



Why Wesleyan? Uncovering Parental Choices in Elementary Education

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive-correlational study explored the reasons why parents choose Wesleyan University-Philippines Elementary Department for their children's education. One hundred forty-three (143) parents answered the reliable and validated researcher-made instrument. The finding reveals that the respondents were mostly middle-aged mothers with stable income, higher education, and white-collar jobs, indicating their capacity to support their children's education. Academic quality emerged as a key factor, with parents strongly agreeing that the WUP Elementary Department provides a strong curriculum, high standards, and adequate academic support. The school environment was also highly valued, as parents appreciate its safety, positive atmosphere, inclusivity, and support for children's overall development. Teacher qualifications were another important factor, with parents trusting teachers' competence, professionalism, and guidance. While parents were generally satisfied with the school facilities, areas such as playgrounds and maintenance need improvement. Tuition fees were considered reasonable and manageable, though flexible payment options remain important for some families. Overall, parents' income and educational attainment significantly influenced their decisions, highlighting the importance of financial capability and education in school choice.

Keywords: *Academic Quality, School Environment, School Facilities, Teachers' Qualifications, Tuition Fee,*

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the primary concerns of parents as they rear up their children, and in finding an appropriate school for the child, several factors come into play including the reputation of the school, facilities available, value formation, and overall school environment (Korsavi, Montazami & Mumovic, 2020). Among the private schools in the Philippines, there is Wesleyan University-Philippines

(WUP) which has established itself with a good reputation due to its high standard of basic education with emphasis on Christian values. The enrolment at WUP's elementary department has steadily increased, leaving people curious about why parents send their children to WUP. This information can be useful for the administration and teachers as they formulate policies, curricula, and other relevant services that would suit the needs of the parents (Zheng, Zhang & Ran, 2023).

The findings from this research will provide a deeper insight into the decisions made by parents when it comes to their children's education, especially in private schools. In terms of the administration of the WUP Elementary Department, the findings will be used for planning and developing marketing strategies, as well as improving academics. It might also be useful for teachers and other school employees to know which features of their work are considered important by parents, allowing them to focus on these areas (Meng, 2023).

Generally, this research endeavor tries to uncover and examine the various reasons that cause the parents to select the Elementary Department of Wesleyan University Philippines as their choice for their child's basic education. On a more specific basis, this research endeavor tries to find answers to the following research questions: (1) What is the profile of the respondents in terms of their age, gender, monthly income, religion, number of children within the family, level of educational attainment, and occupation? (2) What are the major considerations in choosing WUP's Elementary Department by the parents? (3) Is there a significant relationship between the profile of the parents and the primary factors in selecting WUP Elementary Department for their children's education (Grades 1 to 6)? The findings of this study will provide valuable insights that the institution can use to improve its



services and better cater to the needs of its stakeholders.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a descriptive-correlational design to gather measurable data on parents' reasons for selecting the Elementary Department of Wesleyan University-Philippines (Subia, Salangsang & Medrano, 2018). According to Bhat (2023), "Descriptive correlational research is a type of research design that tries to explain the relationship between two or more variables without making any claims about cause and effect. It involves collecting and analyzing data on at least two variables to assess whether there is a link between them. A researcher-made questionnaire serves as the main tool for data collection".

The instrument was a researcher-made questionnaire validated by the experts in the field, while the reliability was tested using Cronbach's alpha. The questionnaire was found to be reliable with a value of 0.911. The questionnaire includes both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions aimed at capturing parents' perceptions and decision-making factors. The respondents of the study are 143 parents of pupils enrolled in Grades 1 to 6 during the academic year 2025-2026. Data collected were encoded in Microsoft Excel and analyzed using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and mean to determine the most common and significant factors affecting parental choice and correlation formulas to establish the relationship between the profile of the parents and the factors that influence them in choosing WUP Elementary Department.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. PROFILE OF THE PARENTS

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age, Sex, Monthly Income, Religion, Highest Educational Attainment, and Current Job

AGE	Frequency	Percent
20-20 years old	8	5.59
30-39 years old	55	38.46
40-49 years old	69	48.25
50 years old	11	7.69
Total	143	100.00
SEX	Frequency	Percent
Male	17	11.89
Female	126	88.11
Total	143	100.00
MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME	Frequency	Percent
Below ₱10,000	1	0.70
₱10,000 – ₱19,999	16	11.19
₱20,000 – ₱29,999	24	16.78
₱30,000 – ₱39,999	21	14.69
₱40,000 and above	81	56.64
Total	143	100.00
RELIGION	Frequency	Percent
Methodist	16	11.19
Non-Methodist	127	88.81
Total	143	100.00
No. of Children in the Family	Frequency	Percent
One (1)	40	27.97
Two (2)	47	32.87
Three (3)	41	28.67



Four (4) or more	15	10.49
Total	143	100.00
HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Frequency	Percent
Elementary Graduate	1	0.70
High School Graduate	9	6.29
Vocational / Technical Graduate	16	11.19
College Graduate	100	69.93
Master's Degree	12	8.39
Doctorate Degree	5	3.50
Total	143	100.00
CURRENT JOB	Frequency	Percent
White Collar Job	106	74.13
Blue Collar Job	37	25.87
Total	143	100.00

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the parents based on their age, gender, monthly income, religious affiliation, highest educational attainment, and occupation. From the results presented, it is apparent that the parent respondents are mostly middle-aged individuals ranging from 40 to 49 years old (48.25%), with those falling in the age bracket of 30 to 39 years old comprising (38.46%). Thus, many of these respondents are likely parents who are currently taking care of their offspring.

The information presented indicates that a majority of the respondents are females (88.11%), implying that mothers take part in filling out questionnaires concerning school or family matters. With regard to income levels, more than half of the respondent families earn ₱40,000 and above (56.64%), showing

that the parents belong to higher economic statuses. Nonetheless, a minority of the respondents belong to lower income levels (PSA, 2020).

Based on the information about the number of children and backgrounds, it can be stated that respondents have two to three children in general. Thus, family size is rather moderate. Furthermore, the great majority of respondents are not Methodists (88.81%). This means that religious background of parents is rather diverse. Concerning the level of education, the majority of parents are college graduates (69.93%). Besides, there are parents with post-graduate studies. Therefore, one may presuppose that parents are able to finance their children's education. In addition, most respondents work as professionals (74.13%). It seems that all respondents have good financial background and opportunities for financing their children's education (Davis-Kean, 2005).

2. PRIMARY FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTS' DECISIONS IN SELECTING WUP'S ELEMENTARY DEPARTMENT.

2.1. ACADEMIC QUALITY

Table 2. Academic Quality

Academic Quality	Wm	Verbal Description
1. The Elementary Department of WUP has a strong academic reputation.	4.49	Strongly Agree
2. The school provides a well-structured and comprehensive curriculum.	4.45	Strongly Agree
3. Students are encouraged to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	4.48	Strongly Agree
4. The academic programs meet my expectations for my child's education.	4.46	Strongly Agree



5. The school maintains high academic standards.	4.46	Strongly Agree
6. Students receive adequate academic support and guidance.	4.47	Strongly Agree
7. The school effectively prepares students for higher levels of education	4.49	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.47	Strongly Agree

Table 2 presents the primary factors influencing the parents' decisions in selecting WUP's Elementary Department in terms of Academic Quality. The table shows that academic quality is a very important factor influencing parents' decisions in choosing WUP's Elementary Department. All indicators received very high ratings, with weighted means ranging from 4.45 to 4.49, and an overall weighted mean of 4.47, described as "Strongly Agree." This means that parents believe the school has a strong academic reputation, provides a well-organized curriculum, and helps students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. They also feel that the school meets their expectations, maintains high academic standards, offers enough

academic support, and prepares students well for higher education.

From the above findings, there can be no doubt that the parents have high trust in the capability of the institution to offer high-quality education to their kids. The good academic achievements and other support systems provided by the institution are among the main motivating factors to join the institution. It further shows the importance of high academic standards, teaching methods, and student support service provision as the main factors in attracting parents. In summary, academic quality is one of the main components influencing the parents' choice of institutions.

2.2. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Table 3. School Environment

School Environment	Wm	Verbal Description
1. The school provides a safe and secure environment for students.	4.48	Strongly Agree
2. The campus atmosphere is conducive to learning.	4.45	Strongly Agree
3. The school promotes good values and discipline among students.	4.52	Strongly Agree
4. The school environment supports students' emotional and social development.	4.48	Strongly Agree
5. The school maintains cleanliness and orderliness within the campus.	4.28	Strongly Agree
6. The school fosters positive relationships among students, teachers, and parents.	4.50	Strongly Agree
7. The school promotes inclusivity and respect for diversity.	4.50	Strongly Agree
8. The school provides activities that support students' spiritual growth.	4.58	Strongly Agree
9. The school provides extra-curricular activities that help students develop their full potential.	4.55	Strongly Agree
10. The school fosters a safe and inclusive environment where students feel respected and supported.	4.48	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.48	Strongly Agree

Table 3 presents the key determinants considered by the parents in choosing WUP's Elementary Department for School Environment. As per Table 3, the school environment plays a highly significant role in determining parents' choice of WUP's Elementary Department. The scores were high on all items with a weighted mean score of 4.48, which is interpreted as "Strongly Agree." This indicates that the parents see the school as providing

a safe environment and developing good values and discipline in children. Parents also feel that the school creates a favorable learning environment for students and contributes to their holistic development by fostering good relationships amongst students and between the latter and teachers and parents.

This indicates that a conducive and nurturing environment at schools has a great influence on the decision of parents regarding the



choice of schools. This is because besides looking at academic performance, parents also care about the safety and behavior of their children. This study indicates that there is a need for schools to continue

creating an environment which is nurturing and values-based to enhance enrollment. This will help create an environment that promotes safety, relationships and personal growth.

2.3. TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Table 4. Teachers Qualifications

Teacher Qualifications	Wm	Verbal Description
1. Teachers in the Elementary Department are highly qualified.	4.59	Strongly Agree
2. Teachers demonstrate mastery of the subjects they teach.	4.55	Strongly Agree
3. Teachers use effective teaching strategies and methods.	4.55	Strongly Agree
4. Teachers show professionalism and dedication to their work.	4.61	Strongly Agree
5. Teachers communicate well with parents regarding students' progress.	4.57	Strongly Agree
6. Teachers provide appropriate guidance and support to students.	4.54	Strongly Agree
7. Teachers serve as good role models for students.	4.57	Strongly Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.57	Strongly Agree

Table 4 highlights the major factors that affect parents' decisions on Teacher Qualifications of WUP's Elementary Department. As can be seen from Table 4, teacher qualifications are very important among those factors that affect parents' decisions when choosing WUP's Elementary Department. All indicators got very high scores, which made up the overall weighted mean of 4.57, which is evaluated as "Strongly Agree." It means that parents consider teachers as highly educated people who know their fields of expertise well and apply appropriate methods of instruction in their work. Also, parents

highly rate professionalism and dedication of teachers and their ability to assist and guide students.

The findings show that teacher quality is highly significant in winning the confidence of parents towards the school. In addition to the expertise of the teacher, the attitude, communication skills, and potential to develop the children are highly valued by the parents. It can thus be concluded that the school must make efforts to employ skilled teachers and provide ongoing training for maintaining high standards of teaching. Excellent teaching will contribute to good learning among children and create a better reputation for the school.

2.4. SCHOOL FACILITIES

Table 5. School Facilities

School Facilities	Wm	Verbal Description
1. The classrooms are conducive to effective learning.	4.34	Strongly Agree
2. The school has adequate learning resources (e.g., books, technology, materials).	4.42	Strongly Agree
3. Facilities such as libraries and laboratories support academic learning.	4.29	Strongly Agree
4. The school provides adequate playgrounds and recreational areas.	3.92	Agree
5. The facilities are well-maintained and safe for students.	4.17	Agree
6. The school has sufficient facilities to support extracurricular activities.	4.21	Strongly Agree



7. The school continuously improves its facilities to meet students' needs.

4.38 Strongly Agree

Overall Weighted Mean

4.25 Strongly Agree

Table 5 summarizes the main reasons behind the decisions of the parents regarding their choice for WUP's Elementary Department in terms of School Facilities. According to Table 5, school facilities are an important reason behind the decision-making process of parents for WUP's Elementary Department. The weighted mean value is 4.25 which is categorized as "Strongly Agree." Most of the variables have high values, which shows that parents believe that the classroom environment is good for learning purposes, and there are enough learning facilities at the school in terms of books, computers, and other study material. Furthermore, they also think that library and laboratory facilities facilitate academic learning, and facilities at the school keep improving to match the needs of students.

Nevertheless, playground facilities (3.92) and maintenance of facilities (4.17) have slightly lower values than others but remain positive.

This means that although the parents seem to be satisfied with the facilities of the school, some improvements could still be done in certain aspects of the facilities, most notably those in the area of recreation and maintenance. In addition to the educational facilities, there are several other important considerations for the parents like safety, good maintenance, and balanced activities related to education and recreation. It would be appropriate on the part of the school administration to make improvements in its facilities, particularly related to sports activities and safety of the students.

2.5. TUITION COST

Table 6. Tuition Cost

Tuition Fee Cost	Wm	Verbal Description
1. The tuition fee is reasonable considering the quality of education provided.	4.04	Agree
2. The school offers good value for money.	4.08	Agree
3. The tuition cost is affordable for my family.	3.95	Agree
4. The payment schemes offered by the school are flexible.	4.28	Strongly Agree
5. The school's fees are transparent and clearly explained.	4.04	Agree
6. The benefits my child receives justify the tuition cost.	4.11	Agree
7. The overall cost of studying at WUP is competitive compared to other schools.	4.18	Agree
Overall Weighted Mean	4.10	Agree

As shown in Table 6 below, some of the notable determinants that have led to the parents' choices concerning the Elementary Department at WUP considering Tuition Fee Cost are highlighted. From the table above, tuition fee cost plays an essential role in the decision-making process by the parents since it received a weighted mean score of 4.10, which means "Agree". In other words, the majority of the parents are satisfied with the costs associated with tuition fee due to the fact that it is relatively affordable. The best performing indicator for the parents was that of the tuition payment options, which received a mean score of 4.28, indicating "Strongly Agree". The least favorable item was that of affordability of the tuition fees for their

respective families, with a mean score of 3.95 or "Agree".

These findings indicate that despite viewing the charges to be fair and reasonable, some families still find the tuition unaffordable. Flexibility in payments is one critical factor that would make education affordable and reduce financial strain on families. It is therefore necessary for the school to maintain and perhaps improve on its policies concerning flexible payment plans and financial support packages. Doing this would not only increase the number of families attending the school but also maintain satisfaction among the parents concerning tuition fees.



3. SIGNIFICANT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PROFILE OF THE PARENTS AND THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THEIR DECISIONS IN SELECTING WUP'S ELEMENTARY DEPARTMENT

Table 7. Significant Relationship Between Variables

Correlation	FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTS' DECISIONS IN SELECTING WUP'S ELEMENTARY DEPARTMENT		
	r- value	p-value	Interpretation
Profile			
Age	-.075	.371	No significant relationship
Sex	-.111	.188	No significant relationship
Monthly Income	.281**	.001	Significant relationship
Religion	.055	.513	No significant relationship
Number of Children	-.093	.267	No significant relationship
Highest Educational Attainment	.175*	.037	Significant relationship
Current Job	-.023	.785	No significant relationship

***Correlation is significant @ 0.01 level; *Correlation is significant @ 0.05 level*

The correlation between the profile of the parents and the factors influencing the choices they make in selecting the Elementary Department of WUP are presented in Table 7. This table presents the correlation between the profile of the parents and the factors influencing the choice of the Elementary Department of WUP, which include academic standards, school environment, teacher credentials, facilities, and cost of tuition. From the table above, age, sex, religion, number of children, and occupation are not significantly related to parents' decision as their p-values are greater than 0.05. This suggests that there is little influence of these variables on parents' choice of a school. On the other hand, there is a significant correlation between monthly income ($r = .281$, $p = .001$) and highest level of education attained ($r = .175$, $p = .037$). This confirms that both monthly income and level of education influence parents' decision-making. This finding proves that better-educated and richer families tend to be more selective when making their decisions (Reay, 1998).

The findings indicate that financial capability and level of education play major roles in choosing schools. In the

case of financially capable parents, they have enough money for tuition fees and prefer good learning and quality environment, whereas for highly educated parents, it indicates their emphasis on quality of academics and teachers (Davis-Kean, 2005). However, considering that most of the variables in the profile do not carry any significance, this is an indication that WUP's Elementary Department is attractive to many parents irrespective of their own backgrounds. This highlights the fact that although the school attracts many parents from various backgrounds, it still needs to devise programs like providing financial aid to students from poor families (PSA, 2022).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are derived based on the findings of the study:

1. Respondents tend to be middle-aged mothers with sufficient income levels, advanced education levels, and office-based occupations, implying that parents choosing the institution have enough financial capability to cater to their children's learning needs.
2. Parents highly agree that academic excellence is provided at the school,



suggesting that curricula, standards, and academic support services are among the primary determinants that encourage parents to opt for the school.

3. The safety, positivity, and inclusiveness of the school are highly valued by the parents, implying that parental concerns regarding their children's safety, well-being, and behavioral outcomes play an integral role in selecting schools.

4. Teachers' competence, professionalism, and mentoring skills form another crucial factor contributing to the parents' favorable impression of the school.

5. Overall, parents are relatively satisfied with the school facilities; however, several improvements can still be made to improve the learning environment of the students.

6. Fees and tuition costs are perceived as affordable; however, due to varying parental financial capabilities, flexible tuition fee plans are essential.

7. Income levels and educational attainments of parents significantly impact their decision-making process when opting for the WUP Elementary Department.

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