

ELIS SCHOOLBASE

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ABSTRACT

School choice is an important decision that every parent needs to make even for their normal children and what more with the children with disabilities. In Malaysia, while school choice options are available to all families regardless of their socio-economic status, parents with special needs children are facing issues of limited school choices to enroll their kids for a reliable special education critically at the early intervention stage. In general, there are various issues that need to be considered in choosing schools such as teacher quality, school reputation, class size, distance and safety, parental and public opinion and value attached to education, sociological and cultural factors and even market forces. With all the issues that parents need to consider, coming up with a decision on which school is the best for their special kids can be a never-ending process. **ELIS SchoolBase** provides a handy and easily accessed tool for a quick school choice decision. It proposed guidelines on how to make school choice decisions and give an idea to parents about the dimensions (based on ELIS framework) that they should investigate when considering the school placement for their school-age children. Parents can conduct a self-check based on the dimensions developed in the system and it is a reliable tool because questionnaires are developed based on research. **ELIS SchoolBase** can be used anywhere and anytime without hassles.

Keywords: parental school choice, students with disabilities

1. INTRODUCTION

Enrolling children with disabilities to formal education is obviously a very critical decision for parents. In general, there are various issues that need to be considered in choosing schools for children such as students' scores on achievement tests, teacher quality, school reputation, class size, distance and safety, parental and public opinion and value attached to education [1], sociological and cultural factors [2] and even market forces [3]. While school choice options are available to all families regardless of their socio-economic status, parents with special needs children are facing issues of limited school choices to enroll their special kids for a reliable special education critically at the early intervention stage. With all the considerations and constraints that parents need to confront, coming up with a decision on which school is the best for their special kids can be a never-ending process.

2. OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

ELIS SchoolBase was initiated to achieve objectives such as: (1) to provide a handy and easily accessed tool for a quick school choice decision (2) to propose guidelines on how to make school choice decisions (3) to give an idea to parents about the dimensions that they should investigate when considering the school placement for their school-age children. It provides users with benefits such as: (1) it can be used

and accessed anywhere and anytime without hassles (2) it provides a reliable tool because questionnaires are developed based on research (3) it enable users to conduct a guided self-check based on the everyday life information seeking (ELIS) behavior framework [4].

3. METHODS

A system was developed, and it adopted questionnaires designed by Assefa and Stansbury [5] that matched the ELIS framework. The four (4) dimensions suggested through which the information seeking behavior tasks can be investigated are values/attitudes, financial capital, social capital, and cognitive capital.

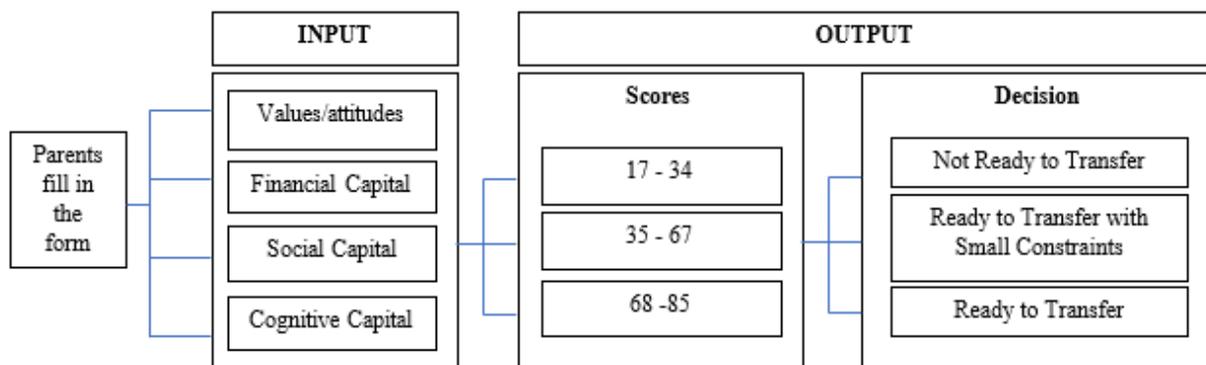


Figure 1. The process of ELIS Schoolbase system output

4. CONCLUSION

Initiated based on socio-economic dimensions and framework developed through series of research, **ELIS SchoolBase** is a handy guided solution for parental school choice decision.

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