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“Entrepreneurship on Global Economics Development in the Era of Society 5.0”

Parents' Ethical Decisions in Choosing Public Schools: Investigating Parental Morals in a Regulatory Focus**Rifal Yoga Pratama^{1*}, Catur Sugiarto¹**¹ Universitas Sebelas Maret

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***Email:** rifal.yogapratama@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This paper aims to explain parents' responses and investigate the ethical decisions of parents in selecting public schools. The method offered in this research uses a qualitative methodology, this study describes in detail the perceptions of parents, by dissecting their moral behavior using regulatory focus theory. It is recommended to interview 20 parents as main informants with in-depth, semi-structured questions. The forms and concepts offered in this study further explore the extent to which parents' idealism in making ethical decisions, regarding the selection of public elementary schools which are considered not to meet the moral standards expected of parents. This study suggests that parents should be rational in making ideal decisions even though there are moral differences between them.

Keywords: parents' ethical decision, school choice, regulatory focus theory, moral perception

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, the latest issue in the last decade regarding the decline in new students in public elementary schools has recently invited various controversies. This case received claims from various groups, some claimed that it was due to the zoning system (Arifuddin et al., 2019), there is also due to family planning (KB) factors that make the birth rate or population decrease (Radarmalang, 2022). Interestingly, this event is rarely claimed as a factor in the lack of religious and moral concern of parents. Reviewing the relationship between moral education and religion invites controversy. However, what is questionable is whether the two can really be separated, while these actions emerge from various perspectives, both from the religious and secular realms (Valk, 2007). Therefore, the existence of public schools with a series of causes is not far from the moral and religious assessment of parents.

Whether or not public schools are appropriate and how appropriate they are in choosing is dependent on the moral judgment of the parents. How do these parents perceive the school by reflecting on their self-image of the chosen school. To create this condition, in general, parents who attach importance to their religion as the main foundation, they are involved in self-awareness, as a sign that morality and religion cannot be separated. Emphasizing religion as the main guideline, and vice versa, applying moral elements with religious standards. (Stavrova & Siegers, 2014) also explained about this matter from a religious perspective, that the involvement between religion and morals is usually often seen as the foundation of morality by ordinary people or those who study and study religion scientifically.

Moral provisions in the context of religion should be regulated with certain conditions, for example regarding parents' concern for the need for religious learning for their children to license their obedience in prioritizing the best education for their children. In other conditions, various perspectives on the choice of private schools are often the basis and oriented towards religious education and are more concerned with moral education. Meanwhile, the moral education applied in public schools is not necessarily satisfactory for religious parents. they think that public schools have not fully answered the moral criteria they desire. The general fact that usually occurs is due to differences in curriculum standards. Public schools usually prioritize general subjects rather than religious studies (Reichard, 2012). Meanwhile, parents who have high rationality focus more on achievement (Yaacob et al., 2014). But that doesn't mean that parents who send their children to public schools are judged or branded as immoral people. Morality in decision making reveals evidence of differences in parents' motives in choosing a school, such as differences in ethics in choosing a school. So far, consumer behavior research that discusses morality has been widespread and influential in the more contemporary world of marketing (Yaprak & Prince, 2019). Even so, the morality approach is still rarely used by researchers to explore similar topics; about the image of public elementary schools according to parents' perceptions. Therefore this study investigates the ethical decision of parents in choosing a public school. The investigation is intended to find out the morals of parents, how they behave in making decisions.

The theoretical concept offered

Morality in decision making reveals evidence of differences in parents' motives in choosing a school, such as differences in ethics in choosing a school. So far, consumer

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behavior research that discusses morality has been widespread and influential in the more contemporary world of marketing (Yaprak & Prince, 2019). Studies that discuss morality have been developed with various theories. Like the regulatory focus suggested by Higgins & Cornwell, (2016) to uncover ethical behavior in organizations. The important regulatory focus is uncovering consumer goals. For example Mazar and Zhong (2010); (Schwabe et al., 2018) argues that buying environmentally friendly products is considered more moral than buying conventional products. Basically, the desire to act through moral means or efforts and maintain a position in a positive moral self-view can be attached to consumers. Although sometimes it is not always reflected in actual consumer behavior. There are goals that govern the behavior of each Consumer. Those that move involve goals or move away from goals, and follow an internal guidance system.

Early research on conformity in regulation examined the relationship of “moral value transfer,” in which conformity results from applying appropriate strategies to a person's primary regulatory focus, intensifying experience on moral evaluation (Higgins & Cornwell, 2016). So far, parental involvement in school choice is not far from their moral judgment of school choice. How do they weigh and perceive the school environment, especially in public schools. Parents in principle want their children to be in a highly disciplined school environment, where there are high academic standards and good moral instruction.

Arli & Pekerti, (2008) in one of their findings provide an example, such as the application of religious lessons in Islamic schools which can help instill strong ethical behavior, so as to minimize unwanted actions among students. As a result, non-religious schools also include curricula that can replace the inherent religiosity domain as in Islamic schools, in order to foster stronger ethical beliefs against negative behavior among students. This means that religious learning as well as ethics education is needed by parents.

Parents have an obligation or role in choosing a school for their child, at least according to what is needed and what is expected. However, information to guide them in choosing a school is not always available and accurate. Even to know and understand what is in the curriculum system, costs and student characteristics are not fully known by parents (Cheng et al., 2016). The limited information is then used as an excuse for them to find out independently from their relatives and those closest to them who also have limited information. With all these assumptions then used as their basis in choosing a school that is considered suitable as empirical evidence (Chowdhury & Synthia, 2021). In accordance with the main goal of regulatory focus theory, how they pursue the goal of studying individual motives, in particular observing how each individual adjusts their standards and goals themselves (Brockner et al., 2004; Trevelyan, 2011; Fischer et al., (2018). Likewise with the behavior of parents who choose private schools, their view of public schools is that they do not feel that learning ethics, morals and religion is sufficiently in line with their family values (Ajuwon & Bradshaw 2009; Reichard, (2012).

Aspects of convenience offered by state schools: regulatory focus promotion

The moral provisions contain two different motivations, namely duty and desire. Covering this, individuals who are oriented towards vigilance are more suitable for individuals who focus on prevention. Meanwhile, individuals who focus on promotion have an orientation towards desire (Bulman et al., 2009; Cornwell & Korenman, (2021) The desire to oppose a more moral outcome of goodness is basically still an ambiguous thing. Because each individual has their own goals and perspectives regarding moral or immoral.

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referring to previous literature, which reveals that individuals who focus on promotion are more likely to engage in fraudulent behavior compared to those who focus on prevention, because the tendency that focuses on promotion is greater on risk taking (Margolis, 2011; Cornwell & Korenman, (2021). In this case the parents' intention and goal is to focus on convenience and comfort without questioning what their children's environment is like, and what learning is like at their child's school.

Decision-making towards the goal of easy mobility for parents may be more vulnerable for their children. Without parental supervision and control, children will explore on their own with an environment that fits their criteria (Meldrum et al., 2016). In view of ambiguity reveals, that such a decision is too risky, because it tends to be more intuitive. This has been proven by opinion Butler et al., (2014) that intuitive thinkers tolerate more risk-taking and tend to be ambiguous. For example, aversion to risk and ambiguity can explain why people are reluctant to invest, or such an attitude questions the problem of the religious education curriculum in public schools, why it is less optimal than the curriculum in Islamic privat schools. The tendency of parents to consider distance is an effort to seek convenience in terms of cost efficiency or time and location. Without gathering more information regarding long-term expectations in a moral context. Only considering the distance, without knowing more about how their children's school environment is, and whether the decisions made are right or not.

METHOD

The research is intended to investigate how parents with their considerations in choosing public schools. Is religious learning in public schools the main consideration for parents in choosing a school? what is their assessment of public schools, how are their moral tendencies, and how is the regulatory focus dissecting their ethical behavior.

To investigate the forms of morality that influence decision making, especially in the realm of ethical consumption, qualitative data is needed to explore perceptions and translate their motives in choosing public schools. The author suggests that for data collection from interviews, involve at least 20 informants consisting of various parents of female gender, with different backgrounds. They were recruited using a snowball sampling approach. This research is suggested in Indonesia, with the consideration of choosing that region because of the background of the issue of marketization of religion in public and private schools supported by the existence of diverse cultures. Data collection is suggested on the interview transcription. Information explored in depth (in-depth interview). In this interview stage, the data collection process took more than 3 months. From the analysis results.

Several descriptions of the questions in the interview topic are suggested including: about the description of the school that is considered ideal. How do parents perceive public schools, and are religious considerations included in their category in choosing public schools, how do they respond to moral learning in public schools. In tradition qualitative research, guidelines are not implemented rigidly but revised when patterns emerge (Patton, 1990; Sabri, 2012). In the data analysis stage, trying to interpret the phenomenon and understand the responses given by the informants. The results of the verbal interview were then transcribed using a voice recording tool using a smartphone as a record of observation evidence.

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