

Contemporary Educational Researches Journal



Volume11, Issue 2, (2021) 39-51

Determining the reasons for private schools prefance and a case study in TRNC

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Suggested Citation:

Kuluma, H., Davulcu, Ö., & Kaçmaz, S., (2021). Determining the reasons for private schools prefance and a case study in TRNC. Contemporary Educational Researches Journal, 11(2), 39-51. <u>https://doi.org/10.18844/cerj.v11i2.5706</u>

Received from January 11, 2021; revised from March 15, 2021; accepted from May 1, 2021. Selection and peer-review under responsibility of Assoc.Prof. Dr. Deniz Ozcan, Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey.

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Abstract

In this study, it is aimed to determine the reasons for choosing private schools in the education process according to the views of the parents of students studying in primary and secondary education institutions in TRNC. The effects of the physical conditions of the school, educational activities, artistic-sports-social and cultural activities, management and academic staff characteristics, communication processes and economic resources were examined. In the research, survey model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used. Parents of 7355 students studying at private schools in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Primary Education and General Secondary Education constituted the research universe of this study. Parents of 242 students studying in Nicosia, Famagusta, Güzelyurt and Kyrenia constituted the sample group of this study. The unit of analysis in the research is the parents of the students. The Private School Preference Criteria questionnaire used in this study was developed by Pulat (2019). The scale consists of a total of 41 items. The data collected with the help of scales in the study were analyzed with the statistical methods "Correlation", "Regression", "Kruskal-Wallis H" and "Mann-Whitney U". The most important reasons for parents to enroll their children in private schools are their belief that they will receive a good education in English, their belief that they will receive a better education in general, and the availability of full-time education as working parents.

Keywords: Private School, Parent, Parent Preference Attitudes, Primary School, Secondary School

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1.Introduction

The determined goals of education should be purposeful towards the needs of individuals and society (Sarpten, 2020). However, in the Turkish Cypriot Community, this delicate balance is quite disturbed. One of the reasons that reveal this situation is the lack of a modern education planning in accordance with the principles of educational science, and the other is due to the human education culture of the Turkish Cypriot Community. The facts such as overprotection of their children, preventing their grief, ensuring their success and counting their child's success as their own success in the culture of parenting parents have also brought the orientation towards private schools. When looking at the level of education, the differences between public and private schools make it important to make a comparison in terms of these two school types. With this study, it is aimed to meet this need. In this context, the reasons for parents to choose private schools will be discussed.

In this study, the reasons for parents of students studying in primary and secondary education in TRNC to choose private schools were investigated. Physical factors, factors related to education and training, management and academic staff, social factors, factors related to communication processes and economic factors were examined taking into account as the factors affecting private school preferences. In order to determine the most effective factors in the private school preferences of the parents of the students, the sample was chosen from the parents of the students studying in primary and secondary education in the TRNC, which was determined as the universe. The data collected in the sample group were evaluated by correlation, regression and nonparametric statistical analysis methods.

In order for private schools to survive and become a sustainable and profitable institution, first of all, they must provide quality service that can meet the needs, wishes and expectations of their environment. Generally, what is expected from private schools is that they show superior and qualified performance and therefore provide qualified education. However, this is not enough for private schools to live. As in other institutions, organizations and businesses, they should provide their services correctly in every aspect and pay attention to parents' expectations. In order for this process to be effective and systematic, private schools must know the advertising, promotion, customer satisfaction criteria and have skills in these matters.

1.1 Background of the Study

As an island located in the middle of the Eastern Mediterranean, the cultural interaction in the historical past of Cyprus is very rich in terms of both diversity and depth (Sarpten, 2020). It is obvious that in order to understand the ground formed by the Cyprus Turkish Education System, it is necessary to look at the Cyprus Turkish Education History. With the conquest of the island of Cyprus by the Ottomans in 1571, the educational practices on the island began to differentiate in accordance with the Ottoman educational tradition. It is possible to see these differences in many areas. Some population transfer to the island took place at the beginning of the changes in the political, economic and cultural structure of the island. With the arrival of Turkish population, the education system based on the Ottoman understanding of religion also started in Cyprus (Irgat, 1997).

Until the 19th century in the Ottomans, the state avoided taking responsibility because the education of the civilian population was seen as a charity. Sultans, high-ranking civil servants and wealthy individuals used to open schools through the foundation. The state ensured that foundation schools were registered by the judges. The majority of foundations were large enough to provide student allocations, teachers 'salaries, janitors' fees, and school attendance for centuries (Süha, 1971). As the Ottoman period in Cyprus lasted for 307 years, it is seen that there was no regular schooling connected to a central system. Generally, schools were located next to mosques, and hodjas came to the fore with the identity of teachers. According to the education system applied in the Ottomans, schools were divided into two as iptidais (primary schools) and madrasahs (secondary and higher education). Primary schools include the first level of primary education while junior highs constituted the second level of primary education and non-formal education was provided in dervish lodges, mosques and libraries (Atalay, 2003).

Primary schools are the schools that cover the first level of primary education. Teaching in these schools was not entirely in Arabic. While the students were taught the texts in Arabic, their explanations were made in Turkish. Also, Turkish prayers and hymns were taught. It was named as neighborhood school or Taş Mektep because it was built in every neighborhood. There were no practices such as classrooms, lesson hours and breaks in Sibyan schools. Lessons started in the morning and ended in the afternoon (Gökel et al., 2015). In these schools with 3 years of education, children usually started at the age of 4 and completed their school at the age of 7, but those who wanted to continue more could stay in these schools until the age of 10 (Aytekin, 1993). The first educational institution opened after the conquest of Cyprus by the Ottomans and financed by state foundations was the Hagia Sophia Sibyan School in Nicosia (Gökel et al., 2015; Çağlar et al., 2007).

Private schools in the TRNC have started to develop together with private universities, although they do not have an old history. The school, which is now called 20 July Science High School, was established in 1901 with the voluntary donations of Queen Victoria and the Turkish Community, and the Victoria Girls' School took its place in history as the first private school (Sarpten, 2020).

Nartgün and Kaya (2016), in their study in which they investigated the expectations of private school parents, stated that the social facilities, security and physical characteristics of the school were sufficient, the school being close to home, the school's full-time education and the quality of the service services were among the most important expectations of parents and these expectations were the important ones in choosing a school.

Ahmet Pulat (2019), stated in his study that the most important three characteristics of the management and academic staff that affect the choice of the parents are the ability of school administrators to communicate well with parents and the teachers of the school. the staff does not change frequently and the teachers working in the school are experienced, respectively. The main factors affecting the reasons for students' parents to choose a private school are the administration and academic staff: the physical conditions of the school, economic resources, communication processes, artistic, sports, social and cultural activities, education and training activities respectively.

The researchers, who revealed that the image of the school is important because it shapes the expectations of the parents, stated that it is a preference factor that should be taken into consideration in terms of parents' preferences as it is also a determinant of quality (Bakioğlu et al., 2010).

2. Aim of the Research

What are the factors affecting the private school preferences of the parents of the students studying in primary and secondary education in the TRNC? The answer to the question will be sought.

Other Problems

Other questions to be answered in the research are as follows:

1. What are the reasons for parents of students to choose private schools?

2. How do the physical conditions of the school affect the private school preferences of parents?

3. How do educational activities affect parents' private school preferences?

4. How do artistic, sports, social and cultural activities affect parents' preferences for private school?

5. How do management and academic staff characteristics affect parents' preferences for private schools?

6. How do communication processes affect parents' private school preferences?

7. How economic resources affect parents' preferences for private schools

2.1. Methodology

Since it is aimed to determine the reasons of private school preference in the education process according to the views of the parents of the students studying in primary and secondary education institutions affiliated to the Ministry of National Education, the survey model, one of the descriptive research methods, was used in this study. Survey model is a research approach that aims to describe a past or present situation as it exists (Büyüköztürk et al., 2017).

2.2 The Universe of the Research

Parents of 7355 students studying in private schools in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Primary Education and General Secondary Education constitute the research universe of this study. 366 parents of students were intended to include in the sample group with a 95 percent confidence interval and 5 percent margin of error, however, the required number could not be reached in this study due to the pandemic. Parents of 242 students studying in Nicosia, Famagusta, Güzelyurt and Kyrenia formed the study group of this research. The unit of analysis in the research is the parents of the students.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

For this research, a questionnaire form consisting of two parts was created. The first part is used to determine the demographic information of the parents, and the second part to determine the private school preferences of the parents. In the study, the "Private School Preference Criteria" questionnaire, developed by Pulat (2019), was given to parents, considering its compatibility with the subject. The data were encoded and analyzed using the SPSS program.

3.Findings

3.1 Analysis of Parents' Reasons for Private School Preferences

In this study, first of all, "What are the reasons for parents of students to prefer private schools?" The answer to the research question was sought. The basic research question was tried to be explained using frequency and percentage (Table 1).

Table 1 Parents' Reason for Enrolling	g Their Children in Private School
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Reason for Enrolling in Private School	Ν	%
My belief that they will get a good English education	138	57,02
My belief that they will get a better education	122	50,41

As working parents, full-time education is more suitable for our opportunities.	118	48,76
Providing more resources for teachers and students in private schools	56	23,14
High performance and taking more responsibility of teachers in private schools.	42	17,36
Paying more attention to disciplinary problems in private schools	38	15,70
Working in the same institution with my child	22	9,09
Having a more democratic relationship between teacher and student in private schools,	16	6,61
We are lecturers in a private school.	4	0,82
The school's equipment, technologically and physically,	2	0,82
Being a full day and offering sportive opportunities.	2	0,82
Less class numbers, not possible to sell harmful substances such as drugs, low grades in order to have to take private lessons.	2	0,82
Class size.	2	0,82
Failure to win public schools with exams	2	0,82
Student profile closer to our local culture	2	0,82
The teaching staff of the school is very good.	2	0,82
Almost no disruption in education.	2	0,82
Regular cleaning.	2	0,82
Demographic structure of public schools	2	0,82
My child has a food allergy	2	0,82
Getting the chance to study with a scholarship	2	0,82

In the study, parents were asked the most important reasons for enrolling their child in private school and they were asked to choose more than one reason. In addition, if there is a reason other than these items, they were asked to write briefly. At the end of the analysis in Table 1, the most important 3 reasons for parents to enroll their children in private schools are, "My belief that they will get a good English education" (N = 138; 57.02%), "My belief in a better education" (N = 122; 50.41%) and "Full-time education is more suitable for our opportunities as working parents" (N = 118; 48.76%) respectively. The reasons indicated by very few people are frequency and percentage average (N = 2; 0.82%) and these are "Technologically and physically equipment of the school", "Full-time and sportive opportunities", "Less class numbers, not being able to sell harmful substances such as drugs", "Giving low marks to make you have to take private lessons", "Class size", "Failure to pass public schools with analysiss", "The student profile is closer to our local culture", "The school's teaching staff is very good", "Almost no disruption in education", "Regular cleaning", "The demographic structure of public schools", "My child's having a food allergy "and" having the chance to study with a scholarship ".

3.2 Analysis of the physical conditions of the school that affects parents' preferences choosing private school

In this study, first of all, "How do the physical conditions of the school affect the private school preferences of the parents?" The answer to the research question was sought. (Table 2)

Physical conditions of the school	\overline{X}	SS
8-The importance given by the school to cleanliness and hygiene	4,8	0,48
7-The school has a quality security service	4,8	0,49
9-The meals served in the school cafeteria are healthy and delicious	4,6	0,5
4-The importance given by the school to technological developments	4,6	0,6
3-The quality of the technical infrastructure of the school (electricity, heating, etc.)	4,5	0,59
5-Having the school's equipment suitable for technological developments	4,5	0,65
6- The school's social facilities such as laboratories, libraries, sports halls, and pools	4,4	0,64
2-Physical competence and attention-grabbing of the classes	4,4	0,56
10-Quality of the school's transportation services	4,3	1,02
1-Characteristics of the region where the school is located	4	0,9
12-The school building is new	3,7	0,8
11-High quality and beautiful school uniforms	3,7	1,03

Table 2 The physical conditions of the school that affects parents' preferences choosing private
school

In Table 2, the mean and standard deviations of the questionnaire items were found in order to find out how the physical conditions of the school affect the private school preferences of the parents. As a result of the analysis, the three most important factors affecting the preferences of parents from the physical conditions of the school are; "The importance that the school attaches to cleanliness and hygiene" (= 4.76; SD =, 482), "The school has a quality security service" (= 4.75; SD =, 487) and "The food in the school cafeteria is healthy and tasty (= 4.64; SS =, 497). The factor affecting the parents' preferences the least among the physical conditions of the school is "The quality and beautiful school uniforms" (= 3.73; SS = 1.031).

3.3 Analysis of educational activities that affect private school preferences of parents

Within the scope of the research, "How do educational activities affect private school preferences of parents? The answer to the research question was sought. (Table 3)

Educational activities	\overline{X}	SS
15-The high success of the school in foreign language education	4,7	0,47
17-Counseling activities carried out in the school	4,1	0,76
14- High success of private schools in secondary school (KGS), high school (BEAL, 20 JULY FEN) and university entrance exams	4	0,99
16-The amount of homework given per day	3,6	0,98
13-The school's establishment date is old	3,2	1,07

In Table 3, the mean and standard deviations of the questionnaire items were found in order to find out how education-training activities affect parents' private school preferences. As a result of the analysis, parents stated that they would definitely consider the item "The school's success in foreign language education is high" (= 4.67; SS =, 471). "Counseling activities carried out within the school (= 4.12; SD =, 764)," High success of private schools, secondary school (KGS), high school (BEAL, 20 TEMMUZ FEN) and university entrance exams "(= 3.96; SS =, 993), "The amount of homework given per day" (= 3.60; SD =, 978). In addition, they were undecided about the item "The establishment date of the school is old" (= 3.21; SS = 1.070).

3.4 Analysis of Artistic, Sports, Social and Cultural Activities that affect private school preferences of parents

In this study, "How do Artistic, Sports, Social and Cultural Activities affect parents' private school preferences?" The answer to the research question was sought. (Table 4)

Table 4: Artistic, Sports, Social and Cultural Activities affecting private school preferences of parents

Artistic, Sports, Social and Cultural Activities	\overline{X}	SS
20-Sports activities carried out in the school	4,3	0,59
22-Study and club activities provided by the school to students	4,2	0,7
19-Artistic activities carried out in the school	4,2	0,73
21-School's participation in social responsibility projects	4,1	0,83
18-The school has international memberships	4	0,9

In Table 4, the mean and standard deviations of the questionnaire items were found in order to find out how artistic, sports, social and cultural activities affect parents' private school preferences. As a result of the analysis, parent said that they would definitely take into consideration the items "sports activities carried out in the school" (= 4.30; SD =, 585) and "The study and club activities that the school provides to students (= 4.22; SD =, 700). The item "Participation in social responsibility projects of the school" (= 4.05; SD =, 831) was the item that affected the parents' private school preferences the least when artistic, sports, social and cultural activities were considered.

3.5. Analysis of the Management and Academic Staff Characteristics affecting private school preferences

In this study, also, "How do management and academic staff characteristics affect parents' private school preferences?" The answer to the research question was sought. (Table 5)

Table 5: Management and Academic Staff Characteristics affecting private school preferences

Management and Academic Staff Characteristics	\overline{X}	SS
23-School administrators can communicate well with parents	4,65	0,477
24-Experienced teachers working at the school	4,58	0,641
27-The school's teaching staff does not change frequently	4,28	0,754
30-The teaching staff of the school is not permanent	4,22	0,83
28-Having health personnel working full time at the school	4,18	0,773
29-Too many young and dynamic teachers	3,96	0,896
26-The religious view reflected by the school	3,55	1,32
25-The political view reflected by the school	2,85	1,331

In Table 5, the mean and standard deviations of the questionnaire items were found in order to find out the management and academic staff characteristics affecting the private school preferences of the parents. As a result of the analysis, the most important factors affecting the preferences of parents from the management and academic staff characteristics are "School administrators' ability to communicate well with parents" (= 4.65; SD =, 477), "Experienced teachers working in the school" (= 4.58; SD =, 641) and "the teaching staff of the school does not change frequently" (= 4.28; SD =, 754) respectively. On the other hand, they were hesitant to take into consideration the item "Political view reflected by the school less important than all other factors in terms of administration and academic staff.

3.6. Analysis of Communication Processes affecting private school preferences of parents

In this study, "How do communication processes affect parents' private school preferences?" The answer to the research question was sought. (Table 6)

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Communication Processes	\overline{X}	SS
35-Quality of teacher-parent communication	4,6	0,54
34-Teachers are open to communication	4,4	0,57
36-Teachers' taking into account the requests and demands of parents	4,4	0,68
37-Ensuring parental participation (such as getting views, assigning tasks, requesting feedback) in the activities carried out during the academic year	4,2	0,69

Table 6: Communication Processes affecting private school preferences of parents

32-Good references of people around	4,1	0,71
31-Positive comments made by other parents at the school	3,9	0,82
33-Advertisements given by the school	3	1,11

In Table 6, the mean and standard deviations of the questionnaire items were found in order to find out how communication processes affect parents' private school preferences. The most important communication process among the communication processes of the parents participating in the study was "The quality of teacher-parent communication" (= 4.58; SS =, 543). The two other communication processes that follow are "Teachers 'being open to communication" (= 4.43; SD =, 574) and "Teachers' taking into account the requests and demands of parents" (= 4.40; SD =, 677). The item with the lowest score by the parents is the item "Advertisements given by the school" (= 2.99; SS = 1.112). Accordingly, the parents participating in the research pay less attention to the advertisements given by the school in terms of communication processes than all other factors.

3.7. Analysis of Economic Resources affecting private school preferences of parents

In this study, also, "How do Economic Resources affect parents' preferences for private school?" The answer to the research question was sought. (Table 7)

Economic Resources	\overline{X}	SS
39-Fairness of the scholarship policy of the school	4,4	0,69
38-The school fee is suitable for the family budget	4,3	0,76
41-The cost of books and stationery is not high	3,5	1,11
40-Free of charge social activities (trips, picnics, seminars, etc.)	3,4	1,12

Table 7: Economic Resources affecting private school	preferences of parents

In Table 7, mean and standard deviations of the questionnaire items are found in order to find out how economic resources affect parents' preferences for private school. As a result of the analysis, parents found it very important by saying the factors "the school fee should be suitable for the family budget" (= 4.26; SD =, 760) and "The school's scholarship policy should be fair" (= 4.36; SD =, 694). They sated that the items "Free of charge of social activities (trips, picnics, seminars, etc.) during the period" (= 3.41; SD = 1.121) and "The cost of books and stationery is not high" (= 3.50; SD = 1.109) is important / at high level.

4. Results

Within the scope of the research, the parents were asked about the most important reasons for enrolling their children in private schools. As a result of the analysis, almost half of the parents stated, "My belief that they will receive a good English education", "My belief that they will get a better education" and "As working parents, full-time education is more suitable for our opportunities". Nearly one fifth of the parents said "Providing more resources for teachers and students in private schools" and "The performance of teachers in private schools is high and taking more responsibility", while fewer parents stated "Giving more importance to discipline problems in private schools", "My child works in the same institution. They also said "Being a teacher and student in a more democratic

relationship in private schools", "Being a lecturer in a private school". In addition, there are very few parents stated, "Technologically and physically, the school's equipment", "Full-time and sports opportunities", "Less class numbers, not possible to sell harmful substances such as drugs", to force them to take private lessons. "Low grades", "Class size", "Failure to win public schools with analysis", "The student profile is closer to our local culture", "The school's teaching staff is very good", "Almost no disruption in education", "Regular cleaning", They also stated the "demographic structure of public schools", "My child has a food allergy" and "Having the chance to study with a scholarship". This study also revealed how the parents' private school get affected preferences according to the physical conditions of the school. As a result of the research, parents stated the items "Physical adequacy and attention-grabbing of the classrooms", "The quality of the technical infrastructure of the school (electricity, heating, etc.)", "The importance given to the technological developments of the school", "The school has the appropriate equipment for technological developments", "The school's laboratory, library, gym, Having social facilities such as a pool "," The school has a quality security service "," The school gives importance to cleanliness and hygiene "," The food served in the school cafeteria is healthy and delicious "," The quality of the school's transportation services " as reasons. Other items that parents take into consideration are "The characteristics of the region where the school is located," The quality and beautiful school uniforms and "The school building is new".

Considering the results on how the educational activities affect the private school preferences of the parents, it is seen that they definitely take into account "The high success of the school in foreign language education". It has been observed that the parents also take into consideration the "Counselling studies carried out in the school," The high success of private schools, secondary school (KGS), high school (BEAL, 20 TEMMUZ FEN) and university entrance exams "," The amount of homework given per day "

When artistic, sports, social and cultural activities are examined, the issues that parents definitely take into consideration among private school preferences are "School sports activities" and "Study and club activities provided by the school to students", respectively. However, it is seen with this research that they also take into account "School having international memberships", "Art activities carried out within the school" and "Participation in social responsibility projects of the school".

Considering the Management and Academic Staff Characteristics, it was observed that the parents absolutely take into account "School administrators being able to communicate well with parents", "The teachers working at the school being experienced", "The school's teaching staff does not change frequently" and "The school's teaching staff is not always" "Existence of full-time health personnel in the school", "Existence of young and dynamic teachers" and "Religious view reflected by the school".

When the Communication Processes are examined, it was determined that the parents absolutely took into account "Positive comments made by other parents in the school", "The teachers being open to communication", "The quality of teacher-parent communication" and "The teachers' taking into account the wishes and demands of the parents". Other issues that they took into consideration were, "Ensuring parents' participation in the activities carried out during the academic year (such as getting views, assigning tasks, requesting feedback)" "Positive comments made by other parents at school" and "Good references given by the surrounding people" as a result. has been found.

5. Discussion

The factors affecting the private school preferences of the parents participating in the study are at a high level regarding the dimension of the physical conditions of the school of the questionnaire. The first three conditions that they attach most importance to from the physical conditions of the school

are, the importance that the school attaches to cleanliness and hygiene, the school has a quality security service, and the food in the school cafeteria is healthy and delicious respectively. Among the physical conditions of the school, the least important situation for the parents participating in the study was the quality and beauty of the school uniforms. In the research conducted by Pulat (2019), the levels related to the physical conditions dimension were found to be high and the importance was given to the same three conditions.

Pulat (2019) research results also show similarities with the findings of the research results in the way that parents who take part in the research attach the most importance to the educational activities of the school, and the success of the school's foreign language education is high.

In Pulat's (2019) study, the situation that parents attach the most importance to the economic processes dimension of the questionnaire of factors affecting private school choices is that the tuition fee is suitable for the family budget. As a result of this research, the most important situation for parents in terms of economic processes is the fairness of the scholarship policies of the school. In short, different results have been obtained between the two studies in terms of economic processes.

The findings also showed that the items that parents consider the most regarding management and academic staff characteristics are that the school administrators have good communication with parents, the teachers working at the school are experienced, and the teaching staff in the school does not change frequently. When the results of the research conducted by Çelikten (2010) were examined, the most important factor that parents took into consideration according to their private school preferences was the academic experience and well-equipped education staff. According to Çelikten (2010), the reason for preference was the experience and equipment of the education staff, while the highest factor in the relevant field was the good communication between school administrators and parents according to our findings. The findings obtained are close to each other but not exactly parallel to each other.

6. Recommendations

This research is a study conducted to determine the private school preferences in the education process, according to the views of the parents of the students studying in the private schools of primary and secondary education institutions in TRNC. The research conducted is a guide for primary and secondary education parents to notice their private school preferences.

Recommendations for Private Schools

- Private schools should be physically competent and attractive, the technical infrastructure of the school (electricity, heating, etc.) should be of high quality, should give importance to technological developments and should have equipment suitable for technological developments, should have social facilities such as laboratories, libraries, sports halls, pools, high quality They should also have a security service, give importance to cleanliness and hygiene. The food in the cafeteria should be healthy and delicious, and the transportation services should be of high quality.
- Private schools should pay attention to the high success of the school in foreign language education, especially in educational activities.

- From the artistic, sports, social and cultural activities in private schools to the sports activities carried out in the school, the study and club activities provided by the school to the students should be carried out with care.
- In private schools, care should be taken to ensure that especially school administrators have good communication with parents, that the teachers working at the school are experienced, and that the teaching staff of the school does not change frequently.
- When the communication processes in private schools are taken into consideration, teachers should be open to communication, they should give importance to the quality of teacher-parent communication and the teachers and parents' requests and demands.
- In private schools, care should be taken to ensure that the tuition fees are suitable for the family budget and that the scholarship policy of the school is fair when it is observed with economic resources.

Suggestions for Researchers

• A research can be conducted to compare the expectations of private and public school parents in order to reveal the reasons for parents' preference for private school.

• Parents' expectations of children who receive education at all levels of private schools (kindergarten, pre-school, primary school, secondary school, high school, university) can be compared.

• This research can be done at the country level by expanding its scope to include private teaching institutions.

• School characteristics that students attach importance to in their choice of school and teachers' expectations from private schools can be investigated.

• Research can be conducted within the school regarding the expectations of parents from private schools.

• A study comparing parents' reasons for choosing private schools and expectations of teachers and parents from school may not be conducted.

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