

Analysis of Elementary School Selection Factors During Pandemic

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Abstract

School selection has always been a problem for parents to get the best school for their children, especially during a pandemic. The purpose of this study was to describe the factors for selecting primary schools during the pandemic. This study uses a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques were carried out by observation, interviews, and documentation. The sample in this study was spread from the Gresik, Surabaya and Sidoarjo areas with a total of 15 parents. This research used Milles and Huberman analysis technique. The results of the study describe the factors of parents in choosing schools during the pandemic. The findings of this study are that there are many factors that influence parents in choosing elementary schools for their children, including 1. Location or distance 2. Environment 3. Circumstances 4. School status 5. Teacher background at school 6. Costs 7. Social and economic status of parents. And based on the results of the research, the distance factor that most influences parents in choosing a school. When viewed from the school status of the 15 parents, there were 13 parents who chose to send their children to private schools. So the findings from this study are that parents are not currently concerned about the cost of schooling their children, but rather the quality and distance between school and home.

Keywords: *parents; school selection factors; early childhood*

Abstrak

Pemilihan sekolah selalu menjadi problematika tersendiri bagi orang tua untuk mendapatkan sekolah terbaik bagi anak terlebih lagi pada konsidi pandemi. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan faktor pemilihan sekolah SD selama pandemic. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Teknik pengambilan data dilakukan dengan observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Sampel dalam penelitian ini tersebar dari wilayah Gresik, Surabaya dan Sidoarjo sejumlah 15 orang tua. Metode yang digunakan adalah Milles and Hubberman. Hasil dari penelitian mendeskripsikan faktor orang tua dalam memilih sekolah selama pandemi. Temuan dari penelitian ini yaitu banyak faktor yang mempengaruhi orang tua dalam memilih sekolah dasar untuk anak, diantaranya 1. Lokasi atau jarak 2. Lingkungan 3. Keadaan 4. Status sekolah 5. Latar belakang guru disekolah 6. Biaya 7. Sosial dan ekonomi orang tua. Dan berdasarkan hasil penelitian factor jarak yang paling mempengaruhi orang tua dalam memilih sekolah. Jika dilihat dari status sekolah dari 15 orangtua terdapat 13 orangtua yang memilih menyekolahkan anaknya di sekolah swasta. Maka temuan dari penelitian ini adalah orang tua saat ini tidak lagi mempermasalahkan biaya untuk sekolah anak, namun lebih pada kualitas serta jarak sekolah dengan rumah.

Kata Kunci: *orang tua; faktor pemilihan sekolah; anak usia dini*

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Introduction

The future of a nation lies in the hands of its next generation. The quality of the young generation as a determinant of the quality of the nation's future includes the ability of academics and the quality of their personality. The first five years of human life are the period when humans experience the most learning process compared to other periods in their next life (Aprilia, 2020). Therefore, to produce a quality young generation, proper handling is needed in educating children (Suwartini, 2017). Education is getting more and more attention from various circles. Public awareness of education is increasing. Every parent has their own considerations to choose the best education for their child.

The Covid-19 pandemic has made all Indonesian people experience structural changes in their lives (Shofiyah et al., 2021). This pandemic has greatly affected the joints of life, especially in the field of education (Onyema et al., 2020), such as many parents who are confused in choosing schools for their children. According to Kurniati (2020) The importance of the role of family and parenting is increasingly visible during the Covid-19 pandemic. This restores the initial function of the family to educate because the family is the main center for children in all educational activities. Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere (Jaya, 2017) and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by themselves and society. Education is held at several levels and types, one of which is Elementary School (Purnamasari et al., 2020).

Education is one of the most important aspects in determining the progress of a nation. Education is one of the facilities and infrastructure for a nation to promote and improve the quality of human resources, so education is an important factor that must be considered in order to realize the development of a nation (Prihanto et al., 2013). Through the education process, it is hoped that Indonesian people will be able to have a vision and mission to progress and develop. However, the world of education still leaves many problems that hinder the achievement of national education goals. This condition is reflected in the uneven fulfillment of education rights (Hakim, 2016). Many education policies are pro and contra with existing education. Equitable access to education in Indonesia is still far from perfect (Safarah & Wibowo, 2018).

This kind of gap has an impact on the number of parents choosing education according to what they want such as the facilities provided, the existing extracurriculars, and expensive schools as part of prestige in society (Prihanto et al., 2013). This condition will greatly affect schools that do not have a less well-known brand image. The choice of parents in deciding schools for their children has become a prominent problem (Mufaziah & Fauziah, 2020). Parents tend to prefer their favorite school, the school has a good brand image. Parents are of the view that a good education must send their children to good schools (Yanuri, 2016) even though they have to pay relatively large costs.

With so many choices of schools available, it is clear that it is not easy for parents to decide which school to choose. The school chosen is of course based on considerations or reasons for choosing the school. This is as reinforced by the results of research Andryana (2009), which revealed that the most influential factor in the selection of elementary schools was the quality of education (38.2%), then the location of the school (25%), school facilities (16%), cost education (10.1%), spiritual (6.4%), and extracurricular (5.5%). Meanwhile, according to (Revaldi (2010) several things that need to be considered by parents in choosing a school for their children are: school location and environment, physical facilities, school vision and mission, portion of religious education, educator profile, learning curriculum, school order and cleanliness,

Schools have an important role in improving children's intellectuality (Riswandi et al., 2021) because schools are the second place for children to seek knowledge and develop their abilities or talents. A good school and in accordance with the child's character will be able to guide the child in a better direction in the future (Fadhli, 2016), therefore choosing a good

school and in accordance with the child's character is very important (Pusitaningtyas, 2017). Communities as parents of prospective students have a big role in determining their child's school, of course they are looking for the best and most suitable school for their child. According to Munira (2012) in his research entitled "Perception and Expectation of Parents and Students Regarding Choice of Secondary School Type", the choice of a suitable and quality school is very important because it has an impact on determining the direction and future of students.

There are many factors that influence parents in choosing a school, including parental internal factors, internal schools or the environment (Bokings et al., 2013) including: parents' income, school programs, facilities, location, and costs. Indicators of the success of a school to be of interest to the public are graduate specifications, good service quality (taking into account the condition of students, intelligence, health, interests and talents, emotional atmosphere and learning motivation), teacher professional competence, availability of learning facilities, quality of life and organizational culture, orderly management of education funds, empowerment of School-Based Management (Widyastuti, 2019). Based on the research above, it can be concluded that parents in choosing a school are influenced by several factors, namely the quality of education and school location

From the description above, it is necessary to conduct research related to the problems of parents in choosing schools for their children. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors that influence parents in choosing schools and to determine the relationship between internal indicators of parents, internal schools, and the environment.

Methodology

This article uses a qualitative research type, which aims to explore or build proportions and explain the meaning behind a reality. This research is not directed at a false-true conclusion, does not test an accepted-rejected hypothesis, but focuses more on collecting data to describe the actual situation that occurs in the field in depth (Creswell, 1994). Population and Sample In qualitative research, we do not use the term population, but by Spradley (2007) it is called a "social situation" or a social situation consisting of three elements, namely: place, actors, and activities that interact synergistically.

The place of this research is in Gresik, Sidoarjo and Surabaya. The perpetrators are parents who have elementary school children, the activity carried out is the selection of schools for children. The sample is part of the population whose characteristics are to be studied. A good sample, whose conclusions can be imposed on the population, is a sample that is representative or can describe the characteristics of the population. The qualitative sample is not called the respondent, but as a resource, or participants, informants, friends and teachers in the study. The sample in qualitative research is also not called a statistical sample, but a theoretical sample, because the purpose of qualitative research is to generate theory. In this study, the research sample was 15 people in the Gresik, Sidoarjo and Surabaya areas.

The sampling technique in this study uses a purposive sampling or judgmental sampling, that is, purposive sampling is a sampling method that is used to select subjects based on specific criteria set by the researcher (Patton, 1990). So, the determination of the sample in qualitative research is done when the researcher begins to enter the field and during the research (emergent sampling design). The trick is that the researcher selects certain people who are considered to provide the necessary data, then based on the data or information obtained from the previous sample, the researcher can determine other samples that are considered to provide more complete data (Chepkonga, 2017). The reasons for the criteria set in this study are parents who have children at the elementary level.

Qualitative research emphasizes on meaning and focuses more on quality data with qualitative analysis and still views quantity data as a phenomenon to support qualitative analysis for strengthening meaning as the final conclusion of the study (Hanurawan, 2016). Data In this study in the form of qualitative data obtained from data sources. To obtain

complete data, the data source is very important so that the research produces an understanding of the right conclusions. Data sources consist of sources (informants), events or activities, recordings, and documents. The informants in this study were data sources, namely parents who had decisions regarding children's education in the Gresik, Surabaya and Sidoarjo areas. Data collection techniques were carried out by observation, interviews, and documentation. The instrument used has been developed and has validated the expert namely P.hD in the field of child psychology.

Data collection in this study was carried out by several methods, namely: 1) In-depth interviews. Data obtained from in-depth interviews in the form of experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge of key informants and additional informants regarding the problems of parents in making education decisions for children. 2) Observation, observation is an observation activity carried out by researchers, in which researchers play an active role in the study location so that it is visible in the activities being researched. In this observation, the researcher is involved with the daily activities of the person being observed or used as a source of research data. Observations are carried out by going directly to the field actively to get a real picture and information about the attitudes and behavior of the informants. The information and information obtained are then analyzed, interpreted, and concluded (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Castleberry & Nolen, 2018).

Data analysis technique is the process of collecting data systematically to facilitate researchers in obtaining conclusions. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials so that they can be easily understood and the findings can be informed to others. Qualitative data analysis is inductive in nature, namely analysis based on the data obtained. According to Miles & Huberman (2014), analysis of organized data on the site emphasizes that the columns in a time management matrix are arranged by time period, in the order of stages, so that it can be seen when certain symptoms occur. The basic principle is chronology. According to Miles & Huberman (2014) the analysis consists of three streams of activities that occur simultaneously, namely: data reduction (Chart 1).

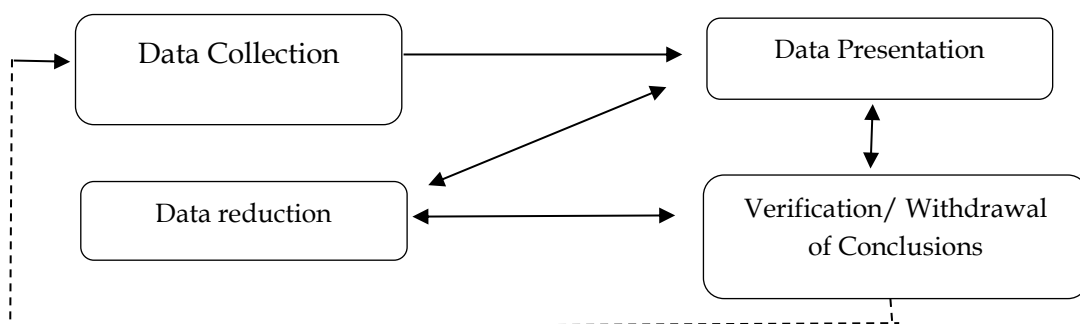


Chart 1. Miles and Huberman's Interactive Data Analysis Model

Results and Discussion

Data collection of this study were obtained from observational data on how parents choose schools for their children. Observational data was strengthened by in-depth interviews with parents so that data were obtained about what they thought when choosing a school. The last part is to document the behavior of parents and children in choosing schools.

Every parent wants their child to be someone they can be proud of. This desire is generally the desire of every parent, regardless of their status, regardless of their financial condition, even parents want their children's future to be much better than the current condition of their parents. From in-depth interviews with parents they said that "...i see education further ahead as a provision for children in social life" Seeing how important school is for children's growth and development in welcoming the future, the role of parents

is no less important, when children will start studying at school. The main role of parents is to guide and direct children in and determine basic education for children (Diana et al., 2021).

By observing the behavior of parents in involving children in school selection, this is the best way. Seriousness in school selection also appears in the documentation carried out. Good early education for children is a necessary foundation for the development and improvement of children's potential abilities. Therefore, the best basic education must be chosen so that it is firmly embedded in children to adulthood. Parents' perception of education greatly influences parents' decisions in determining basic education for their children. So with the data triangulation process, Picture 1 shown that the selection of the best school for children requires planning by involving children.



Picture 1. Parents explain school brochure

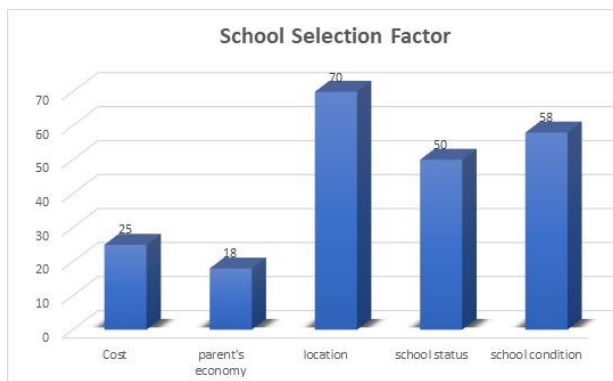


Figure 1. School Selection Factor

Perceptions of one parent with another parent differ in assessing basic education for children. Parents' perceptions can be seen when choosing a school for their children. Where, there are lots of good schools, the facilities are also good. This is the ideal view for parents today. In addition, several things that must be considered by parents in choosing a school for their children are not only in terms of academics, the various achievements that have been obtained by the school, but the environment, association, and the way in which teachers carry out the teaching and learning process at school are also things that are not important. can escape the attention of parents (Prihanto et al., 2013). Parents' decisions in determining basic education for children are influenced by various reasons and often come from the experiences of parents. There are several factors that influence parents in determining and choosing schools for their children, namely: 1. Location or distance 2. Environment 3. School conditions 4. School status 5. Teacher background at school 6. Costs 7. Social and economic parents Results of the analysis data from indicators of factors that influence parents in choosing schools for their children, the results are in the following figure:

The figuer 1 shows data that from 15 parents there were 10 parents, most of whom stated that location or distance was the main factor that parents considered in choosing a school for their child. The location of the school is the location or place where the school is located. In this study, location concerns the strategic location of the school itself, far from home or work and public facilities. This data proves that parents prefer to send their children to schools that are closer to home. This is in line with the results of previous research conducted by Christian (2016) entitled *The Effect of Service Marketing Mix at Islamic Junior High School Surakarta on Parents' Decisions in Choosing Schools for Their Sons and Daughters*, in this study the location variable proved to have an effect on parents' decisions in choosing schools.

Then, the state of the school also affects the decision of parents in choosing a school. The state of the school can be seen in terms of quality teac hers, quality of teaching, friendly staff, facilities and infrastructure, transportation, security, class size, nutrition, branding, and cleanliness. Study Garcia Reyes, (2013)who researched the determinants of primary school selection in Alberta, some parents based their choices on social relations, in-person visits to

schools, and in-depth discussions about education related to these schools with the teachers of the primary schools. Teaching quality is the ability of school resources to change certain types of inputs and situations to achieve certain added value for students (Society & Maghfiroh, nd). Teacher quality is the ability of the teacher to teach, both related to meeting the standards of teaching staff, the ability to master the material, and the capability as a role model for students. And the school environment is about cleanliness, and serenity in the chosen school. School safety is the state of being free from danger when children are in school.

Schools must be able to bring out advantages and uniqueness based on an analysis of the context and potential of the existing environment to produce quality schools so that at any cost it can be in accordance with what will be obtained and utilized by students (Munira, 2012). Based on the data above, the cost and social economy of parents are not the main problems that must be considered by parents. School fees are money spent by parents to pay for school needs such as tuition fees, building fees, activity fees, uniforms, and others. The school environment is everything around the school that can affect a child's development (Rukmana, 2017). In addition, there are several other factors that influence parents in determining schools for their children, namely in terms of factors: 1) Graduates that have been produced by schools, where the selected schools include favorite schools, students excel in academics, many alumni are accepted in favorite junior high schools, and the average score of the national exam is relatively high, 2) Curriculum and learning programs that can support children's needs and competencies, 3) Extracurricular programs that can develop children's talents, 4) Religion-based schools.

Based on the type of educational institution, both public and private schools are currently competing to provide the best for children's education. The better the predicate of the school, the parents have no doubt about the quality of education from the school. However, with so many choices, it is not surprising that many parents are confused in choosing the right school for their child. The quality of schools is absolutely important in influencing the development of children, so that in choosing schools, parents must be more selective in choosing schools because they see the increasing number of school choices in Indonesia, both public and private schools (Jannah, 2019). Currently, schools are competing to provide superior facilities to attract more applicants. School branding began to be considered to increase awareness in the community. School branding can be an attraction for parents in directing and making choices for their sons and daughters (Kristiani, 2016). Therefore, many parents prefer to choose private schools over public schools. Although they have to spend more money, this is not a problem for parents.

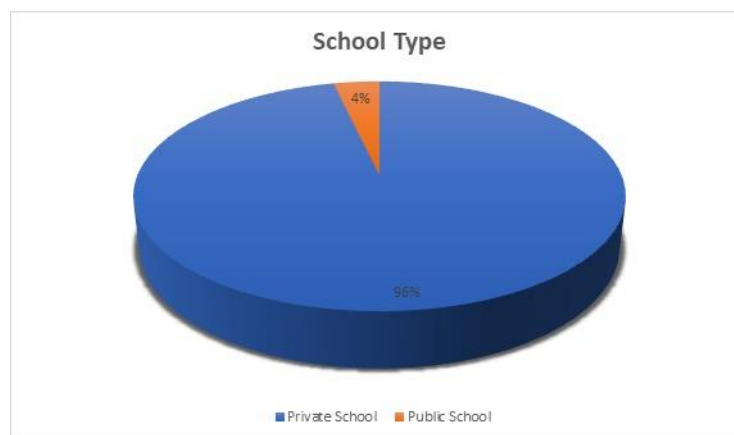


Figure 2. School Status Diagram

The tendency of parents to prefer private schools to public schools is because private schools have advantages or characteristics, uniqueness of schools that are raised based on environmental potential, existing opportunities, and gain support from all school residents

and parents of students. Schools that are trending today offer uniqueness, excellence, characteristics, which become the school's identity so that it has a brand in society (Kristiani, 2016). Schools must be able to bring out excellence and uniqueness based on an analysis of the context and potential of the existing environment to give birth to branding. There are various reasons for parents, one of which is interesting is that the school has characteristics such as boarding schools, nature schools, integrated schools that are full day and have the main characteristics of character education values which are not owned by public schools (Purnamasari et al., 2020). The results of the parents' survey data analysis showed that the indicators for school selection were based on school status, the results are shown in the figure 2.

The picture 2 shows data from a survey of parents spread across the Surabaya, Sidoarjo and Gresik areas that out of 15 parents there were 13 parents who chose to send their children to private schools. This shows that most parents in choosing schools for their children, parents have a high interest in sending their children to private schools. The selection is based on the consideration that schools that have good quality and facilities can support students in improving their children's achievements later, in addition, cost is not a consideration for parents where parents believe that expensive schools will produce students who have good outputs. Based on the regulation, elementary school is required to provide facilities in the form of classrooms, libraries, science laboratories, leadership rooms, teacher rooms (Mina, 2021). Parents choose quality schools with clear goals. Many parents choose certain schools with certain considerations, such as parents with a religious background, they will choose a school with a clear religious vision and mission as well. Another condition is that academic families who choose education more generally will send their children to school with consideration of the balance between academics and others.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion that the results of a survey of parents spread across the Surabaya, Sidoarjo and Gresik areas, there are many factors that influence parents in choosing elementary schools for their children, namely: 1. Location or distance 2. Environment 3. The condition of the school which can be seen from the graduates that have been produced by schools, where the selected schools include favorite schools, students excel in academics, many alumni are accepted in favorite junior high schools, and the average value of the National Examination is relatively high, cleanliness and security, extracurricular programs that can develop children's talents 4. School based on religion. 4. School status 5. Teacher background at school 6. Costs 7. Social and economic status of parents. When viewed from the school status of 15 parents, there were 13 parents who chose to send their children to private schools. The finding from reseach is most have a high interest in sending their children to private schools. The selection is based on the consideration that schools that have good quality and facilities can support students in improving their children's achievements later, in addition, cost is not a consideration for parents where parents believe that expensive schools will produce students who have good outputs.

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