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**EXAMINING CRITERIA USED BY PARENTS WHILE SELECTING SCHOOLS  
FOR CHILDREN COMPARING SERVICE QUALITY MEASUREMENT  
APPROACHES: A DEVELOPING COUNTRY PERSPECTIVE**

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***ABSTRACT***

The study examines the diverse attributes used by the parents while selecting schools for their children in urban Bangladesh and proposes a statistically significant five dimensional 22-item school choice index. Methodology of the study is based on 1121 data collected randomly that demonstrate factors affecting parents to perceive the service quality of the educational institutions (private and public) before taking admissions for their children. Transparent admission policy was found to be the top ranked determinant of school selection followed by indicators such as performance of the teachers, school's ability to build critical thinking skill among students, parents-teacher relation and sincerity of the school management. Even though academic achievement was considered to be a critical performance indicator of service quality, our results revealed that this is not the top most school selection criterion. Rather, parents accentuated more towards development of good skills, morality, self-discipline etc. Dimension wise results found that 'responsiveness' and 'school's image' in the society were the most vital measure factors. Additionally, the paper compared the factors used with the sought-after service quality measurement frameworks (Gronroos Model, SERVQUAL, SERVPERF) which postulated that it is impractical to assume that generic models capture a detailed perspective of a complex sector like education and stressed to adopt a context specific view of service quality combining multiple theoretical approaches.

**Keywords:** School selection, Service Quality, SERVQUAL, Multidimensional modeling, urban Bangladesh