

PARENTS' PREFERENCES ON SECONDARY  
SCHOOL SELECTION

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- (1) This undergraduate research project is the end result of our own work and that due acknowledgement has been given in the references to ALL sources of information be they printed, electronic, or personal.
- (2) No portion of this research project has been submitted in support of any application for any other degree or qualification of this or any other university, or other institutes of learning.
- (3) Equal contribution has been made by each group member in completing the research project.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

AMOS	Analysis of a Moment Structure
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
ChiSq/df	Chi Square/Degrees of Freedom
DV	Dependent Variable
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
GLBTQ	Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, or Queer
NFI	Normed Fit Index
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAT	Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SC	School Characteristic
SE	School Environment
SEM	Structural Equation Modelling
SES	Socio Economic Status
SI	Social Influence
Sig	Significance
SPM	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index

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## PREFACE

Children's education always is the prior concern among the parents. This concern increase dramatically when the issue of secondary school arises because secondary school will indirectly affect the path of the children in future. As children are the future leaders that lead the world, parents often put more focus on the children's education. The parents always wish to let their children to receive the best education in the secondary school level so to be well-prepared or become more competitive before entering the college or university. Secondary school education is the core origin that able to shape up the children's interest in their future career path when the children need to decide where they wish to pursue at. The children's education is as well considered as part of the parent's investment to secure their children's future path. Therefore, this research aims to uncover the factors behind what contributes to the parent's preferences in selecting particular schools to enrol their children.

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine the actual reasons or criteria that affecting the decision of parents in selecting the type of secondary school for their children. The conceptual model was developed to examine the four factors that influencing the parent's selection in private or public school and the three different stages that involve in choice process. The parents are concern on the factors which are known as social influences, school characteristics, school environment, as well as parents, administration and teacher (PAT) relationship. This four independent variables will then incorporate with the choice process which including the predisposition, search and choice that taken by the parents to select a school. Survey questionnaires were used to collect data from the parents in Ipoh, Perak who have children studying in private or public schools to obtain the parents' perception. The structural equation modelling technique was utilized to test the conceptual model. The result of the finding indicates that parents are focusing on the school characteristics and ignore the PAT relationship when making secondary school selection for their children. This research has created a new independent variables which known as E-engagement. This new independent variable – E-engagement plays a vital role in the enrolment of children into the secondary school by the parents. In the end of this research the implication in managerial, theory as well as in future research has been discussed.



## **CHAPTER 1: RESEARCH OVERVIEW**

### **1.0 Introduction**

This chapter briefly explained on the overall research topic by dividing them into research background, research problem, objectives of the study and research significance.

### **1.1 Research Background**

Malaysia education system was categorized into primary education, secondary education (junior/ senior/ pre-university), secondary technical and vocational education and tertiary education. The school system is structured on a 6+3+2+2 which consists of six years of compulsory primary education start at age of seven until twelve, followed by three years of junior secondary education and two years of senior secondary as well as two years of pre-university after senior secondary study (Clark, 2014).

According to Malaysia Educational Statistics (2014), all the level of education in Malaysia was divided into public institution and private institution. Public institution includes few types of school such as Regular, Fully Residential, Religious, Technical, Vocational, Special Education, Special Model, Sports, Arts, Special Model (K9), Government Aided Religious School, Bimbingan Jalanan Kasih and Vocational colleges. While private institution had only few types of

school which are Academic Secondary, Chinese Private Secondary, International Secondary, Religious Secondary and Correspondence Secondary School.

The vision lies in the Malaysia Government is to develop this country a hub of education excellence. According to Studying at private school (n.d.), it's an instilment of increment in terms of education choices provided by education providers are being encouraged by the respective government parties in order to effectively implement a democracy in the current education system. These providers help to contribute towards making Malaysia a center of educational excellence for pre-tertiary education. Utilizing the greatness of skills sharpening and knowledge, it can enhances the personnel's abilities such as confidence level of a respected person, more attentive while being physically fit, in order to gain momentum for the economics. (Yaacob, Osman, & Bachok, 2014) In short, Malaysia was promoting the growth and development of education institution as the country is progressing towards a developed nation.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

There's an argue by education expert clarified that education standards are significantly vary as private sector is greatly credited in terms of enlarging access to Malaysia's higher education has been increased for the past 15 years. (Goosh, 2011) Apart from tailoring the recognized international program performed using English language, international schools do offer various extra-curricular activities, finer amenities, concentrated class size, and, in some case, housing services. Private schools and international schools in Malaysia (n.d.) asserted that international schools enable parents to select a distinctive type of education for their lad, which it's an education prepared to face the reality of universal communication, worldwide chance and as well as diverse of culture. It charters a far deal of child-centred and holistic technique to learning for the students. Being immersed in miscellaneous experiences, it encourages students to realize their utmost potential in a vast number of scopes, in academically, physically, mentally and communally. (Private schools and international schools in Malaysia, n.d.) In Number of

international schools set to exceed target (2012) article, it focused on the statement there was an increment scene of amount of international school students from 8,294 to 23,159 from the year 2002 to 2011 where the annual expansion rate of 13.8% is the indicator of enlargement of the market. Hence, it's emerged as ubiquitous situation where numbers of parents are enrolling their lad into international schools. (Teh, 2015) Parents in Malaysia would engraved the factor that affect their decisions, when it's pragmatic to decide on the type of educational environment and experience they wish their children can indulge within it, while achieving long-term educational goals for their lads as international school seems to be a great secondary school choice.

Teh, (2015) asserted that boosting student numbers entering international schools in every year was proving the increment rate. Teh (2015) mentioned that statistics provided by the Ministry of Education, 20,000 students were enrolled in international schools in 2013, compared to 15,000 the year before, which was done by the website, iMoney.my. As mentioned in the numbers given by the Education Ministry, albert, the rate of students in Malaysia admitted into international school was less significant compare in the year 2012 where 0.4 per cent rate of the overall 5,250,732 students admitted into or roughly 20,000, it did rose up to a near 1 per cent at greater than 15,000 students from the previous year. (Chi, n.d.)

Referring to Latha (n.d.), there was an increment of international schools across the nation, which contributed by the interest towards international education by the Malaysians were gaining momentum.

There have been dissatisfaction of various stakeholders on the quality of Malaysia's education system. Follows were excerpts of speech of several renowned public figure in Malaysia:

- i. Malaysia's education system is "not that good" has been acknowledged by Deputy Prime Minister and Education Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin. It emphasized that improvements needed few years to provide better results.

- ii. Education Minister II Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh admitted that Malaysia's education system was below par as shown in global rankings, and cited Putrajaya's National Education Blueprint as the solution. Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh also stressed that it is important to judge and contrast Malaysia education system against the international standards, and Malaysia has ranked in the bottom third out of 74 countries in the Programme for International Student Assessment which is below the international and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average.
- iii. "Singapore's system has proven to be successful ... (it has) helped to unite the races (there). What we can emulate from Singapore is the unity which has been fostered by its single-stream education system which uses English language as the medium"

Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar, 2015

Such Policy and Guides (2009) indicated that these concerns mostly phenomenon was believed to affect the parents' decision in selecting school. On selecting the school, Parent opinions on school selection in New Orleans (2013) mentioned that parents will be having their concern and consideration. Addressing parents' concerns and complaints effectively: include the incident management between students at a school, the education or other progress of their child and the development and implementation of school and general education policy. Parents also concerned on whether the school could advocate for the needs of their child. If the school fails to address their child's learning needs, they will stop their children from going the school and find one that is more satisfactory and adaptable (Yaacob et al., 2004) Nonetheless, parents have addressed the concern on the curriculum reform by the school. They were concerned on how to support the program, misinformation or no information, concerns about program implementation, and concerns about whether teachers could be believed.

Past studies emphasized heavily on the investigation of private schools than public school. By referring to Yaacob, Osman and Bachok (2014) and Adebayo (2009), most of the content, results of research or discussion tend to highlight more on

private school and provide less information on public school. Next, method of the researchers set the questionnaires were rather one sided. Referring to Adebayo (2009), she stated “Do parents think private schools perform better than public schools academically?” and “Do you think private schools have better facilities than public schools?” in her questionnaire. Based on the same studies, there were evidence that none of the past studies particularly focused on certain education level. This research aimed to leverage down by examine parents’ selection in secondary school level only and improve the outcome of the results by developing a more comprehensive views in this issue.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This research aimed to examine determinants of parents’ selection of secondary school level and distinguish the selection of secondary school and its determinants based on type of schools. It involves 5 variables, including social influences, school characteristic, school environment, parents-administration-teachers relationship and school choice.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This research examined the factors that influence the parents’ decision in secondary school selection for their children to provide insight to school on factors that may affect their school enrolment. It provides a benchmark for the secondary school in Malaysia regardless public or private institution to understand which factors are actually contributing to the decision of parents in secondary school selection. Yet, through this research the secondary institution could come out with some strategies based on the findings to boost up the school enrolment.

In addition, this research also demonstrate the application of theory of College Choice Model and College Choice Influences. These theories have led to the

formation or adaptation of the conceptual framework implemented in this study. These theories guided the research and determine the determinants that affect the parents on the secondary school selection based on few factors as well as the steps involved in the selection process. In nutshell, this research shows these theories are interrelated to the contribution of parents' final decision on secondary school selection for their offspring.

## **1.5 Chapter Layout**

### Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter is the introduction on the overall research topic. It includes research background, research problem, objectives of the study and research significance.

### Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews journal articles and past studies which found to be relevant in our research area. It includes reviews on theoretical framework, reviews on each variables, development of research framework and hypothesis.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter illustrate method on how the research was carried out. This involves research design, data collection methods, sampling design, questionnaire design, pilot test and proposed of data analysis tools.

### Chapter 4: Data Analysis

This chapter shows the results of the study with detailed analysis. This involves cross tabulation analysis with demographic information, scale measurement of presented data, results from Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), hypothesis testing and analysis the differences between parents' concern.

### Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion and Implication of Study

This chapter mainly wrapped the whole research including discussion of major findings, limitations of study, implications and direction for future research.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

In summary, this chapter described Malaysia's education system and growing parents' concern in secondary school enrolment. The major objective of this study aimed to examine determinants of parents' selection of secondary school level and distinguish the selection of secondary school and its determinants based on type of schools.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

Chapter 2 reviews relevant theoretical framework and past studies. Elaboration on research framework and discussion on hypothesis development were included in this chapter.

### **2.1 Underlying Theories**

#### **2.1.1 College Choice Influences and College Choice Model**

In this research, parent's decision have been investigated from two distinct standpoints. Firstly, the research focused on the factors affecting parent's selection between public and private school. Secondly, the research focused on three different stages which involving in choice process. Both of this provided a more comprehensive views on how parents choose the best school for their children.

To examine on the areas that could influence school selection were too broad. By referring numerous of studies, Furukawa (2011) had grouped them into 5 categories which are family, peers, institutional characteristic, institutional communication and institutional fit in order to improve the understanding of readers and highlight



the importance of those aspects in contributing to the decision making of school selection. The following table shows the component of the each categories:

Table 2.1: College Choice Influences

Categories	Components	References
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parental education</li> <li>▪ Parental influence on where to find information</li> <li>▪ Family alumnus</li> <li>▪ Parental involvement in choice process</li> <li>▪ Parent role in paying for college</li> <li>▪ Importance of other resources</li> <li>▪ varied by ethnicity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Litten (1982)</li> <li>▪ Bouse and Hossler (1991)</li> <li>▪ Hossler and Foley (1995)</li> <li>▪ Avery and Hoxby (2004)</li> <li>▪ Smith and Fleming (2010).</li> </ul>
Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student high school peer group</li> <li>▪ Peers influence perception of Institutional quality</li> <li>▪ Influence motivation for attending college</li> <li>▪ Affiliations such as GLBTQ</li> <li>▪ influence choice</li> <li>▪ • Guidance of counsellors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kealy and Rockel (1987)</li> <li>▪ Kelp Kern (2000)</li> <li>▪ Burleson (2010)</li> <li>▪ Johnson and Stewart (1991)</li> <li>▪ Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989)</li> </ul>
Institutional Characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cost of education and sticker price</li> <li>▪ Amount of financial aid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hossler and Litten (1991)</li> <li>▪ Monks and Ehrenberg (1999)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reputation of the institution and</li> <li>▪ selectivity</li> <li>▪ State policies affecting public</li> <li>▪ institutions</li> <li>▪ College rankings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Litten (1991)</li> <li>▪ Avery and Hoxby (2004)</li> <li>▪ Hossler and Litten (1993)</li> </ul>
Institutional Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specific marketing strategies</li> <li>▪ Communication with parents</li> <li>▪ College catalogues and viewbooks</li> <li>▪ Online web content</li> <li>▪ Social media</li> <li>▪ Admissions portals</li> <li>▪ Investment in research and planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pagano and Terkla (1991)</li> <li>▪ Hartley and Morphey (2008)</li> <li>▪ Kealy and Rockel (1987)</li> <li>▪ Lefauve (2001)</li> <li>▪ Kelpel Kern (2000)</li> <li>▪ Johnson and Chapman (1979)</li> <li>▪ Jaschik (2007)</li> <li>▪ Foster (2003)</li> </ul>
Institutional Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Institutions searching for particular</li> <li>▪ Characteristics in students</li> <li>▪ High-SES, middle-range academic</li> <li>▪ performers view it as a rational</li> <li>▪ process</li> <li>▪ Campus environment</li> <li>▪ Cultural artifacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kraus (2008)</li> <li>▪ Williams (1986)</li> <li>▪ Astin (1965)</li> </ul>

Source: *Furukawa, Derek Takumi, "College Choice Influences Among High-Achieving Students: An Exploratory Case Study of College Freshmen" (2011). UNLV Theses/Dissertations/Professional Papers/Capstones. Paper 1091.*

Next, this research had focused on College Choice Model which proposed by Hossler and Gallagher (1987). According to Hossler and Gallagher (1987), this model was constructed by referring to several of researchers which include R. Chapman (1984), D. Chapman (1981), Litten (1982) and Jackson (1982). In this model, it was divided into 3 stages which began with predisposition, followed by search and ended with choice.

First, predisposition was determined by the level of interest of students to pursue for higher education. This stage was directly affected by socialization process (eg: family, friends, teacher), student's ability (eg: academic ability, achievement, college-track coursework, participation in co-curriculum activity), school characteristic and geographical location. Social and economic factors often influenced the interest and attitude towards college enrolment. (Delaney, n.d) Predisposition was similar with the first stage proposed by Jackson (1982) which referred to preferences.

Second, search happened when students began to actively gather more information about higher education institution and examined which was the best choice for themselves from a set of choices. It was strongly determined by their preferences and needs that they had identified in the first stage. Jackson (1982) had included exclusion which is a part of search process where students began to eliminate some of the choices and lead to a more narrowed list of options.

Third, choice referred when the students decided which university to apply and accept if they have been accepted by the particular institution. Cost, financial aids, educational aspirations and college activities were ultimately influenced the final decisions. (Hossler and Gallagher, 1987; John, 1990; Nora and Cabrera, 1992) as cited by Tatar and Oktay (2006)

### **2.1.2 Application of Hossler and Gallagher's College Choice Model in Past Studies**

Table 2.2: Relevant Past Studies on College Choice Model and College Choice Influences

No	Author (Year)	Findings
1.	Tatar & Oktay (2006)	This theory used to examine Turkey second year student's behavior in search and choice process. It was found that students does not actively search for more in-depth information during the search phase. A fourth phase, persistence was suggested to identify whether the students may restart the choice process to opt for course or university changing.
2.	Schoenherr (2009)	This study used Hossler and Gallagher's model to examined factors influence high achieving students college first choice. The three phases were mentioned to be happen simultaneously and factors such as student characteristic and institutional characteristic would influence the three phases. It was concluded that the college cost and reputation were the most important determinant for college choice.
3.	Henry (2012)	The study focused on understanding of Catholic homeschooled students on college choice process. The outcome shows that students lack of information in the search process and institution communication were crucial. Peers shows less importance in affecting the decision but divine intervention and Catholic identity was rather significant.
4.	Dial (2014)	The research examined on factors that influence decision making process of African American student. The traditional theory only examined economic, social and psychological factors. The results demonstrated that it was crucial to consider

		differences in minority's experience on decision making process.
5.	Hernandez & Okerson (2014)	This research aimed to investigate Hispanic college choice from socioculture anthropological view. Based on the results, both researchers proposed trust which closely related to familismo become the central of the model that leads to the next three stages. Concern and types of support were factors that may influence the process and after the choice.
6.	Delaney (n.d)	The paper aimed to identify the relationship between student's college choice process and parent's income. Based on the data, it demonstrated positive relationship between both variables as students from higher income family tend to concern for social opportunity while lower income family concern on the institution characteristic which may benefit in their future career.
7.	Yates (2013)	The paper studied student's perception on factors that may affect their post-secondary educational and career plan. Based on the research, educational aspiration influenced by ethnicity and parent's influence. Thus, it was majorly determined by the exposure in the middle school age.
8.	Tan (2009)	This research studied the applicability of major U.S. college choice factors to Philippines high school seniors. The findings shown that academic ability and gender appeared important but socioeconomic level and peer influences were difficult to account for college choice selection in Philippines.

Source: Developed for the research

### **2.1.3 Adaptation of Furukawa's College Choice Influences and Hossler and Gallagher's College Choice Model**

In this research, College Choice model was adapted from students making selection for higher education to parents making secondary school selection for their children. Instead of college choice model, it converted into a secondary school choice model. However, not all the components in each variables will be utilized in this research due to differences in level of education. This research focused on the parent's preference on secondary school selection by involving the process of decision making along with influential factors. In order for better understanding, certain independent variables renamed and combined. Family and peers were represented by a single unit of independent variable which was social influences. Institution characteristic and institution fit were replaced with school characteristic and school environment respectively. Institution communication was replaced with parents-administration-teachers relationship because it was unfair to compare on the way they communicate and promote their school since public school does not perform any promotional activity to promote their school. Thus, parents-administration-teachers relationship appeared more relevant to the study.

## **2.2 School Choice**

School choice referred as phrase that given to a broad range of programs offering students and their families' options to publicly provided school or selecting private school. According to Mirón, Beabout and Boselovic (2015), school choice and open enrollment policies took part on increasing role in improving education across the country. Improved of school quality is one of the most important beliefs of school choice as an education reform mechanism. The school quality can improved through a competitive process where parents collect details about schools' exam scores, specialized programs and teachers, (Mirón, Beabout & Boselovic, 2015).

According to College Choice Model that developed by Hossler and Gallagher (1987), it had three stages. The first stage is predisposition. In this stage predisposition meant by the stage whether the student want to further their study. Hossler and Stage (1992) as cited by Schooner (2009) has described that

socioeconomic status, student's education accomplishment, parent's academic levels, ethnicity, gender, encouragement from teachers and parents' expectation is the factors that have been found to predispose students toward further study. The parents' socioeconomic status was referred as family's social position based on income, education and their occupation. This factor would influenced and put into the school selection consideration. Carneiro and Heckman (2003) mentioned that parental academic levels that have stable income have much better positive role. Parents' encouragement such as parental involvement in school would bring positive effects on children. Besides, Ho and Willms (1996) mentioned that encouragement by parents should also highlight parents' actions at home.

Next stage from the College Choice Model is 'Search'. This phase happens when the parents start to seek for the details about applying their children on which schools are providing opportunities and benefits. Within this stage, external and institutional detail sources are being considered by the parents. Moreover, Schoenherr (2009) mentioned that tuition fees, availability of financial assistance and academic reputation may be a factors concerned by parents. It was on the Search Stage that communication between parents and higher education institution increased. (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987)

The final stage is Choice. Choice made by the parents after considering and evaluating all the information gathered during previous stage. Hossler and Gallagher (1987) as cited by Tan (2009), described that choice was when the person decide which educational institution they apply after analyzing the schools in their choice set. This stage, predisposition factors merged with the details obtained during search stage is implemented. (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987) Hence, parents will choose one institution over another after moving through the three-step phase.

## **2.3 Determinants of School Choice**

### **2.3.1 Social Influence**

According to Burney and Irfan (1995), the education level and socioeconomic status of parents have played important roles in the secondary school's enrolment process for their children. The education level of parents will directly affect the school choice process (Furukawa, 2011). There was a positive relationship between the parental education level and child schooling decision (Burney et al., 1995). This means parents who have received high level of education such as diploma, degree, master and so on will pay more attention on the schools that they going to send their' children in. In contrary, parents with low education level will not aware, consider and pursue school with good quality of academic staff, syllabus, safe and good learning environment and so on. This is due to the parents' own education experiences have provided some ideas to them when they involve in the decision of schooling for their offspring.

The findings of Bobonis and Finan (2009) have shown that a child's decision to enroll in school was affected by the behavior of the child's peers. Children tend to choose to enroll into the school that chose by their peers in the reference group and affected by the desire to match with others due to peer pressures.

### **2.3.2 School Environment**

According to Badri and Mohaidat (2014), parents are concern to the safety environment provided by the institution regardless the types of institution for their children to enroll. Safe environment could provide confidence to the parents that their children are safe in the school and their children are able to enjoy their study during in the school and so on. Besides, the incident of school violence increase dramatically recently has cause the safety of institution become highly focus by parents (Friedman, Bobrowski & Geraci, 2007). Environment categorized into school-environment and classroom-environment. There is a general perception that good school environment could generate positive students outcomes (Dorman, Fraser & McRobbin, 1997). Hence, parents are paid more attention on the school environment that cultivates their offspring. This can be supported by Anderson



previous studies which indicated that students' cognitive and affective outcome, students' values as well as personal growth and satisfaction is directly related to the school environment provided. Classroom environment also contribute heavily on the parental schooling decision. A great classroom environment must include great cohesiveness and satisfaction, goal direction and reduced disorganization and friction, and hence, students could learn effectively and efficiently during in the class and increase their academic performances.

Facility and equipment are also concerned by the parents when they are doing the schooling decision for their children. Instead of the common facility and equipment that provided by the institution, the using of advanced technology or information technology to assist in teaching are getting concerned by the parents. According to Edling (2000), students able to learn quicker and allow more in-depth or broader coverage of information when technology is used in class. The technology can benefit the students in secondary education with the priority that students cannot abuse it (Holden, Ozok & Rada, 2008).

### **2.3.3 School Characteristics**

School reputation is one of the critical elements that determine the parental choice on secondary schooling decision for their children. Reputation is refer as the perceptual phenomenon which emerging from observers' group judgments about an organization based on the assessment of the organization's performance over a period of time in the areas in which observers consider essential (Barnett, Jermier & Lafferty, 2006). According to Skallerud, 2011; Bond and King, 2003; Friedman et al., 2006; Friedman et al., 2007; Hausman and Goldring, 2000; Li and Hung, 2009 as cited in Badri and Mohaidat (2014) has showed that there was growing trend of increasingly recognizing the institution by their reputation among the parents and which directly affect their perception towards the institution. A school or institution will be selected by the parents is attributed by the favorable reputation of the school itself (Badri et al., 2014). Skallerud (2011) has noted that the good reputation will create loyalty among the parents towards the schools. In addition,

institution with favorable reputation will have high probability being selected by parents (Burney et al., 1995).

Parents consider quality of academic staff and syllabus as the important elements in decision making of school enrollment. Furukawa (2011) stated parents concern about the quality of the teachers during the schooling selection process (as cited in Pagano and Terkla, 1991). High quality of academic staff available in the school will lead to the thought of high quality and profession among the parents because according to Shah, Nair and Bennett (2013) the bigger size the academic staff with professionals will allow students to engage in the actual present-day issues and pull out current information and resources. This could encourage parents to enroll their children in the school without hesitation as they think the high quality and profession could expose and educate their children better.

Besides, parents also concerned more on the syllabus provided by institution. Eberly, Newton and Wiggins (2001) have stated that syllabus is an initial and formal communication tool that used to communicate with students about the information of their courses or subjects in the institution according to their education level. With the present of syllabi, parents able to consider whether the syllabus is suitable for their children and choose among the best. The school with syllabus which is widely recognized can be the top selection for the parents to enroll their children in.

The cost of a school plays an important part in the school's characteristics (Avery & Hoxby, 2004). According to Gouda, Das, Goli and Pou (2013), cost of schooling is a critical factor that affects parents' schooling selection decision for their children. The household economic status could affect the affordability of the schooling cost. For instances, family with high economic status could afford the fees of private school. In addition, the schooling cost borne by students in urban area is higher than in rural area regardless of the type of school (Gouda et al., 2013).

The last factor that contributes to the school's characteristics is the location. The location of the schools plays an important role for the parents to decide which school that they are going to send their children in. Parents tend to consider the place that the school located.

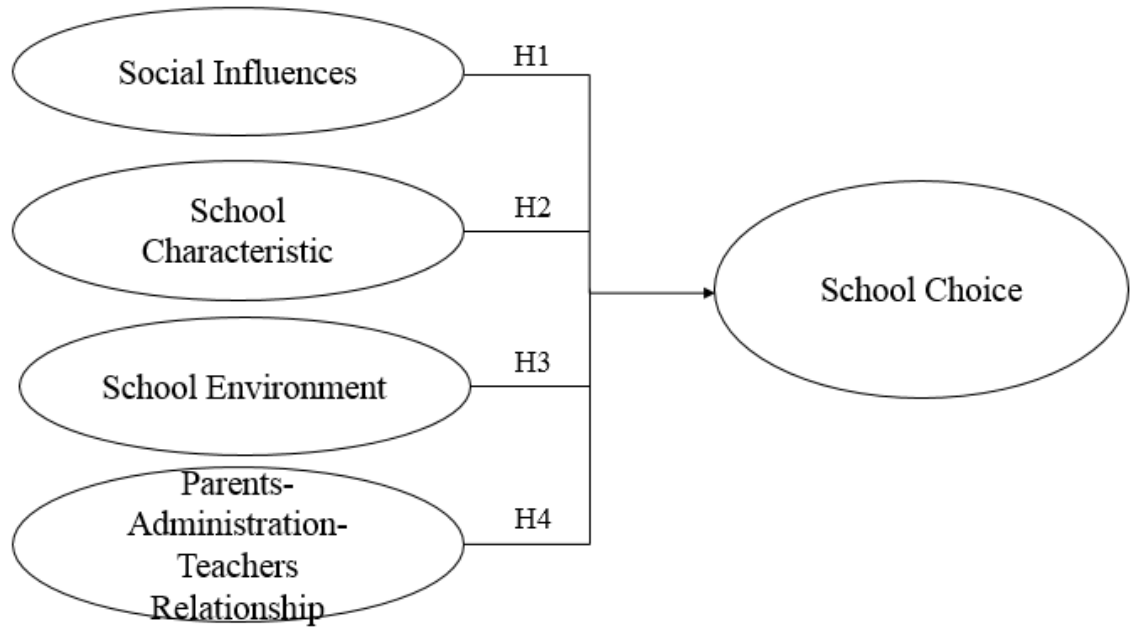
### **2.3.4 Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship**

According to Furukawa (2011) as cited in Kelp Kern, 2000, has stated the school which has well communication with the parents could encourage them to send their children to that particular school. The school which including teacher and administer should have good relationship with the parents. The corporation and support among significant adults which is parents and teachers in a child's lives could help the child to learn best. The involvement teachers and support from parents in a child's development is meaningful and essential. Schools have to reach out to parents, making them feel welcome as full partners in the educational process. In return, parents have to make commitment to support their children both at home and school.

Followed by the improvement in technology institutional communication with parents has altered from physical information such as flyer and brochures into internet which including official website, social media and portals, so, can reach massive potential students and parents (as cited in LeFauve, 2001). Internet could provide more detail information than physical information to the parents. Clear and thorough understanding to the institution will minimize the worries of the parents about the misconception towards the institution. This able to engage the parents with the institution and motivate them to enroll their children to the institution.

## **2.4 Operation Framework**

Figure 2.1: Research Framework



Source: Developed for the research

## 2.5 Hypothesis Development

### 2.5.1 Relationship between social influence and secondary school choices for parents

H0: There is no significant relationship between social influence and secondary school choices for parents.

H1: There is a significant relationship between social influence and secondary school choices for parents.

As stated by Rehman, Khan, Triq, and Tasleem (2010), private school choice will crown over public school as parent's prestigious job status is the factor in choosing school. Apparently, those parents who are great in participating the school selection procedure do have a social class creaming when they are great in information access along greater social linkage. (Yaacob, 2014). However, Henry (2012) stated that to influence the decision, little significance of peers was shown. Furthermore, the

findings shows that in selecting college choice in Philippines, peer and socioeconomic level shows less significance while gender and academic ability owns a significant importance of influence. (Tan, 2005). Therefore, parents are less likely to be affected by social influence that can facilitate their participation in the process of choosing the school.

### **2.5.2 Relationship between school characteristic and secondary school choices for parents**

H0: There is no significant relationship between school characteristic and secondary school choices for parents.

H1: There is a significant relationship between school characteristic and secondary school choices for parents.

As cited in Adebayo (2009) study, the National economic empowerment and development strategy (2006) report, it mentioned that where there are a great proportion of the people stays under the poverty bracket and they are not capable of paying educational fees in private schools. As mentioned in Fack and Grenet, (2010) study, it pointed out that the result of private school's well established geographical position in Paris is that parents are most possibly take account of the existence of private schools as given when picking the residential location. Over 80% of the participants depicts that in selecting the school alternatives, quality of the school academic was the utmost significant which were stated reports of Indianapolis and San Antonio's Milwaukee private voucher programs. (Bast & Welberg, 2004). Hence, school characteristic is important for parents to be part of the selection element for their next generation.

### **2.5.3 Relationship between school environment and secondary school choices for parents**

H0: There is no significant relationship between school environment and secondary school choices for parents.

H1: There is a significant relationship between school environment and secondary school choices for parents.

As cited in Charles, (2011) study, according to National study of school evaluation (2004) study where is describes student's support assortment of significant resources entailing technology, media hub, and school libraries, school's facility, school's textbooks, and latest advanced technologies. Cited in Charles (2011), National study of school evaluation (2004) stated the parent's viewpoint of the school environment that may aid or hamper the student's willing to learn or the enthusiasm in learning are referring the school's learning environment or climate. As asserted in Sharkey and Goldhaber (2008) as to foresee a student's performance, the main reason in the excellence of educational syllabus lies on the teacher's quality. Therefore, school environment factor will affect the parent's selection in school choice.

#### **2.5.4 Relationship between Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship and Secondary School Choices for Parents**

H0: There is no significant relationship between Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship and Secondary School Choices for Parents.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship and Secondary School Choices for Parents.

The significance of parental participation and great connection is a critical element of family-school relationships to aid the student's academic acquirement process. (Christenson, 2004). National study of school evaluation (2014) study, as cited in Charles (2011) study mentioned parent's view of contentment towards the superior activities provided by the school, student involvement prospect and parental worries which entail decision performing procedure are referring towards the Parent-school relationships. In the educational community, the need for open and honest

communication is critical, particularly in the relationship among teachers, parents, and students. To aid in a successful student's experience within the classroom context, effectual home-school connection that facilitates the cooperation within the context of students, teachers and parents is a pragmatic element. (Merkley et al., 2006). Hence, Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship is important in affecting selection of secondary schools program.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

In summary, it was identified that four independent variables may influence school choice which parents' preferences on secondary school selection. Methodology will be discussed in following chapter.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter illustrated the method on how the research was carried out. This involves research design, data collection methods, sampling design, questionnaire design, pilot test and proposed of data analysis tools.

### **3.1 Research Design**

Research design defined as guidance to carry out the research project and outline that spells out the necessary processes to gain respective information required to untangle the research's problem. (Malhotra & Peterson, 2006). In this research, quantitative research approach had identified which type of variable will actually influence the parent's preferences. Other than that, it was suitable for this research as the nature of it is utilizing questionnaires by collecting data from a huge amount of target respondents.

### **3.2 Sampling Design**

The target population were parents with the children under aged 7 to 12. The entire research conducted in Perak. This state was chosen due to the public school in this state was the top in SPM results but increase of enrolment in private school.



This research utilized judgmental sampling technique. Where respondents were chosen based on the judgment of researchers. The target respondents were mentioned and clarified that let researchers to approach to parents at school waiting area. The parents were asked to ensure whether they are waiting their children and the age of their children. It was then distributed with the survey after guaranteed they were the target respondents.

Malhotra (2007) clarified that sample size is referring towards the amount of elements to be inclined in the research study project. The number of sampling size of the target respondents are frankly based on the complexity of the model and characteristics of basic measurement model. The least amount of sample size – 100: Models entailing five or fewer constructs, each of them comprised of above than three items (observed variables), and along consist of high item communalities (.6 or higher) (Hair et al., 2009).

In short, a number of 210 respondents been set as the sampling size as the model fulfilled the condition of the basic measurement model. A pilot study of 106 respondents was carried out as a prior research before giving out the 210 sets of questionnaires to the target respondents. With this pilot study, it helped the research to tackle the validity and accuracy problems of the questionnaire thoroughly.

### **3.3 Data Collection Methods**

The collected primary data helped to answer the hypotheses. Well-structured questionnaires were distributed to a sample of target population and the questionnaires will be printed out to be distributed face to face to target respondent and via online survey to get the results. The research for distributing questionnaire was executed in few primary schools during the school day ends, and actively searches for parents at recreational park as well as shopping malls and hawker stalls. In addition, Survey Monkey was used to send questionnaire to target respondents with the help of certain school administrators.

### **3.4 Research instrument – Questionnaire**

Questionnaire questions were designed according to Chapter 2 Literature Review, College choice model. It included questions about school influences, school characteristic, school environment, parents-administrations-teachers relationship and school choice.

The survey questions were in English and Bahasa Melayu to enable the respondents to understand each of the questions stated. A short introduction and purpose of the research was displayed on the front page of the questionnaire.

The survey questionnaire was constructed mainly included few components and sections. It was classified into section A, section B and section C. Demographic information gathered to be analyzed from section A with few answers to be select by respondents.

Next, Section B inquired about the respondents' view on the factors that influence their preference towards the selection of secondary school for their children. Respondents were required to indicate the extent of their agreement for each statement based on the 5-point Likert scale [ (1)= strongly disagree; (2)= disagree; (3)= neutral; (4) agree and (5)= strongly agree]. Similarly to section B, section C also use 5-point Likert scale for the statement of School Selection.

#### **3.4.1 Pilot Test**

To ensure the questionnaire was without mistakes or inaccuracy, a pilot test was conducted to test the expediency of the questionnaire before distributing the confirmed survey. Blessing and Chakrabarti (2009) stated pilot surveys is conducted to find out the potential problems that might influence the quality and validity of the results. They added that pretest is conducted to check the aspects or the surveys and to assure that everything in survey works as intended.

There were 106 sets of questionnaire of pilot test distributed. Comments were given by respondents that questions were not available in different language, questions do not provide adequate example to be understood and certain items were not relevant to the context. Respondents mentioned that everyone could understand English language as some of them can only understand their own language. Besides, there are few questions were not asked clearly by showing example. With these feedbacks received, refinement and changes were implemented as well as unwanted items were removed for further discussion. With this pilot study, it had tackle the content validity and accuracy problems of the questionnaire thoroughly where it allows us to rectify the problem spontaneously.

### **3.5 Proposed data analysis tools**

Prior to data analysis, data cleaning was conducted where missing responses and variance in the responses were checked.

According to Rahm and Do (n.d.), data cleaning referred the need of detecting and discarding mistakes and inconsistencies from data to improve the quality of data. To obtain accurate and consistent data, combination of diverse data representations and elimination of duplicate information was strongly required (Rahm et al., n.d.) Hence, 6 sets of questionnaires and 7 sets of questionnaires were eliminated in pilot study and actual fieldwork respectively to assure the accuracy of data to get better results.

#### **3.5.1 Measurement of accuracy**

##### **3.5.1.1 Reliability test**

Reliability defined as the degree to which measurements are free from error and, therefore yield consistent results. It known as consistency and reproducibility which

is defined in common as the extent to which a measure, procedure, or instrument yields the identical result on repetitive trials (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998), the degree of consistence amongst multiple measurements of variables can be assessed by using composite reliability.

Composite reliability measures the overall reliability of a set of items loaded on a latent construct. Its score should be greater than the benchmark of 0.7 to be considered sufficient (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). However, values in between 0.60 to 0.70 were considered satisfactory if other indicators of the construct's validity are good (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006).

### **3.5.1.2 Validity test**

Referring to Malhotra et al. (2006), validity test was used to test on how well an instrument measures a particular concept in order to focus on the stability and consistency in measurement. There were four common types of validity test namely content validity, convergent validity, composite validity and discriminant validity. Content validity referred to the extent which content of the items appear consistently with the proposed concept based on the researcher's judgement. (Hair et al, 2009) This could be determined by review of each items throughout pilot test process by researchers (Malhotra & Grover, 1998 as cited by Shodhganga, n.d.) Feedbacks from target respondent was helpful to assist researcher's judgement. Thus, content validity was achieved as discussed in pilot test section.

Referring to Hair et al. (2009) convergent validity test referred to the extent which indicators of a particular construct should converge or share a high proportion of variance in common. In simpler terms, convergent validity was determined when each measurement item highly correlates with its assumed theoretical framework. It can be verified through factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). All standardized loading estimates should be significant. Value should between the range of 0 to 10. The ideal level of standardized loading estimates should be 0.7 or higher but 0.5 considered as acceptable level of convergence. A good AVE should achieve 0.5 or higher as it indicates less error remains in the items than variance

explained by the latent factor structure imposed on the measure and shows adequate level of convergence.

Discriminant validity test referred to extent which constructs that truly non-related should be proven non-related. This shows that a latent variable should explain the variance of its own indicators better than the other latent variables. In simpler terms, each variables should be unique on its own. Thus, it could be proven by examined correlation between two constructs is high. In order to provide strong evidence of discriminant validity, loading of an indicator on its assigned latent variable should be higher than its loadings on all other latent variables. (Hair et al, 2009)

### **3.5.2 Inferential analysis**

#### **3.5.2.1 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)**

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was a family of statistical model that seek to clarify the relationships among multiple variables. SEM also can be defined as a multivariate technique which examines the structure of interrelationships expressed in a series of structural equations which depicts all the relationships among constructs. With regard to the measurement instrument, the variables are classified as latent (unobserved) and observed variables. Each latent variable will have few observed variables to represent it.

Factor analysis was technique that contribute to the foundation of SEM to investigate the relationship between sets of observed and latent variables. It tested the co-variation among a set of observed variables in order to collect information on their underlying latent constructs. There are two types of factor analysis which are Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The factor analytic model focuses merely on how, and the extent to which, the observed variables are linked to their underlying latent factors.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) is designed for situations where links between the observed and latent variables are unknown or uncertain. It used to determine the extent to which the item measurements are related to the latent constructs. On the contrary, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is a measurement model and implemented to presume the relations between the observed measures and the underlying factors based on knowledge of the theory, empirical research, or both, and then tests this hypothesized structure statistically.

If the goodness-of-fit were adequate, the model argued for the plausibility of postulated relations among the variables. To determine the whether a model work well with its data. It requires the researcher to look on the fitness index showed in the SEM diagram. The table below showed the definition of each fitness index, description and its acceptable thresholds.

Table 3.1 Definition of each fitness index, description and its acceptable thresholds

Fitness Index	Description	Acceptable Threshold
Chi square $\chi^2$	Assesses the magnitude of discrepancy between the sample and fitted covariance's matrices (Hu and Bentle, 1999).	Low $\chi^2$ relative to degrees of freedom with an insignificant p value ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen, 2008)
RMSEA	Steiger (1990) states that RMSEA measures the approximate fit of the model in the covariance matrix of the population.	< 0.07 (Steiger, 2007)

NFI	Assesses the model by comparing the $\chi^2$ value of the model to the $\chi^2$ of the null model (Hooper, Coughlan, and Mullen, 2008).	> 0.90 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004)
CFI	A revised form of NFI which takes sample size into account (Byrne, 1998)	> 0.90 (Hu & Bentler, 1999)
ChiSq/df	When large sample size is used, Chi-square nearly always rejects the model (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). When small sample size is used, Chi-square may not discriminate between good fitting models and poor fitting models (Kenny and McCoach, 2003). Due to these limitations, Wheaton et al. (1977) suggest relative $\chi^2$ , a figure that minimizes the impact of sample size on Chi-square.	< 3.00 (Kline, 2005)

Source: Developed for the research

### 3.6 Conclusion

In summary, there was about 316 questionnaires including pilot test's questionnaire was been collected from parents with children from aged 7-12 who stayed in Perak state. These data were coded into SPSS 22.0 along with AMOS for detailed analysis.

## **CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS**

### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter involves interpretation of data into several segments involving demographic analysis, scale measurement, hypothesis testing, presentation of CFA output and SEM path diagram as well as identifying differences in parents' concerns towards different variables.

### **4.1 Demographic profile**

Table 4.1 Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

<b>Demographic Factor</b>	<b>Labels</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Type of School	Private school	116	57.1
	Public school	82	40.4
	Do not know	5	2.5
Education level	High school	48	23.6
	Diploma	31	15.3
	Bachelor degree	73	36
	Master/Phd	30	14.8
	Less than high school	21	10.3
Household Income	Below 50000	71	35
	50001-99999	60	29.6



	100000-149999	41	20.2
	More 150000	31	15.3
Ethnicity	Malay	38	18.7
	Chinese	116	57.1
	Indian	36	17.7
	Others	13	6.4

Source: Developed for the research

Table 4.1 shows the demographic profile of our all qualified respondents. It was further explained in the following section by examined the relationship between demographic variable and school choice.

#### 4.1.1 Relationship between demographic variable and school choice

Table 4.2 Crosstabulation of Demographic Variable and School Choice

	Chi-Square		Symmetric	
	Value (Pearson)	Sig	Value (Cramer's V)	Sig
Education level x School Choice	57.415	.000	0.381	.000
Household income x School Choice	34.942	.000	0.297	.000
Ethnicity x School Choice	4.881	0.559	0.111	0.559

Source: Developed for the research

Since it involved a nominal variable and an ordinal variable, the appropriate measure of association to use in summarizing the relationship is Cramer's V. The other reason Cramer's V was chosen because it is more suitable for more than 2 x 2 tables. The Cramer's V value of education level and school choice is 0.381. There is extremely desirable relationship among the education level of parents in the

school choice selection. While the Cramer's V value of household income and school choice is 0.297. This relationship among the household income and school choice was moderately strong. Lastly, the Cramer's V value of ethnicity and school choice is 0.111. The relationship among ethnicity and school choice was shown weak.

Table 4.3 Frequency count for education level

		DVcc			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
<b>Education level</b>	High school	1	8	37	46
	Diploma	1	2	26	29
	Bachelor degree	0	5	67	72
	Master/Phd	0	1	29	30
	Less than high school	7	5	9	21
<b>Total</b>		9	21	168	198

Source: Developed for the research

According to Table 4.3, the respondents who have pursued higher education level which was bachelor degree and Master/Phd had selected the category of 3.00. The 3.00 category is including the scale of agree and strongly agree in secondary school choice selection. The 67 respondents over total 72 respondents who have received bachelor degree have chosen the category of 3.00. In addition, 29 respondents over 30 respondents who have pursued Master/Phd had selected the category of 3.00 as well. In conclusion, this depicted that respondents that have received higher education level will more focusing on the secondary school choice for the children.

Table 4.4 Frequency count for household income

		DVcc			Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	
<b>Household income</b>	Below 50000	9	14	44	67
	50001-99999	0	6	53	59

	100000-149999	0	0	41	41
	More 150000	0	1	30	31
<b>Total</b>		9	21	168	198

Source: Developed for the research

According to the Table 4.4, the respondents who have higher household income are more likely to choose the category of 3.00. The 3.00 category is including the scale of agree and strongly agree in secondary school choice. The respondents who have RM100000-RM149999 and more than RM150000 as the household income had chosen the category of 3.00. All the 41 respondents who fall in the category of RM100000-RM149999 had selected the 3.00. Besides, 30 over 31 respondents who have household income more than RM150000 had selected the category of 3.00 as well. Hence, it shows that respondents with higher household income will influence the decision of secondary school choice for the children.

## 4.2 Factor Analysis

Upon factor analysis was performed under SPSS 22, all the items was rearrange into 4 factors and items with factor loadings value below 0.6 will be withdrawn from further analysis.

Table 4.5 Factor Analysis for Factors Influence School Selection

Items	Construct Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
	<b>School Characteristic</b>				
SC 1	Reputation of the School is important			0.703	
SC 2	The tuition fees should be reasonable			0.823	

SC 3	The quality of academic program is suitable for my children.			0.991	
SC 4	Location of the school is important.				
SC 5	The syllabus used should be certified by educational regulatory bodies			0.811	
	<b>Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship</b>				
PAT 1	Parents should have a good relationship with the administrators of the school.		0.721		
PAT 2	Parents and administrators of the school should be well communicated.		0.651		
PAT 3	Parents and teachers should have a good relationship.		0.74		
PAT 4	Parents and teachers should be well communicated.		0.631		
PAT 5	I prefer to receive information on the school's upcoming activities online.				0.793
PAT 6	The traditional way (eg: flyers and brochures) in communicating with the parents is a preferred option.				
	<b>Social Influence</b>				
SI 1	Information shared by friends and family members about the school is important.				

SI 2	Social media plays important roles in sharing information about the school.				0.795
SI 3	Children usually prefer to study in the same school with their friend from primary school.				
SI 4	I always share information about school to my friends and family members.				
	<b>School Environment</b>				
SE 1	The school should be a safe place for learning ensures the environment is conducive for teaching and learning.	0.743			
SE 2	The classroom's environment should be conducive.	0.778			
SE 3	The school should have sufficient facilities.	0.933			
SE 4	The school should have adequate equipment for learning purpose.	0.811			
SE 5	School should use technologies in facilitating the teaching process.	0.722			
SE 6	School should put a reasonable control on students in using technologies in the school.				
Eigenvalues		5.882	2.547	1.811	1.326
Percentage (%) of Variance		28.012	12.131	8.625	6.313

Source: Developed for the research

Table 4.6 Comparisons on Factors Influence School Selection

<b>Furukawa (2011) – College Choice Influences</b>	<b>Revised Model - Factors Influence Parent's Preference on Secondary School Selection</b>	<b>Factors Generated – Factors Influence Parent's Preference on Secondary School Selection</b>
Institutional Characteristics	School Characteristics	School Characteristics
Institutional Communication	Parents-Administration- Teachers Relationship	Parents-Administration- Teachers Relationship
Institutional Fit	School Environment	School Environment
Family	Social Influences	E-Engagement
Peers		

Source: Developed for the research

Refer to Table 4.5, one item from both school characteristic and school environment which involved “Location” and “Reasonable control on technology usage” has been dropped respectively. Under Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship, “Traditional way communicating with parents” was dropped while “Receive information from online” was regroup under Factor 4. Moreover, all the items under social influences was dropped and left with “Social media is important for information sharing” was also regroup under Factor 4. As shown in Table 4.6, all the items were rearrange and factors were renamed into School Environment (Factor 1), Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (Factor 2), School Characteristic (Factor 3) and E-Engagement (Factor 4). These factors explain 55.08% of overall variance where factor of school characteristics accounts 28.012% of variance followed by factor of parents-administration-teachers relationship (12.131%), school environment (8.625%), and parents engagement (6.313%). The percentage of variance used to examine the importance of factors generated. In this case, the school characteristic factor contributes more than the other three factors that were made.

In the same time, factor analysis was also performed on the dependent variable which is school choice. Result shows that items which relevant to predisposition and choice were not relevant in this context as factor loading value below than 0.6. Thus, the following analysis will be more focused on search process as it is important by accompanied with 45.092% of variance.

### 4.3 Measurement of scale

In order to measure reliability of the data, composite reliability has been computed into Table 4.7. The results of validity tests included content, convergent and discriminant were run and discussed in the following sub-section.

#### 4.3.1 Composite reliability

The 4.7 presented the composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE).

Table 4.7 Composite Reliability and AVE of Construct

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>AVE</b>
School Choice	0.79	0.652
School Characteristics	0.763	0.597
Parents-Administration - Teacher Relationship (PAT)	0.876	0.638
School Environment	0.865	0.566
E-Engagement	0.703	0.542

Source: Developed for the research

As shown in table above, the value of composite reliability for all the constructs were exceeded 0.70 which was considered adequate to prove the reliability. In addition, the composite reliability of all constructs not merely exceeds the minimum

requirement of 0.70 but beyond than that especially Parents-Administration-Teacher Relationship with highest value of 0.876. Hence, it shows that the overall reliability of a set of items loaded on a latent construct was high. In terms of average variance extracted (AVE), it will be further discussed in convergent validity.

### 4.3.2 Content validity

As discussed in chapter 3 (3.4.2 Pilot test), content validity was tested based on review of each items throughout pilot test process by researchers. Feedbacks from target respondents had assisted researcher's judgement. Hence, content validity was fulfilled.

### 4.3.3 Convergent validity

Table 4.8 presented the average variance extracted (AVE) and the standardized factor loadings.

Table 4.8 Standardized Factor Loadings and AVE of the Constructs

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Construct Statements</b>	<b>Standardized Factor Loadings</b>	<b>AVE</b>
School Choice	DV 2	I actively search information about the school prior to my children's enrolment.	0.825	0.652
	DV3	I evaluate the pros and cons of each possible alternative for my children's schooling.	0.79	
School Characteristics	SC 1	Reputation of the School is important.	0.652	0.597
	SC 2	The tuition fees should be reasonable.	0.607	



	SC 3	The quality of academic program is suitable for my children.	0.751	
	SC 5	The syllabus used should be certified by educational regulatory bodies.	0.657	
Parents- Administration -Teachers Relationship	PAT 1	Parents should have a good relationship with the administrators of the school.	0.769	0.638
	PAT 2	Parents and administrators of the school should be well communicated.	0.772	
	PAT 3	Parents and teachers should have a good relationship.	0.826	
	PAT 4	Parents and teachers should be well communicated.	0.827	
School Environment	SE 1	The school should be a safe place for learning ensures the environment is conducive for teaching and learning.	0.788	0.566
	SE 2	The classroom's environment should be conducive.	0.755	
	SE 3	The school should have sufficient facilities.	0.782	
	SE 4	The school should have adequate equipment for learning purpose.	0.846	
	SE 5	School should use technologies in facilitating the teaching process.	0.559	
E-Engagement	PAT 5	I prefer to receive information on the school's upcoming activities online.	0.772	0.542
	SI 2	Social media plays important roles in sharing information about the school.	0.699	

Source: Developed for the research

As shown from Table 4.8, all standardized factor loadings were greater than 0.5 with majority of the values above 0.70. For all the constructs, majority of the items are above 0.5 had satisfied the benchmark of convergent validity and achieved a high level of validity by exceeding 0.70 which convergent validity was proven. For

the average variance extracted (AVE), all of the constructs achieve above 0.50 which shows less error in the items. This had fulfilled the second criteria of convergent validity.

#### 4.3.4 Discriminant validity

Table 4.9 Factor Matrix that shows Discriminant Validity

	School Environment	Parents-Administrati on-Teachers Relationship	School Characteris tic	E-Engageme nt	School Choice
School Environment	<b>0.752329715</b>				
Parents-Administrati on-Teachers Relationship	0.59	<b>0.798749022</b>			
School Characteristi c	0.751	0.746	<b>0.772658</b>		
E-Engagement	0.417	0.566	0.525	<b>0.736206493</b>	
School Choice	0.063	0.034	0.369	0.55	<b>0.80746517</b>

Source: Developed for the research

In order to determine discriminant validity, the shared variances between factors were compared with the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the individual factors. Table 4.9 is the evidence of discriminant validity. The diagonal items in the table indicates the square root of AVE's, which is a measure of variance between construct and its indicators, and the off diagonal items represent squared correlation between constructs. This analysis examined that the shared variance between

factors were lower than the AVE's of the individual factors, which confirmed discriminant validity.

#### 4.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

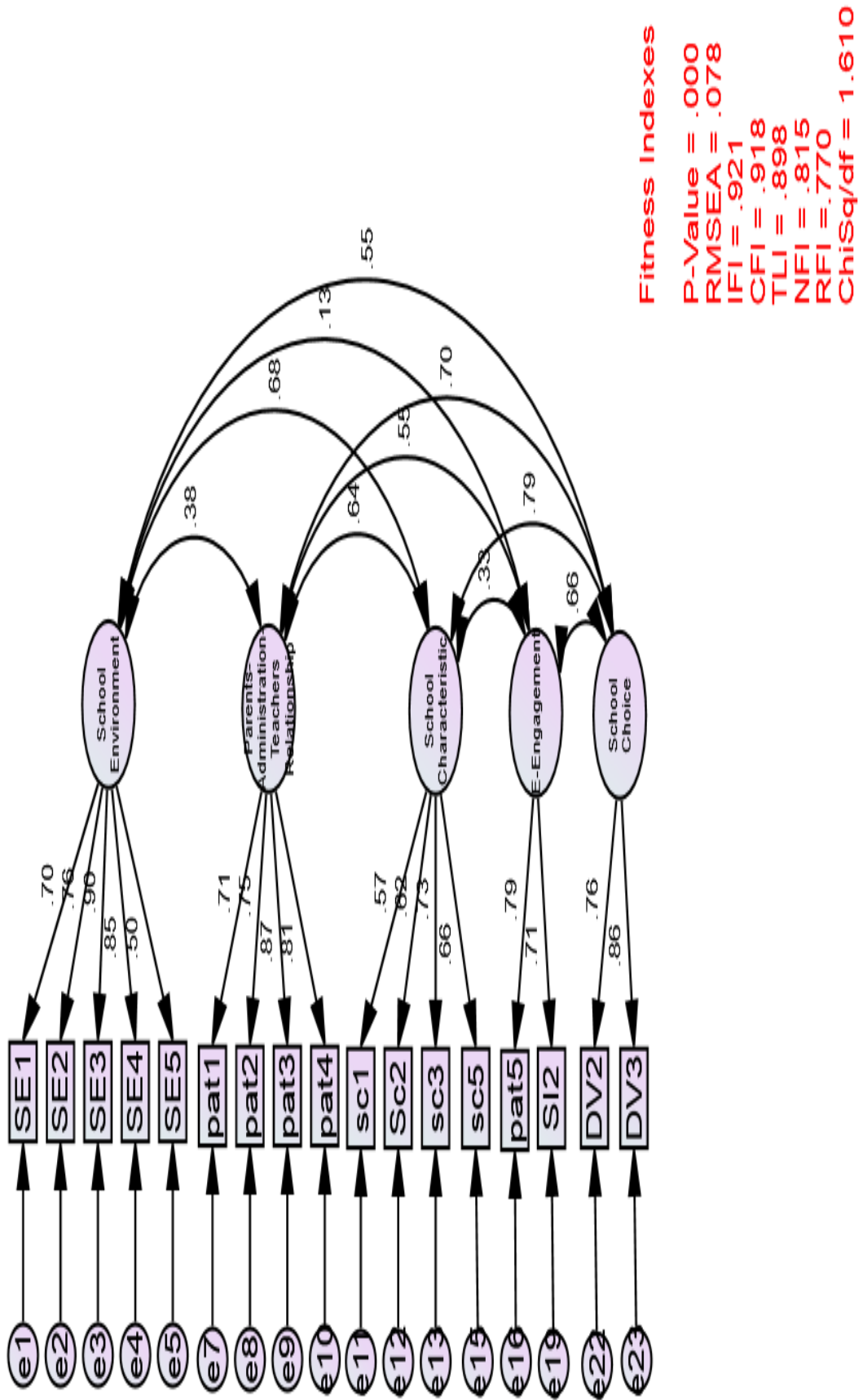
Table 4.10 Fit Indices of Revised CFA Output

Fit Indices	Values of Fit Indices for our proposed model	Desired Values for Good Fit
Relative $\chi^2$ ( $\chi^2/df$ )	1.610	< 3.0
RMSEA	0.078	< 0.08
CFI	0.918	> 0.90

Source: Developed for the research

Chapter 3 has discussed that to test how well the measured variables represent the number of constructs, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is used. Table 4.10 has depicted that relative  $\chi^2$  (1.610) is less than 3.00, RMSEA (0.078) is less than 0.08 and CFI (0.918) is greater than 0.90. This shown that proposed model in this research is indeed fitting into data.

Figure 4.1: Revised CFA Output



## 4.5 Model Testing using SEM technique

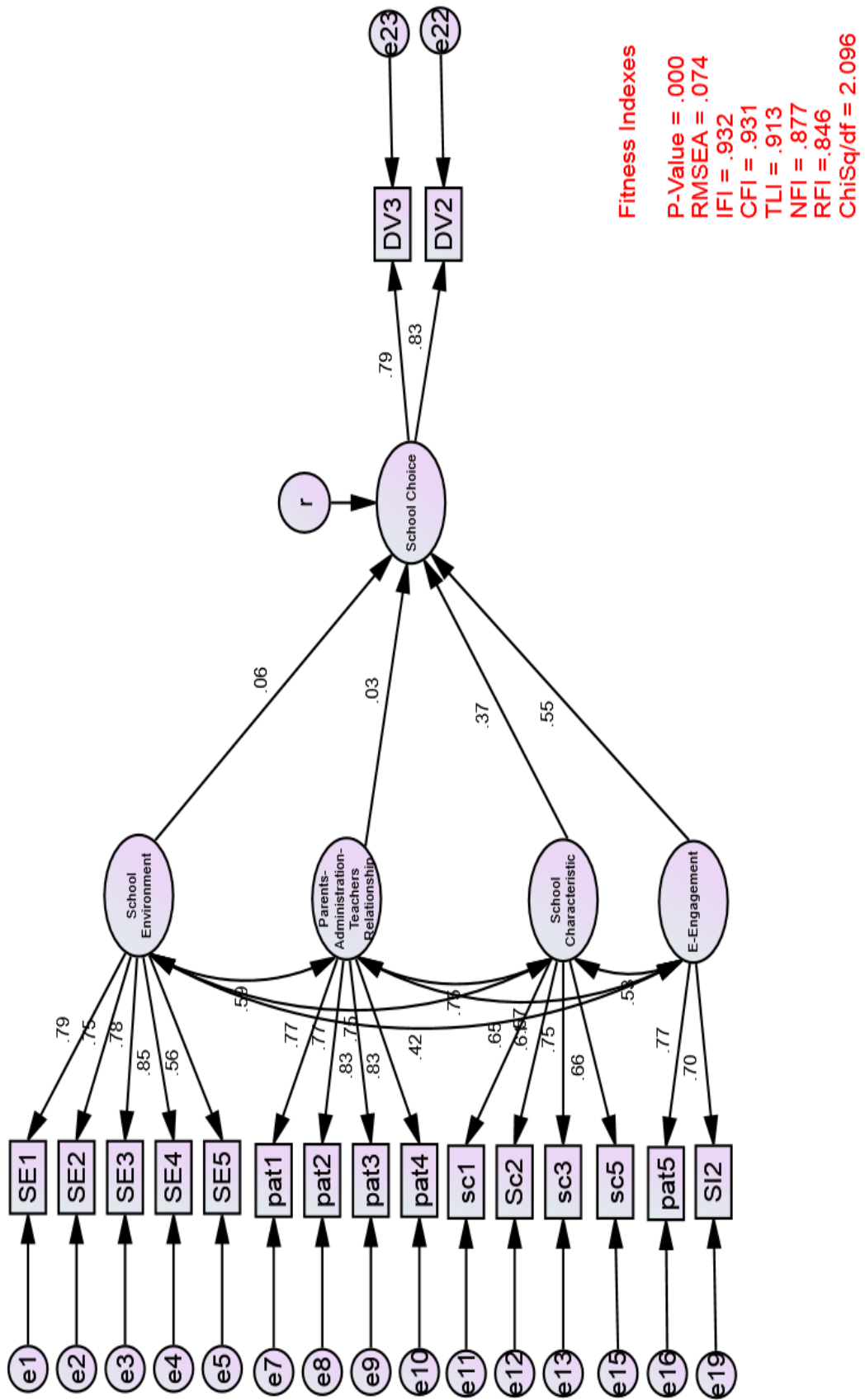
Table 4.11 Fit Indices of SEM Result

Fit Indices	Values of Fit Indices for our proposed model	Desired Values for Good Fit
Relative $\chi^2$ ( $\chi^2/df$ )	2.096	< 3.0
RMSEA	0.074	< 0.08
TLI	0.913	> 0.90
CFI	0.931	> 0.90

Source: Developed for the research

As shown in Table 4.11, the indication of relative  $\chi^2$  (2.096) is less than 3.00, RMSEA (0.074) is less than 0.08, TLI (0.913) is more than 0.90 and CFI (0.931) is greater than 0.90. In summary, the model can be concluded as having a good fit with the relevant data only if the fit indices fall within the acceptable threshold range.

Figure 4.2: Path Diagram of SEM Result



## 4.6 Hypothesis Testing and New Findings

Table 4.12 Hypothesis Results

Hypothesized Path	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Std. Error	P-value	Results
School Choice $\leftarrow$ School Environment	0.117	0.209	0.576	Not significant
School Choice $\leftarrow$ Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship	0.047	0.165	0.777	Not significant
School Choice $\leftarrow$ School Characteristic	0.545	0.244	0.026	Significant

Source: Developed for the research

Table 4.13 Hypothesis Results for New Findings

Hypothesized Path	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Std. Error	P-value	Results
School Choice $\leftarrow$ E-Engagement	0.558	0.113	<0.001	Significant
School Environment $\leftrightarrow$ Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship	0.145	0.025	<0.001	Significant
School Environment $\leftrightarrow$ School Characteristic	0.172	0.028	<0.001	Significant
E-Engagement $\leftrightarrow$ School Environment	0.139	0.033	<0.001	Significant
Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship $\leftrightarrow$ School Characteristic	0.228	0.038	<0.001	Significant

E- Engagement ↔ Parents-Administration- Teachers Relationship	0.252	0.048	<0.001	Significant
E-Engagement ↔ School Characteristic	0.219	0.047	<0.001	Significant

Source: Developed for the research

#### 4.6.1 Relationship between school environment and school choice

As shown in the table, the hypothesis of school environment towards school choice has a path coefficient ( $\beta$ ) value of 0.117 and owned a p-value of 0.576 which greater than standard value 0.05 that signified its non-significance relationship. As highlighted by Peterson and Llaudet, (2006), the study revealed that institute facilities and resources had mere impact towards students' academic performance. The school facility is a facilitating instrument and is not really a concern for the parents. The result was surprisingly consistent with Charles (2011) study that depicted the significance of the relationship between institute resources and student attainment still persist to be a controversy statement. Moreover, the research has found that safety environment within the school is not rated as significantly important. It's further detailed with Goldring and Rowley (2006) study that showed no major disparity are obviously shown in the t-test as a main concern placed on school safety in the parents school choice process. In summary, from the research it can be deduced that school environment and school choice have no significant relationship.

#### 4.6.2 Relationship between Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship and school choice

On the other hand, the hypothesis of Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship towards the school choice a path coefficient ( $\beta$ ) value of 0.047 and embodied a p-value of 0.777 which is greater than standard value 0.05 which



pointed out the non-significance relationship. Firstly, Ascher, Fruchter and Berne (1996) argued that less parents in all social class emerge enthusiastic in obtaining necessary information to make dynamic educational choices. There are parents not keen to be updated about children's educational related information. Surprisingly, parents showed inadequate knowledge for school choice as just mere 28% of parents had paid attention to teachers regarding schools. (Lai, Sadoulet & Janvry, 2009). Moreover, to engaged parents consistently, parents are opt to feel that they are being well-versed, welcomed and partnership feeling. (Charles, 2011). School's administration that is not tailoring a welcoming communication medium induced no belongingness of parents to develop a relationship with the administration. To end the statement, the truth was Parents Administration Teachers (PAT) relationship won't affect the school choice.

#### **4.6.3 Relationship between school characteristic and school choice**

Astonishingly, the school characteristic towards school choice hypothesis owned a path coefficient ( $\beta$ ) value of 0.545 where the p-value of 0.026 which is lower than standard value 0.05 that narrates a significant relationship. Mentioned in Teske et al., (2007) study, academic quality is an undeniable factor that affects school choice. As asserted in Parker et al., (2007) study, the excellence of the academic school program will no doubt emerges as most influential aspects lies at the overall opinion of school quality. The significance of academic quality program will no doubt come across parent's mind when enrolling their children. The other reasons act as a pragmatic role that affects parent's preferences in selecting school is the geographical location. (Wilson, 2010) Moreover, the fees charged by the school are another factor that contributed to the parent's school selection when enrolment equals to investment. This is advocated in the Joshi (2014) study that depicted that parent's choices are greatly restricted by their fees paying capability. In short, the research found that school characteristic had direct significant relationship with the parent's school choice.

#### **4.6.4 Relationship between e-engagement and school choice**

From the table 4.13, the research can deduced that hypothesis of newly formed variable, E-engagement with the school choice with a Path Coefficient value ( $\beta$ ) of 0.558 and a p-value of less than 0.001 which is less than the standard value of 0.05 its significance relationship. During the whole research process, it discovered that parents nowadays are more likely to access to online platform and social media to obtain amount of educational information. As traditional method of searching information is still prevailing, the usage of E-engagement has begun to intensify, as it's accessible at anywhere and anytime. As supported by Teske et al., (2007) study, it stated that parents with well-developed socioeconomic status are quite efficient in seeking out information using variety source including internet. As such, the research emphasized that E-engagement owned a significant relationship with the school choice through calculations made.

#### **4.6.5 Interrelationship between school environment and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT)**

Furthermore, the hypothesis of school environment and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT) with a Path Coefficient value ( $\beta$ ) of 0.145 with a p-value less than 0.001 where standard value is 0.05 explained its significance of the relationship. Depicted by McGrew and Gilman (1991) study, parent's institute of empowerment with the school environment chains up a bonding towards the parent-school connection. As mentioned in Parent opinions on school selection in New Orleans (2013) study, school environment in parents perspective, equals to administrators, parents, and educator all together are well collaborated, parent's involvement in their lad's learning space. As Charles (2011) reported accordingly that to enhance academic performances, a mutual two way collaboration practice entailing institute personnel, parents, and learners will provides devotion towards better environment. The indeed proved the relationship enhances the feedbacks, recommendations and advices to allow changes towards a better future school

environment. Hence, the school environment and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT) mutually affect each another.

#### **4.6.6 Interrelationship between school characteristic and school environment**

Interrelationship between school characteristic and school environment with the Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ ) value of 0.172 and has a p-value of lesser than 0.001 which is lesser than standard of 0.05 value proved a significant relationship. Frankly speaking, parents pondered over classrooms conditions that vehemently affect their children's study progress and school selection. It can be strengthened by Parent opinions on school selection in New Orleans, (2013) study that implied to search for well-built academic syllabus, parents often focus on the classroom and institute environment during the school selection process. Furthermore, Kleitz, Weiher, Tedin and Matland (2000) analysed that parents will opt for an undersized class size, which they deem will charter greater academic quality. The smaller the size, the more focused the teachers can perform towards student's academic progress. It's as well stated that numbers of private institution the children enrolled have offered great amenities, producing an encouraging learning environment. (Yaacob et al., 2014). By means, school with adequate facilities induced school environmental satisfactions that affect student's academic quality. To conclude this, the school characteristic and school environment had an interrelationship.

#### **4.6.7 Interrelationship between E-engagement and school environment**

Table 4.13 explained the hypothesis of E-engagement and school environment with a Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ ) value of 0.139, showing a p-value less than 0.001 which is lower than the standard value of 0.05 signified a significant relationship. During the research, it's known that the parents are tending to further search for conducive school environment information. Parents perform such act are mere out of curiosity

to analyse the image of school environment and learning classroom. Using E-engagement platform such as online and social media, it permitted the access into the amenities and technologies used to understand how learning process is performed with ease. To conclude, the E-engagement and school environment have a significant interrelationship.

#### **4.6.8 Interrelationship between school characteristic and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT)**

Apart from that, the hypothesis between school characteristic and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT) with a Path Coefficient value ( $\beta$ ) of 0.228 while having p-value not reaching 0.001 which is lesser than standard of 0.05 portrayed a significant relationship. Intimate relationship between parents, administration and teachers are pragmatic in determining aspects of the school's quality in terms of the location, the reputation, the academic quality, the syllabus used and the fees as it's a pathway for parents enrolling children decision. This is stated in Joshi (2014) study that explained parents were empowered due to fee payment, while communicating with school; it advanced the school administrations aspects to be attentive enough towards the parent's concern. Besides, the parents must be reactive in navigating the institute system, the qualities they practice and desire in schools, and they feeling they embodied regarding the quality of institute choices. (Parent opinions on school selection in New Orleans, 2013) Therefore, it's concluded that the school characteristic and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT) influenced one another.

#### **4.6.9 Interrelationship between E-engagement and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT)**

On the other hand, hypothesis of E-engagement and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT) with a Path Coefficient value ( $\beta$ ) of 0.252 and having a p-value of less than 0.001 lower than the standard value of 0.05 pictured a

significant relationship. During the research process, it's acknowledged that the parents are no longer being attentive towards face to face communicating with teachers and administrations. Instead, online platform and social media charter a great way for parents to enquire information, to raise concerns, to gain instant feedback and educational information with favourability. Parents as well exposed obtaining material about the schools from the internet, is frankly a great start (Parent opinions on school selection in New Orleans, 2013). In sum, E-engagement had interrelated affects with Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship (PAT).

#### **4.6.10 Interrelationship between E-engagement and school characteristic**

Last but not least, hypothesis of E-engagement and school characteristic owns a Path Coefficient value ( $\beta$ ) of 0.219 and p-value lesser than 0.001 which is lower than standard value on 0.05 signalled a significant relationship. Throughout the research, it's known that school characteristics is influenced by E-engagement when parents accessed into internet and social media to engrave news regarding school's reputation in the search engine. Furthermore, school's location is easily traced for parents to make advantage at it when sending off their children. Besides, the syllabus used by the school can be discovered with ease through online method or social media for the definition, the benefits and the functions of it with convenience. Therefore, it's no doubt that the E-engagement and school characteristic had an interrelationship.

#### **4.7 Differences of Parents' Response towards the variables**

Table 4:14 Results of Independent T-Test

Variables	Levene's Test		T-Test (p-value)	Mean	
	F	Sig		Public	Private

School Environment	1.563	0.213	0.051	4.6224	4.4805
Parents-Administration-Teachers Relationship	2.43	0.121	0.772	4.2931	4.2683
E-Engagement	3.689	0.056	0.139	3.7845	3.5976
School Characteristic	0.766	0.383	0.025	4.3621	4.1646
School Choice	0.016	0.9	0.015	4.1509	3.8476

Source: Developed for the research

To infiltrate into the information regarding differences of parent's response towards the variables, the cross tabulation analysis have been conducted to aid the research. As mentioned in the table, there are results in the three columns of Levene's Test, T-Test and Mean value.

Levene's Test is picturing the powerfulness and robust to non-normality, becoming a very popular tool for checking the homogeneity of variances (Joseph et al., 2009). The Levene's Test value in the table 4.14 explained that if the significant value is more than 0.05, assume the variances are equal and if the significant value is less than 0.05, the variances are unequal. In this research, all variables including school environment, Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship, E-engagement, School Characteristics, and School Choice significant values are greater than 0.05. This interpretation concluded that all the variables have equal variances.

As for the T-Test, it's handy to allow the research to test the differences of parent's responses towards all the variables stated. When the value of the variables is less than 0.05, it meant there's a significant difference of parent's opinion about the variables that applied on public or private school and it's a non-significance difference if the value is greater than 0.05. Astonishingly, there are two variables has a value less than value 0.05 which are the School Characteristic with a value of 0.025 and School Choice with a value of 0.015, proved that there are discrepancies of parent's opinion towards the public and private school in these variables. On the

other side, School Environment with value 0.051, Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship with value 0.772, and E-Engagement with value 0.139, all three variables dictated no differences in parent's opinion as all three variables have T-Test value less than value of 0.05.

As for mean column, it did provide sufficient information about the discrepancy of parent's concern towards the school choice for both private and public school. The mean value owned a purpose of comparing the parent's interested concern where the higher the mean value, the higher the concerns towards either public or private school. Therefore, all the values of each variable of the public School Environment with value of 4.6224 are 0.1419 more than private school. For public school's Parents-Administration-Teachers (PAT) relationship with the value of 4.2931 is 0.0248 more than private school variable value while E-engagement's value of 3.7845 is 0.1869 greater than private school variables value. Furthermore, public school's School Characteristics owned the value of 4.3621 is 0.1975 more than private value and School Choice chartered a value of 4.1509 which is 0.3033 significantly higher than the private's school variable value. In this research, this depicted that the parent that currently has children or soon to enrol their children into public school showed a greater concern.

## **4.8 Conclusion**

In summary, it is concluded that items had been rearranged and renamed into 4 variables which are school environment, school characteristic, parents-administration-teachers relationship and e-engagement. The data was proven to be reliable and validate. Upon inferential analysis, hypothesis testing and other new findings has shown. These findings will be summarized in Chapter 5.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The primary objective of this study is to examine factors that affect parents' selection on public or private school in secondary school level only. A total number of 203 parents contributed towards this study. Results were presented in Chapter 4 upon data analysis process.

This chapter consists of 4 sections which are summary of major findings, implication of the study, limitation of the study and direction for future research. This research is concluded with achieved research aim.

### **5.1 Summary of Major Findings**

In the research, there are a total number of 203 target respondents that willingly helped the research out. The target respondents are all randomly selected by all means without taking into consideration of their demographic factors, the schools the parent's children are studying, utilizing judgmental sampling technique, within private and public schools that situated in Ipoh region. As a result, the sample of the research is presumably to be the representative of the whole target population

As a result, the research had brought the research a promising fruitful return as the research managed to discover some other major findings throughout the whole



process as well. First and foremost, it's a pleasant surprise as the results portrays the emergence of newly formed independent variable that forms form the components of information obtaining using social media and parent's engagement through online. The research made the E-engagement discovery during the data interpretation part using the SCM software. As this finding does affect the future study and the implications, it's consider one of the significant findings that the research would like to highlight it.

Other than that, from the findings in the part 4 of data interpretation, the research have concluded that the independent variable school environment and Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship has no significant relationship with the dependent variable, school choice. In this case, this has gave the research a sense of direction that the school environment and the Parents-Administration-Teachers relationship will not be a major factor that influence the parent's choice of selection for the lad. This imposed that the parents does not rely on these two factors to enroll their child into the particular school.

Last but not least, all the independent variables including E-engagement have an interdependence relationship among each other. This is proved in the data analysis part where numbers proved the existence of each other affecting one another. Though, social influence has been dropped out as its insignificance is discovered after the research has performed.

## **5.2 Implication of the Study**

### **5.2.1 Theoretical Implication**

In this research, College Choice Model and College Choice Influences by Hossler and Gallager (1987) and Furukawa (2011) respectively were adopted and reform a new research model to make it more appropriate to the current study. Instead of focusing on college choice model, Parents' School Selection model were

empirically tested in this research and proven to be reliable. The whole research process had contributed a new insight to the future researchers. Thus, future researchers may consider used this model in their upcoming study if it is applicable.

By referring back to the major findings in this study, the discovery of e-engagement has been found out important in contributing to Parents-Administration-Teachers interaction. This was completely a new variable that proven to affect parent's selection as it has not been mentioned in any of the past studies. It is crucial for the future researchers to take note on e-engagement whenever relatable studies will be conduct. In the same time, this new information would be a good reference to those researchers who interested or give them the opportunity to perform further studies in this issue.

Throughout the process of literature review, it was found out that very minimal or less existing study has been done in the past on this school selection field especially in Malaysia context. For instance, only study by Yaacob et al. (2014) were found. Furthermore, it also heavily focus on the private school and information on public school was too limited. It also does not specifically concentrate on any school level. This research has enriched the existing research in Malaysia by providing a comprehensive view on parents' school selection without putting focus on type of school and leverage down to secondary school level for a more detailed study.

### **5.2.2 Managerial Implication**

This study provides a more comprehensive and practical understanding of the parent's preference on secondary school selection for their children. The school or institution could prepare some marketing strategies according to the findings of this research to increase the enrolment rate of the secondary school. Besides, the managerial implication could offer the remarks or suggestion to future researcher in the secondary school choice area.

The first finding that obtain in the research is the formation of a new independent variable which known as e-engagement. The e-engagement consists of internet and

social media. In the research, parents are found prefer to obtain information via internet rather than using the traditional ways to receive the information from the school itself. In addition, social media also become one of a critical method to be selected by the parents to receive information from the school. Due to the advancement of technology, parents prefer to use the technology advanced method to communicate with school. Schools can choose to select some popular social media to provide the school's information to the parents and it also could benefit the schools by spreading news or information to parents effectively.

The school characteristics are having significant relationship to the school choice by parents for the children which is the second finding in the research. The school characteristics do concern by the parents when they making the secondary school choice. So, school may put more effort on the school characteristics to attract the enrolment of students such as set high requirement for the recruitment of academic staff and offer reasonable school fee. In nutshell, secondary schools may need to try to meet the requirement or preferences of the potential parents to increase the interest of them and indirectly attract the enrolment of students.

The last finding in the research is the insignificant relationship of the parent, administration and teacher (PAT) relationship with the school choice. According to the research finding, parents showed less interest in the PAT relationship. Indeed, the parents are having more interest to participate in the event or activities held by school with the children and teachers so they able to know the actual progress of the children in school rather than only receive the status of the children from the school or teachers unilaterally. The involvement of parents directly in the school's activities could encourage the parents to co-operate with the teachers to figure out solutions to handle the problem of the children if problem does exist. Hence, school may organize some periodical activities which involve parents, children and teachers simultaneously to improve the progress of children in school.

### **5.2.3 Implication for Policy Maker**

The research might enable the government or Ministry of Education to aware of the parents' perception on school choice for younger generation and it may encourage government to adjust the education policy according to the needs or requirement of the parents to the schools as possible. The parents' perception is critical because parents are selecting the school instead of children and parents have the same objective with government which is to develop students to become individuals who are knowledgeable and competent. In addition, government could adopt the education system that prefer by parents that offering in the private schools to collaborate with the existed education system in public school to design a new and more advanced education system to improve the performance of students so to meet with the international standards. The improvement could be observed through the international student assessment such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Hence, government may adopt parents' consideration to produce a parents-friendly education system or policy to the public to embrace it easily with less hesitation as the best choice for parents.

### **5.3 Limitation of the Study**

This research has few limitations. The first limitation of this research is not adequately providing underlying insight. The research used only quantitative method. The items in each scale that are used might not review respondents' understandings. According to Choy (2014), quantitative data fails to deliver an in depth explanation of the respondents. Therefore, the deeper understanding towards their preference is not fully exposed to this research and not sufficiently provides underlying insight.

The second limitation is narrowed focus of target respondent. Due to this study's sampling population range is only parents who have their children in primary school that are soon to enrol into either private or public secondary school. The range of these parents does not exactly reflect the true preferences on secondary school selection between private school and public school because there are still a lot parents beside listed as our target respondents. This resulting that there are a lot of

parents who could be the chance of sharing their information that we have been filtered away.

## **5.4 Direction for Future Study**

To begin with, it is suggested to future researcher to use mixed methods research design to conduct overcome the weaknesses of solely using quantitative research design. According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004), mixed methods refers to research designs that mix both approaches within or across the stages of the research process after consideration. As shown in data analysis, some of the hypothesis shows no relationship but there are clear interrelationship between those independent variables. By using mixed methods, the results could be improve as it able to answer a broader and more comprehensive range of research questions when researcher is not limited to a single research method. Take this study as example, researcher can provide stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence of findings. Thus, mixed methods is suggested for better improvement on the results.

Next, redefine the target respondent could be a solution to overcome narrow respondent issue. For instance, expanding the sampling population to unmarried couples, married couples without children, and married couples with younger children and babies (under age 7) would be a good idea for future researcher. During this study being conducted, various opinion from the public is being expressed through person-administrated survey. To get the right target population, filtering question such as "Do you have children in the aged of 7-12?" was being asked. However, a lot of non-target respondents such as married couples with younger children or even unmarried couples already have thought of where they should send their children in the future. This shows that not only parents with children in primary school give a thought on the same issue but it is an issue that may be consider by those who plan to have children in the future.

## **5.5 Conclusion**

To conclude with, the objective of this study to examine determinants of parents' selection of secondary school level was achieved. The framework able to provide an insight on how school characteristic and e-engagement affect parent's preference in school selection. In the same time, this study provide a brief insight to all the schools in secondary school level on which factor their school necessarily emphasize. In the same time, the results of this study also reflect the needs of parents in Perak state of Malaysia. For the future researchers, this study develop a new idea for their future research and develop a comprehensive view on future improvement in relevant study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 3.1 Certification Letter



**UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN**  
Wholly Owned by UTAR Education Foundation (Company No. 578227-M)

11<sup>th</sup> January 2016

**To Whom It May Concern**

Dear Sir/Madam

**Permission to Conduct Survey**

This is to confirm that the following students are currently pursuing their *Bachelor of Marketing (Hons)* program at the Faculty of Business and Finance, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Perak Campus.

I would be most grateful if you could assist them by allowing them to conduct their research at your institution. All information collected will be kept confidential and used only for academic purposes.

The students are as follows:

<u>Name of Student</u>	<u>Student ID</u>
Liew Zhun Yeau	11ABB05314
Pinky Cheong Li Xin	13ABB06622
Cheong Ka Kit	12ABB05420
Lee Ying Zhen	13ABB04324


If you need further verification, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

  
.....

Mr Choy Johnn Yee  
Head of Department,  
Faculty of Business and Finance  
Email: choyjy@utar.edu.my

  
.....

Dr Gengeswari a/p Krishnapillai  
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Address: 9, Jalan Bersatu 13/4, 46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia. Postal Address: P O Box 11384, 50744 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
Tel: (603) 7958-2628 Fax: (603) 7956-1923 Homepage: <http://www.utar.edu.my>

Appendix 3.2 Questionnaire

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**SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**UNIVERSITI TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN**

**Faculty of Business and Finance**

**BACHELOR OF MARKETING (HONS) FINAL YEAR PROJECT**

**TOPIC: PARENT'S PREFERENCES ON SECONDARY SCHOOL SELECTION: AN  
EMPIRICAL STUDY Survey Questionnaire**

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Dear respondent,

Wahai responden sekalian,

We are final year undergraduate students pursuing the degree course in Bachelor of Marketing (Hons), from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar. The purpose of this survey is to study the relationship between parent's preferences on secondary school selection between private school and public school. The factors affecting are the school characteristics, school environment, social influence, and parents, administrations and teachers relationships (PAT). Thank you for your participation.

Kami adalah pelajar-pelajar university yang sedang mengambil Sarjana Muda Pemasaran (Hons) di Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR) Kampar. Matlamat untuk soal selidik ini adalah untuk mengkaji factor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pilihan ibu bapa dalam memilih jenis sekolah di antara sekolah kebangsaan dan sekolah swasta untuk anak-anak mereka. Antara faktor-faktor yang telah dikaji meliputi ciri sekolah, persekitaran sekolah, pengaruh sosial, dan hubungan antara ibu bapa, pentadbir sekolah dan guru-guru.

Terima kasih atas kerjasama anda.

**INSTRUCTION:** Please read EACH statement carefully and provide the correct information by circle the number according to number given.

**ARAHAN:** Sila baca TIAP-TIAP kenyataan berikut dan memberi maklumat yang betul dengan bulatkan nombor berdasarkan nombor-nombor yang disediakan.

---

**Instructions:**

- 1) There are THREE ( 3 ) sections in this questionnaire. Please answer ALL questions in ALL sections.
- 2) Completion of this form will take you approximately 10 to 15 minutes.
- 3) The contents of this questionnaire will be kept strictly confidential and only for academic purposes.

**Arahan:**

- 1) Terdapat 3 bahagian dalam borang soal selidik ini. Sila jawab SEMUA soalan dalam SEMUA bahagian.
- 2) Anggaran masa untuk menyiapkan soal selidik ini adalah 10 hingga 15 minit.
- 3) Maklumat dalam soal selidik ini akan dirahsiakan dan hanya digunakan untuk tujuan akademik.

**Section A: General Information**

**INSTRUCTION:** Please read EACH question carefully and provide the correct information by placing a TICK (✓) in the boxes provided.

**Bahagian A: Maklumat Peribadi**

**ARAHAN:** Sila baca TIAP-TIAP soalan berikut dan memberi maklumat yang betul dengan mengisikan (✓) dalam kotak yang disediakan.

Q1. Which type of school you would like to enrol your children for secondary school?

Q1. Yang manakah jenis sekolah yang anda ingin menghantarkan anak anda ke sekolah

Public school / Sekolah kebangsaan

Private school / Sekolah swasta

Homeschool / Sekolah dalam rumah

Do not know / Tidak tahu

Q2. What is your highest education level that you have completed?

Q2. Apakah tahap pengajian sekolah tertinggi anda yang telah dicapai?

Less than high school / Kurang daripada sekolah menengah

High school graduate / Sekolah menengah

Diploma /

Bachelor Degree / Sarjana muda

Master/PhD / Sarjana/Kedoktoran



Q3. What is your household income level for the past 12 months?  
Q3. Berapa jumlah pendapatan isi rumah untuk 12 bulan lalu?

Less than RM 50,000 / Kurang daripada RM 50,000  
RM 50,000 to RM 99,999 / RM 50,000 hingga RM 99,999  
RM 100,000 to RM 149,999 / RM 100,000 hingga RM 149,999  
RM 150,000 or more / RM 150,000 atau lebih

Q4. What is your ethnicity?

Q4. Apakah kaum anda?

Malay / Melayu  
Chinese / Cina  
Indian / India  
Others / Lain-lain

**SECTION B:**

This section inquire about your view on the factors that influence your preference towards the selection of secondary school for your children. You are required to indicate the extent of your agreement for each statement based on the 5-point Likert scale [(1) = strongly disagree; (2) = disagree; (3) = neutral; (4) = agree and (5) = strongly agree]

**BAHAGIAN B:**

Bahagian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pandangan anda mengenai faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pilihan anda dalam pilihan jenis sekolah untuk anak anda. Anda perlu menunjukkan tahap kesetujuan anda untuk setiap kenyataan berdasarkan skala 5-point Likert. [(1) = amat tidak setuju; (2) = tidak setuju; (3) = neutral; (4) = setuju and (5) = amat setuju]

No	Statement / Kenyataan	Strongly Disagree/ Amat Tidak Setuju	Disagree/ Tidak Setuju	Neutral	Agree / Setuju	Strongly Agree / Amat Setuju
1	The school should be a safe place for learning ensures the environment is conducive for teaching and learning. Sekolah harus merupakan tempat yang selamat dan kondusif untuk pembelajaran.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The classroom's environment should be conducive. Persekitaran kelas harus kondusif.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The school should have sufficient facilities. Sekolah harus mempunyai kemudahan yang mencukupi.	1	2	3	4	5

The school should have adequate equipment for learning purpose. Sekolah harus mempunyai alat pembelajaran yang mencukupi.	1	2	3	4	5	4	Ti cc Se pe
School should use technologies in facilitating the teaching process. Sekolah harus menggunakan teknologi dalam proses pembelajaran.	1	2	3	4	5	5	Se fa Se te

6	Parents should have a good relationship with the administrators of the school. Ibu bapa harus menjalinkan hubungan baik dengan pentadbir sekolah.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Parents and administrators of the school should be well communicated. Ibu bapa dan pentabir sekolah harus berkomunikasi dengan baik.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Parents and teachers should have a good relationship. Ibu bapa dan guru harus mempunyai hubungan baik.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Parents and teachers should be well communicated. Ibu bapa dan guru harus berkomunikasi dengan baik.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Reputation of the School is important. Reputasi sekolah adalah penting.	1	2	3	4	5
11	The tuition fees should be reasonable. Yuran sekolah harus munasabah.	1	2	3	4	5
12	The quality of academic program is suitable for my children. Kualiti program akademik sesuai untuk anak saya.	1	2	3	4	5
13	The syllabus used should be certified by educational regulatory bodies. Sukatan pelajaran sekolah harus diprakui oleh badan-badan akademik kawal selia.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I prefer to receive information on the school's upcoming activities online. Saya lebih suka menerima maklumat terkini sekolah melalui online.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Social media plays important roles in sharing information about the school. Laman sosial memainkan peranan penting dalam penyebaran informasi sekolah.	1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION C:**

This section inquires about your selection of secondary school for your children. You are required to indicate the extent of your agreement for each statement based on the 5-point Likert scale [(1) = strongly disagree; (2) = disagree; (3) = neutral; (4) = agree and (5) = strongly agree]

**BAHAGIAN C:**

Bahagian ini adalah untuk mengetahui pilihan sekolah menengah untuk anak anda. Anda perlu menunjukkan tahap kesetujuan anda untuk setiap kenyataan berdasarkan skala 5-point Likert. [(1) = amat tidak setuju; (2) = tidak setuju; (3) = neutral; (4) = setuju and (5) = amat setuju]

No	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I actively search information about the school prior to my children's enrolment. Saya sentiasa mencari maklumat tentang sekolah mengenai kemasukan sekolah untuk anak saya.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I evaluate the pros and cons of each possible alternative for my children's schooling. Saya menganalisis kebaikan dan keburukan untuk tiap-tiap pilihan untuk kemasukan sekolah anak saya.	1	2	3	4	5