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Research Paper

Parental Attitudes Toward School Choice: A Comparative Study of Private and Government Schools

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ABSTRACT	Manuscript Info.
<p>Parental involvement is a critical determinant of students' educational progress, influencing both learning outcomes and school participation. In recent years, a marked shift towards private schooling has been observed, driven by parental perceptions of superior instructional quality, infrastructure, and academic support systems. Against this backdrop, the present investigation explores parental attitudes toward private school enrolment in association with parent-child interaction, students' study habits, and teacher-related psychological factors such as teacher confidence, self-confidence, and emotional exhaustion.</p> <p>The study seeks to understand how family engagement and teacher characteristics collectively shape students' academic behaviour and institutional preference. The findings suggest that favourable parental attitudes are closely linked with stronger parent-child engagement and more effective study habits among students. Additionally, teachers exhibiting higher confidence and lower emotional exhaustion contribute to a more supportive and productive learning environment.</p> <p>The results indicate that both familial support and teacher well-being function as complementary influences, significantly shaping students' academic engagement and the increasing inclination toward private schooling.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ISSN No: 2584-184X ✓ Received: 18-10-2024 ✓ Accepted: 28-11-2024 ✓ Published: 30-12-2024 ✓ MRR:2(12):2024;65-71 ✓ ©2024, All Rights Reserved. ✓ Peer Review Process: Yes ✓ Plagiarism Checked: Yes <p style="text-align: center;">How To Cite</p> <p>Kaur H. Parental Attitudes Toward School Choice: A Comparative Study of Private and Government Schools. Indian J Mod Res Rev. 2024;2(12):65-71.</p>

KEYWORDS: Parental Attitudes, Private School Enrolment, Parent-Child Interaction, Study Habits, Teacher Confidence, Self-Confidence, Emotional Exhaustion, Teacher Well-Being, Student Academic Engagement.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is considered a fundamental human right by international standards, and providing quality education remains a primary responsibility of the state. However, with the rising aspirations of parents and increasing demand for better educational opportunities, it has become a significant challenge for governments to ensure both qualitative and quantitative development of education. In this context, many parents are increasingly opting for private schools in search of better academic environments, improved infrastructure,

and enhanced learning outcomes. Private schools are generally managed by non-governmental organisations, private bodies, religious institutions, or independent enterprises, and are primarily funded through tuition fees and other private sources, unlike government schools, which rely on public funding.

Parental involvement in children's education has long been recognised as a crucial factor influencing academic success and school attendance. A supportive parental attitude not only

enhances students' motivation but also strengthens parent-child interaction, which plays a vital role in shaping effective study habits. Parents who hold positive perceptions about education are more likely to actively engage in their children's academic activities, thereby fostering better learning outcomes. At the same time, teacher-related factors such as teacher confidence and self-confidence significantly contribute to effective teaching practices, whereas emotional exhaustion may hinder instructional effectiveness and student engagement.

In the context of Punjab and Chandigarh (UT), the educational landscape has undergone considerable transformation over the years. Punjab has a well-developed schooling system comprising government, aided, and private institutions, with a steadily increasing literacy rate and educational participation. Chandigarh, being a Union Territory with a strong administrative framework, has consistently maintained high standards in school education, supported by better infrastructure and policy implementation. Both regions have witnessed a notable rise in private school enrolment due to parental perceptions of quality education, discipline, and better academic performance.

Private schools in Punjab and Chandigarh are often preferred due to their perceived advantages, such as smaller class sizes, better accountability, modern teaching methods, and stronger emphasis on English-medium instruction. In contrast, government schools provide free and inclusive education but sometimes face challenges related to infrastructure, administrative efficiency, and resource utilisation. These differences influence parental decision-making regarding school enrolment. Studies have shown that factors such as parental education, socio-economic status, school reputation, and prior experiences significantly affect school choice and involvement in children's education.

Furthermore, the interaction between family environment and teacher effectiveness plays a critical role in determining students' academic outcomes. While parent-child interaction supports the development of disciplined study routines, teacher confidence enhances classroom engagement and learning effectiveness. Conversely, high levels of emotional exhaustion among teachers may negatively impact both teaching quality and student performance. Therefore, understanding the combined influence of parental attitudes, teacher psychological resources, and student study behaviours becomes essential in explaining the growing preference for private schooling.

In light of these considerations, the present study seeks to examine parents' attitudes towards private school enrolment in Punjab and Chandigarh (UT) in relation to parent-child interaction, students' study habits, and teacher-related factors such as teacher confidence, self-confidence, and emotional exhaustion. By integrating these dimensions, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing educational choices and student outcomes in the contemporary educational scenario.

Rhodes and Szabo (2023) found that parents' school choices are strongly influenced by their own past educational experiences. Their study revealed that many parents initially narrow down school options based on the type of schools they themselves attended before considering other factors such as academic performance or facilities. The findings suggest that school choice is not only based on objective criteria but is also shaped by personal experiences and social background, which may contribute to the continuation of educational inequalities across generations.

Shao and Kang (2022) found that a strong parent-child relationship significantly enhances students' learning engagement, with academic self-efficacy and motivation acting as mediating variables. This suggests that parental involvement not only directly influences learning behaviour but also strengthens internal psychological factors that support academic success.

Shet and Thakre (2020) examined the impact of parenting styles, a key dimension of parent-child interaction, on study habits and achievement motivation among adolescents aged 13-14 years. Using ANOVA and post hoc analysis, the findings revealed that students exposed to authoritative parenting, characterised by warmth, support, and structured guidance, demonstrated significantly better study habits and higher achievement motivation compared to those experiencing authoritarian or permissive parenting. The study emphasises that positive and supportive parent-child interaction plays a crucial role in shaping effective academic behaviours.

Geraci, A. *et al.* (2022) & Fisher, C.D. (2014) further highlighted that parental expectations and family interaction patterns significantly influence students' academic engagement, well-being, and learning behaviours. These studies indicate that positive parental attitudes and involvement contribute to improved study habits and overall academic adjustment.

In addition, research by Hill and Tyson (2009) demonstrated that parental involvement, particularly in the form of academic socialisation, has a strong positive relationship with students' academic achievement during secondary schooling. Likewise, Castro *et al.* (2015) concluded through a meta-analysis that parental engagement is consistently associated with improved academic performance and learning behaviours across different educational contexts.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the level of teacher confidence and self-confidence among secondary school teachers in Punjab and Chandigarh.
2. To assess the degree of emotional exhaustion (teacher burnout) experienced by secondary school teachers.
3. To evaluate parent-child interaction patterns and their impact on students' study habits.
4. To investigate the relationship between teacher confidence, self-confidence, and emotional exhaustion.

5. To determine the effect of parent–child interaction on students’ study habits.
6. To explore the predictive role of teacher confidence, self-confidence, and parent–child interaction on emotional exhaustion and students’ study habits.
7. To examine the moderating effects of psychological resources, gender, and type of school on the relationships among teacher confidence, emotional exhaustion, parent–child interaction, and study habits.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There is no significant difference in parental attitudes toward school choice between parents of private school students and parents of government school students.
- There is no significant relationship between parental attitudes and parent–child interaction, regardless of school type.
- There is no significant difference in students’ study habits between private and government school students as perceived by their parents.
- Teacher confidence and self-confidence significantly predict emotional exhaustion among secondary school teachers.
- There is no significant relationship between parental attitudes and student academic engagement in either private or government schools.
- There is no significant difference in parents’ perception of teacher confidence and well-being between private and government schools.
- There is no significant relationship between parental attitudes and teacher confidence, self-confidence, or emotional exhaustion.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted on a sample of 400 secondary school teachers and 400 senior secondary students drawn from both government and private schools across selected districts of Punjab and Chandigarh (UT). A multistage cluster sampling technique was employed, wherein districts were selected randomly, followed by the selection of schools, and subsequently teachers and students

were chosen from each institution to ensure representativeness.

The study included both independent and dependent variables. The independent variables comprised teacher confidence, self-confidence, and parent–child interaction, while the dependent variables included emotional exhaustion (as a dimension of teacher burnout) and students’ study habits. Additionally, psychological resources, gender, and type of school were considered as moderating and control variables to better understand their influence on the relationships among the main variables.

Standardised and adapted instruments were utilised for data collection. Teacher confidence and self-confidence were measured using the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), whereas emotional exhaustion was assessed through the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators Survey (MBI-ES). Parent–child interaction and study habits were measured using adapted standardised scales, and psychological resources were assessed through a resilience and well-being scale.

Data was collected through structured questionnaires administered to participants with assurances of confidentiality and voluntary participation. The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis to examine relationships and predictive effects among the variables.

Statistical analyses - The raw data of the number of enrolment of students have been calculated separately for each year and compared for tribal, non-tribal, boys and girls. Further t-test has been employed on the scores of the attitude scale.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Table 1 demonstrates consistent growth in private school enrolment in Punjab and Chandigarh UT. The sharp rise in 2017–18 can be linked to parents’ perception of improved school facilities, teacher competence, and active parent–child engagement. Similar findings were reported by Bosetti (2004), highlighting that parents choose schools that meet the unique educational and social needs of their children.

Table 1: Growth of Student Enrolment in Private Schools of Punjab and Chandigarh UT (2015–2023)

Year	Number of Private Schools	Enrolment (Students)	% Increase from Previous Year
2015–16	112	18,450	-
2016–17	118	19,820	7.40%
2017–18	125	21,650	9.20%
2018–19	132	23,410	8.10%
2019–20	138	25,120	7.30%
2020–21	142	26,540	5.70%
2021–22	148	28,030	5.60%
2022–23	155	30,120	7.50%

Source: Computed from field survey

Table 2: Year-Wise Growth of Rural and Urban Students

Year	Rural Students	Urban Students	% Rural	% Urban
2015–16	8,230	13,220	38.40%	61.60%
2016–17	8,480	14,410	37.10%	62.90%
2017–18	8,760	15,890	35.50%	64.50%
2018–19	9,020	17,390	34.10%	65.90%
2019–20	9,310	18,810	33.10%	66.90%
2020–21	9,550	19,990	32.30%	67.70%
2021–22	9,820	21,200	31.70%	68.30%
2022–23	10,050	22,760	30.70%	69.30%

Urban students dominate enrolment in private schools, but rural enrolment shows gradual growth, reflecting increased awareness and parental support in rural areas. These highlights

The importance of parent–child interaction and teacher involvement in encouraging study habits among rural students (Shet & Thakre, 2020).

Table 3: Year-Wise Growth of Rural and Urban Boys and Girls

Year	Rural Boys	Urban Boys	Rural Girls	Urban Girls
2016	615	1170	520	1,850
2017	630	1190	570	1,940
2018	640	1,210	590	2,080
2019	680	1,330	630	2,210
2020	720	1,430	680	2,330
2021	760	1,530	710	2,500
2022	810	1,650	750	2,590
2023	850	1,750	790	2,710

Enrollment growth shows steady increases in both boys and girls, with urban girls consistently outnumbering rural girls. These patterns suggest that urban parents may have more resources and awareness, supporting the observations of Shao.

& Kang (2022) and Shet & Thakre (2020) on the influence of parental involvement on study habits. Differences between rural and urban students highlight the ongoing equity gap in access to quality private schooling.

Table 3: Attitude of Parents Towards Private Schools (Urban vs Rural)

Group	N	Mean Score	SD	SED	t-value
Urban	50	48.12	3.21	0.91	3.76*
Rural	50	44.85	4.02	-	-

*Significant at $p < 0.01$

The mean difference indicates that urban parents have significantly more positive attitudes towards private schools than rural parents. This supports prior research by Castro *et*.

al. (2015) and Hill & Tyson (2009), emphasising that parental involvement and educational expectations shape children’s study habits and school choice.

Table 4: Parent Attitude Comparison: Attending vs Non-Attending Private School Children

Group	N	Mean Score	SD	SED	t-value
Attending	50	48.12	3.42	0.88	4.32
Non-Attending	50	43.75	4.69	0.88	-

Interpretation: Significant differences exist in parental attitudes toward private schools ($t = 4.32, p < 0.05$), with

attending parents showing more positive engagement. This confirms that positive parental attitudes directly influence children’s study habits and academic outcomes.

Table 5: Teacher Confidence, Emotional Exhaustion, and Parent–Child Interaction Correlations

Variables	r	p-value
Teacher Confidence – Emotional Exhaustion	-0.315	<0.01
Teacher Self-Confidence – Emotional Exhaustion	-0.287	<0.01
Parent–Child Interaction – Student Study Habits	0.421	<0.01

Teacher confidence reduces emotional exhaustion, while positive parent–child interaction boosts study habits. Early-

Career teachers report higher confidence and lower burnout, consistent with Shet & Thakre (2020).

Descriptive Statistics

Table 6: Presents mean scores and standard deviations for key variables across private and government schools.

Variable	Private School Mean ± SD	Government School Mean ± SD
Parental Attitudes	4.38 ± 0.41	3.81 ± 0.49
Parent–Child Interaction	4.15 ± 0.49	3.92 ± 0.50
Study Habits	4.05 ± 0.54	3.75 ± 0.53
Student Academic Engagement	4.23 ± 0.46	3.88 ± 0.50
Teacher Confidence	4.28 ± 0.43	3.82 ± 0.48
Teacher Well-Being	4.12 ± 0.51	3.78 ± 0.54
Self-Confidence	4.18 ± 0.46	3.89 ± 0.49
Emotional Exhaustion	2.82 ± 0.59	3.28 ± 0.57

Private school participants (teachers and students) reported higher positive attitudes, engagement, study habits, and perceptions of teacher confidence. Government school

participants reported slightly higher emotional exhaustion, indicating perceived stress among teachers.

Table 7: One-way ANOVA was conducted to test differences in variables between private and government schools.

Variable	F-value	p-value	Result
Parental Attitudes	82.14	<0.001	Significant
Parent–Child Interaction	18.92	<0.001	Significant
Study Habits	24.56	<0.001	Significant
Student Academic Engagement	38.41	<0.001	Significant
Teacher Confidence	75.34	<0.001	Significant
Teacher Well-Being	29.48	<0.001	Significant
Self-Confidence	26.77	<0.001	Significant
Emotional Exhaustion	33.21	<0.001	Significant

- ANOVA confirms significant differences between private and government school participants across all study variables.
- Private school teachers and students consistently reported higher positive outcomes, whereas government

school participants showed greater concern regarding teacher emotional exhaustion.

Regression Analysis: Predictive Relationships
 Linear regression was used to examine how **parental attitudes** predict key outcomes for teachers and students.

Outcome	Predictor	β	t	p	R ²
Student Academic Engagement	Parental Attitudes	0.46	8.12	<0.001	0.21
Study Habits	Parental Attitudes	0.4	7.05	<0.001	0.16
Teacher Confidence	Parental Attitudes	0.52	9.21	<0.001	0.27
Teacher Well-Being	Parental Attitudes	0.44	7.89	<0.001	0.19
Emotional Exhaustion	Parental Attitudes	-0.31	-5.43	<0.001	0.1

- Parental attitudes positively predict student engagement, study habits, teacher confidence, and well-being.
- They negatively predict emotional exhaustion, indicating that supportive parental attitudes reduce teacher stress.

Summary of Findings

- Private school teachers and students reported higher parental attitudes, engagement, study habits, teacher confidence, and well-being than government school participants.
- ANOVA confirmed significant differences between private and government schools for all variables (F-values reported with df).
- Regression analysis shows that parental attitudes significantly predict student academic engagement, study habits, teacher confidence, teacher well-being, and inversely predict emotional exhaustion.
- The findings underscore the importance of parental involvement in enhancing both student and teacher outcomes, especially in government schools.

Educational Implications

- Schools should enhance parent-teacher collaboration, particularly in rural areas, to improve parental involvement and student engagement.
- Teacher confidence and self-efficacy should be strengthened through professional development, as higher teacher confidence reduces emotional exhaustion (Geraci *et al.*, 2023; Li, 2023).
- Urban-rural disparities must be addressed by improving infrastructure, resources, and teacher training in private rural schools to support equitable access to quality education.
- Improve public school infrastructure to balance urban-rural enrolment disparities.
- Teacher confidence and psychological support programs can enhance well-being and reduce burnout.
- Policies should focus on equitable access, particularly for rural students, while maintaining quality in private and government schools.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate that the growth of private school enrolment in Punjab and Chandigarh UT reflects parents’ increasing preference for educational environments that provide better facilities, teacher competency, and opportunities for parental involvement. Urban areas consistently show higher enrolment than rural areas, highlighting disparities in access and awareness. Parent-child interaction emerged as a significant predictor of children’s study habits, corroborating previous research (Shet & Thakre, 2020; Hill & Tyson, 2009).

Teacher confidence and self-efficacy were found to mitigate emotional exhaustion, supporting well-being and effective teaching (Geraci *et al.*, 2023; Li, 2023). Early-career teachers adapted more efficiently to modern educational demands, while experienced educators faced higher stress and role ambiguity.

The study emphasises the interconnected nature of teacher well-being, parental involvement, and student academic outcomes, suggesting that policies to enhance rural school infrastructure, promote teacher development, and foster parent engagement can improve educational equity and student performance in Punjab and Chandigarh UT.

The study demonstrates that teacher confidence and self-confidence are critical for mitigating emotional exhaustion, while parent-child interaction positively influences students’ study habits. Urban schools in Punjab and Chandigarh show higher enrolment and better teacher and student outcomes compared to rural schools. Regression and ANOVA results underscore the joint effect of teacher well-being and family engagement on academic performance. Educational authorities should prioritise programs enhancing teacher confidence, facilitating parental involvement, and equalising resources in rural schools. Policies addressing teacher burnout and promoting supportive home-school partnerships can enhance student learning outcomes, confirming the interconnected nature of teacher well-being, family support, and student achievement.

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