

Factors Influencing Student School Selection Based on Gender Differences: Empirical Analysis during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Laila Hayati¹, Hapipi Hapipi^{1,2}, Lalu Rudyat Telly Savalas³, and Jannatin 'Ardhuha^{4*}

¹Department of Mathematics Education, University of Mataram, Indonesia 83125

²Department of Mathematics Education, Cambridge University, United Kingdom

³Department of Chemistry Education, University of Mataram, Indonesia 83125

⁴Department of Physics Education, University of Mataram, Indonesia 83125

Abstract. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence junior high school students in choosing a high school based on gender differences. The literature review was used to identify relevant factors to be incorporated into the survey instrument design. Questionnaires were administered via the Google form link, and information was collected from 564 junior high school students. Respondents consisted of 226 male respondents and 338 female respondents spread across West Nusa Tenggara Province. The multiple-response survey data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. In general, the results showed that the reasons for choosing a school for male respondents were dominated by their own desires, close to home, favorites, and the prospect of continuing their studies at their favorite university. Meanwhile, the reasons for choosing a school for female respondents were dominated by their own desires, preferences, the prospect of continuing their studies at their favorite university, and the achievements of the target school. This shows that female respondents tend to be more interested in choosing schools that have high popularity and many achievements. In contrast, male respondents are more likely to choose a school that is close to home and popular even though the school has minimal achievements. This finding is very important for schools and teachers about the factors that influence students in choosing a school. Identification of factors allows the development of the right strategy and balances the dynamics of the social environment and rapidly developing information technology.

1 Background

Factors influencing students' decisions to continue their education are basically divided into internal factors (psychological factors) and external factors (social factors). Social factors or external factors are factors related to daily life or the surrounding environment that come from outside a person's self that influence the choice of a prospective student's school [1]. Reference groups, or friends, in this case, have direct or indirect influence because of their skills, knowledge, or characteristics that have a social impact on others. Psychological factors

* Corresponding author: j.ardhuha@unram.ac.id

that influence the decision of prospective students to choose a school include motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs and attitudes [2]. Thus, the decision to choose a prospective student's school is in the hands of the prospective student himself, which is influenced by motivation, perception, learning, as well as beliefs and attitudes. Motivation arises from the fact that prospective students have the desire, the urge to decide to choose the school they want. This information comes from existing advertisements, after which prospective students interpret it in different ways. This information also provides experience to prospective students before choosing a school, as they also learn through other experiences. This affects the beliefs and attitudes of prospective students when making decisions about choosing a school that is in accordance with the expectations of prospective students.

The main objective of this study was to investigate the factors that influence junior high school students in choosing a high school in terms of gender differences in the province of NTB. Although there have been several studies of the factors influencing students' choice of school conducted in various countries, only some of them have been identified. Several things become factors related to the transition of students entering tertiary institutions, namely family factors, emotional regulation, motivation, and students' views of tertiary institutions [3], other factors such as perception, influence, and opportunity are very important in international students' decisions to come to the United States for their studies [4]. The results of other studies have identified six factors of college choice that have been shown to have a significant influence on school selection, namely academics, athletics, coaching, location, important people and communication factors [5], rankings, infrastructure, media promotion, and admissions procedures. [6], academic quality, costs (including tuition fees, living expenses, hostel, and hostel fees), financial aid and scholarships, infrastructure provided (campus and residence), IT services, reference groups, websites, and online reviews play an important role in school selection [7].

Some of these studies have explored the factors that influence high school students in choosing a university. These studies did not explore the perceptions of high school students. Moreover, despite the variety of existing studies, however, additional exploration is needed to unravel the complexities of school selection factors in the context of West Nusa Tenggara and further develop a more comprehensive understanding of the influence of student school choice factors.

2 Methods

The questionnaire survey was conducted in the new school year for students entering school in 2021. The target of the survey was limited to junior high school students who will continue on to senior high school in West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. The survey was distributed using a Google form which was given to students via WhatsApp messages. A total of 564 students have filled out the questionnaire. Participants are spread across ten districts or cities in the province.

The data collection instrument was a self-administered structured questionnaire. Questionnaires were sent to junior high school students who had just graduated and were going to continue their studies to high school during the intake period for new students.

The questionnaire was compiled in the form of multiple responses. Multiple responses are a qualitative type of data with only two or more possible answers [8]. This questionnaire allows respondents to choose more than one answer option. The compiled questionnaire consists of two parts. The questions posed can be answered by more than one student. The first part examines family background information about the respondent. The second part examines information about the school chosen and the reasons for choosing the school. This information is divided into two parts, namely intrinsic factors, namely interest, feelings of

pleasure, and motivation, and extrinsic factors, namely socioeconomic status, level of education, type of parental occupation, and parental income.

3 Results and Discussion

The analysis performed is descriptive and inferential analysis. The first step deals with the aggregate surface characteristics of the respondents using descriptive statistical measures such as percentage and frequency. The main focus of this research presented in this study is to determine the factors that influence school selection (admission to high school) in West Nusa Tenggara in terms of gender differences among male and female students.

Before analyzing the factors that influence junior high school students in choosing a high school in the new school year, the validity of the instrument is first analyzed (V).

To obtain the V value, Aiken's formula is used [9]:

$$V = (\sum S) / (n(c - 1)) \quad (1)$$

where:

$\sum S$ = The total the difference between the score given by the expert and the lowest score of the importance rating

n = Number of experts involved

c = Number of choices of importance rating scores.

The values of S1, S2, and S3 are obtained using the formula:

$$S = r - l_o \quad (2)$$

where:

r = the importance rating score chosen by the expert.

l_o = lowest score of all importance rating scores.

Data from instrument validation results were analyzed by comparing the validation results with the validity categorization [9], which follows the range shown in **Table 1**.

No	Score range	Category
1	0.80-1.00	High
2	0.40-0.80	Moderate
5	0.00-0.40	Low

If the questionnaire instrument belongs to the category high and medium, then the instrument is used. If the questionnaire instrument belongs to the low category, then the instrument is revised/not used. If some of the items or even all of the items fall into the low category, it is necessary to review and even re-create the instrument in each aspect with in-depth analysis and validation of the material content.

The results of the validity of the questionnaire instrument items on the influence of the pandemic on the selection of senior high schools using the Aiken formula calculations can be shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Calculation results of the item validation of the questionnaire instrument for the influence of the pandemic on high school selection using the Aiken Formula

No	Validator			s1	s2	s3	$\sum S$	n(c-1)	V	Category
	1	2	3							
1	3	4	4	2	3	3	8	12	0.667	High
2	3	4	4	2	3	3	8	12	0.667	High
3	3	4	4	2	3	3	8	12	0.667	High
4	4	4	4	3	3	3	9	12	0.750	High
5	4	4	4	3	3	3	9	12	0.750	High
6	3	4	4	2	3	3	8	12	0.667	High
7	4	4	4	3	3	3	9	12	0.750	High

The inputs from experts 1, 2, and 3 regarding the questionnaire instrument for the influence of this pandemic include: 1) the language in the instructions is not clear, 2) the error in using the word "pandemic," which should use the word "pandemic (in Bahasa Indonesia)," 3) the questionnaire should be made in the form of a google form, 4) questions adapted to respondents, 5) discrepancies between questions and answers, 6) order of questions in the questionnaire, adding options, and relevance between the things being asked and the purpose of giving the questionnaire. After receiving the validation results and suggestions from the experts, the questionnaire was then corrected according to the suggestions so that the questionnaire given to the respondents was a proper questionnaire and had gone through a validation and improvement process.

Based on these inputs, it can be concluded that initially, there were several errors in the questionnaire on the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic on the selection of high schools, so the questionnaire received an assessment of "fit for use with revision" from the three experts. Then a validity test was carried out using the Aiken formula, and high validity results were obtained for all aspects of the questionnaire instrument so that the questionnaire was feasible to use.

3.1 Respondents background

The total respondents were 564 junior high school graduates that consist of 226 male and 338 female students coming from all cities and districts in the Province of West Nusa Tenggara. When it comes to the family's monthly income, there is no discrepancy between the monthly income of male and female families (**Fig. 1**).

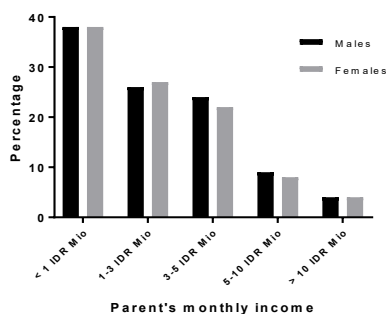


Fig. 1. Monthly family income of student's parents

We asked the respondents if their siblings were also attending school to reveal the family's additional responsibilities for children's education. The answer may give an insight into the family cost of their children's education. The results are depicted in **Fig. 2**. It is shown that more female students have siblings attending elementary school, whereas more male students have siblings attending junior high school. Such distribution might show that the overall family budgetary for children's education for male and female junior high school graduates are similar.

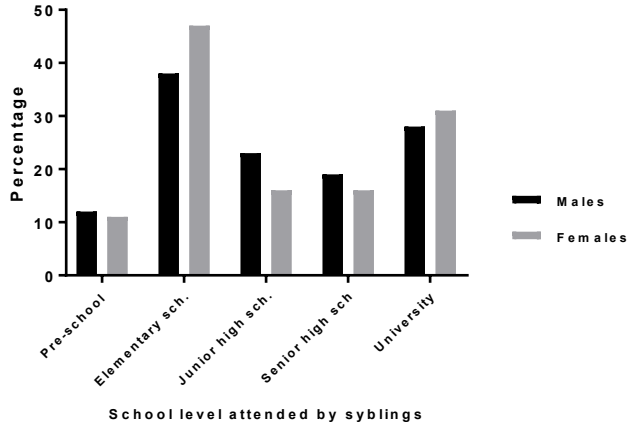


Fig. 2. School level attended by respondents' siblings.

3.2 The argument for choosing senior high schools.

Before analyzing students' preference to choose a senior high school, we analyze the information source for the junior high school graduates aiming to continue their education. The results are described in **Fig. 3**.

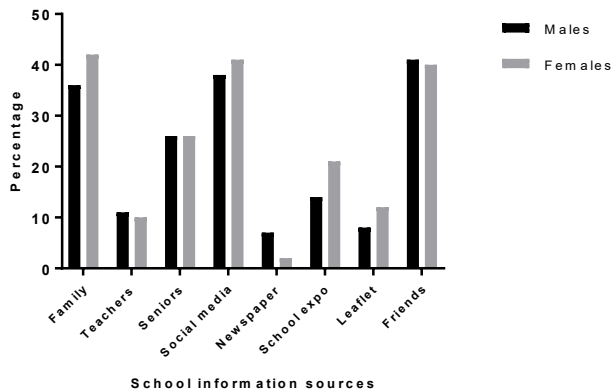


Fig. 3. Senior high school information sources

Three common information sources for junior high school graduates are their family, social media, and word of mouth or from their friends. Moving forward, with the aforementioned background and information source, how then the students decide to choose their senior high school (**Fig. 4**)?

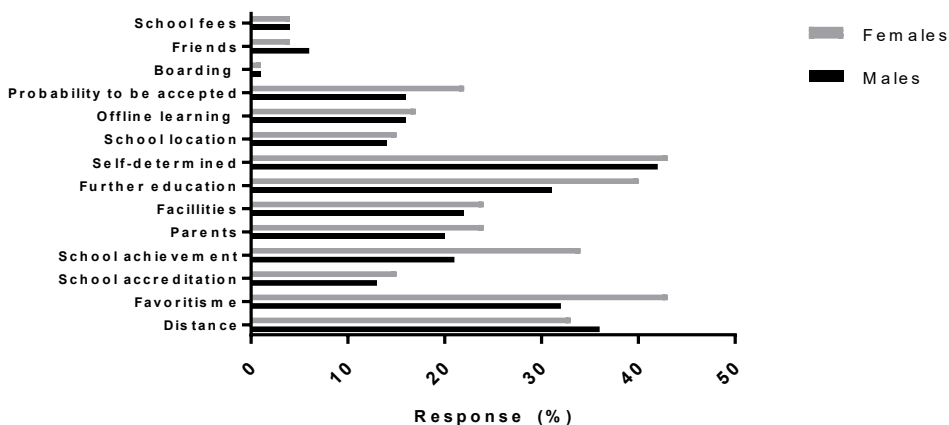


Fig. 4. Reasons for deciding which school to choose.

Fig. 4. Shows that the reasons for selecting schools for male students are dominated by their own desires, being close to home, favoritism, and opportunities for continuing their studies (at the university level). Meanwhile, the reasons for selecting schools for female students were dominated by their own desires, preferences, opportunities for continuing their studies (in favorite universities), and school achievements. This shows that female students tend to be more interested in choosing schools that have high popularity and many achievements. In contrast, male students are more likely to choose a school that is close to home and popular even though the school has minimal achievements.

It is interesting to see that more female students consider school favoritism as the main reason. Our experience also supports the idea that prestigious senior high schools will give more opportunities for their later graduates to enter their favorite universities/departments.

3.3 School Selection and Pandemic

We further analyze how the Covid-19 pandemic might change students' preferences in their prospective senior high school. In this regard, both male and female students show almost identical preferences. 15% of female and 13% of male students may change their school choice (**Fig. 5**).

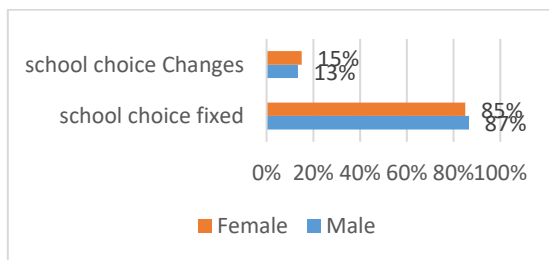


Fig. 5. How determined are female and male students to their senior high school option

Among those who might change their school destination, more female students argue to change their school option to get closer to school, as compared to male students, i.e., by 56% and 43%, respectively (**Fig. 6**).

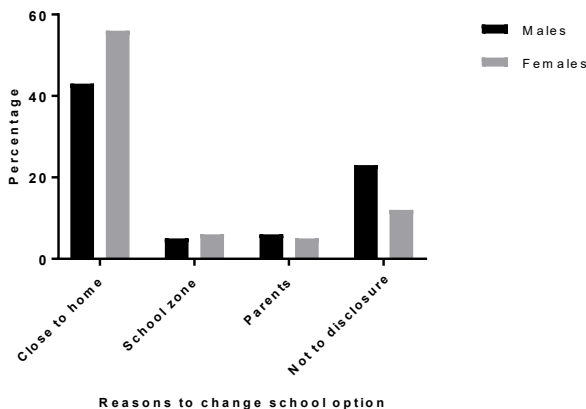


Fig. 6. Some consideration for students who may change their school selection.

Regardless of their school option, both male and females student show the same aspiration to have schools that facilitate offline learning. There are also various reasons for both male and female students wanting to have offline school (**Fig. 7**).

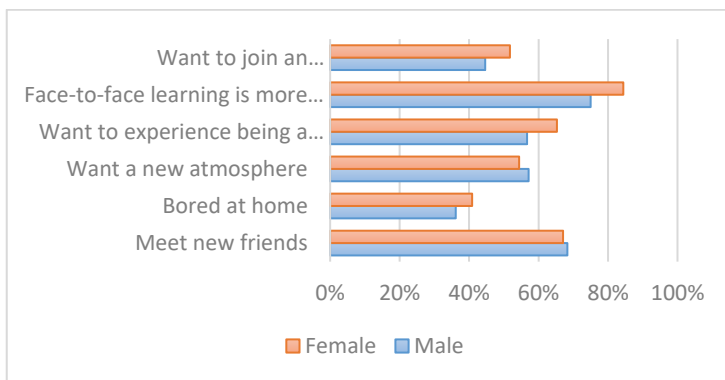


Fig. 7. Students' aspiration to have an offline learning process.

Several factors, such as enjoyment, comfort, worthiness, and happiness, were recently reported to have a positive correlation for senior high school graduates when choosing their university [10]. It is worth noting that similar reasons are also found in the earliest age when junior high school graduates opinioned to have more interaction, to experience new atmosphere, to make new friendships, etc. (**Fig. 7**).

The majority of respondents did not have any hopes for online learning and instead hoped that learning could return to face-to-face as before the pandemic. However, if the online learning mode persists longer, both males and females hope that during online learning, they can understand the material being studied, the teacher does not give excessive assignments, the teacher explains the material being studied more clearly and interactively, get online learning facilities for free, learning continues to run well, effectively, and optimally, adds insight and trains abilities, achieves, teaching and learning process is carried out according to schedule, and avoids Covid-19.

4 Conclusion

The present study analyzed what factors determined junior high school graduates when they select their senior high school. In general, both males and female students showed similar responses with regard to the school option in the midst of the pandemic. Most students did not change their school selection. However, the students who are open to changing their school options put the school distance (from) home as the main consideration. Nevertheless, for various reasons, both males and female students aspired to have an offline learning process, regardless of their school selection.

Acknowledgement. The authors thank Dr. Dadi Setiadi, Department of Biology Education, University of Mataram, for constructive discussion.

References

1. M. Meriyati, *Memahami Karakteristik Anak Didik*, (Fakta Press IAIN Raden Intan Lampung, Bandar Lampung, 2015)
2. J. S. Nevid, *Ilmu Psikologi: Konsepsi dan Aplikasi Psikologi*. (Rizal, Ed., & M. Chozim, Trans, Nusamedia, Jakarta, 2021)
3. C. Cox, *Prior Exposure to College and Adjustment to College for First-Year Students*. (Diss. William James College, 2019)
4. A. Tan, *Higher education institution choice behaviors of international students on US college campuses*. (University of the Incarnate Word, 2014)
5. W. L. William. *The Difference in College Choice Factors between Parents and Student-Athletes, and the Effects of Personal Fit on School Selection*. (Diss. Troy University, 2020)
6. Romi, S., G. Sanjeevni, *A Management Journal*, **1**, 2, 387-412. (2010)
7. H. Misra, S. Singh, *Journal of Applied Management - Jidnyasa*, **11**, 2, 31-48 (2019)
8. S. Santoso, *Panduan Lengkap SPSS 26*. (PT. Elex Media Komputindo, Jakarta, 2020)
9. L. Hayati, K. Sarjana, S. Soeprianto, N. Kurniati, *Int. J. Sci. Acad. Res.* **4**, 6, 5777-5780 (2023)
10. R. Nagoya, I. Bernarto, F. Antonio, *Factors affecting university selection during the pandemic: a study of Indonesian high school students*, ADI International Conference Series, 3, 1, 189-201 (2020)