

# A Study on the Attributes of Parents Choosing The Private Schools Than Government Schools For Their Children Education (At Appajipeta Village, Nalgonda District)

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**Abstract:** Parents are increasingly choosing private schools, rather than government schools, for the education of their children. According to anecdotal information from discussion with parents, some parents believe that their children receive a higher quality of education in private schools than they would in government schools. Based on this assumption, government schools may lose quality students to private schools and parents may be misinformed about the quality of government education. The goal of this study was to compare parental perceptions of school quality based on whether their children attend a public or a private school in a rural area in Appajipeta village of Nalgonda district, Telangana State. Non-probability, purposive sampling was used to survey 80 public and private school parents. The study followed a quantitative, non-experimental, causal comparative design, in which participating parents (N = 80) completed the opinion inventory, a self esteemed questionnaire was designed. The study examined almost 80 % of the respondents (Parents) perceive that English medium, better quality education & discipline are the main reason for opting a private school than government school. And also more than 50 % of the respondents reported that teachers in the private school are having good teaching skills and are well qualified than government teachers. But this was a wrong belief among the rural households where the government is conducting various exams for recruiting efficient and well qualified teachers. And also 41.25 % of respondents strongly agree that they feel inferior or low status in the society, if they send their child to government school. The Union and State governments is spending thousand crores of rupees for the school education in annual budget for their people, in the similar way parents are also spending thousands of rupees annually for their children education indicates, the money spent by the government is not reaching to the citizens of the country where the government is spending crores of rupees for the school education to the government schools for providing infrastructural facilities, buildings, grounds, uniforms, mid-day meal for the students and also giving high salaries for the teachers, the parents are opting for the private schools implies the lack of political will, improper monitoring and implementation of funds and also due to lack of accountability and transparency in the education departments are the reasons for choosing the private school.

**Keywords:** government schools, private schools, quality education, perceptions, union and state governments.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

India, with more than a billion residents, has the second largest education system in the world (after china). Experts estimate that 28.5 percent of its current population is under the age of 15. But counter to the image of India as a youthful engine of economic growth where many urban-based citizens work in some of the best technology - centered jobs in the world, males in India complete just 2.9 years of schooling on average, females just 1.8 years. And for the small proportion who do persist through primary and secondary schooling, the quality of instruction varies widely, depending on the region of the country and whether one is enrolled in a state-supported public school or a fee-based private school.

Despite the highly inefficient delivery of public services, high levels of teacher absenteeism and non-teaching activity, many Indian students remain motivated to succeed on the college entrance exams. The high level of competition for entry into the Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institutes of Management and other top institutions is enough to spur millions of students to achieve at remarkably high levels, particularly in the areas of science and mathematics. The increased demand for higher education is not currently being met: only ten percent of the age cohort is actually enrolled in higher education. But in a country with such a large population, ten percent enrollment amounts to 9 million students, resulting in 2.5 million new college graduates a year. These numbers driven by the private sector opportunities abroad, and increasingly, back in India will continue to ensure India's prowess in delivering high-quality technical manpower.

As per the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)<sup>[1]</sup> 2012, 96.5% of all rural children between the ages of 6-14 were enrolled in school. This is the fourth annual survey to report enrollment above 96%. 83% of all rural 15-16 year olds were enrolled in school. However, going forward, India will need to focus more on quality.

### Private Schooling:

Although the growth of private schooling in India is quite visible, even in rural areas, the contours of this change remain poorly understood because of data limitations. Official statistics often tend to underestimate private school enrollment (Kingdon 2007)<sup>[2]</sup>. Moreover, there is at best limited understanding of the effectiveness of private education in India. If parents know what is best for their children and if they are voting with their feet, we might assume that private schools must be of better quality than existing public schools.

Two considerations suggest a need for deeper reflection, however:

(1) There is a long history of school quality research in different contexts, particularly in the United States, which suggests that much of the apparent differences in schools are due to parental choices that propel children from certain backgrounds into certain types of schools (Hanushek 1997)<sup>[3]</sup> and,

(2) The panorama of Indian private schools is dotted with small, unrecognized and unregulated schools, frequently with poorly trained teachers. Anybody who has observed some of these schools would not automatically assume that private schools are better than government schools.

Hence, it is important to empirically examine the impact of private school enrollment on educational outcomes.

A key argument made in favor of private schools is the emergence of a "competitive" market for education, offering parents a certain kind of choice. Advocates of private education argue that private schools represent the possibility of exiting the public school system whenever parents lack the 'voice' to effect quality improvements. Further, proponents claim that the threat of exit from private schools to government schools or competitor private schools provides an incentive for those running private schools to maintain quality and fulfill parental expectations (Mehrotra, 2006; Tooley, 2007)<sup>[4]</sup>. There is also a perception that parents are now able to match better the nature of education 'supplied' with the skills they aspire for their children.

### Private and government schools compared:

An interesting aspect is the systematic pattern of private school placement (Pal, 2010; Muralidharan and Kremer, 2006)<sup>[5]</sup>. The 2006 survey suggests that private schools tend to be found in villages that are larger. Private schools tend to be located closer to the roads, to railways stations and district headquarters. In short, private schools tend to be in more accessible villages where perhaps they can more easily service a large clientele from surrounding villages. In the sample villages, private schools are significantly newer than government schools reflecting that the growth of private schools is a relatively recent phenomenon.

The correlates of private upper primary school presence are somewhat different. Strikingly, a village is less likely to have a private upper primary school the greater the number of government primary and upper primary schools, although there is positive association with the number of private primary schools. This suggests perhaps that those enrolled in government primary schools tend to continue in government schools for upper primary classes and that the presence of government schools is therefore associated with a lower probability of private upper primary school presence. Dropping the variable denoting number of private primary schools results in the number of households becoming a significant variable, representing the population that is serviced. The age of the oldest school also has a positive association indicating that villages with a long history of schooling are more likely to attract private schools. As with private lower primary presence, private upper primary schools tend to be present in villages that are more accessible. These findings make a case for accounting explicitly for choice set and school availability in the context of household decision making.

Apart from the differences between government and private schools in terms of placement in communities, the data on schools points to significant differences, on average, between private and government schools. A larger proportion of private schools offer English as a medium of instruction. Although fewer function out of their own building, in terms of other facilities such as drinking water, toilet, fans and library, a larger proportion of private schools have functional facilities. A lower proportion of private schools reports facing a shortage of teachers. On average, private school teachers are younger and a larger proportion of them are graduates. However, significantly fewer have had formal teacher's training. It is also apparent that on average sample children attending private schools travel longer to get to school than their counterparts in government schools and pay significantly higher on school fees, transport and supplies. Interestingly, they also spend more on private tuitions. Not with standing these differences, it is important to note the significant diversity of school attributes within each group, private and government. For example, only half of the private schools surveyed operated in pucca houses. Around a tenth operated from *kuccha* houses. Observations on the variation in school quality within private and government schools holds good on a much broader level and in other contexts as well (Chudgar,2012)<sup>[6]</sup>.

### Research on Public and Private Schools in India:

In comparison with the extensive literature in other countries, research on public and private schools in India is still in infancy. However, studies in India have noted that government schools are more expensive than private schools with lower teacher accountability. Kingdon (Kingdon 2008)<sup>[7]</sup> reports from micro study in the Uttar Pradesh that recurrent per pupil expenditure in private schools was only 41% of the expenditure in public schools; most of this difference occurs because teacher salaries are much lower in private schools compared to government schools. Another study in Delhi found that on average, the full time teachers teaching grade 4 in government schools earned Rs. 10071 per month compared to Rs. 3627 in private recognized schools and Rs. 1360 in private unrecognized schools (Tooley and Dixon 2005)<sup>[8]</sup>.

Another aspect of public schooling to attract considerable attention relates to the lack of accountability and frequent teacher absences. Studies in India have found considerable absenteeism among school teachers in rural areas (ranging from 11 to 25%) and found that private school teachers are 2-4 percentage points more likely to be present in school than government school teachers (Muralidharan and Kremer 2006).

While research on student performance in government and private schools remains limited, what information is available, records higher performance on the part of students from private schools than from government schools. For example, a nationwide survey of rural children's reading and arithmetic skill conducted by PRATHAM found that 60% of the rural children enrolled in standard V in government schools can read a simple paragraph compared to 70% for those in private schools (Pratham 2005)<sup>[9]</sup>. Similar results are shown by a study in Delhi slums (Tooley and Dixon 2005). However these studies do not fully control for the socioeconomic differences in children in government and private schools.

### More children going to private schools: NCAER

The findings of the 2011-12 round of India Human Development Survey (IHDS), a representative national sample of 42,000 households, carried out by the National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER)<sup>[10]</sup>, the numbers show that enrolment in government schools now make up 65 per cent of all school enrolment, down from 72 per cent in 2004-05.

Private school enrolment is increasing even though it is five times as expensive as going to a government school. The previous round of the IHDS was conducted in 2004-05, allowing for a comparison of change over the last eight years using independently collected data.

Private school enrolment ranges from as high as 61 per cent in Jammu and Kashmir and 56 per cent in Uttar Pradesh to as low as 12 per cent in West Bengal and Odisha and 13 per cent in Bihar. It is higher among boys, in urban areas and among richer households.

The average Indian family spends over Rs. 7,000 per year, per child enrolled in a private school as compared to less than Rs. 1,400 per child in a government school. Household expenditure on private schooling<sup>13</sup> ranges from over Rs. 18,000 in Delhi to just over Rs. 3,500 in Uttar Pradesh.

From the source of National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCEAR), IHDS data the percentage of the enrolment in private school increased to 36% in 2011-12, where it is 28% in 2004-05.

Children in private schools learn more than in government schools, but not very much, and those in cities, belonging to richer households, and those who come from forward castes do better. These numbers largely corroborate the ASER's findings.

## II. RESEARCH PROCESS

### **Hypothesis:**

The attributes of parents choosing the private schools for their children are quality education, good infrastructural facilities and English medium. Even the families of low income groups choose private schools than government schools as the parents believe that in government schools it is not possible to get all these.

### **Research Methodology:**

The study focuses on the attributes of parents choosing the private schools than government schools for their children education at Appajipeta village in Nalgonda district. It examines the factors that which affect the low income families of different socio-economic background and their views and opinion about the government schooling.

### **Research Design:**

- The term design indicates, drawing the outline. It is a process of decision making before the situation arises in which the decision has to be carried out. It is an accurate and systematic planning which will foresees and touches all the aspects of situation and problems, objectives, area of study, characteristic of the population, methods and procedure for the data collection and to analyze the needed information with regard to the phenomenon of the study undertaken by the researcher.
- The main purpose of social research is to explore, to describe and to explain this study on “the attributes of parents choosing the private schools for their children education at Appajipeta village in Nalgonda district”. The researcher through the research design precisely searches the living conditions, their views, opinions and consequences.
- Firstly to know the economic status of the parents.
- Secondly understand the reasons for opting private schools than government schools
- And finally to know parents feelings and observations towards functioning and facilities in government schools.

### **Sampling Frame:**

The researcher with the support of NGO “Government Schools Protection Society” had selected the Appajipeta village in Nalgonda district, where most of the parents in this village are sending their children to private school.

### **Sampling Design:**

As the study is focused on the parents of different socio-economic backgrounds of low income families, the researcher has chosen to interview the parents who are sending their children to private schools.

### **Methods of Data Collection:**

In the limited period during the concurrent field work a self-administered questionnaire was prepared. The researcher conducted the research at the Appajipeta village in Nalgonda district. The primary data has been collected from 80 households. A combination of both qualitative and quantitative process has been used for the data collection. Face to face, interview was used on the process of data collection. Questionnaire was prepared according to the hypothesis. The information was gathered through face to face conversation with the respondents.

### **Sampling Method:**

The researcher has used purposeful sampling method for the study. This method was used as the researcher has met the respondents directly with a particular purpose. Thus the researcher has taken 80 respondents from the Appajipeta village who residing in the village. A total of 80 households completed the questionnaire.

### III. ANALYSIS OF DATA AND FINDINGS

#### Analysis of Data:

The researcher after taking the collected data gone through the questionnaire in order to see whether there was any gap or unanswered questions and any consistency. After having analyzed everything the researcher prepared the respondents view in percentages.

#### 1. Occupation of the parents:

Table I: showing occupation of the respondents

Sl. No.	Occupation	No. of respondents	Percentage
1.	Self employment	18	22.5
2.	Daily wager (coolie)	47	58.75
3	Agriculture	15	18.75
Total		80	100

The above graph gives the information about the occupation of the respondents, a majority 58.75 % of respondents reported they engaged in daily wage works as coolie in agriculture or non-farming activities or menial jobs and the 22.5% reported as the self-employment where majority of them are auto drivers & lorry drivers. The remaining 18.75 % reported as farmers working in agriculture.

#### 2. Economic status of the Parents:

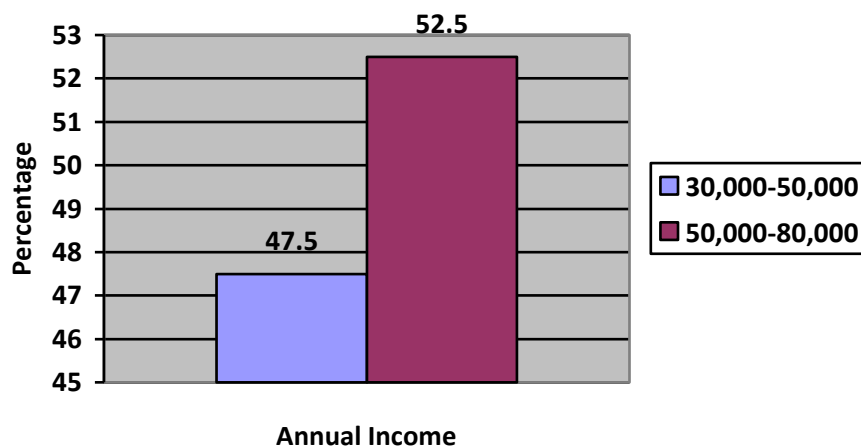


Fig 1: indicates annual income of the respondents

The above graph gives the information about the annual income levels of the respondents that there are 52.5% who gets the income annually ranging from 30,000-50,000 and the remaining 47.5% gets the income annually between 50,000-80,000.

#### 3. In which school your children are studying?

Table II: shows the % of the children going to private and government schools

Sl.No	School	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Government School	21	26.25
2	Private School	59	73.75
Total		80	100

The above table shows that about 73.75% of the respondents send their children to private school where are only 26.25% choosing the government schools for their children education.

#### 4. How much money you are spending for your children education per annum (including bus fee, donation, books etc.,) ?

Table III: shows the % of the respondents spending amount for their children education

Sl. No	Fee (Rs.)	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	3000-5000	12	15
2.	5000-10000	34	42.5
3.	10000-15000	13	16.25
4.	More than 15000	0	0

From the above table, majority of the parents i.e., 42.5 % are spending Rs. 5000 - 10000, 16.25 % are spending 10000-15000 and the remaining 15 % are spending amount 3000-5000 for their children education in private schools.

#### 5. Does the school in which your child is studying have government recognition?

Table IV: shows about the % of the respondents known about the school recognition

Sl. No	Does the school in which your child is studying	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	11	18.6
2.	No	7	11.7
3.	Don't know	41	69.5

The above graph represents that about 70 % of the respondents (parents) don't know whether the private school in which his/her child is studying is recognized by the government or not. 18.6 % reported that private school is having government recognition and 11.7% of respondents reported that the school is not recognized by the government.

#### 6. The main reason for sending your children to private school than government school?

Table V: shows the percentage of respondent's main reason for sending their children to private school

Sl. No.	Main reason for sending your children to private	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	English medium	33	41.3
2.	Quality education & Discipline	31	38.75
3.	Poor infrastructure and facilities in govt. school	16	20.00
4.	By seeing others (attraction or for status)	0	0
Total		80	100

From the above table, among 80 respondents 33 respondents i.e., about 41 % reported that English medium is the main reason for sending their children to private school, 38.75 % said that for quality education and discipline and 20 % reported that due to poor infrastructure and facilities in the government school.

Even though government is spending thousand crores of rupees for the school education in government schools for infrastructures, facilities, buildings and also giving high salaries for the teachers, the parents are choosing private school due to improper monitoring and lack of accountability and transparency in the educational departments.

#### 7. Do you think that teachers in private school are having good teaching skills and well qualified than government school teachers?

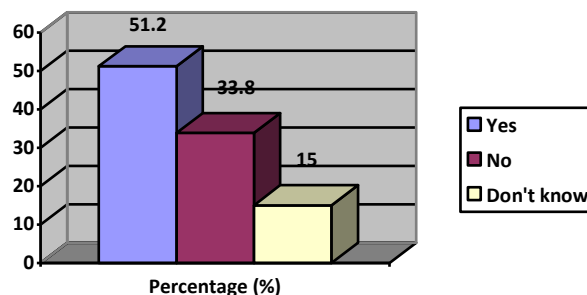


Fig 2: shows respondents percentage about the teaching ability of private teachers



The above graph gives the information about that majority of the parents (respondents) i.e., 51.2 % think that teachers in private school are having more teaching skills and are well qualified than government teachers, while 33.8 % said no and 15 % reported as don't know.

By this we can understand that the parents in Appajipeta village (rural areas) are unaware about the qualification of the government teachers where the government will conduct exams (like B.Ed, TET, DSC and others) and select the well qualified teachers who are having good teaching and ability skills. Where as in the private schools most of the teachers are of intermediate and other degree qualifications which does not relate to the teaching skills are teaching for the students.

#### 8. Are you ready to shift your children from private school to government school if they provide quality education, English medium and maintain good infrastructural facilities?

Table VI

Sl. No.	Option	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Yes	41	69.5
2.	No	9	15.25
3.	Can't Say	9	15.25
Total		59 + (21*) = 80	100.00

\* - indicates the number of respondents who already joined their children in govt. school

The above table represents the data that about 70 % of the respondents reported that they are ready to shift their children from private school to government school if the government provides quality education, english medium and maintain good infrastructural facilities. 15.25 % of respondents said that they are not willing to shift their children to government school and remaining 15.25 % said they can't say whether they join their children or not in government school.

#### 9. Do you feel inferior or low status in the society, if you send your child to government schools?

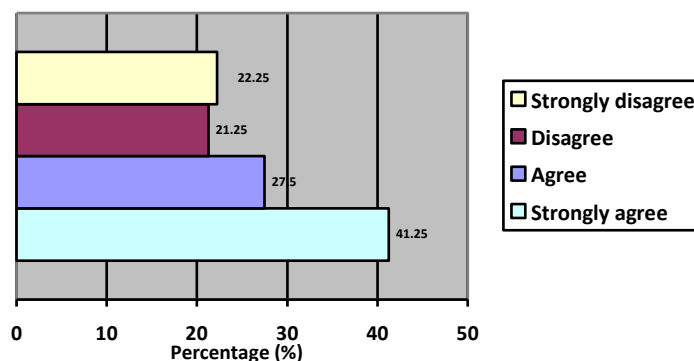


Fig 3: shows the respondents for sending their children to government schools.

From the above graph, 41.25 % of respondents strongly agree that they feel inferior or low status in the society, if they send their child to government schools, while 27.5 % said they agree. And the remaining 22.25 % and 21.25 % of respondents reported that they strongly disagree and disagree with that statement.

It indicates that in the present society, children studying in the government school indicates that his/her family status is low, as today only people belonging to low income levels and low socio-economic families are sending their children to the government schools.

#### 10. The main reason for the collapse of government schools day by day?

Table VII: shows the reasons for the collapse of government schools day by day

Sl. No.	Reason	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Government policies and lack of will	41	51.25
2.	Improper functioning and poor quality teaching	32	40
3.	Parents attitude towards government school is negative	7	8.75
Total		80	100

The above table gives the information that majority of the respondents almost 52 % reported that government policies and lack of will in the government, the government schools are losing faith and degrading day by day. Also 40 % of the respondents said that due to improper functioning and poor quality teaching is also the reason. And only 9 % of the respondents said that it is because of the negative attitude by the parents towards government schools.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

This study sought to examine school choice decisions of households between government and private schools using quantitative methods and their perspective towards government schools.

From a public policy perspective, the survey data analyzed in this study offers a few key insights. Private primary & high school presence continues to be highly selective in terms of English medium, quality education and discipline. So, the hypothesis is correct that most of the parents i.e., among 80 respondents 33 (41 %) respondents reported that English medium is the main reason for sending their children to private school, 38.75 % said that for quality education and discipline and 20 % reported that due to poor infrastructure and facilities in the government school.

And majority of the parents (respondents) i.e., 51.2 % believe that teachers in private school are having more teaching skills and are well qualified than government teachers. By this we can conclude that parents are unaware about the qualification of the government teachers where the government will conduct exams (like B.Ed, TET, DSC and others) and select the well qualified teachers who are having good teaching and ability skills. Whereas, in the private schools most of the teachers are of intermediate and other degree qualifications which does not relate to the teaching skills are teaching for the students.

Even though the government is spending crores of rupees for the school education as they are allocating budget yearly to the government schools for providing infrastructural facilities, buildings, grounds, uniforms, mid-day meal for the students and also giving high salaries for the teachers, the parents are opting private schools indicates the lack of political will, improper monitoring and implementation of funds and also due to lack of accountability and transparency in the education departments are the reasons for choosing the private school. Every child who born on this earth should get free and quality education irrespective of caste, religion, region, sex etc., it is the duty of the government to provide free education to every children as it is a human right and a fundamental right.

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