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DETERMINANTS OF PARENTAL SCHOOL CHOICE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

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Abstract
The study examined determinants of parental school choice internationally aiming to identify research gaps and providing suggestions for researchers. Articles published between 2000 and 2023 were searched from 9 databases and a total of 30 articles were included in the review. The result showed that parental school choice is critically affected by parent-related factors like parents' education, income, family size, and education level of the children, and the school-related factors: quality of education, performance of teachers, school facilities, school cost, parent-teacher relationship, and school curriculums are the major ones. The safety/security related and children's educational achievement is found slightly affecting factor on parental school choice. The research design of reviewed articles is found descriptive research although the explanatory research design was appropriate as it supports better. The study also identified factors for developing and developed countries are different. For developing countries socio-economy, income, family education, cost, curriculum, technology, proximity to home, number of children, and age of the child are the major ones. For developed countries: school quality, teacher performance, special programs, playground, training teachers, library service, student moral development, school performance, environment, school ranking, interaction with parents, discipline, curriculum structure, knowledge, result, and communication skills are paid attention for parental school choice decisions.

Keywords: achievement, education quality, parent income, school choice

Introduction
Education is a fundamental right and a powerful tool for individual and societal development. It equips individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills, and values to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to the betterment of society. However, there are still significant challenges to ensuring education is accessible, equitable, and of high quality for all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic background or geographical location. Education plays a great role in the development and socio-economic welfare of society. It also enables people to become more productive members of society. Overall, the development of human

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resources is impossible without an emphasis on education (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008). It contributes to the formation of an informed and engaged citizenry, capable of participating in democratic processes and making informed decisions, it promotes social cohesion, tolerance, and understanding among diverse communities.

School choice is a concept that allows parents to have the freedom to choose the best educational option for their children. It recognizes that not all schools are created equal and that different educational approaches may work better for different students. Connecting the quest for better education with school choice is important because it empowers parents to actively participate in the development process of their children. When parents can choose the school that aligns with their values, goals, and preferences, they can ensure that their children receive an education that meets their individual needs (Kamal & Zunaid, 2006).

Parents play a crucial role in the upbringing and education of their children. They are the first teachers of their children and have a significant influence on their development. From a young age, parents provide the foundation for their children's learning by creating a nurturing and supportive environment. They provide the foundation for their children's learning, instill values and morals, and support their academic success. Parents not only play a crucial role in the upbringing and education of their children but also have significant responsibilities and aspirations for their children. They invest in their children's success and have high expectations for their future (Anderson, 1992). Parents want their children to have a better life than they did and often see education as the key to achieving it. Parents also have aspirations for their children's academic achievements and career paths. They want their children to excel in school, go on to college or university, and secure stable and fulfilling careers.

Hence one of the most important parental roles in their children’s academic upbringing is choosing the school they attend as school choice gives parents greater power not only over their children ’s education but also in influencing important educational decisions (Aweke, 2016). This implies that parents are prominent stakeholders in the process of their children’s schooling on the one hand, and they are primarily responsible for the holistic development of their children on the other hand. Parents respond differently in fulfilling those responsibilities; particularly in deciding about a school to which their children should go (Anderson, 1992). Furthermore, parents take on various roles and responsibilities in their children's lives. They act as caregivers, nurturers, educators, and mentors. They provide emotional support, guidance, and encouragement to help their children navigate through life's ups and downs. Parents are there to celebrate their children's successes and provide comfort during times of failure or disappointment.

However, it is important to recognize that not all parents have equal opportunities or resources to support their children's education. Socio-economic factors can impact the level of involvement and support parents can provide. Therefore, society must ensure that all parents have access to the necessary resources, such as affordable childcare, parental education programs, and support networks, to help them fulfill their role in their children's education. It is important to note that parents' decisions about school choice are influenced by various factors such as their educational background, socioeconomic status, cultural beliefs, and personal experiences. Every parent wants the best for their child, and their choices

reflect their aspirations and expectations for their children's education and future. Some parents may prioritize academic excellence and choose a school with a strong academic reputation. They believe that attending a prestigious school will provide their children with the best educational opportunities and set them up for future success. These parents may also consider factors such as class size, teacher quality, and extracurricular activities in their decision-making process. Other parents may prioritize the values and principles taught at a school. They may choose a school that aligns with their religious or cultural beliefs, or one that promotes a specific educational philosophy such as Montessori or Waldorf. These parents believe that a school's values and principles will shape their children's character development and overall well-being.

Several researches have been published about the determinants which affect parental school choice. This is done in the world as well as in Africa. This large abundance of literature makes complex which variant types of determinants affect one and not others. This makes it for the practitioners and school providers difficult to implement their activity by understanding which factors are most significantly determined by parents. Different empirical research has been done to identify the determinants that are responsible for the decision-making of parental school choice. Specifically, the research-focused area was grouped into four broad categories: (a) parent-related factors which come through different demography of parents. (b) school-related factors that come through the characteristics of schools. (c) Safety/security-related factors that have effects on the student's sense of security. (d) Students' achievement-related factors depend on the student's grades in different examinations.

Hence, this paper attempts to assess how parental school choice is conceptualized and understood in various studies. An attempt is made to consider as many published research articles as possible in this area to fill in these gaps draw lessons from the past and discuss the possible implications for future practice and research. Accordingly, the following research questions should be answered by the review:

- According to the studies reviewed, what are the determinants of parental school choice globally?
- According to the studies reviewed, are the determinants of parental school choice the same for developed and developing countries?
- To what extent has 'parental school choice' been an agenda of educational research in Ethiopia?
- What do studies conducted on parental school choice in Ethiopia, if any, indicate?

Methods

The method that was used to answer the research questions was a systematic review of studied literature conducted between 2000 and June 2023. Inclusion/exclusion criteria were used to determine the articles to be reviewed as annexed on Appendixes: Table 1 Summary of the included in the systematic review

Search methods and coding process

The subject and keyword for the search: 'School choice," "determinants of school choice," "factors of school choice," "education" or "student achievement", "school achievement", "private school" and "government school".

The articles were selected and analyzed their content together. The major ones taken from them were the methodological part of the analysis methods they used, sampling methods, and research approaches employed were the major. School choice was picked as the dependent variable and independent variables were taken and each assessed for the degree of significant effects and the direction of relation on parental school choice were analyzed.

Inclusion Criteria

Different criteria were used to screen the studies published for inclusion in this analysis. The major one was articles that were studied on the determinants of parental school choice and the relation between the determinants and their effects on parental school choice and articles that were studied after 2000 are included in this systematic review. The second inclusion criterion for this study was the articles that were published and acknowledged by known publishers considered as a criterion of inclusion. The articles also have to be done on schools preschool, primary, and secondary school levels are included as parents have relatively more follow-up with students. Hence, studies that are done at tertiary levels are excluded from the study. Other studies that were not published and studied in Ethiopia were also included in the meta-analysis. Articles that were done before 2000 were excluded from the analysis and the articles that did not include four groups of the above-listed independent variables and that did not use primary data sources were also excluded from the analysis.

Analytical methods

Descriptive statistics were used both to determine the frequency of various methodological parameters, as well as to identify variations due to the time of the study, geographic focus, and product type.

Study selection

The articles retrieved from their initial database search were 5,534. A total of 401 articles were selected and the others which came from duplication of searches and unrelated articles were removed. Another 363 were excluded after the clear review of the abstract, depending on the inclusion criteria in which they did not relate directly to the study of the determinants of parental school choice. Most are removed since they study determinants and students' achievement relations and used secondary data as a result only 30 articles were included in the study.

Study characteristics

All the selected four major groups of factors which affect parental school choices were identified in the review. The four groups were parent-related factors, school-related factors, safety/security-related, and student achievements. The studies included the use a research approach of a qualitative, quantitative, and or mixed research approach. All the included studies use primary sources of data.

Quality of methods of included studies

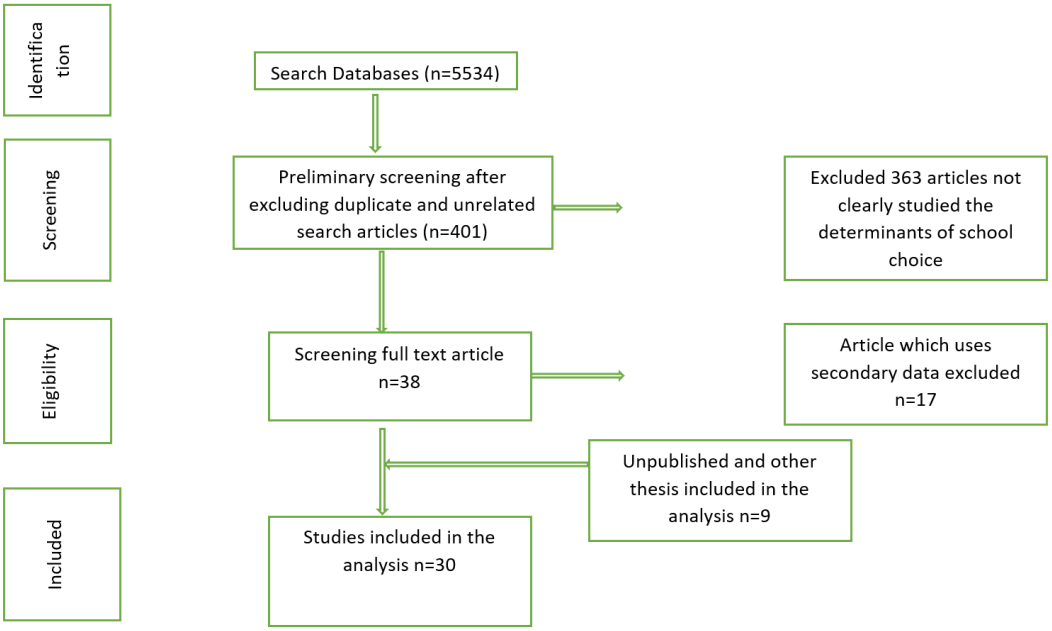


Figure 1. Inclusion/exclusion processes of the studies from 2000 to 2022

Findings and Discussion

Determinants of parental school choice globally

Table 1 in the appendix shows in detail the study setting and the underlying factors influencing parental school choices. Analysis of the reviewed articles revealed four major themes namely: school-related, parent-related, security/safety-related, and student achievement-related factors that influence parental school choice. These four major themes had several subthemes and are reported below:
(a) parent-related factors that come through different demography of parents.
(b) school-related factors that come through the characteristics of schools.
(c) Safety/security-related factors that have effects on the students on their security issues.
(d) Students' achievement-related factors depending on the student's grades in different exams are the major determinant factors grouped on parental school choice decision.

Parent related factors

These factors come from parents of students and it originates from the demography of parents mainly. The factors included in these groups are parent education, parent income, size of family, number of children, socio-economic situation, student age, student gender, and ethnic background.

Parent education

Parental education was taken as the most important factor in parental school choice. Parents are taken as the first and most decisions makers in the education of children and when parents' education levels become high their decisions become reasonable in choosing schools for their children (Chaturvedi, 2021; Ghosh & Dey,

2020; Hossain, Ahamed, & Jahan, 2017; Siddiqui, 2017; Tarkhnishvili, Tarkhnishvili, & Strielkowski, 2022).

From the results of Siddiqui (2017) in Pakistan school choice is more dependent on parents' education. When parents attend a formal school for a long period, they tend to select private schools for their children, and parents having a lesser number of years spent in formal education is positively related to children's enrolment in Madrassahs. The differences in parental school choice are noticeable between private schools and Madrassahs but less obvious between government schools and private schools (Siddiqui, 2017).

According to Chaturvedi (2021), studies in India mother's education is more important than a father's education in the decision on the choice of school. Parents' education is significantly related to parental school choice in India (Chaturvedi, 2021)

Parent education is also a determinant factor for parental school choice in Georgia. Private school' students' have better education. The study shows that school choice is much linked to the parent's education When the private school student's parents have higher education (compared with the public school students' parents), the chance of sending their kids to a private school in the future is inevitably high (Tarkhnishvili, Tarkhnishvili, & Strielkowski, 2022).

Among the socioeconomic factors, parental education is the most crucial role in school choice. Because, educated parents know that selecting schools for children is an important decision to make as these institutions would be the caterer for the children's future roles and successes (Tanvir, Tunvir, & Nusrat, 2017).

Parents with higher educational attainment are more likely to find themselves in positions where they can make informed decisions on their children's education (Oiyer, Odundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015).

Parent income

Parent income is one of the most significant factors in choosing students' schools. When the income of parents becomes high there is an intention to choose private schools and when the income is low parents choose more on public schools (Bedaso &Shobisso, 2020; Charbaji, Sellami & Al Qassass, 2019; Hossain, Shohel, & Jahan, 2017; Tarkhnishvili, Tarkhnishvili, & Strielkowski, 2022).

Georgia Private school students' parents have better income. When the private school students' parents have a higher income (compared with the public school students' parents), the chance of sending their kids to a private school in the future is inevitably high (Tarkhnishvili, Tarkhnishvili, & Strielkowski, 2022). Parent income is a determinant of school choice in Bangladesh (Hossain, Shohel, & Jahan, 2017). Parent school choice in Qatar (El-Kassem, Sellami, & Qassass, 2019) and India (Ghosh & Dey, 2020) depends on the income of the parents. In Ethiopia also income of parents was the most important variable that affected the parents' decision regarding the selection of public or private schools (Merga & Sofamo, 2020). Parents from rich families prefer private schools over public schools because private schools offer more resources to extend learning opportunities for the children than underfunded public schools (Hossain, Shohel, & Jahan, 2017).

Size of family

According to Hossain, Shohel, and Jahan (2017), children from families with fewer members and not more than one sibling attended private schools as smaller families have more financial mobility than extended families in Bangladesh and the number of kids in the family has critical effects on parental school choice of Georgia (Anna, Levan, & Wadim, 2022).

Education level of children

Parents' preference for school differs based on a child's grade level as they are less concerned for the moral guidance and safety of an older child than the younger one as the latter requires more attention and care. Findings of Hossain, Shohel, and Jahan (2017) show that parents in the KCC area preferred private schools instead of government schools, specifically for their younger kids, as private schools offer a more congenial educational environment than the hectic conditions in government schools.

School related factors

Educational quality

The education quality of the school is considered a vital school-related factor for parental school choice (Ahmed & Jahan,2020; Asanjarani, Alkash'an & Keshavarz, 2021; Bedaso & Shobisso,2020; Grosset al., 2015; Tanvir, Ahamed & Jahan, 2017; Tarkhnishvili & Strielkowski, 2022). Parents look and research the quality of education before deciding on their children's school.

Bedaso and Shobisso's (2020) results confirmed that the quality of education was a strong determining factor relating to parental school choice. The quality of private schools significantly influenced the enrolment decision as it indicated that parents would like to send their children to private schools for better education (Merga & Sofamo, 2020). The quality of education is the major factor in parental school choice in Pakistan (Shahzad, Naoreen, & Ashraf, 2020).

Performance of teachers

The performance of teachers was also considered as a deciding factor for parental school choices since it is directly related to the educational quality of the schools, it becomes the major factor for parental school choice. According to Shahzad, Naoreen, and Ashraf (2020) in Pakistan, the performance of teachers was the major factor in parental school choice for their children.

In Thailand, the quality of the teacher and the class size are worth noting as they relate to the academic performance criteria that parents consider. Parents believe with the presence of quality teachers and smaller classroom sizes; their children will receive better teachers' attention and therefore result in better academic performances (Wei & Mhunpiew, 2020).

School facilities

School facilities like class size, library service, technological services, laboratories, technological labs, and playgrounds of schools have significant effects on parents choosing a school for their children.

In Bangladesh concerning the physical facilities, it was observed that many private schools have a large and diversified collection of books with a mandatory

provision of library hours and internet connectivity and hence parents prefer private schools (Chowdhury & Synthia, 2020).

Adequate and appropriate facilities, materials, and equipment for students to learn in a classroom are also critical factors in school choice in Kenya (Oiyer, Odundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015).

The physical characteristics of a school and its buildings are appealing to them and therefore, an influential factor when determining their school of choice (Cantu, Verela, Jones, & Challoo, 2021).

Cost of school payment

The cost of schools is also a major factor for parents to choose schools for their children. When the cost of the school becomes very high parents' capacity to pay becomes less and most parents do not choose. The cost of schooling is a sensitive issue for decision-making in developing countries like Ethiopia where the literacy rate is low as compared to developed countries (Merga & Sofamo, 2020).

Parent-teacher relationship

Parent-teacher relationship is also a major school-related factor for parental school choice. relationship between parent–teachers, and teacher–learners is the major factor for school choices in South Africa (Roy & Miller, 2021). The parent's involvement in children's educational experience and their level of "motivation", as factors mostly influencing the choice between public and private schools in Italy (Pandolfini, 2013).

School curriculum

In Bangladesh, public schools follow the national curriculum that focuses more on core contents, whereas private schools put more emphasis on critical reasoning and learning or operational curriculum (Chowdhury & Synthia, 2020). Hence school curriculum is the major factor for school choice in Bangladesh and the structure of the curriculum of the school is the critical factor in the school choice of Tamilnadu (Jayasubramanian, Rajamani, & Rajakrishnan, 2020). The school curriculum is the major factor that affects Iranian parents' school choices, too (Faramarz et al., 2022) as many Iranian parents need a religious-based curriculum.

Safety/security related factors

School safety

Safety was regarded as a key factor influencing parental school choice decisions in South Africa. Articulate discipline and safety as key factors influencing their school choice decision-making process. It should also be noted that school discipline is a key requirement for a safe schooling environment (Roy & Miller, 2021). Parents choose schools for academic reasons and safety measures undertaken by learners, staff, parents, and other stakeholders to either minimize or eliminate risky conditions or threats that may cause accidents, bodily injury as well as emotional and psychological distress. A safe and secure school environment facilitates and fosters quality teaching and learning in educational institutions (Oiyer, Odundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015). Also, safety measures were influential in parental school choice decisions to enroll in a particular school in the USA (Cantu, Verela, Jones, & Challoo, 2021).

Social atmosphere

Providing school-choice options has led to (socially biased) pupil flows across the city from residential areas with higher socio-economic profiles to desirable classes in different schools. Ethics and the social atmosphere are critical factors in school choice in Finland (Kosunen, Bernelius, Seppanen, & Porkka, 2020).

The study findings also asserted that school social environment besides academic preference influences some parents when choosing a school for their children. The social environment which is defined by the teacher-pupil relationship, discipline, and the diversity of the school determines parental school choice (Oiyer, Odundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015).

Distance from home to school

Safety to and from school and in school is the major factor that affects parental school choice for their children in Pakistan (Shahzad, Naoreen, & Ashraf, 2020). The geographical importance is not only tied to convenience but is also tied to the school's surroundings and transmitting a sense of confidence that children are safe. Safety was indicated as a top influential factor for parent participants in the research study. School safety is an important issue for many school leaders and parents (Cantu, Verela, Jones, & Challoo, 2021).

Students' achievement-related factors

Child education

parents choose schools that are convenient with the belief that they will provide better educational quality. They believe that pupils attending a school out of the immediate environment spend more time commuting and have less time for learning. Parents typically choose a school near where they live as a convenience when deciding on children's education (Oiyer, Odundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015).

When the school culture promotes a positive and caring climate that supports learning, the academic standards go hand in hand. Parents are greatly influenced to enroll in a school where they feel the people whom they interact with genuinely care for their child (Cantu, Verela, Jones, & Challoo, 2021).

This systematic review examined the factors that affect parental school choice from different countries around the globe from different grouped factors individually as well as in a group. School-related factors and parent-related factors were more investigated in the review articles. In the reviewed articles the schools related factors that affect parental school choice for their children were quality of education, teacher performance, school facilities, learning curriculum, parent-teacher relationship and cost of school are the critical factors which affect parental school choice for their children. It is found that the school-related factors mostly and more significantly affect parental school choice than parent-related factors in the reviewed articles. The parent-related factors that affect parental school choice are parents' education, income, size of family, and education level of children.

The other two groups that affect school choice are safety/security-related factors and children's education-related factors. The safety/security-related factors that affect parents when choosing a school for their children are the distance from home to schools, school safety, and social atmosphere are the major one. From

student achievement children's academics is the factor which affects parental school choice.

Determinants of parental school choice in developed and developing countries

Here thirty studies were identified and meta-analyses were done. Accordingly, from 30 studies the majority were descriptively analyzed. From the 30 studies included in the meta-analysis 22 studies which cover (73.33%) of the total were simply descriptive analyses. Only 8 that covers (26.67%) of the studies concluded from the inferential analysis although it is hardly possible to generalize from descriptive statistics of a relationship variable. This means studying the cause and relationship of variables descriptively is invaluable. It requires an explanatory research design and hence an inferential analysis is mandatory. One paper from each of Pakistan, Qatar, India, and Ethiopia was inferentially analyzed despite using a different model.

The research approach of the papers included in the SLR 7 studies from 30 which covers (23.33%) used a qualitative research approach. Different researchers inferred that qualitative research is appropriate when the area is new and needs an depth analysis. To test models and study the causal relationship quantitative research approach could have been better. Hence this indicates that there is a gap in the studied literature that supports the determinants of parental school choice.

Besides, the majority of the studies were from developed countries whereas studies on the determinants of parental school choice in Africa and specifically in Ethiopia were few. But it is known that education is necessary more for developing countries than the developed ones.

For developing countries including Ethiopia socio-economy, income, family education, school cost, curriculum, technology, relationship, proximity to home, number of children, and age of the child are the major ones that affect parental school choice, and for developed countries school quality, teacher performance, special program, playground, training teachers, library service, student moral development, school performance, environment, school ranking, interaction with parent, discipline, curriculum structure, knowledge, result, and communication skill gives attentions for parental school choice. Therefore, there are different factors in developing and developed countries.

From the systematic reviewed article these four main factors are different from one country to the other country. The major factor for one country may not be significantly considered for the other country. It is observed parent income from the parent-related factor and school payment from the school-related factors have a significant effect on parental choice in developing countries which is not a factor for a developed one.

The systematic review from the different countries indicates that parent income is a critical factor that affects parental school choice in the country of Georgia, Bangladesh, Qatar, India, and Ethiopia (Bedaso & Shobisso, 2020; Charbaji, Sellami & Al Qassass, 2019; Hossain, Shohel, & Jahan, 2017; Tarkhnishvili & Strielkowski, 2022).

In addition, the size of the family is the factor that affects parental school choice in Bangladesh and Georgia. Parents' education is a significant factor as parents are more educated, they can choose schools which are better for their children's future success and in countries like Pakistan, India, Georgia, the USA,

Kenya, and Bangladesh parent education was given more attention for school choice (Chaturvedi 2021; Ghosh & Dey, 2020; Hossain, Ahamed, & Jahan, 2017; Siddiqui, 2017; Tarkhnishvili, Tarkhnishvili, & Strielkowski, 2022).

When we saw the effect of the size of the family on parental school choice studies performed in Bangladesh and Georgia take as the critical factors which affect parental school choice. (Anna, Levan, & Wadim, 2022; Hossain, Shohel, & Jahan, 2017). Education level also has an effect on school choice in Bangladesh (Hossain, Shohel, & Jahan, 2017).

School characteristics from the systematically reviewed articles include education quality, the performance of teachers, school facilities, cost of schools, parent-teacher relationship and school curriculums are factors that affect parental school choice. Education quality is the critical factor that affects parental school choice. Studies which were done in Pakistan, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Iran identify education quality as the major factor that affects parental school choice (Ahmed & Jahan, 2020; Asanjarani, Alkash'an & Keshavarz, 2021; Bedaso & Shobisso, 2020; Grosset al., 2015; Tanvir, Ahamed, & Jahan, 2017; Tarkhnishvili & Strielkowski, 2022).

Whereas the performance of teachers in Pakistan and Thailand is a critical factor for parental school choice. When the performance of teachers becomes high at schools the school's quality of education is higher hence from the reviewed articles it becomes a critical factor in parental school choice. Parents believe with better quality teachers and smaller classroom sizes; their children will receive better teachers' attention which therefore results in better academic performances (Shahzad, Naoreen, & Ashraf, 2020; Wei & Mhunpiew, 2020).

As reviewed literature in Ethiopia indicates the cost of schools has a significant effect on parental school choice. The cost of schooling was a sensitive issue for decision-making. In developing countries like Ethiopia where the literacy rate is low as compared to developed countries (Merga & Sofamo, 2020).

Parent-teacher relationships and school curricula are also critical to school-related factors that affect parental school choice. Safety/security-related factors are also determinant which affects parental school choice. Parents choose schools for academic reasons and safety measures undertaken by learners, staff, parents, and other stakeholders to either minimize or eliminate risky conditions or threats that may cause accidents, bodily injury as well as emotional and psychological distress (Oiyer, Odundo, Obat, Lilian, & Akondo, 2015; Cantu, Verela, Jones, & Challoo, 2021; Roy & Miller, 2021). Studies performed in South Africa, the USA, and Kenya identify safety/security as factors of school choice.

From the reviewed articles safety to and from school and in school are the major factors which affect parents to choose a school for their children in Pakistan and Texas (Cantu, Verela, Jones, & Challoo, 2021; Shahzad, Naoreen, & Ashraf, 2020).

On the other hand, in developed countries, factors such as school quality, teacher performance, special programs, playgrounds, training for teachers, library services, students' moral development, school performance, environment, school ranking, interaction with parents, discipline, curriculum structure, knowledge, result, and communication skills are given more attention in parental school choice. These factors highlight the focus on providing a high-quality educational experience for students in developed countries.

The differences in determinant factors between developing and developed countries can be attributed to various factors such as differing levels of economic development, educational resources and infrastructure, cultural norms and values, and government policies. Policymakers and educators need to consider these unique factors when developing interventions and policies to improve parental school choice and educational outcomes in different contexts.

Parental school choice' as an agenda of educational research in Ethiopia

The determinant factors selected for developing countries and developed countries are different. For developing countries including Ethiopia socio-economy, income, family education, cost, curriculum, technology, relationship, proximity to home, number of children, and age of the child are the major ones that affect parental school choice, and for developed countries school quality, teacher performance, special program, playground, training teachers, library service, students' moral development, school performance, environment, school ranking, interaction with parent, discipline, curriculum structure, knowledge, result, and communication skill gives attentions for parental school choice. Therefore, there are different factors in developing and developed countries.

Some educational studies tried to find out about the determinates of parental school choice in Ethiopia Tilahun Bedaso and Belay Shobisso (2020) have tried to analyze through Binary Logistic regression to find the determinants of parental school choice and Teshome (2017), Yadessa and Bekabil (2022), Seboka (2003), Gizaw (2019), Woldehanna, Mekonnen, and Jones (2009) have also conducted educational research which deals about parental school choice in Ethiopia. In general, the educational research did not give more attention to parental school choice as little research was done on the topic although parental school choice is still a critical problem.

Studies conducted on parental school choice in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, parents have the freedom to choose among public schools, private schools, and community-based schools for their children's education. Studies have highlighted challenges related to the quality and accessibility of education in Ethiopia. Some parents may choose private schools as they perceive higher quality, while others may prefer public schools due to lower costs or proximity. Affordability is a significant factor influencing parental school choice in Ethiopia. Private schools often charge fees, which can be a barrier for low-income families. government schools are generally more affordable but may face resource constraints. Location and infrastructure: proximity to schools and the availability of appropriate infrastructure also impact parental school choice. In rural areas, where access to schools might be limited, parents may opt for community-based schools.

The studies employed in Ethiopia about the determinants of parental school choices were few and counted in numbers. From them, some are still analyzed descriptively. From this the factors that significantly separated were family economic status, family education, cost of schools, distance from home to school, and socioeconomic status are the determinants that affect parental school choice.

When we saw some like Merga and Sofamo (2020) that try to analyze through Binary Logistic regression to find the determinants of parental school choice.

Others study includes Teshome (2017), Yadessa and Bekabil, (2022), Seboka, (2003), Gizaw, (2019), and Woldehanna, Mekonnen, and Jones (2009) are educational research that deals with parental school choice in Ethiopia. Most studies used descriptive statistics while generalizing from descriptive statistics of a relationship variable is difficult. This means studying the cause and relationship of variables descriptively is invaluable. It requires an explanatory research design and hence an inferential analysis is mandatory.

Conclusion

These studies emphasize the need for schools to prioritize academic excellence, values and principles, social environment, and practical considerations to attract and retain students. By addressing these factors, schools can create an environment that is conducive to learning, growth, and overall student well-being. In conclusion, parental school choice is influenced by a variety of factors including academic excellence, values and principles, social environment, and practical considerations. Understanding these factors can help schools and policymakers make informed decisions to improve educational outcomes for all students. Additionally, it is important to recognize that the factors influencing parental school choice may vary between developing and developed countries, highlighting the need for context-specific approaches to education. The determinant factors selected for developing countries and developed countries are different. The studies conducted in Ethiopia about the determinants of parental school choices were few, inadequate, and did not get proper attention in the educational research.

Implication

Researchers have to employ the inferential analysis method as it plays a crucial role in understanding the determinants that influence parental school choice. By analyzing data and making generalizations about the larger population, researchers can draw meaningful conclusions and inform educational policies and programs. School-related factors and parent-related factors have been identified as critical factors affecting parental school choice, and understanding these factors can lead to more informed decision-making and improved educational outcomes. Inferential analysis allows researchers to examine the relationship between these factors and parental school choice in a more comprehensive and meaningful way. By analyzing data from a sample of parents, researchers can make generalizations about the larger population of parents and conclude the factors that significantly influence their school choice decisions rather than simply using the descriptive method. Research in school choice has to be done at a comprehensive level in Ethiopian education.

Policymakers and school providers have to pay attention to providing schools for the determinants of parental school choice as parental school choice is a basic need for education and parents are the critical persons who choose schools for their children. Therefore, the school-related factors that have to be given more attention are education quality, teachers' performance, school facilities, cost of schools, parent-teacher relationship, and school curriculums. Parents did not only consider school-related factors but also parent-related and safety/security-related factors are critical to parents. Therefore, when providing schools, the determinants have to be considered to satisfy parents' needs and increase the quality of education.

Strengths and limitations of this study

The major strength of this systematic review it focuses on increasing the understanding of the determinants which affect parental school choice. The study also highlighted the gap in knowledge in the literature and only a few studies are dealing with the effects of safety/security-related factors on parental school choice and most of the studies have given attention to school-related factors on parental school choice. However, the conclusion drawn from the systematic review is limited to the data within the identified articles.

Although the use of this concept will help school providers and policymakers, the finding of the article reviewed in this study within each country may not be representative of all the identified countries. The variables studied in these systematic reviews are also only for the selected and identified variables in the designated articles.

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