

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTAL CHOICE OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS FOR THEIR CHILDREN IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS AT FUNAKAYE LGA, GOMBE STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the factors that parents consider when choosing a secondary school for their children at a few chosen schools in the Funakaye Local Government Area of Gombe State, Nigeria. The primary objective of the study is to pinpoint the issue of the declining quality of education, which may have a direct impact on secondary school choice based on maintaining academic performance. Utilizing a quantitative descriptive research design, this study gathers relevant empirical information using questionnaires and interviews. We used percentages to analyse every piece of data that was submitted to the table. Fifty people in total took part in the survey. The findings showed that children don't mind if their parents choose their schools for them; parents also said that factors like wealth, the school's standard, the learning environment, and academic achievement all influence the decision about which school to attend. Subsequently, suggestions are offered, including the need for the government and society at large to provide high-quality education with certified instructors and conventional facilities. To encourage parents to take their kids to school, the schools should set reasonable and manageable costs. To face the current problems worldwide, the government should upgrade and provide the required tools and new technical equipment to raise the level of public schools. Students ought to make every effort in order to excel in life.

Keywords: Assessment, Children, Choice, Parent, Secondary School

Introduction

Preparing students for a creative life and helping them acquire abilities that will ultimately improve and impact our society is the main objective of education. Although, education is still an important part of society. This means that, depending on the school that the person attended, it became necessary to develop people who could manage and handle administrative, technical, and professional choices in society as a result of this onus being accepted. It became essential to implement the plans in order to increase education and produce the needed and desired labour force (Ifemeje, 2007).

The admissions process has completely altered from the colonial past, when parents were urged to bring their children to school and register them because there were no exams to take beforehand. For that reason, parents must select a school for their children that will shape their future careers, provide them with an outstanding education, and prepare them for college admissions and life's obstacles.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to survey and analyse the variables determining the secondary school that parents in the Funakaye Local Government area of Gombe State, Nigeria, choose for their children. The local indigenous population is aware of its educational obligations and keeps contributing to the advancement of education in the region, state, and country as a whole. In acknowledgment of variations in parental perception, attitudes, and personalities about the results of learning that may be attributed to a wide range of circumstances, including sex, co-education, ownership, boarding, day, close or distant, standard, etc.

Statement of the Problem

Every year, students in the Funakaye Local Government Area of Gombe State and around the country progress from primary to secondary education. Making decisions on secondary school is a challenge for parents of primary school graduates. Not every one of them has the same secondary option schools: People have varying tastes when it comes to some schools over others. The reasons for each parent's selection of these institutions are unique. The effect of demographic parameters on parents' choice of secondary school education, however, remains unclear to the researchers. The researchers set out to investigate and evaluate the determining elements influencing parents' choices of secondary schools for their children in the Funakaye Local Government Area of Gombe State, Nigeria, in light of this concerns.

Purpose of the Study

This study's primary goal is to identify the variables that affect parents' decisions on secondary schools for their kids in a subset of schools in the Funakaye local government area of Gombe State, Nigeria. The research especially aims to ascertain: The impact of parents' decisions over their children's secondary school

Research Questions

Thus, the following inquiries serve as a guide for this study project:

- i. What are the elements that influence parents' decisions on secondary schools for their children?
- ii. What impact does a parent's choice of school have on their pupils?

Review of Related Literature

It seems to be quite difficult to define the concept of education into exact expressions. Indeed, it appears that there is no overarching structure regarding its scope of interpretation or implication. Thus, based on their perspectives or understandings, several academics defined the idea in different ways. The process through which people become engaged members of their community is known as education. It's a framework that makes man a moral being fit to exist in a community. It is a process by which children learn how to be beneficial to both themselves and other people. (Ocho, 2005) According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (National Education Law No. 20 of 2003), Education is a deliberate attempt to foster a learning environment where students actively participate in the process of realizing their potential to possess the spiritual strength of religion, self-control, personality, intelligence, character, and other skills that they will need for both themselves and society.

The Latin term "educare," which refers to the process of instructing or training, is where the word education originates, claims Parankimalil (2012). Education is defined as a methodical process that helps adults and children develop sound attitudes, knowledge, experience, and abilities. An individual becomes civilized, polished, cultured, and educated as a result. But education may also be defined as the act of learning broad information, strengthening one's capacity for judgment and thinking, and overall preparing oneself or others intellectually for adulthood (Daily Beast, 2008).

The Importance of Education

Education produces "greater understanding and tolerance" and invites greater equity because it gives our children the tools they need to succeed in today's global economy. The need to educate children is all the more urgent in light of the world community's "mighty struggle against terrorism" because educated children are much more likely to embrace the value that defects terrorism (Laura Bush, 2002). Education is important in the area of conflict or extreme poverty because it could help children see beyond a world of hate and hopelessness.

The Influence of Family on the Child

The ability to handle life's issues and demands is based upon the psychological foundation of early family experiences. Within the society, parents identify certain values that are important for the development of their children (Goldsmith, 2000).

Families are the central and enduring influence on children; their education, composition, income, and values (The family pediatrics report, 2003). The organization of the family has a direct

effect on the children, the first social relationship of the children is familial, and where children acquire their first experiences of being treated as a person in their own right. A child receives care for dependency and attention for their sociability. The kind of care and attention children receive during their early years of life affect their handling of important issues such as; trust vs. mistrust and autonomy vs. disunity. This equips children to establish rapport with people outside the family.

The Concept of Choice

Making a choice involves considering your possibilities, mentally picking one or more of them, and making a decision (Schwartz, 2004). Through education, people may increase their mental horizons and opportunities, make well-informed decisions, and participate in public decision-making. It is among the most significant elements that work against the social and economic mobility that is imposed by prejudices rooted in culture and history. On a personal level, education is closely linked to increased earning potential and a life that is more knowledgeable and conscious. Every child, adolescent, and adult must acquire literacy in order to be prepared to handle the obstacles life may present.

Factors that Determine the Parental Choice of Secondary School

- i. Security and safety
- ii. Location and distance
- iii. Transportation
- iv. Available facilities
- v. Affordability of fees
- vi. Discipline
- vii. Regular feedback on students' progress
- viii. The tone of the school
- ix. Status of the school
- x. Attainable standard of the school
- xi. Career opportunity
- xii. Conduciveness of the learning environment

With regard to this, most parents already know what to look for when their adolescents are ready to start secondary school and make that decision.

Methodology

This study uses a quantitative descriptive research design, gathering pertinent empirical data through questionnaires and interviews. Day schools, boarding schools, single-sex schools, and mixed (male and female) schools were among the government (public) and private institutions. The study population is the one from whom the sample was drawn.

There are 1379 people in total, of which 100 were sampled. In the Funakaye local government area of Gombe State, Nigeria, five (5) secondary schools were randomly chosen by the researchers, and twenty (20) parents were picked from each school. Slips of paper, a basic random sample approach, and were used for all of these.

The administrators of the five (5) chosen schools facilitated the researchers' request for approval from the Parent Teachers Association (PTA), and twenty (20) questionnaires were delivered to the sampled parents and teachers.

The five schools are made up of one (1) federal government-owned secondary school, two (2) state government-owned secondary schools, and three (3) government schools. Two of the three secondary schools are mixed (male and female) day schools, while one is a residential school. The other one is a single (female) secondary school. There are now five secondary schools overall, the other two (2) being private mixed-gender day schools. Since it is typically not feasible to research the complete population, a technique is used to choose a smaller sample of the population for the study. Because it is challenging to use every student in a chosen group of secondary schools and Sampling is necessary since parents are participating in this study project in the interim. Simple random sampling was utilized to acquire the data with simplicity and precision. The five (5) secondary schools in the Funakaye local government area of Gombe State, Nigeria, are the randomly chosen subjects. A random sample of twenty (20) parents or teachers was taken from each school, for a total of one hundred (100) parents or teachers. This demonstrates that in each of the chosen secondary schools, the researchers employed one hundred (100) questionnaires.

Research Instrument

The variables affecting parental choice of secondary school questionnaire (PIIFSSQ) is the instrument used to gather data. The parents were asked about the anticipated variables influencing their choice of secondary school using an instrument that the researchers had devised.

There are fifteen items in the test that evaluate the aspects that parents and students consider while choosing a secondary school. The surveys are structured and closed-ended, with a predetermined list of particular questions and an option for responses. The responses were scored in the following order: disagree (2 marks), strongly disagree (1 mark), agree (3 marks), and highly agree (4 marks). Percentages were used to assess all of the data that was submitted into the table.

Results

Research Question 1: What are those factors responsible for parents' choice of secondary school for their children?

Table 1: responses to factors influencing parental choice of school

S/N	Items	No. of respondents	Agreed		Disagreed	
			No.	%	No.	%
1	Socio-economic status of the parents	100	76	76	24	24
2	Location and distance of the school	100	16	16	84	84
3	Standard of the school	100	80	80	20	20
4	Academic performance of the school	100	80	80	20	20
5	Amount of the fees charged by the school	100	78	78	22	22
6	School attended by colleagues, relatives, neighbors, and friends	100	12	12	88	88
7	Religion	100	54	54	46	46
8	Intended career of the child	100	6	6	94	94
9	Conduciveness of the school (learning environment)	100	88	88	12	12
10	Choice of the child	100	6	6	94	94
11	Preference of day to boarding school	100	60	60	40	40
12	Career of the child	100	12	12	88	88
13	Future ambition of the child (entire life)	100	24	24	76	76
14	Preference of single school than mixed	100	12	12	88	88
15	Intellectual development of the child	100	50	50	50	50

Table 1 above indicates that the respondents thought that the school's standards, academic standing, fee schedule, and overall environment were the most significant factors. Items 6, 8, 9, 10 and 14 were ranked as being the least essential influence the school that parents choose for their kids. Just a small percentage of respondents thought that the child's decision had any bearing.

Research Question 2: What is the impact of parental choice of secondary schools on children?

Table 2: responses on the effects of parental choice of secondary school

S/N	Item	No. of respondents	Agree		Disagree	
			No.	%	No.	%
16	Most parents make school choice for their children	100	70	70	30	30
17	Children usually find it difficult to cope in schools they don't like	100	80	80	20	20
18	If parent happens to send Children school which they dislike, it would affect their intellectual performance and development	100	60	60	40	40
19	Does the saying "if you dislike a subject you will find it difficult to perform brilliantly in the subject" correlate with the choice of school that is, if the child dislikes the schools s(he) would find it difficult to adopt and perform brilliantly	100	78	78	22	22
20	My parental choice of school would affect my choice, career, and ambition for my entire future life.	100	80	80	20	20

The above table demonstrates the respondents' belief that their academic performance may suffer if their parents choose to send them to schools they dislike. According to the statistics, 80 (80%) of the respondents said they had trouble adjusting to school, and 78 (78%) said they agreed with the statement that "if you dislike a subject, you find it difficult to perform brilliantly in the school." For this reason, the secondary schools that parents choose for their kids have an impact on those kids.

Discussion

It was found that one of the things that affected the decision was family, which has a significant impact on the kid. Goldsmith also views this (2000). According to him, the psychological underpinnings of early family experiences serve as the basis for the capacity to manage the challenges and demands of life. "Families are the central and enduring influence on children's education, composition, income, and values," according to the 2003 Family Pediatrics Report. Additionally, the 2003 family pediatrics study clarified that interpersonal ties inside the family have a major impact on children's development.

According to Barry Schwartz (2004), choice is mentally weighing the pros and cons of several possibilities and choosing one or more of them. The results also show that parental choice has a major impact on the kid. Additionally, in line with Beegle (2005), conscientious parents prepare for their children's futures well in advance and never stop thinking about them. This

By the time a child reaches puberty, most parents have picked up a few tips and most of the deciding elements for selecting a good school for their child.

Factors that Determine Parental Choice of School

This research reveals that there are many factors that determine the parental choice of secondary school for their children in the Funakaye local government area of Gombe State, Nigeria. Among the factors are:

1. Socio-economic status of the parent
2. Standard of the school
3. Academic performance of the school
4. Amount of fees charged by the school
5. Conduciveness of the school learning environment

The aforementioned or listed factors are the main or major factors influencing the parental choice of secondary school for their children in Funakaye local government area of Gombe State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

The variables impacting parents' decisions about their children's secondary school in Funakaye Local Government Area, Gombe State, are examined in this research. According to the study's findings, a parent's choice of secondary school for their child is largely influenced by a number of factors, including the parent's socioeconomic status, the school's standards, academic performance, amount of fees charged, and the environment's suitability for learning. The academic achievement of the kids was also significantly impacted by the secondary school that the parents chose for them.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

- i. Public (government) schools in particular need to raise their bar and perform better since students' school preferences are influenced by their academic standing.
- ii. It is important to provide a welcoming and supportive learning atmosphere in schools for both instructors and students.
- iii. To enable parents to take their children to school, both public and private schools should have reasonable and affordable tuition costs.
- iv. In order to address the current issues, the government should raise the caliber of instruction in public schools by supplying and modernizing the facilities and instruments required, as well as private
- v. schools in order to prevent any impact on students' decision about their higher education and profession.

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