Private Schools Inventory, constructed and validated by Hilary N (2014).

The Mean and Standard Deviation of Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools

In order to find out the Level of Attitude towards Private Schools of Parents of Higher secondary School students, the Mean and S.D have been calculated.

Table 1: The Mean and Standard Deviation of Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools

Demographic Variable	Sub sample	N	Mean	SD
Gender of Students	Male	93	71.78	15.304
	Female	107	78.96	12.756
Locality	Rural	133	75.54	14.530
	Urban	67	75.79	14.293
Type of Management	Govt.	127	70.44	14.970
	Private	73	84.64	7.244
Group	Arts	83	74.17	15.611
	Science	82	74.23	15.699
Type of family	Nuclear	146	76.19	14.040
	Joint	54	74.09	15.419
Parents' Education	Illiterate	14	80.76	11.506
	School Level	107	73.36	15.637
	College Level	79	77.78	12.625
Entire Sample		200	75.62	14.416

Entire Sample

It is evident from the above Table that the calculated Mean score of entire sample ($M=75.62$) indicates that the Parents of Higher secondary School students have favourable Attitude towards Private Schools.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THIS STUDY

Following are the findings of this study:

- Parents of Higher secondary School students have favourable Attitude towards Private Schools.
- There is significant difference between Male and Female Students' Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- There is no significant difference between Rural and Urban Students' Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- There is significant difference between Govt. and Private Students' Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- There is no significant difference between Arts and Science group Students' Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- There is no significant difference between Nuclear and Joint family Students' Parents' Attitude towards Private Schools.
- There is significant difference between students of Illiterate and School level Educated Parents and School level and College Level Educated Students' Parents with respect to their level of Attitude towards Private Schools and there is no significant difference between parents of Illiterate and College level Educated Parents with respect to their level of Attitude towards Private Schools.

CONCLUSIONS

In terms of community, type of family, gender, location of school, type of management and education of parents, the attitude of parents towards private schools was considered. The current study has shown that the parents of higher secondary students have a favourable attitude towards private schools, further showing that student gender, form of school management and parents' education have a major effect. The investigator assumes that administrators, teachers and

researchers should focus on the other variables in order to enhance the quality of government schools and the attitude of parents towards those schools, based on the outcome of the current study and comparing the findings with previous studies.

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