

FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTS' DECISIONS WHEN CHOOSING A PRIVATE SCHOOL

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by

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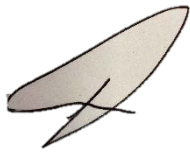
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Supervised by: Mr Kevin Rafferty



DECLARATION

I, David Arendse, hereby honestly and truthfully declare that this is my original research work, it's being submitted as partial completion of my Master of Business Administration studies at Rhodes Business School (Rhodes University). This work has never been submitted at any university or institution, all the work of others used in this research paper has been acknowledged.



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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Consumers make decisions based on multiple factors that influence their decision-making process. These decisions can be influenced by deep personal reflection to the simple impulsive purchase done to fulfil a need or want.

This research study explored the relationship between the resource-based view and the factors considered by parents when selecting a school for their child/children. The Valuable, Rare, Imitable and Organized (VRIO) framework as developed by Barney, J. (1991) outlines the framework through which an organisations resources can be assessed in terms of their potential competitive advantage. The research study was interested in understanding how an educational institution can identify and then leverage its resources to create a competitive advantage.

Methodology: Each family that has one or more child enrolled at St Stithians College, which is a private school in Gauteng, South Africa, was invited to participate in the study. This represented a potential population size of 1 700 families, however a sample of 334 was used. The educational institution caters to both boys and girls from Grade R to 12 (Matric). Each family was requested to participate in the study as they had already chosen to have at least one child enrolled.

A self-administered close-ended questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection and the questionnaire was broken into two sections. Section A focused on building a profile of the respondent while section B assessed the level of influence the factors had on a parent's decision. Section B's questions were structured as Likert-Scale questions requiring a response between 1 and 5, with 5 being the highest influence, and 1 being the lowest. The responses to the questions were then grouped into the factors they spoke to and the average results per factor were assessed via an ANOVA table to test the null hypothesis that parents do not consider factors when choosing a school for their children.

Findings: As a paper, this study set out to discover what the competitive advantage was of a private education institution in South Africa. It did so by identifying what the key factors were when parents selected the school of their choice and then analysed these findings against the resources of the given institution.

The ANOVA table analysis of the responses identified that parents do consider factors and that the factor that they were most influenced by was convenience factor, represented by location of the institution and the distance to it. While there are multiple private education suppliers in South Africa, no other provider has the location that St Stithians College has, and as such, its location is its competitive advantage.

Significant: This research study will expand the existing but limited competitive advantage body of knowledge in the South African education sector. South African educational institutions will be able to develop similar studies which will then assist in identifying their own competitive advantages. This can better enable education providers to entice consumers to their education services.

Keywords: Competitive Advantage, Consumer Decision Making, Education Sector, Factors Influencing Parents, South African Education.

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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION, STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM, RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

1.1 Introduction

For as long as people have tried to sell their products and services, the ability to understand why consumers make their decisions has been central in allowing providers to gain an advantage. This has led to the understanding and accepted rationale that, while on rare occasions consumers do make impulsive decisions, there are factors that organizations can identify and leverage that will then lead to building their desirability among possible consumers. This is still true today where, even though consumers are presented with many options from organizations based all over the world, they must still make consumer decisions based on the same rationale as generations before.

By defining consumer behaviour and the decision-making process that follows, organizations have been able to better understand why a consumer chooses one service or product over another. This has become a key factor in enabling organizations to unlock the competitive potential of their product or service offering (Kim, Ferrin & Rao, 2008). This process is not an easy one as there are two obstacles that cause organizations to overlook its importance. The first is the sheer magnitude of work that an analyst must perform to complete an analysis, and secondly, many who are familiar with the technique still have difficulty translating the data into a coherent strategy (Reynolds & Olson, 2001). It is therefore perhaps understandable that there has not been a study such as this undertaken in the South African education sector. Yet, given the exponential growth of the private education sector, and the continuing growth that is expected over the next few years, it is vital that private education providers understand what their competitive advantages are to position themselves apart in the growing private education sector.

While parents want the best possible education, given by the best educators available and in the highest quality facilities (Glewwe, Suzanne & Harsha, 2013) they can find these needs fulfilled by most private institutions across South Africa (Spreeen & Vally, 2006). Consumers, even in the education sector, must choose their preferred providers and the decision-making process that these consumers go through will ultimately define the outcome of this choice. What this means for educational institutions is that they, too, must be aware of the influence they can have over a consumer during the decision-making process and in the process be able to define their competitive advantage.

When it comes to identifying a competitive advantage there is a shift occurring. In 1983, Theodore Levitt first presented the idea of the 'Globalization of Markets' (Levitt, 1983) and, while controversial at the time, this idea has since permeated every organization across the world and influenced their strategies. From early in the 1980's the concept of globalization influenced how organizations created, engaged, marketed and communicated with their consumers. Competitive advantage was built on the ability of an organization to operate in the 'Globalized Market' (Opara & Eboh, 2017). However, over the past few years, there has been a negative shift in consumer sentiment towards these globalised organizations and the generic products they offer in multiple markets. As such, global branding is losing its appeal and organizations are having to respond quickly (Holt, et al., 2004) to prevent their global brands from being perceived as irrelevant. Organizations are having to present products that appeal to a localised market and to do so, there is a renewed focus on finding their competitive advantages in these localised markets. The benefit of this shift in consumer sentiment is that localised

education providers could be able to leverage this shift and gain an advantage through the close ties they have with the communities that surround them.

With the continuing demise of the public education sector in South Africa there has been an increase in the number of parents seeking the services of the private education sector. This has led to further competition in the sector as more providers enter the market to supply a service to the growing consumer market. The business case for private education in South Africa is one of the most compelling, as is seen in the meteoric rise of listed companies such as AdvTech and Curro Holdings. For example, Curro Holdings increased its annual revenue from R170 million in 2011 to almost R1.4 billion in the year ended December 2015 (Njobeni, 2017). This growth opportunity has led to a greater number of entrants to the market (Woodhead, Frost & James, 2013), while the increase in competition has led to traditional private education providers having to rethink their positions in the market and in doing so, ensuring that they maintain their competitive advantages (Al-Alak & Tarabieh, 2011).

While studies have been done in other regions of the world to highlight the reasons why parents elect to send their children to private over public education institutions (Beavis, 2004). The purpose of this study is to show the difference in the influences of factors when it comes to choosing St Stithians College and in doing so identify and define the competitive advantage presented by St Stithians College. St Stithians College is a private education institution situated in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. It offers private education to both boys and girls from Grade R to 12 (Matric).

Through a closed-ended questionnaire distributed to the parent body of the private institution, the factors that led parents to choosing a specific private education institution over other potential institutions will be tested and the differences in these factors identified. The identification of these factors will then begin to point towards the competitive advantage presented by the institution. The purpose of asking current parents was to indicate their motivation and therefore understand why they elected to send their child to this institution over other potential like-for-like suppliers of private education.

A previous study by Alyani, Osman & Bachock (2014) provided the factors that parents look for in an educational institution. These are the level of teacher quality, the academic results that the institution can produce as well as the access to facilities that the institution provides (Alyani, et al., 2014). However, for the most part, private education institutions provide these, and therefore they are not in themselves differentiating factors that attract parents to one school over another.

This study indicated that ultimately convenience, as shown through the location of the institution's campus as well as the distance a consumer resides from the campus, is a defining factor. The potential for this to continue to be a mitigating factor in South Africa is high as the country continues to see an increase in urbanisation consumers will potentially continue to make choices based on convenience.

1.2 Background of the study

When identifying a firm's competitive advantage, the Resource-Based view, which was explored by Barney (1991) in his article "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage" (Barney, 1991), presents a framework for analysing an organizations available resources as well as how these resources are then used to leverage the competitive advantage of the organization. While the literature presents different ideas around the concept of the resource-advantage perspective, which the Resource-Based view uses as its principles, at its core, the common theme is that the firm's resources are heterogeneous and imperfectly mobile, and that management's key task is to understand and organize the available resources for sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). For resources to hold potential as sources of sustainable competitive advantage, they should be valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable and not substitutable (generally known as the VRIO; Value, Rareness, Imitability, Organization, framework) (Barney & Zajac, 1994).

While the Resource-Base view has been widely explored in strategic management circles, its usage when identifying the competitive advantage of service providers, such as education providers, has not been as widely explored.

The education sector in South Africa is divided into two different areas (Fiske & Ladd, 2006). There is a public sector, which is funded by the government, with oversight and control by Department of Basic Education, and a private sector which is funded and managed independently from government. The public sector has the mandate to provide education to all citizens of the Republic of South Africa and as such the schools which are managed by the Department of Basic Education are not in competition with one another (Bolton, 2017). Instead, they are an apparatus of government intended to provide a basic service in accordance with the Bill of Rights (Bolton, 2017). As such, this sector's management and organizational structures are not focused on gaining a competitive advantage but instead in ensuring sustained results across an entire system (Fiske & Ladd, 2006).

The private sector, on the other hand, is like that of any private service provider (Coleman, 1987) and, as such, the institutions which are set up to provide the service of education to the paying public rely on the fees these institutions can charge for the education they provide to their pupils as well as, in some instances, outside income. This may be in the form of donations and contributions from their alumni networks or income raised through listing on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, as was done by Curro Holdings and the AdvTech Group. The service provided by the institution is education and they charge for these services accordingly. As a result, to increase their market share, these institutions need to set themselves apart by defining their competitive advantage and leveraging this advantage to increase their attractiveness to prospective parents in the highly competitive private education sector (Montenegro & Patrinos, 2013).

Research was conducted in Malaysia by Alyani, Osman & Bachock (2014), which focused on understanding what factors contributed to influencing prospective parents' decisions to enrol their children in certain private institutions over others. This research is relevant to the South African context, where there is a growing private education sector and as more and as more prospective parents begin to look for alternative options for their children's education (MacGregor, 2008). Private institutions in South Africa are in the unique position where they can take advantage of this shift (Jansen & Taylor, 2003). However, to do so, they will need to better understand how these factors influence the decision of prospective parents in the South African context; and by doing so, these private institutions can then better leverage their competitive advantage to set themselves apart in the market. Are they able to identify resources that are valuable, rare, costly to imitate, and is the

organization organized to capture value (Knott, 2015)? For education institutions these resources may be as obvious as the teaching faculty, while others may be less so, but either way every organization is presented with a unique set of capabilities, and it is the organization's ability to identify which of their resources fit the VRIO framework that will enable it to gain a competitive advantage (Knott, 2015).

At present, the influence of the factors on a parent's decision when selecting a private school for their child differs across various regions around the world. While, in some studies, parents seem to place greater importance on the reputation of the school, (Bosetti, 2004), while Beavis (2004) showed research which seemed to indicate that parents prefer schools that achieve greater academic results. This then leads parents to elevate the importance of the school's overall performances as a factor influencing their decision of choice (Beavis, 2004). In some occasions there even seems to be a greater influence based on the demographics of the parent or the level of education of the parents (Burgess, et al., 2015). This poses a unique opportunity for the South African context, because most of the South African population was historically prevented from receiving equal access to education (Spren & Vally, 2006). Further to this, is the level of trust that parents place in an educational institution to provide the best outcome for their child. This aspect is paramount and therefore the need to develop and nurture the trust placed in these institutions is vital (Cheng, *et al.*, 2019).

These studies, as well as the study undertaken by Alyani, *et al.*, (2014) in Malaysia, have helped to identify eight factors that together define what contributes to a parent's choice of a private institution for their children. These are social background or status, income level, school syllabus, school environment or facilities, school performances, location, teaching quality and distance (Alyani, et al., 2014). Each of these factors impacts a prospective parent's choice differently; however, it is how a private institution presented their unique positioning against these eight factors that contributed to the respective institution's competitive advantage being identifiable and inter-alia, the institution's attractiveness to a prospective parent (Alyani, *et al.*, 2014).

To conduct a similar study in a South African context, St Stithians College was chosen as a test case for the study. This College was selected because, while it is a private institution, St Stithians College offers a unique educational model. Based in Sandton, South Africa, the St Stithians College offers private education for both boys and girls from Grade R to 12. The College is structured in a style reflective of a village of schools in that there are seven schools who together make up the St Stithians College brand. Each school is run in a similar manner to that of a department within a large organization, with oversight, central capabilities and services being provided on a campus level. The head of the College is the Rector whose role is like that of a Chief Executive Officer and reporting to him are the Heads of the respective schools, each of whom functions as a head of department, managing their respective departments with a certain level of autonomy. The seven schools that fall under the St Stithians College brand are the Junior Primary which is a co-educational school offering schooling from Grade R to 2, separate Girls' and Boys' Preparatory schools offering schooling from Grade 3 to 7 and separate Boys' and Girls' Colleges which offer education from Grade 8 to 12. The sixth school is Thandulwazi, a non-profit maths and science academy whose mandate is to provide free education through a Saturday school model for Grade 8 to 12 learners from around Johannesburg, as well as a teacher training program through which 43 intern teachers are provided to St Stithians College annually. The seventh school is the Kamoko Bush School, an outdoor education facility owned and managed by St Stithians College in the rural Modimolle region situated in the Limpopo Province of the Republic of South Africa. This facility provides a unique teaching environment for all St Stithians College learners as well as other institutions wishing to make use of it. St Stithians College was founded in 1953 as a boys' college and has since expanded over the years, with the founding of the girls' college in 1995.

Currently, there are 2600 students enrolled, made up from 1700 families, at St Stithians College over the different schools (St Stithians College, 2018).

1.3 Statement of the problem

With parents being faced with many options when it comes to the education of their child or children. These decisions are influenced by many external factors that influence a parent's decision, which for the most part cannot be controlled (Spreeen & Vally, 2006). This is as a result of there being mitigating factors that each parent takes into consideration individually when electing to enrol their child or children at a given institution. For education institutions, identifying and understanding these factors is vital in determining their competitive advantage. In doing so, the ability to understand the why in a parent's decision of choosing one education institution over a similar competitor in the market is key to identifying an institution's differentiators.

Currently, many of these institutions assume and rely on their traditions and reputation (Jansen & Taylor, 2003), and while this may have been a mitigating factor in the past, parents today are presented with multiple options to choose from (Nairaland, 2012). For an education institution to continue to be at the forefront of the consumer's choice, they need to understand what their unique selling points are. This then presents the problem of understanding what sets one institution out from another. Why do parents choose certain institutions over others? For the purposes of this study, the focus will primarily be on St Stithians College. Given that there are so many options why do parents chose St Stithians College.

1.4 The objectives of the research study

The aim of this research is to examine the factors considered by parents when deciding to enrol their children in St Stithians College. This will provide evidence for identifying what sets the institution apart from its competitors and help present an argument for its competitive advantages.

1.4.1 Specific aims

The aim of this study is:

- To assess and identify the influence of the eight factors; Social background, income level, school syllabus, school environment or facilities, school performances, location, teaching quality and distance.
- To explore, statistically, the strength and weaknesses of these factors in the decisions made by the parents

1.4.2 The research question

What are the factors that influence a parent's decision when choosing St Stithians College, is there a significant difference between these factors and what is the relationship between the socio-economic background of a respondent and these factors?

1.5 Hypotheses of the research study

A hypothesis is a proposed statement about any two or more variables' relationship that is then tested (Brugman, 1990). This is then designed through a strong research question as well as influenced by the accompanying literature review (Lawson, 2008). As such, the following hypotheses were derived from the research question presented in the above section, following an extensive review of the existing literature.

The null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference in the influence that factors have on a parent, from a certain socio-economic background, decision to send their child or children to a specific school.

Ha1: There is a significant difference in the level of influence that factors have on a parent's decision to send their child or children to a specific private educational institution.

1.6 Significance of the study

The outcome of this research will be beneficial to the private education sector of South Africa as it can be replicated in any education institution wishing to understand why parents choose them as their preferred educational institution. It is primarily beneficial to St Stithians College as it provides a better understanding of why parents chose to send their child or children to St Stithians College. By considering the factors that influenced a parent's decision, the institution can better use their unique capabilities. This will enable the College to better communicate its competitive advantage which can then contribute to growth strategies for the College.

The research was also able to advance the knowledge of the Resource-Based view in the growing private education sector of the South African economy. This is because the paper provides a practical way in which private institution can identify the resources at their disposal that could then be utilised to differentiate themselves in the market. This presents potentially significant practical implications for educational institutions in terms of maximizing their competitive advantages.

Such a study is important for education institutions as these institutions are service providers competing in a highly competitive sector of the market. As such, for these providers to be able to attract and sustain consumer engagement, there needs to be a greater level of understanding in how and why consumers choose them.

1.7 Research study outline

1.7.1 Chapter 2: Literature review

An extensive review of the literature is discussed, from the origins of the Resource-Based view, its evolution over the recent times and where several key theorist contributions were discussed. This has helped to construct. A large aspect that was discussed were the VRIO framework and the development

of where it is today. Similarly, Consumer Decision-Making was discussed in detail, with its adaptations over the years culminating in the current 'five stage model' which was utilised in this study.

1.7.2 Chapter 3: Research methodology

The design of this research study is discussed in detail, ranging from locating the study within a paradigm of research (positivism), the type of study (quantitative), the sample size, research instruments, data collection technique and analysis.

1.7.3 Chapter 4: Results and discussion

The statistical output of the results is presented and discussed in detail. The Chapter discusses the response statistics, reliability statistics, frequency statistics, explains the variables and an ANOVA table tests the hypothesis presented.

1.7.4 Chapter 5: Recommendations, ethical considerations and conclusion

All the respondents who participated in the study were above the age of 18, and this was ensured by the fact that only the parent body of the institution received the request to participate. The confidentiality of the respondents was achieved by not requesting their names or personal details in any manner or form. This ensured that all responses were anonymous. All participants were required to indicate their consent to participate in the study, thereby acknowledging voluntary participation in the study. The organization where the research study was conducted signed granting permission to conduct the research. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University to conduct the research. Ethical clearance number; 2018 08 80_Arendse, a copy of the letter can be found in Appendices (Ethics letter of approval, 74).

The recommendations presented are aimed at St Stithians College as this was the institution where the research was undertaken. The findings were discussed in brief and this allowed for the key findings to be unpacked.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter briefly introduced theories and concepts that were adopted in the study without going into much detail. It also unpacked the location of the study.

In this chapter the problem that motivated the study was presented and this then fed into the objectives and specific aims being unpacked. The study outline was also presented together with an outline of each chapter.

The next chapter will begin to explore the current literature and theories that give this study its theoretical context.

CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter briefly defines The Resource-Based View, the four attributes of resource that can present a competitive advantage, namely those that are Valuable, Rare, Imitable, Organized (VRIO), an overview of the education climate of South Africa, the Consumer Decision making theory and the factors that parents consider when electing to send their child/children to a specific education institution.

Similar studies conducted globally are also discussed as they indicate factors influencing a parent's decision as to which school to send their child or children.

2.2 Resource-based view

The Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm is an organizational model in which individuals co-operate and leverage their differences, to produce the best possible business activity within their organization (Cooner & Prahalad, 1996). What this means is that the focus of the RBV is on the relationship between an organization's resources and its ability to perform optimally, thereby creating a competitive advantage. It proposes that organizations must have resource heterogeneity, or that these resources must be unique for these resources to be able to contribute to an organization's competitive advantage (Peteraf, 1993). The concept is that if all organizations in a market were to have the same stock of resources, no strategy would then be available to one organization that would not also be available to all other organizations in the market (Dierickx & Cool, 1989). In other words, what one organization would do, the others could simply follow (Barney, 1991).

When defining if a resource is heterogeneous the RBV proposes that a resource must fit into the VRIO framework. The VRIO framework was originally developed by Barney (1991) in his work 'Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage', where he named four attributes that firm's resources must have to become a source of sustained competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). According to Barney (1991), the resource must be valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable and non-substitutable. His original framework was called VRIN; however, in his later work Barney introduced the VRIO framework, which was an improvement of VRIN model (Barney & Zajac, 1994). VRIO analysis stands for four questions that ask if a resource is: 1. valuable? 2. rare? 3. costly to imitate? and 4. is a firm organized to capture the value of the resources? A resource or capability that meets all four requirements can bring sustained competitive advantage for the company (Chatzoglou, Chatzoudes, Sarigiannidis, & Theriou, 2017).

Through this framework, managers of organizations can assess the resources available to an organization and define if they can supply a competitive advantage (Chatzoglou, Chatzoudes, Sarigiannidis, & Theriou, 2017).

Gordon and Milne (1999) explain that if an organization's current actions are incongruent with its accumulated assets, it is likely to be less effective than other organizations pursuing a similar strategy but with a good "fit" between current strategic investments and accumulated assets (Gordon & Milne,

1999). This means that if an organization has access to certain resources, its ability to use those resources to their fullest gives them a competitive advantage over their competitors.

This is not always easily implemented though, and scholars have started to explore the RBV's implications for marketing and the role played by market-based resources in the development of the marketing strategy of an organization (Srivastava, Fahey & Christensen, 2001). Drawing on the RBV, further examination as to the extent to which organizations are then able to deploy their key resources has been carried out (Hulland & Wade, 2004). However, while there has been research into this, marketing scholars have so far devoted little attention to applying the RBV in a broader approach (Srivastava, Fahey & Christensen, 2001). This is a result of the fact that there are several unresolved problems in utilising an RBV approach (Ketchen, Hult & Slater, 2007). These criticisms, as highlighted by Gordon and Milne (1999), focus on aspects such as the unit of analysis which is used, the circularity of the RBV, the exogenous nature of value, the neglect of the environment around the organization, the condition of heterogeneity, and the behavioural assumption underlying the condition of non-imitability.

With that in mind, most studies utilising an RBV prefer to use the individual resource found as the relevant unit of analysis to study a possible competitive advantage. Gordon and Milne (1999), however, points out that this choice may only be useful if the resource is well-defined and free-standing. If, in contrast, there are strong relations of complementarity and specialization among the resources it is then advisable to group these resources together. This was presented by Priem and Butler (2001) who argue that the understanding of Barney's (1991) statement "if a resource is valuable and rare, then it can be source of competitive advantage" is only true if the concepts 'valuable' and 'competitive advantage' are defined in the same terms. Peteraf and Barney (2003) answer this criticism by proposing a narrower definition of competitive advantage, with the focus shifting away from simple profitability and focusing attention on defining the competitive edge.

This was also explored by Priem and Butler (2001) who find a second important problem, namely that the value of resources often grows or originates outside of the actual organization. In his response to Priem and Butler (2001), Barney (2001) acknowledges that the determination of the value of an organization's resources is exogenous in nature to the Resource-Based Theory presented in his 1991 paper. Because of this determination of value, Priem and Butler (2001) go on to conclude that the RBV has contributed very little to the explanation or prediction of competitive advantage and recommend that scholars address core connections between resources and the environment they must operate in because, while resources represent what can be done, the competitive environment represents what must be done to compete effectively in satisfying the needs of the consumer (Saá-Pérez & García-Falcón, 2002).

2.3 Education overview

In South Africa, there is a need for quality education (Spren & Vally, 2006). This need is fulfilled through the provision of education services as defined by two sectors. On one end of the spectrum is the public or state-run education system, and on the other is the private sector.

The state sector operates under the authority of the South African Schools Act (1996). Through this act the Government of the Republic of South Africa is mandated to provide quality education to all citizens of the Republic (Republic of South Africa, 1996). It is by far the largest provider of education services in South Africa (Department of Basic Education, 2018), responsible for 23 905 schools across South Africa. The independent sector is made up by 1 786 schools across South Africa (Department of Basic Education, 2018). The state sector has been criticised for its continued decline in terms of the

educational outcomes achieved (Spreeen & Vally, 2006). While there are cases of some state schools achieving consistently strong results (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2009), this is unfortunately not the norm (Nicolaidis, 2015), and because of this decline there is a growing number of parents seeking an alternative education provider for their child or children (Spreeen & Vally, 2006).

Bridging the gap between the state sector and the private sector are the semi-private or former 'Model C' schools (South African Institute of Race Relations, 2011). Former 'Model C' schools are schools that were reserved for white pupils under apartheid. The term is not officially used by the Department of Basic Education but is widely used to refer to former whites-only schools. In 2009 the national matric pass rate in former 'Model C' schools were 94%, compared to an overall pass rate of 60% (South African Institute of Race Relations, 2011). The former 'Model C' schools are state run but are granted a level of autonomy that allows the governing body to make decisions about the direction of the institution, employ staff, and set strategic goals for the institution. Their fees are generally higher than the average state school and so they tend to resemble more of a private sector institution than the typical South African state-run schools. The future of these schools has been in the balance for some time, though, as the debate continues over whether they should be allowed to continue in their semi-autonomous manner (Christie & McKinney, 2017). Both these institutions as well as the fully state-run institutions are required to follow the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) guidance in the implementation of their examinations and the National Senior Certificate (NSC) curriculum. While each province provides its own leadership and oversight of their respective schooling districts, the schools are required to follow the national framework.

When looking into the private sector, not every private education institution is the same. Many of South Africa's traditional top private institutions were started out as church or missionary schools (SA Schools, 2018). While these institutions are private entities, they do not operate for profit (ISASA, 2018). Instead they reallocate any surplus income generated back into the institutions themselves. Due to the increase in demand across South Africa there is a growing number of newer entrants entering into the market and starting their own private institutions. Many of these institutions are run, owned, and managed by listed companies, who seek to derive value for their shareholders and as such run their institutions as for-profit organizations (AdvTech, 2018). Institutions that are operated privately can elect to be members of The Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) and this body provides accountability and accreditation services, thereby providing a benchmark to ensure that the quality of these institutions is maintained. As an ISASA institution there is the freedom to choose which syllabus is offered and many of these institutions implement the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) curriculum (ISASA, 2018).

Both the IEB and DBE are monitored by the Umalusi Council. This council sets and monitors standards for general and further education and training in South Africa in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework Act No 67 of 2008 and the General and Further Education and Training Quality Assurance Act No 58 of 2001 (Umalusi Council, 2018).

The Council is tasked with the development and management of a sub-framework of qualifications for general and further education and training and for the attendant quality assurance (Umalusi Council, 2018).

Umalusi is currently responsible for the certification of the following qualifications in schools:

- Senior Certificate (SC) - continues as a revised qualification for adults
- National Senior Certificate (NSC) - replaced the SC in 2008

ISASA schools undergo a further level of quality testing through the bi-annual IQAA accreditation visits, these ensure that ISASA institutions meet the requirements and expectations of ISASA and ensure the credibility of the institutions associated to it (ISASA, 2018).

A further provider, albeit a much smaller player in the market, are the International Schools, who offer British, American or German curricula. Some of these institutions are ISASA members, while others operate purely independently from the rest of the education sector in South Africa (ISASA, 2018).

There is a growing trend towards the privatisation of education in South Africa (Spren & Vally, 2006), and as this trend continues, the need for these private service providers to differentiate themselves will be key in unpacking and leveraging their competitive advantages (Cao, Berkeley & Finlay, 2014).

2.4 Consumer decision making

Consumer decision making, or consumer behaviour is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes used to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society (Dennis, Merrilees, Jayawardhena, & Wright, 2009). In other words, it is the process consumers undertake, consciously or sub-consciously, when they choose which product or service to purchase. This process considers certain factors which then influence a consumer's decision.

Most of the time, the products and services purchased are because of a long and detailed decision-making process (Etzioni, 2014). For organizations the success in influencing the purchase behaviour depends largely on how well the organization understands the consumer's behaviour. As such, the organization needs to know the specific needs that consumers are trying to satisfy and how they can then turn their own unique capabilities into resources the consumer wants (Morton & Fasolo, 2009). Organizations, therefore, must be able to understand how consumers go about gathering the information about the different alternatives as well as the influence that factors have on making a final decision among multiple competing brands (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000).

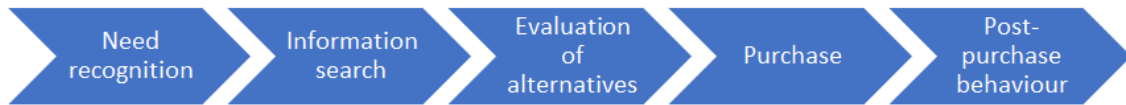
One of the most active areas of academic research in marketing over the past few decades has been looking into what is known as the behavioural decision theory (Kaa, 2010). Through behavioural decision theory researchers have been able to identify situations where consumers end up making irrational decisions (Morton & Fasolo, 2009). However, what is emphasized by these reports is that consumer behaviour becomes a very valuable area to understand for organizations as they can then understand the context in which decisions are made thereby gaining an advantage over competitors (Friedrichs & Opp, 2002).

As such, understanding how the consumer decides on which service to use has become crucial for organizations (Wang & Shukla, 2013). The work of these and other scholars have also challenged predictions from economic theory and assumptions about rationality, leading to the appearance of the field of behavioural economics.

The traditional model originally put forward by Simon (1960), of consumer decision-making process, involves the five steps that consumers move through when buying a product or service. As an organization it is imperative to understand these steps and what influences each step-in order to move the potential consumer from recognising a need or want to complete the purchase (Clark & Knutson, 1996).

The Five-stage model of the consumer buying process can be graphically depicted as follows:

Figure 1: Consumer Decision Making Five Stage Model (Clark & Knutson, 1996)



For each stage of the model it is important for organizations to both determine and identify when their target market develops a need or want. Organizations may also help to recognize the consumer's need or problem, or circumstances that trigger a need or want, at times going so far as to create the circumstance or need themselves, thereby making the consumer feel insecure without a certain product (Kanagal, 2016).

After the consumer has developed a need or a want, they then enter an information search stage the different alternatives that can be purchased to satisfy their need or want. It is during this second stage, or the information search stage where the consumer will then look both internally and externally for information on the product or service (Kanagal, 2016). An internal information search consists of utilizing information from memory or past experiences with the organization. An external information search is asking friends and family about their experiences with the organization. In certain circumstances a consumer might even go further and research from public sources, such as reviews, blogs (Darling, Heller, & Tablada, 2009). One way in which an organization can influence the external research factor is through marketing-controlled sources, such as banners, television adverts, brochures, etc (Darling, Heller, & Tablada, 2009).

The amount of time dedicated to this step usually depends on the consumer's experience when engaging the organization or service, the risk involved and the level of interest (Etgar, 2008). The process of looking for information is a choice defining moment for consumers and organizations must be able to attract a consumer during this process (Carsky, Dickinson & Smith, 1995).

However, it is not enough to simply decide on what product or service to choose and consumers often find themselves re-evaluating their choices, however, once a consumer decides on a service provider they then enter the buying process, or the fourth stage. It is in this stage where a consumer must then still implement the decision and make the actual purchase. In the beginning a consumer may make a purchase intention to use a certain service but will not follow through and complete the purchase and it is here that the consumer considers other decisions. Factors such as when to buy, where to buy, and how much money to spend all contribute to influencing the consumer as to when the purchase decision is completed. Often, there is a time delay between the formation of a purchase decision and the actual purchase (Carsky, Dickinson & Smith, 1995).

In the final, or fifth stage, otherwise known as the post-purchase or satisfaction stage, consumers evaluate and review the service they chose to purchase. Questions such as; was it right for the consumer or were their expectations met are often considered during this stage (Brunelle, 2009). A consumer will evaluate if the service has matched or exceeded the promises made during the decision process and whether they, as the consumer, will become an ambassador for the organization. Thereby becoming influences for the organization to other potential consumers who are themselves in stage two of their respective consumers decision making processes (Darling, Heller, & Tablada, 2009). The same can be said for negative feedback, which if emerging at stage two can negatively influence a potential consumer's decision-making process and negatively impact their sentiment towards a given product or service.

Even with the model proposed, it is accepted that many of the purchase decisions people make as consumers are based on a habitual or routine choice process (Gensler, Verhoef, & Böhm, 2012). For the most part, the decision process consists of little more than recognizing the problem, engaging in a quick internal search, and making the purchase to fulfil their need. As such, in these instances, the consumer spends little or no effort engaging in an external search or alternative evaluation (Belch & Belch, 2009). This is further continued by Hoyer (1984) who argues a view of decision-making based on the idea that consumers are not willing to engage in a large decision-making process. Consequently, consumers apply very quick and effortless choice tactics. This traditional model is criticised by saying that it is a rational perspective, while many people may behave irrationally when deciding it is argued that consumers do not go through this sequence whenever they buy something but instead simply act on impulse. This view was argued by McKinsey & Company (2009) who developed their own understanding of the traditional decision-making model and presented it as a circular process with four phases: initial consideration; active evaluation, or the process of researching potential purchases; closure, when consumers buy brands; and post purchase, when consumers experience them (McKinsey & Company, 2009).

Research by Macdonald & Sharp (2000) investigated how an organization's brand or reputation influences buyer behaviour, their study was a replication of the study originally undertaken by Hoyer and Brown (1990) which highlighted the brand awareness effects on consumer decision making for a common, repeat purchase product. These studies examined brand awareness in the consumer choice process. The results of this study support the idea that brand awareness or reputation is a dominant choice factor when looking at what influences consumer decision making. Their research showed that consumers will choose from different brands based on the consumers awareness of the brand and that this does not always consider the quality and price factors of the service or product being offered (Hoyer & Brown, 1990), and was replicated in a more recent study which further entrenched this finding (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000).

Similarly, Heilman, Bowman & Wright (2000) examined how brand preferences and marketing activities evolve for consumers who are new to a market. A theoretical framework was developed which begins with a consumer first purchasing in a category and shows the subsequent purchases in the next purchasing stages. The theory is based on the idea that choices made by new to the market consumers are driven by two forces. The first is an information collection stage. The second is a stage in which information collection is extended to brands not as well known. The results of the study show the importance of considering the experience with the brand or organization (Heilman, et al., 2000).

As private education institutions are service providers (Gollust & Jacobson, 2006), they are required to be able to identify the decision-making process of their potential consumers. In this case it would be a parent deciding on the educational institution for their child. As parents are required to make choices on behalf of their children these are often influenced by the parents own preferences and when it comes to selecting a school, these preferences can be based on the parents own experiences or knowledge of the schools and area (Van Pelt, et al., 2007) which then influences a parent's choice when it comes to which school to send their child to and why.

2.5 Factors that influence a parent's decision

As highlighted, when any consumer decides toward one product or service over another, they consciously or subconsciously consider several factors which influence their choices (Alyani, *et al.*,

2014). When parents go through the decision-making process of selecting a school, they consider several factors as part of the external information stage (Shiv & Fedorikhin, 1999).

Understanding these factors and how they can influence a parent's decision in the decision-making process of what school to send their child to can allow private education institutions to better position themselves in the market and while it is important to appreciate that there is a level to which children do influence their parents' decisions (Hall, Shaw, Johnson, & Oppenheim, 1995), ultimately it is the parent who are responsible for paying for the goods and services consumed by the household and making the final decision (Labrecque & Ricard, 2001).

The influences of these factors are therefore an important aspect to enable private educational institution to identify their potential competitive advantage.

2.5.1 Social Background

When profiling a child or family's socioeconomic background it is important to consider the parents' education, occupation, income, the family's assets as well as their race or ethnicity (Jackson & Bisset, 2005).

These factors including the employment status of the parents' combine to provide a social background profile. Understanding the parent's employment status speaks to the possible perceptions held by prospective parents. Parents who hold occupations with a perceived higher prestige than their peers will most likely choose an institution with a level of prestige or reputation as this contributes to the perceived social standing of the family and individuals (Rehman, Khan, Triq, & Tasleem, 2010). When looking at this factor alone, parents can elect one institution over another simply based on the perception or reputation of the institution within the community (Beavis, 2004).

2.5.2 Income Level

From an economic point of view the income of a parent or a household combined annual income becomes an important factor affecting parents' choice. This is because of the need to pay higher fees for the privilege of attending private schools (Bosetti, 2004). Often middle-income parents sacrifice and make allowances for their children to be educated in the private schools of their choice. This can have long term economic implications as in some cases these families overextend themselves, thereby burdening themselves with debt which may cause internal strife within the family unit (Tatar & Benyamini, 1992). What the family can afford and what they can get for the amount they pay can, therefore, play a role in influencing the parents' decision as they must ensure they are getting the best value for money.

2.5.3 School Syllabus

It is argued that parents select a school based on the syllabus being offered by that school (Maddaus & Marion, 1995). However, in South Africa, both public and private schools write matric exams that are accredited by Umalusi (Lepota & Murray, 2014). This is a governing institution that ensures that both the IEB and the DBE maintain a certain level in their examinations. As such the factor of choosing a school based on a school syllabus is not as much of a factor in South Africa as it is in other parts of the world (Lepota & Murray, 2014). The majority of ISASA schools are still committed to the IEB (IEB, 2018)

One aspect of the syllabus offered which may have an influence parents' decisions in the South African context is the influence of religion in schools, as many private schools in South Africa were started as church schools (Methodist Church of Southern Africa, 2017). St Stithians College is also a Methodist school with close links to the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (St Stithians College, 2018). Parents who select private schools based on the religious affiliation of the school are often concerned with the morals, values, religion, family and character development that are then expected to be developed along with the academic program (Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles, & Wilson, 2015).

2.5.4 School Environment or Facilities

When looking at what a school is, Smith (2000) defines it as a facility, which consists of school buildings on a well-located site which include the facilities for students to concentrate and learn. It facilitates the job of directing people in their social perspective, school management, school organization and class allocation as well as providing facilities to increase and assist teachers' quality and effectiveness. However, a school is not only a place that focuses on academic outcomes but also highlights the aspects of personal or social development among its learners and community (Owoeye & Yara, 2011). Hence, a school must include the elements of convenience, safety and desirability (Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles, & Wilson, 2015). Rehman, Khan, Triq, & Tasleem (2010) further highlights that the quality of education has a direct correlation to the environment of the educational institution itself and school facilities may also affect the students' academic performance. (Bosetti, 2004).

2.5.5 School Performances or Results

There is a strong level of importance placed on a school's overall performance and studies show that parents prefer schools that achieve greater results. These are not only academic, though, as parents want their children to attend schools that consistently outperform other schools (West, 1992). It is argued that parents are more likely to send their children to private schools who achieve higher than average academic results (Howley, 2000). Parents want to send their children to an institution that will give them best possible opportunities to achieve their best possible results (Alyani, Osman, & Bachock, 2014).

By focusing on achieving such high results the school increases its prestige (Checchi & Jappelli, 2003) and by doing so, elevates the school's standing amongst the South African community (Jackson & Bisset, 2005). This then increases the desirability of the school to potential parents, increasing its reputation and appeal of sending a child to it (Checchi & Jappelli, 2003).

2.5.6 Location

Finding the ideal school location is often a gamble as the location is identified based on the anticipated change that might occur in that given area (Bosetti, 2004). Given the cost of purchasing and developing land in an already built up area, schools must possess the foresight to foresee which areas will grow and be able to sustain their schools. This can at times be a hit and miss situation with some schools having to change their make-up, i.e. become boarding schools to ensure that they remain financially viable.

However, the location that an education institution places itself can influence future parents based on the desirability of the area, the access to the area, as well as its overall growth potential. While a

parent can arguably find a top education at one of the many highly ranked educational institutions, across South Africa they may not be able to find one that is conveniently located for them.

2.5.7 Teachers' Qualification

In South Africa, where the public sector is unable to compete with the pay structures of the private sector, private schools often attract the top academic staff to their institutions (Green, Machin, Murphy, & Zhu, 2008). As a result, parents send their children to these institutions expecting that the teachers teaching their children are of the highest possible quality and ability. It is argued that teacher quality can increase or decrease the learning efficiency of their pupils (Green, Machin, Murphy, & Zhu, 2008).

As teachers are on the front line of the educational services presented by schools, their ability to teach and provide the required outcomes is vital (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The link between a teachers' experience, qualifications and general ability have a direct impact on their students' achievements (Ballard & Bates, 2008). For this reason, having a faculty that has higher qualified educators than competitors create the image that the institution may supply a better education (Decorby, Halas, Dixon, Wintrup, & Janzen, 2005)

2.5.8 Distance

The need for convenience would appear to be a growing factor across the consumer decision making spectrum, from healthcare (Abraham, Anderson, Andrea, Dehmer, & Tufano, 2011), disaster management (Kapucu & Garayev, 2011), and to the way tourists plan their respective vacations (Smallman & Moore, 2010), convenience continues to be a factor that influences each of their decision-making processes.

The same could then be assumed for parents seeking out an education for their child or children. While a good education is one thing, the convenience of finding the best possible service provider that is not too far from home becomes a factor that then influences a parent. This is due to the accessibility of the location (Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles, & Wilson, 2015). Just as any other service provider sees an increase based on the location they situate themselves in, the same can be said for an educational service provider. While a location could offer outstanding facilities with world class teachers, but is out of the way for a parent, will not be as attractive as a provider that is conveniently located for these same parents (Hanrahan, 1998).

Distance can at times also plays a part in the ability of a prospective parent to be involved and a part of their child's education. However, this may not always be the case and in some situations, parents may not consider the distance of the schools at all (Burgess, Greaves, Vignoles, & Wilson, 2015). This could be because of the socio-economic background of the family, or the desire for the child to be a boarder and experience life away from their family.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the Resource-based view, unpacked the VRIO framework, discussed the current education climate in South Africa, gave an overview of the Consumer decision making as well as the factors influencing parents' decisions on the choice of school. The evolution of the Resource-based

view was discussed as was the implementation of the five stages of consumer decision making. The connection between a Consumer decision making process and a parent electing one school over another is key to understanding why a parent makes the choices they make.

While the Resource-based view has been utilised in many industries to assist in identifying an organization's competitive advantage (Ketchen, et al., 2007), the correlation between the identified competitive advantage and the process consumers go through when deciding to purchase from the organization is often overlooked (Alamgir, et al., 2010). For a private education institution, the need to not only find the respective competitive advantages, but to also be able to use the identified advantage, to influence the potential consumers in their decision-making process, is critical in attracting new potential consumers to their services.

In the next chapter the methodology and the way the study was conducted will be discussed.

CHAPTER 3 : RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted when conducting this research study. The research paradigm, the research design, quantitative method of research, the research sample, data collection and data analysis are discussed as well as the steps the research study followed to ensure validity and reliability.

3.2 Research paradigm

The research was conducted from a post-positivist paradigm with an ontological view of a critical realist. This perspective is important for such a study as the data gathered may be influenced by the participant's bias, upbringing and their own personal values. However, the ontology of a critical realist describes a view in which the reality that exists can be described or defined by what is observed; rather than the view that it exists independently of observation. Consistent with such a post-positivist paradigm, quantitative statistical data techniques were used. The gathering of such data was done through primary sources. The primary sources originated fully from the direct collection of data from the parent body of a private education institution.

3.3 Data collection method

The primary data was collected via a structured self-administered closed-ended questionnaire. The responses information was stored in a data repository and then extracted and analysed with the following objectives in mind; to assess the factors parents take into account when choosing a private school for their children, to describe, statistically, the level of influence these factors have on a parents choice, to identify any factors that score higher or lower than the total score, to identify any significant differences in the mean scores across the eight factors and to test for the homogeneity of any variances.

The questionnaire was distributed, electronically to the families who have at least one child enrolled at St Stithians College. This represented a population of 1 700 families and each family was requested to submit one response. These responses were captured, anonymously, electronically via an online collection system (Google Forms). A total of 334 responses were received representing the sample size used.

3.4 Questionnaire design

For reference, a sample questionnaire has been included in the Appendix (Questionnaire, 76). To keep the responses anonymous respondent's personal details were not asked. However, to build a profile, the parent's age, education, and socio-economic background was asked in section A. This established

the respondent's general profile. Encompassing but not limited to identifying their social background/status, income level, parent's education level, distance from the school and parent's connection to the school.

Section B then focused on understanding how the eight factors identified in the study undertaken by Alyani, et al. (2014) influenced the parents of St Stithians College when choosing to send their child to the institution. These questions were designed as Likert Scale questions and required the respondents to indicate their level of agreement with a given statement on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the least and 5 being the highest. This enabled the researcher to establish the level of influence of the school syllabus, school environment/facilities, location, school results, teacher education level, social background of the family, and distance to the campus.

While there were 31 questions, these questions were asked to identify the influence of the possible factors. The questions were grouped so that each question randomly linked to its corresponding factor. This was to attempt to stop respondents from influencing their answers unduly.

While factors such as location and distance only have two questions each that directly speak to them, both represent a similar factor in that they reveal the convenience factor that parents consider when selecting the desired school. As such each factor had a minimum of two questions asked which enabled a trend to be identified in each factor.

The questions themselves were developed in consultation with the Director of Marketing for St Stithians College, Mr Mfundo Ncube, who gave insight into some of the aspects that parents could consider when selecting education institutions. These were further analysed against studies into parent's decision-making processes undertaken by Jackson & Bisset (2005), West (1992) and Bosetti (2004). While there could have been more questions asked, to keep the questionnaire an acceptable length the total number of questions was capped at 31 ensuring an even spread in representation across the different factors.

The questions correspond the relevant factors as follows:

Table 1: Table showing the link between questions asked and factors influenced

Factor	Corresponding questions
Income level	1; 22; 26
Social Background/status	2; 11; 19; 20; 29; 30; 31
School environment/facilities	7; 8; 10; 25; 27
School performance	9; 13; 14; 21
Location	6; 17
School syllabus	3; 4; 12; 23; 24; 28
Distance	5; 18
Teacher qualification	15; 16

3.5 Data population and sampling

This research used quantitative techniques and the collection of primary data was done via the circulation of a structured self-administered closed-ended questionnaire. The research respondents were the current parent body of St Stithians College. Therefore, this group represents people who have already chosen St Stithians College over other potential schools.

The questionnaire was circulated via an email to each registered email address on the school's database via an accompanying letter signed on behalf of the Rector, Dr T Nuttall, by Mr Alistair Steward (Head of Advancement). A total of 1700 questionnaires were sent out. This represented a questionnaire to each current family at St Stithians College. Of a population size of 1700, 334 responses were received giving the sample size. Families were encouraged to submit one response per household.

The population of 1700 families represent the total number of St Stithians College families, while the sample size for this study is represented by 334 respondents.

3.6 Statistical analysis

The primary data has been analysed using MS Excel. This was used to generate tables and frequency charts to further illustrate the findings of the study. The primary data was then analysed using statistical analysis, an ANOVA table interpretation to highlight the difference that the various factors have on prospective parents.

To ensure that the statistical analysis is reliable a Cronbach's Alpha test was run on the results generated by the ANOVA table to show the reliability of the findings.

Further analysis was then done via inferential statistics to assess whether there were any trends that developed among different income groups or families living certain distances from St Stithians College. These statistics helped to then identify the factors that influence different income groups and further identified the difference in the influence of factors on parents' decisions to enrol at St Stithians College.

3.7 Conclusion

The importance of this chapter is the outline of the framework this study followed with the context of academic research. This chapter identified the research paradigm, the design of the research and the population of the study. The sample was also presented as were the methods of data collection and data analysis were discussed.

Based on the research literature and methods drawn from similar studies, the adopted methodology for this study is suitable and consistent with the similar studies in the body of literature, as indicated in the above paragraphs.

This chapter showed how the research was conducted and where the data was gathered from. What this data means and how it can be interpreted is further unpacked and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4 : RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented a discussion on the steps that were followed in obtaining the results discussed in this chapter. Chapter 1 of this research study present the hypotheses that were drawn from the literature review discussed in Chapter 2 of this research study.

The hypotheses has been tested, and the results generated are discussed in this chapter.

The first part of the chapter discusses the respondent's profile. Enabling a general profile of the type of person who participated in the study to be created. From here the actual results from the questionnaire which was circulated are unpacked and discussed, showing, graphically the responses per question. This is broken into section A and section B allowing for easy reference when discussing and analysing the findings.

The results from section B are evaluated statistically to allow for further interpretation and analysis to be done to better understand the different influences each factor has on a parent's decisions. It is here that the mean response rate per question is discussed and potential trends identified. These results are tested statistically using an ANOVA table and the reliability tested through a Cronbach Alpha test.

To find trends, the data is then tested through inferential statistics which illustrate the potential trends based on certain respondents' profiles.

A descriptive analysis is then done on each section, from which the results are discussed in detail and the potential implications these findings have on education providers in the future is eluded to.

4.2 Respondents profile

Every person who received and responded to the questionnaire is a current parent of St Stithians College, meaning that they have already chosen to send their child or children to the institution.

To ensure that only present families participated, the questionnaire was sent out using the internal emailing system of the institution. This allowed for the institution to introduce the study to the parent body and encourage their participation.

To ensure that no minors participated in the study, the questionnaire was only circulated to current parents, and they were requested to respond from a parent's perspective. Access to the questionnaire was secure, and unless the link was sent to an individual, they would not be able to gain access to it.

4.3 Results of findings

Section A of the questionnaire was designed to create a comprehensive profile of the respondents and in doing so build a better understanding of the profile of a typical St Stithians Parent.

Section B required the respondents to indicate the level of agreement they held with each statement in terms of the influence had in deciding on whether to attend the school or not.

Out of a population size of 1700 families 332 responses were received, which represents just under 20% (19,52%) of the total population. Of the 332 responses received, 328 gave consent to participate in the study, while only 4 chose to not participate and they were not then asked to participate any further in the study and as such their responses were not captured.

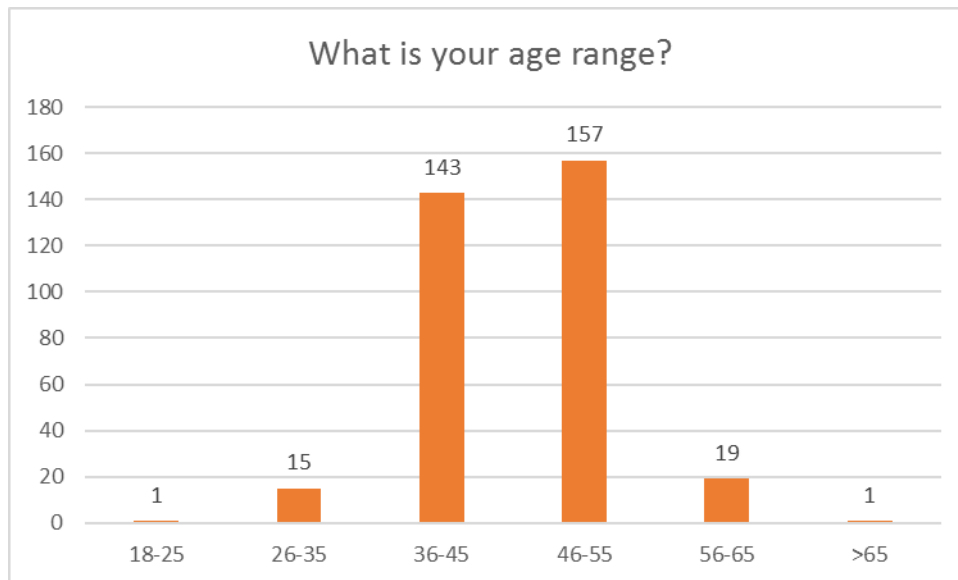
The graphs below give an illustrative insight into the responses received in Section A.

4.3.1 Voluntary Consent.

332 responses were received, of these 4 indicated they did not give consent and were not asked any further questions. The remaining 328 responses were captured, and their responses are as below.

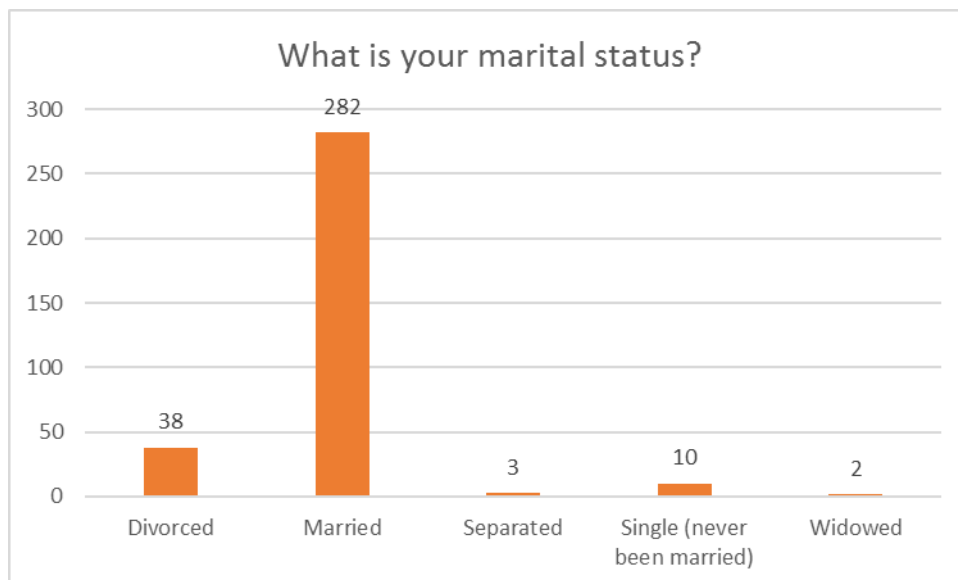
4.3.2 Results from section A

Figure 2: Age range of respondents



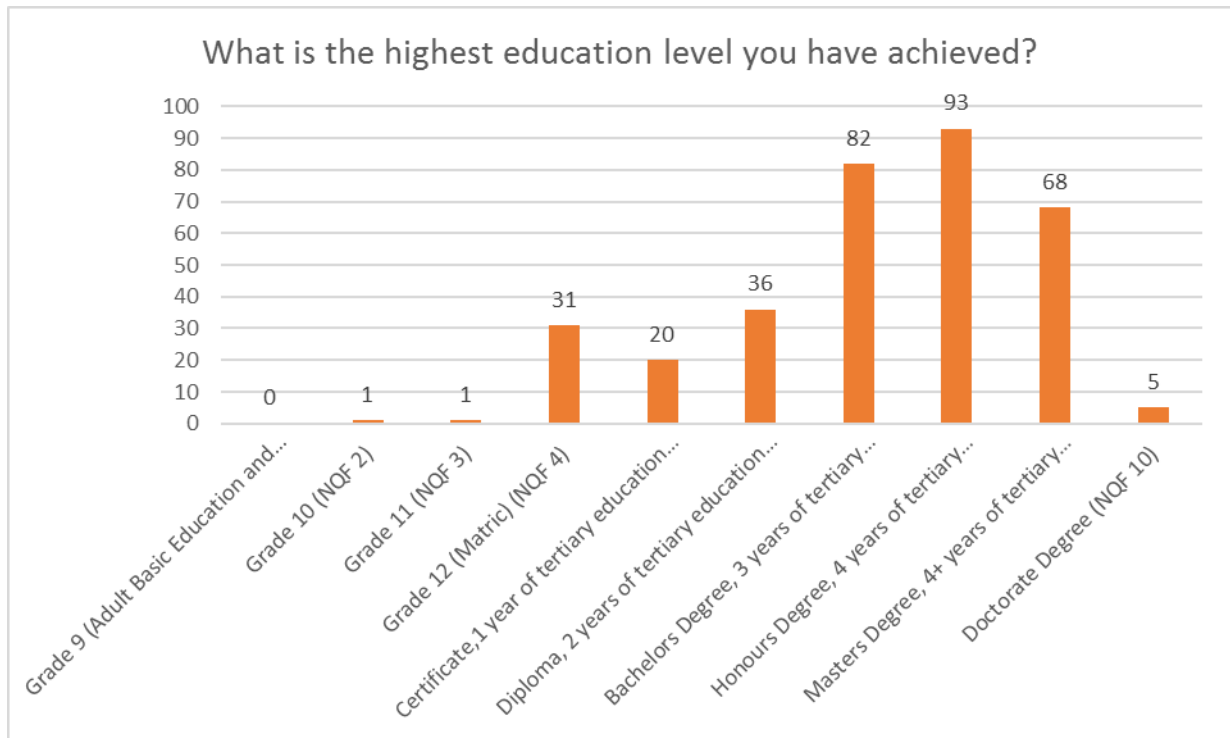
Marital status.

Figure 3: Figure 3: Marital status of respondents



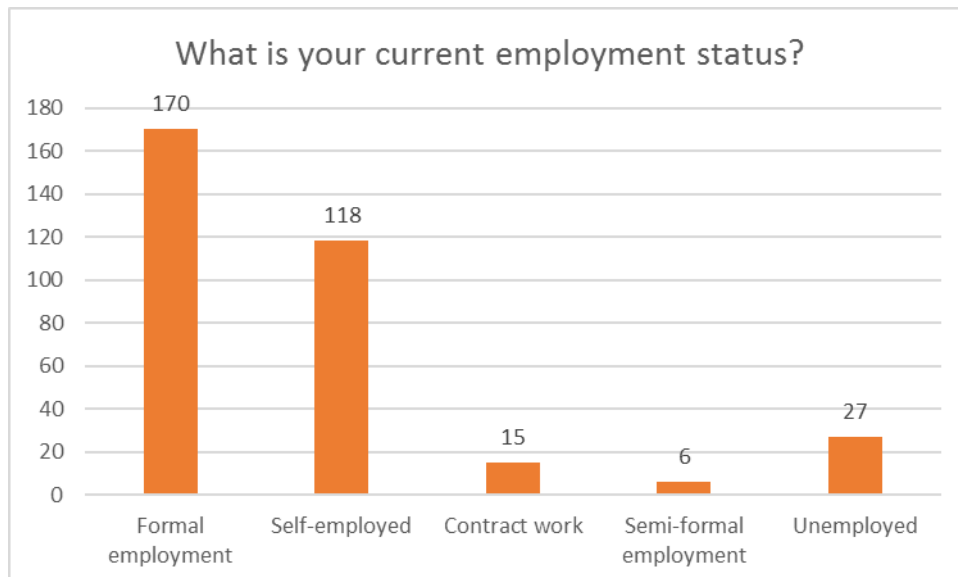
Highest education level.

Figure 4: Highest level of education achieved by respondent



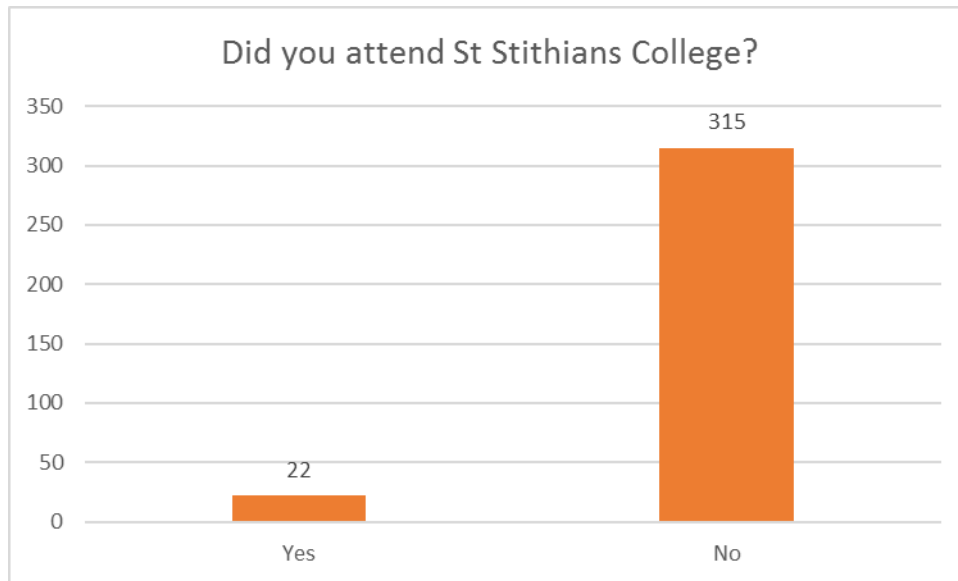
Employment status.

Figure 5: Current employment status of respondents



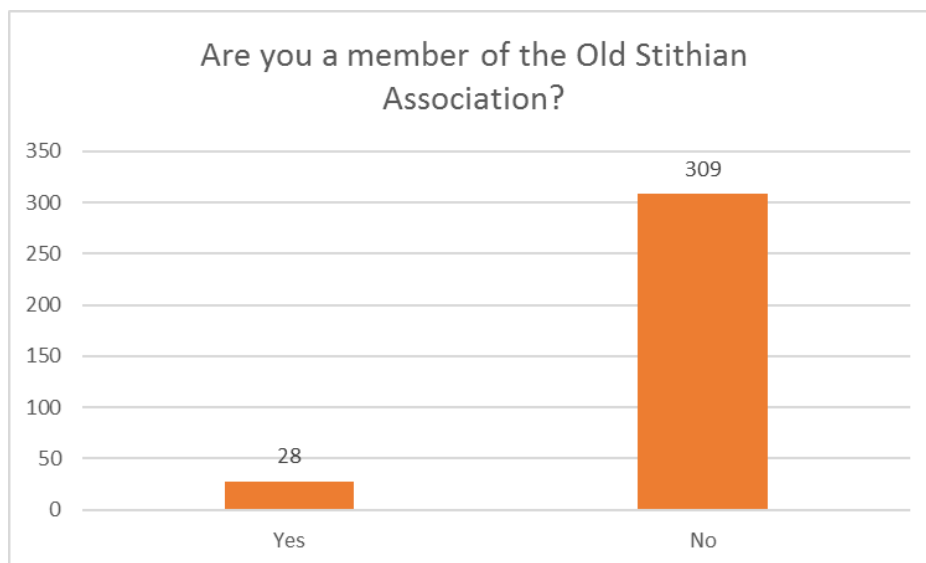
St Stithians College attendance.

Figure 6: Respondents past attendance at St Stithians College



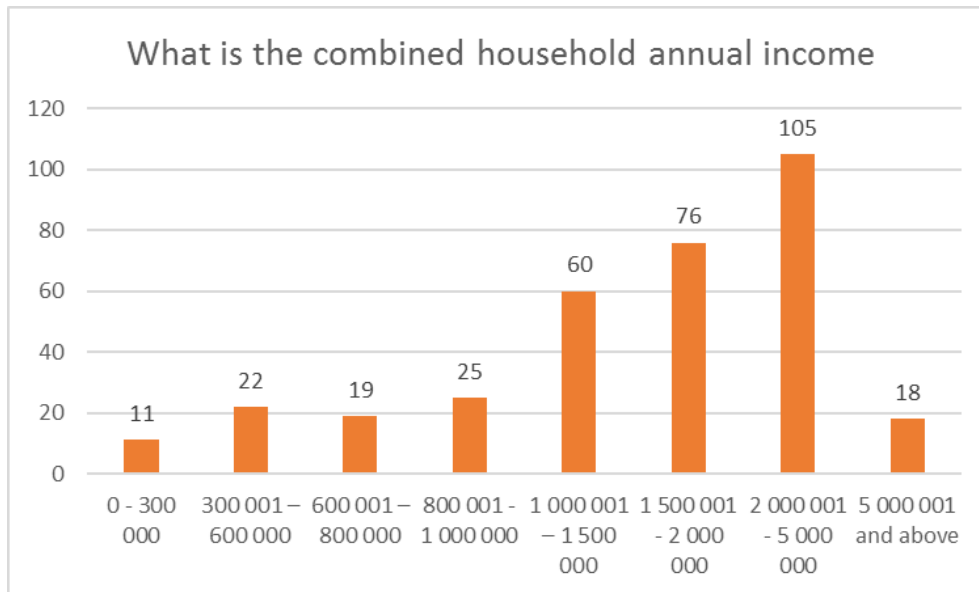
OSA membership.

Figure 7: Respondents affiliation to the OSA



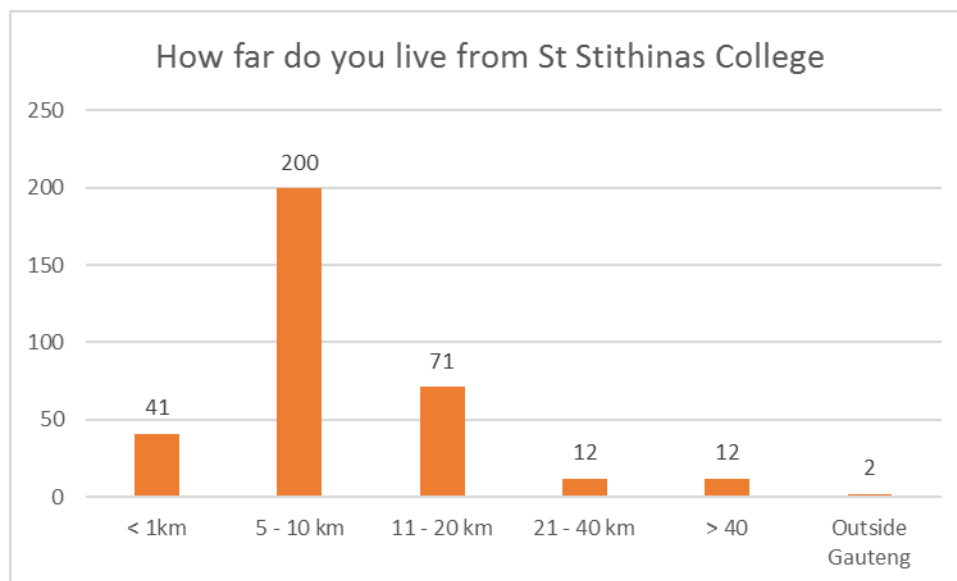
Combined household income.

Figure 8: Total combined annual income level of respondent's per household



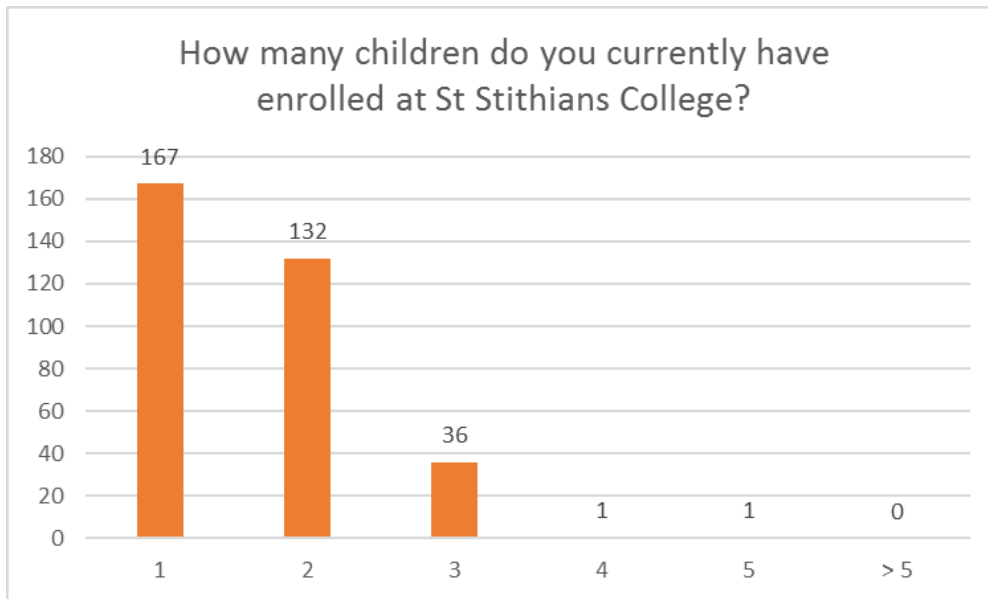
Distance from school.

Figure 9: Distance respondents reside from St Stithians College



Children currently enrolled.

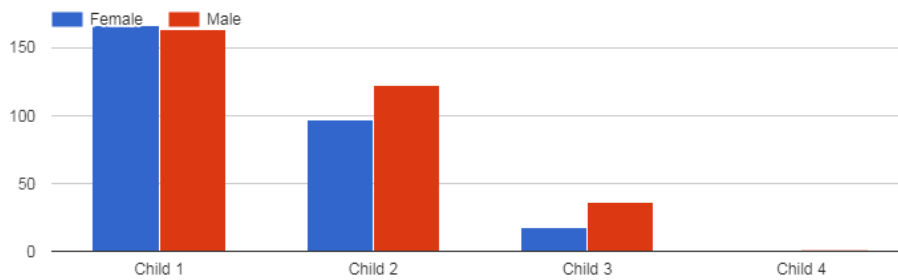
Figure 10: Number of children respondents enrolled in St Stithians College



Childs sex.

Figure 11: Sex of the respondent's child(ren)

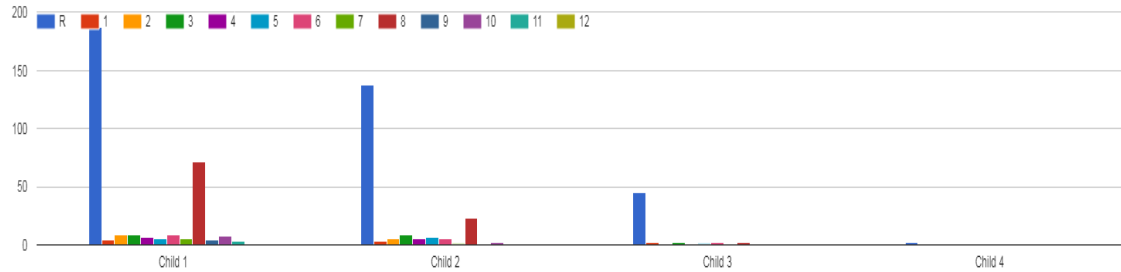
What are your children's sex?



Grade of first enrolment.

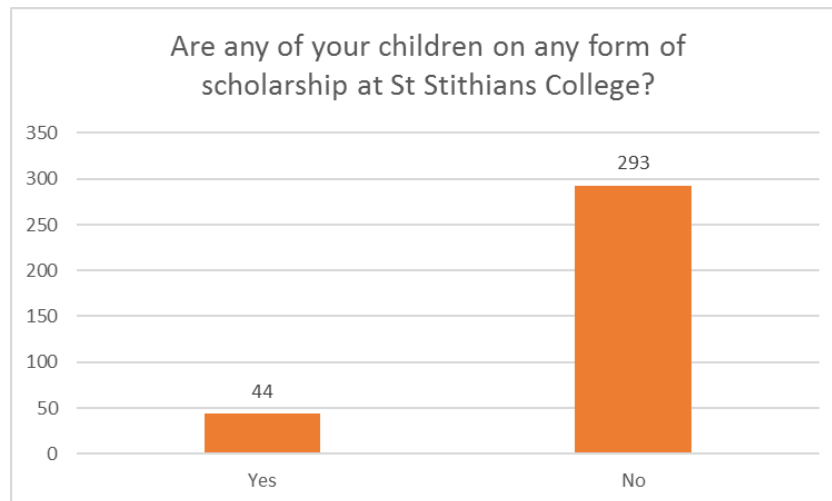
Figure 12: Grade of first enrolment

In what Grade did you enroll your children St Stithians College?



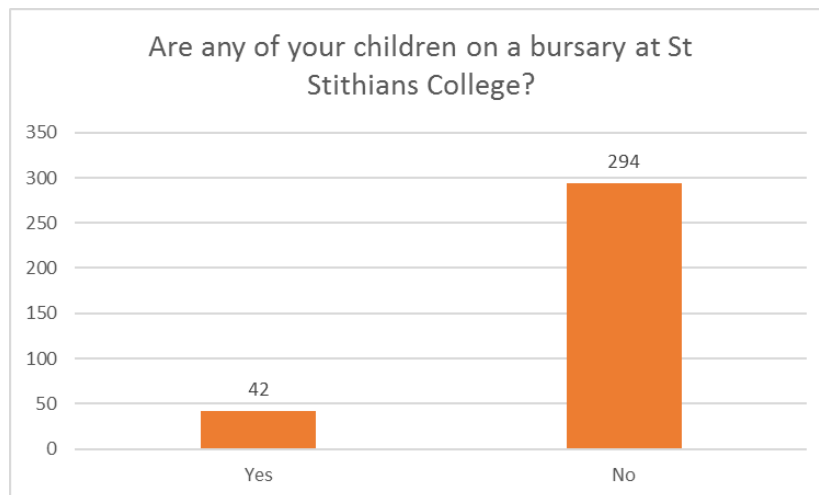
Scholarship recipients.

Figure 13: Responses from scholarship recipients



Bursary recipients.

Figure 14: Responses from scholarship recipients



Below is a breakdown of the mean responses per question asked in section B. Section B focused on understanding the influence of the different factors on the decisions made by parents for their children's education. For each questions the mean response is shown. This shows which of the questions received higher or lower response levels indicating which held more and less influence over the respondent's decision.

4.3.3 Results from section B

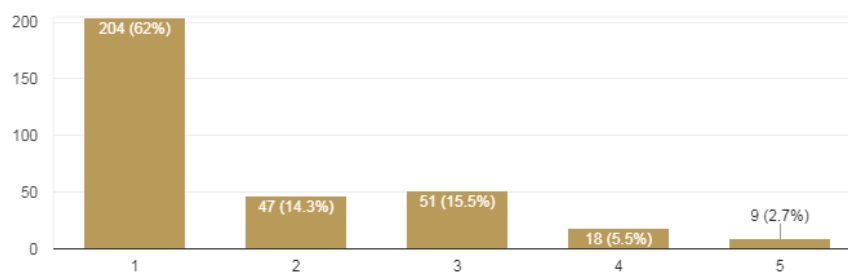
This section gives the results from each question asked. These are reflected in graphs which show the responses per question.

Question 1.

Figure 15: Question 1 responses

When compared to other schools I was looking at, because the annual fees charged by St Stithians College were less...d my child(ren) to St Stithians College.

329 responses

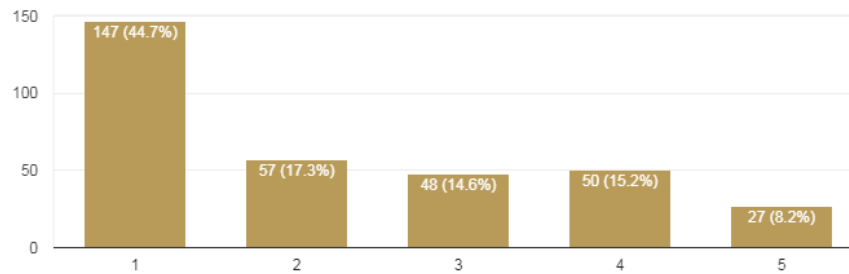


Question 2.

Figure 16: Question 2 responses

I chose St Stithians College because it is a Methodist school

329 responses

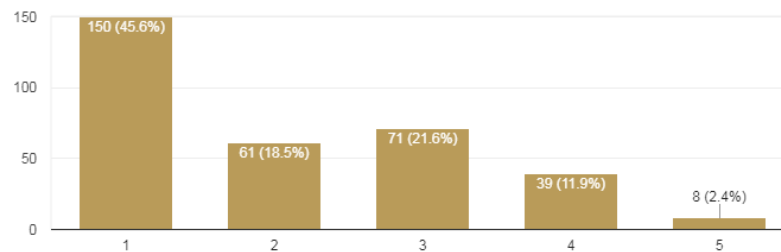


Question 3.

Figure 17: Question 3 responses

I chose St Stithians College because the school offers opportunities to go on international tours.

329 responses

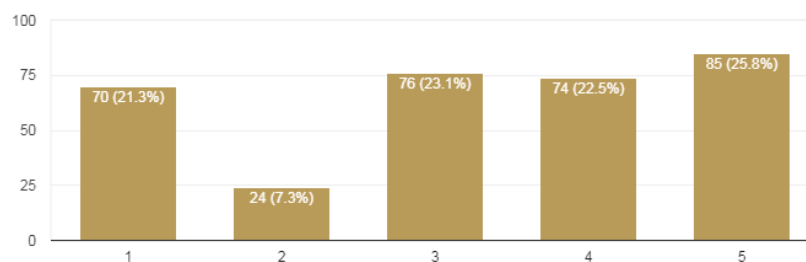


Question 4.

Figure 18: Question 4 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the school's affiliation to the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA)

329 responses

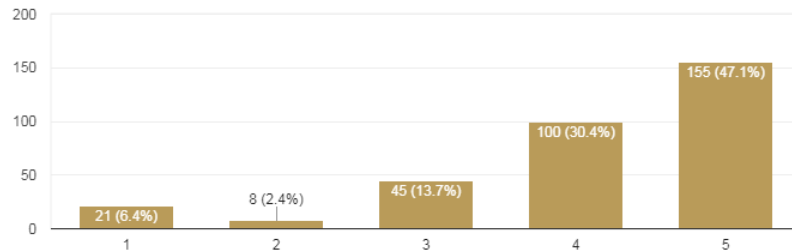


Question 5.

Figure 19: Question 5 responses

I chose St Stithians College because St Stithians College utilizes the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) exams.

329 responses

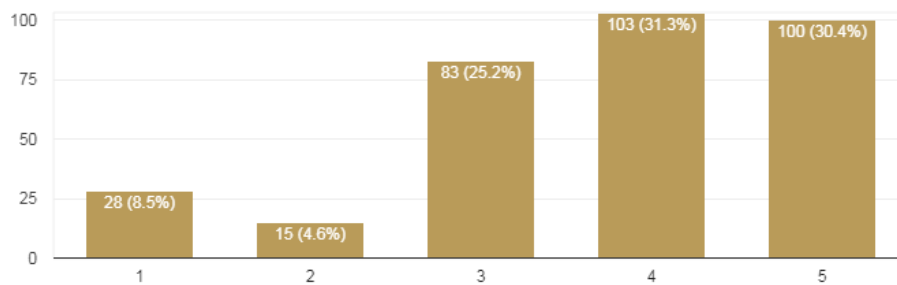


Question 6.

Figure 20: Question 6 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the academic subjects offered by the school.

329 responses

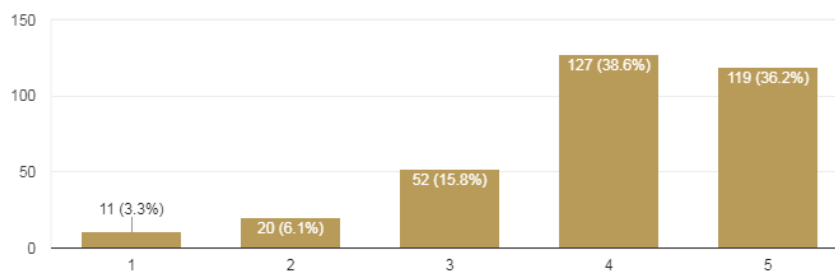


Question 7.

Figure 21: Question 7 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the look and feel of the campus.

329 responses

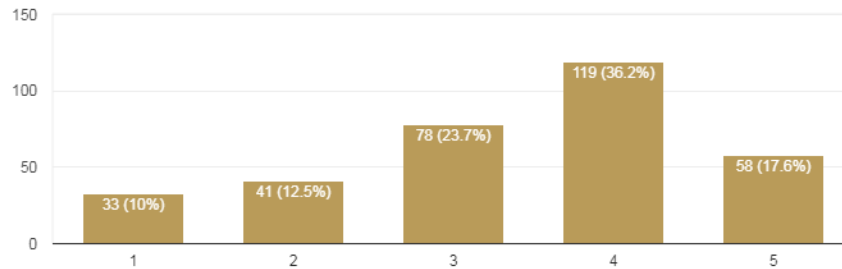


Question 8.

Figure 22: Question 8 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the security offered on campus

329 responses

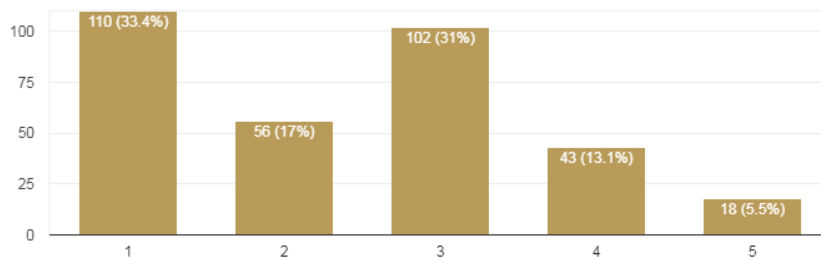


Question 9.

Figure 23: Question 9 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the access to medical facilities on campus

329 responses

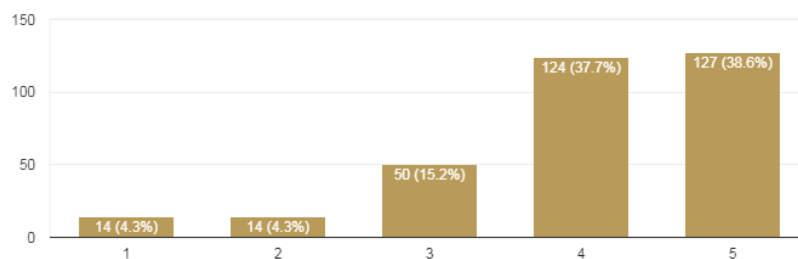


Question 10.

Figure 24: Question 10 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the access to the various sporting facilities on campus.

329 responses

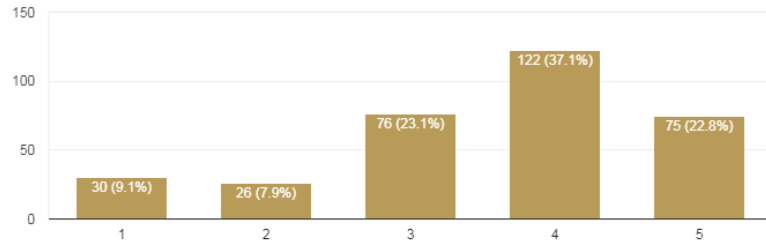


Question 11.

Figure 25: Question 11 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the access to the various to cultural facilities on campus.

329 responses

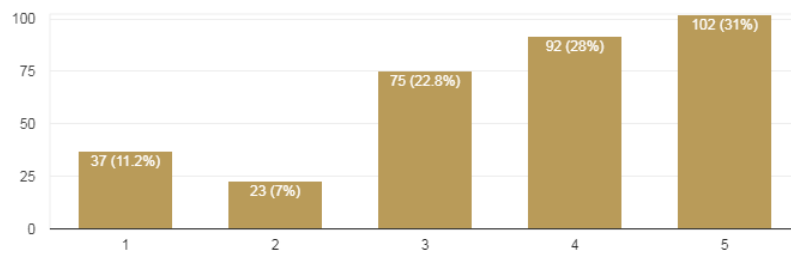


Question 12.

Figure 26: Question 12 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the sporting codes offered.

329 responses

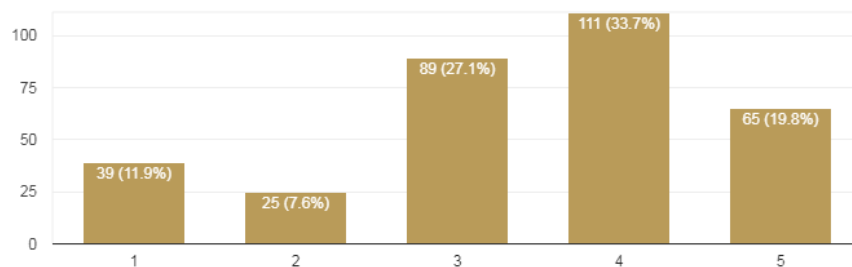


Question 13.

Figure 27: Question 13 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the cultural opportunities offered.

329 responses

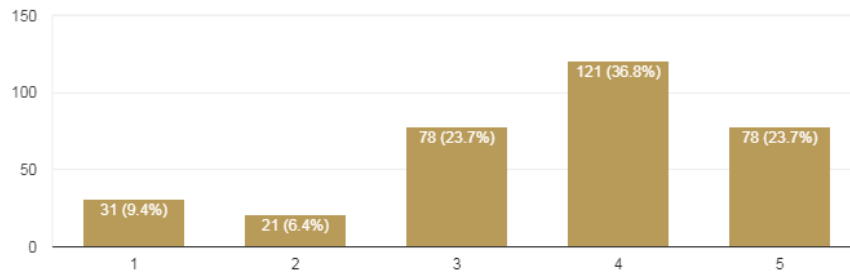


Question 14.

Figure 28: Question 14 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the access to computer and other e-learning platforms on campus.

329 responses

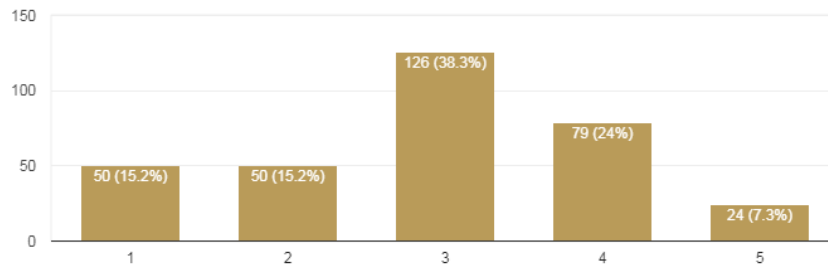


Question 15.

Figure 29: Question 15 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the look and feel of the classrooms.

329 responses

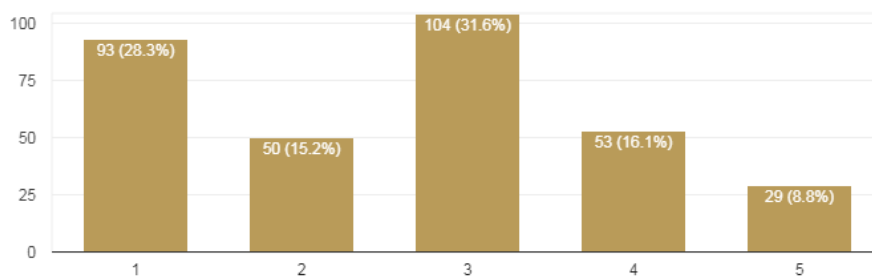


Question 16.

Figure 30: Question 16 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the racial demographic of the school.

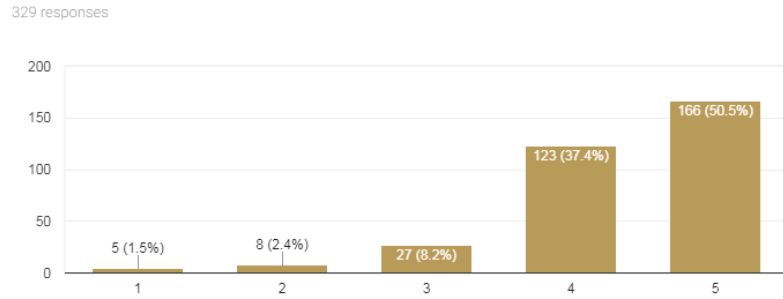
329 responses



Question 17.

Figure 31: Question 17 responses

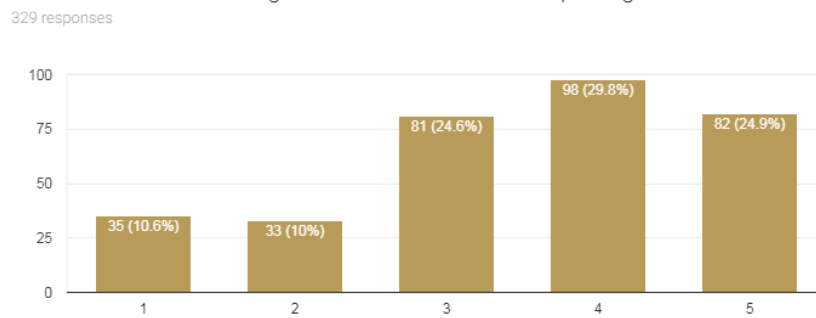
I chose St Stithians College because of the school's academic performances.



Question 18.

Figure 32: Question 18 responses

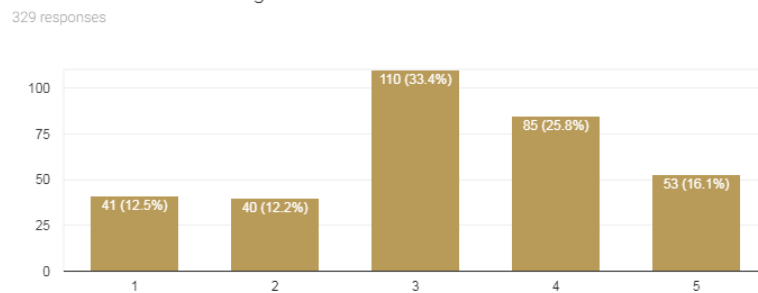
I chose St Stithians College because of the school's sporting achievements.



Question 19.

Figure 33: Question 19 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the school's cultural achievements.

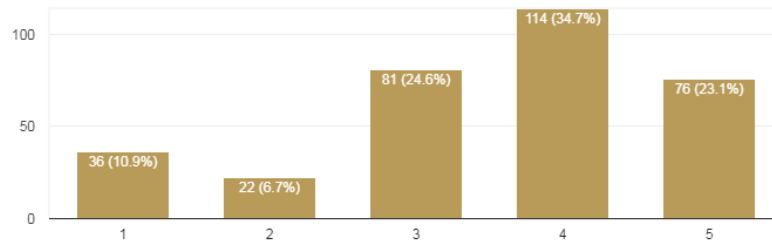


Question 20.

Figure 34: Question 20 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the qualifications held by the teaching staff at the school.

329 responses

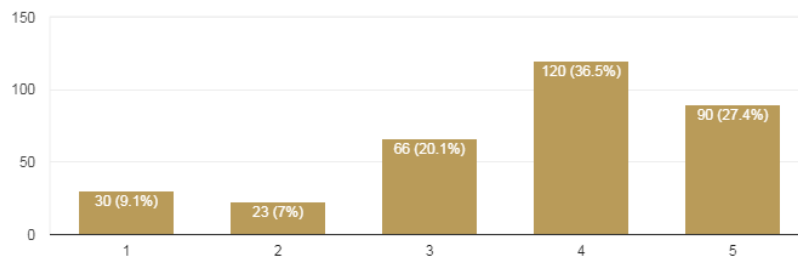


Question 21.

Figure 35: Question 21 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the teaching staff's level of experience at the school.

329 responses

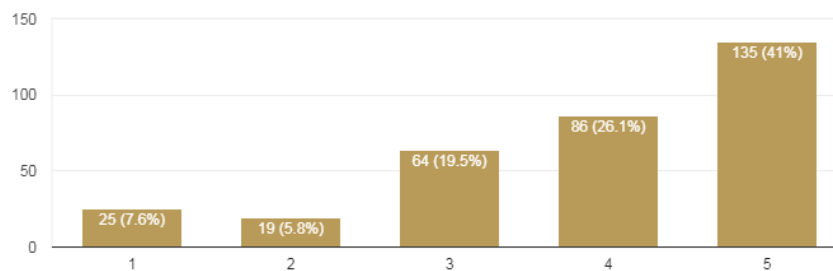


Question 22.

Figure 36: Question 22 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the school's location.

329 responses

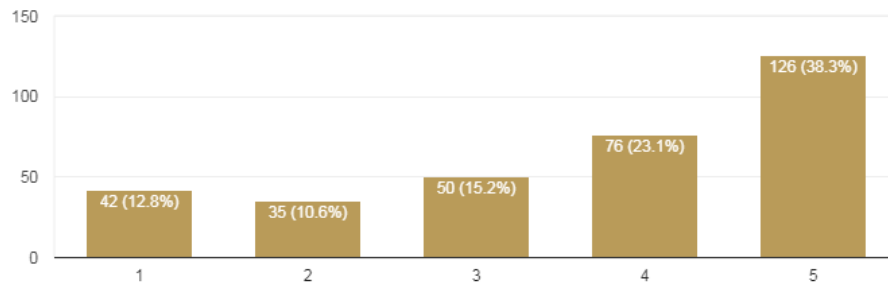


Question 23.

Figure 37: Question 23 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the distance and travel time to school.

329 responses

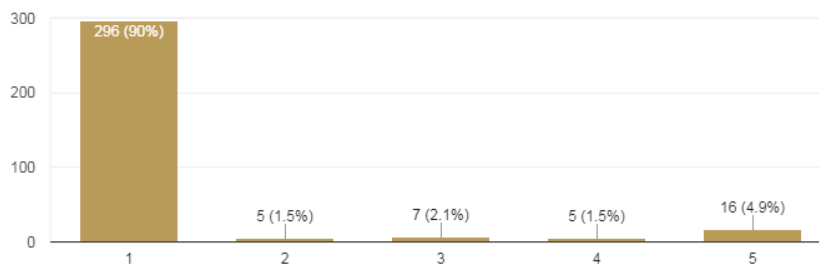


Question 24.

Figure 38: Question 24 responses

I chose St Stithians College because I once attended the school.

329 responses

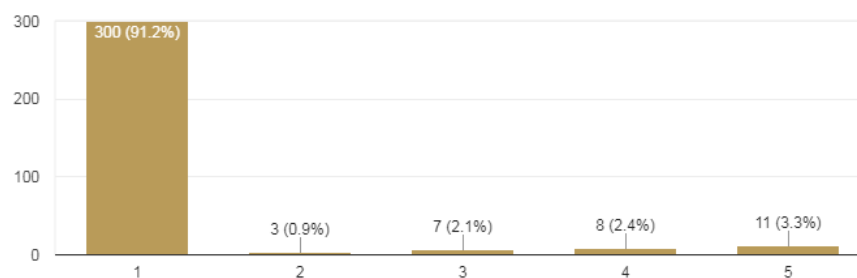


Question 25.

Figure 39: Question 25 responses

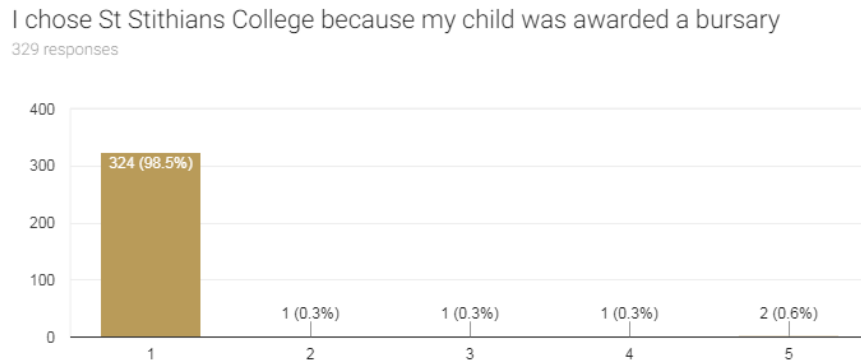
I chose St Stithians College because my child was awarded a scholarship

329 responses



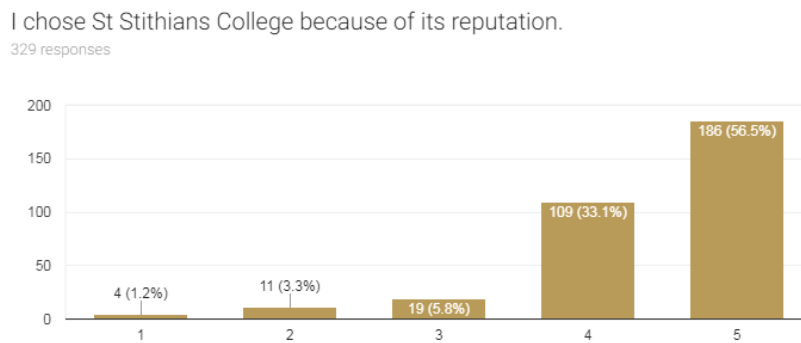
Question 26.

Figure 40: Question 26 responses



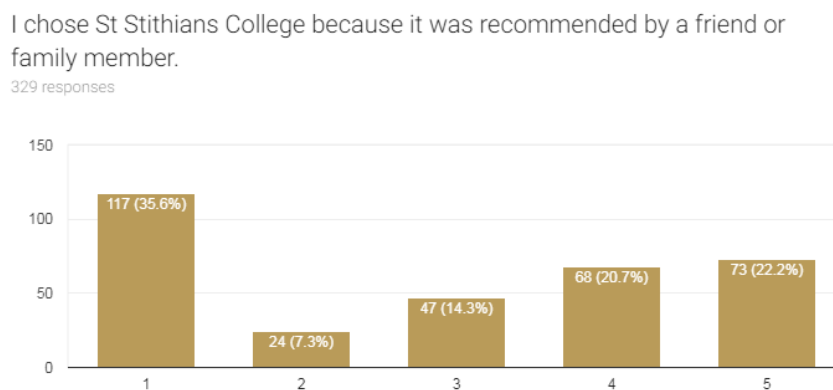
Question 27.

Figure 41: Question 27 responses



Question 28.

Figure 42: Question 28 responses

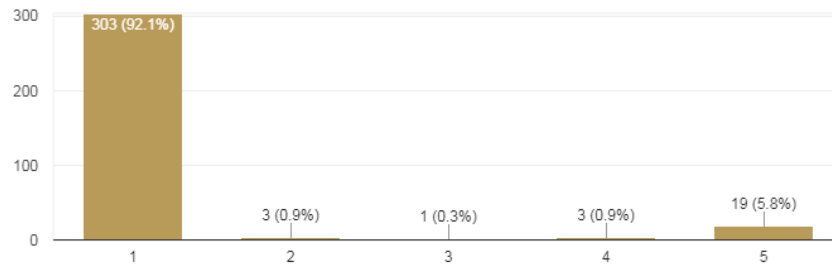


Question 29.

Figure 43: Question 29 responses

I chose St Stithians College for my child because I work at St Stithians College

329 responses

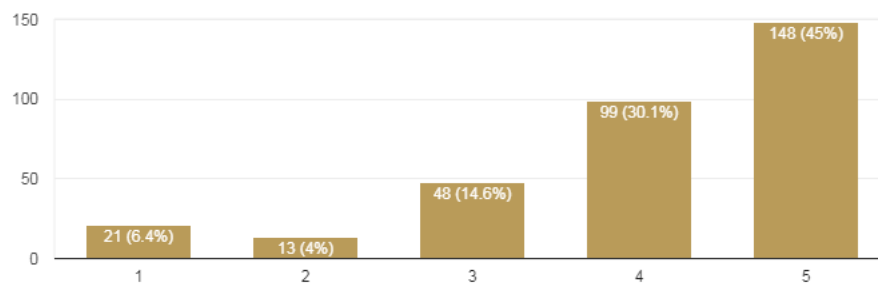


Question 30.

Figure 44: Question 30 responses

I chose St Stithians College because of the school's legacy, heritage and history.

329 responses

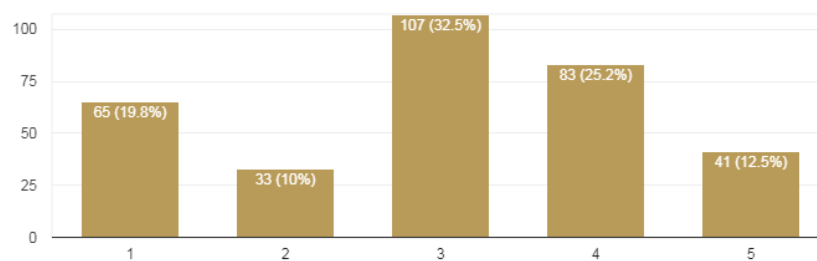


Question 31.

Figure 45: Question 31 responses

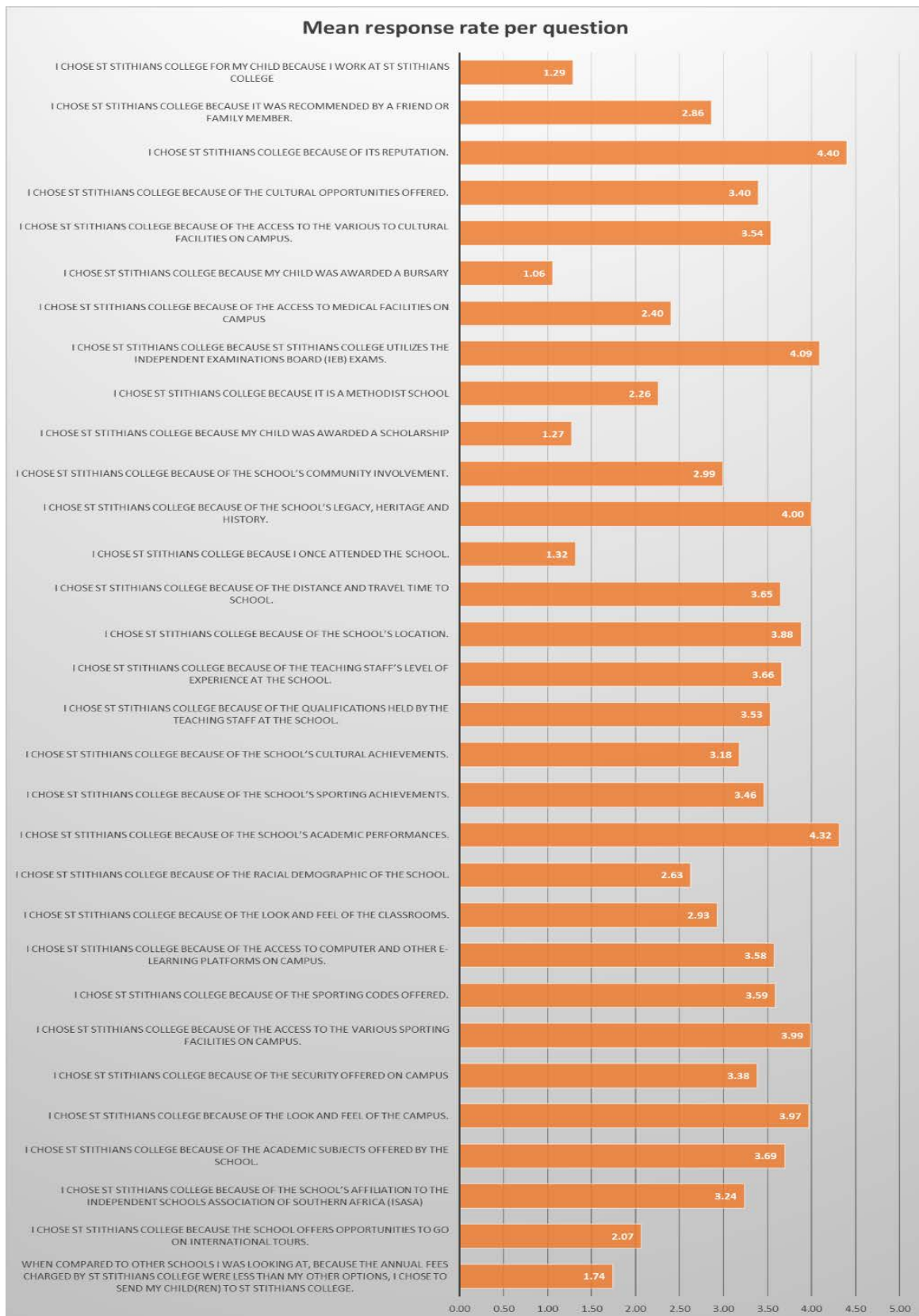
I chose St Stithians College because of the school's community involvement.

329 responses



4.3.4 Mean response rate per question

Figure 46: Mean response rate per question



The figure above shows the mean response level given by the respondents for each question. The 31 questions were asked to test the influence of the eight factors identified, and the responses were then grouped according to the eight factors, with the average influence of each factor shown as below:

4.3.5 Table of grouped factors indicating mean

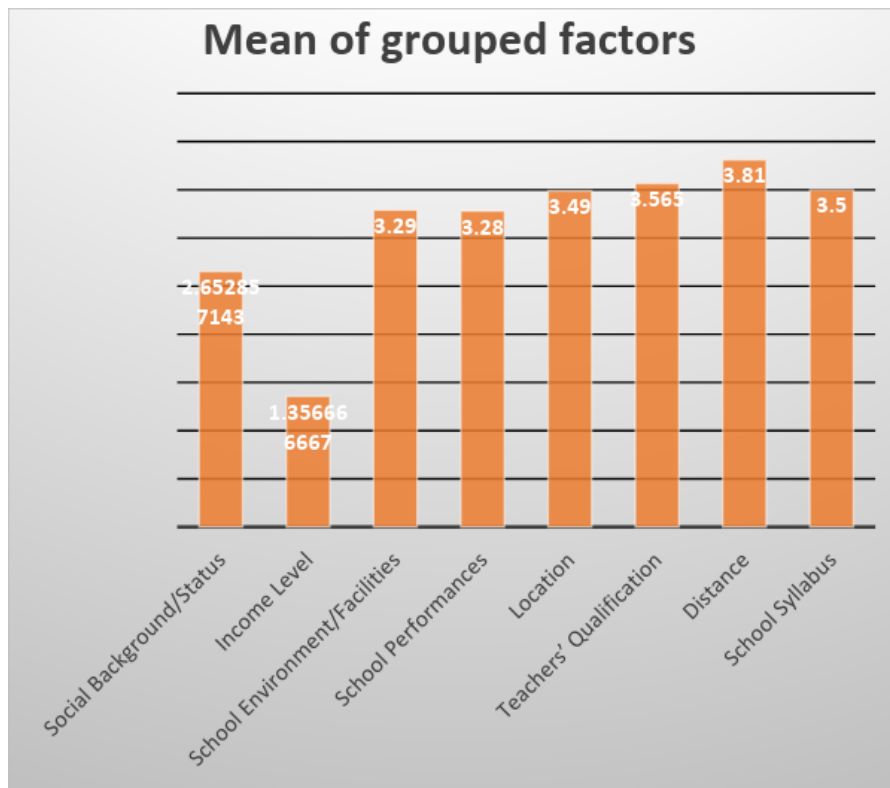
Table 2: Table indicating the mean response per factor

Factor	Mean value
Social Background/Status	2.65
Income Level	1.36
School Environment/Facilities	3.29
School Performances	3.28
Location	3.49
Teachers Qualification	3.57
Distance	3.81
School Syllabus	3.5

What the table shows is the mean response rate per factor. Understanding this data is key to interpreting the differences in the level of influences that parents feel as while one or two questions may have received higher responses, they feed into the certain factors and allow for the factors themselves to be explored. This is further illustrated graphically below as the grouped factors are illustrated on a frequency chart.

4.3.6 Frequency chart of grouped factors

Figure 47: Mean of grouped factors



What the above has shown graphically is the average response given by grouped factors. This data will then be tested through a series of statistical analysis to test the null hypothesis.

4.3.7 Cronbach Alpha test

The study asked 31 questions, each question was intended to test the influence of 8 pre-determined factors. As such, these questions feed into the influence level of the 8 factors. To test the measure of internal consistency, or how closely related the separate questions are as a combined group a Cronbach Alpha test must be considered.

This is because a Cronbach Alpha test is a measure of scale reliability. When viewing the results, a "high" value for alpha does not imply that the measure is unidimensional. This test was done on each question in relation to the 8 factors they speak to.

Cronbach's Alpha is calculated by the following formula:

$$\alpha = \frac{N \cdot \bar{c}}{\bar{v} + (N - 1) \cdot \bar{c}}$$

Where N is equal to the number of items, c-bar is the average inter-item covariance among the items and v-bar equals the average variance.

In the case of this study, the “sum of variances” were done per factor, allowing the test to test each factor against the “variance of total scores”. The results of these tests are shown below:

Table 3: Cronbach's alpha result per factor

Factor	Count	Sum of item variances	Variance of total scores	Cronbachs Alpha
Social Background/Status	7	9.6079	295.5106	1.1287
Income Level	3	2.1838	295.5106	1.4889
School Environment/Facilities	5	7.0183	295.5106	1.2203
School Performances	4	6.1874	295.5106	1.3054
Location	2	2.9165	295.5106	1.9803
Teachers' Qualification	2	2.9358	295.5106	1.9801
Distance	2	3.0525	295.5106	1.9793
School Syllabus	6	8.8851	295.5106	1.1639

If the result of this test is giving a number above 0,75 then it is internally consistent. What the table shows is that all the results given are internally consistent. In this case, as all results were above 1, it also shows that there could be a level of redundancy in the questions being asked.

4.3.8 ANOVA table of factors

Table 4: ANOVA Table of factors

Anova: Single Factor

SUMMARY

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance
Social				
Background/Status	7	18,57	2,65285714	1,48072381
Income Level	3	4,07	1,35666667	0,12123333
School				
Environment/Facilities	5	16,45	3,29	0,39105
School Performances	4	13,12	3,28	0,09226667
Location	2	6,98	3,49	0,0242
Teachers' Qualification	2	7,13	3,565	0,00245
Distance	2	7,62	3,81	0,0512
School Syllabus	6	21	3,5	0,53436

ANOVA

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	13,488734	7	1,926962	3,23092815	0,01547869	2,44222609
Within Groups	13,7174595	23	0,59641128			
Total	27,2061935	30				

An analysis was run on the factors as contributed by the respective question to reveal the mean difference for each factor.

This was done to test the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the influence that factors have on a parent, from a certain socio-economic background, decision to send their child or children to a specific school.

What was revealed is that there was a statistically significant difference between groups as determined by the one-way ANOVA ($F = 2,4$, $p = 0,0015$). The total difference is 30 and the difference within the groups is 23, meaning the difference between the groups is 7.

Further to the statistical results given, a post hoc test in the form of a Bonferroni Correction was undertaken as the homogeneity of variances per test was violated.

Since there are eight tests, these represent eight different hypotheses, using the critical value of 0,05 the Bonferroni Correction is:

$$\alpha/n = .05/8 = 0,0625$$

As such, for this set of eight tests, the null hypothesis would be rejected if the p-value was smaller than 0,0625. As the p-value above is 0,0015 we can statistically conclude that the null hypothesis can be rejected.

4.3.9 Inferential Statistical analysis

The questionnaire used a non-probability convenience sampling technique, in that it was a voluntary response from the current parent body of St Stithians College. The population size, N , is 1700 which reflects the families who currently have at least one child enrolled at St Stithians College.

As there were 332 responses this number reflects the n and falls within the acceptable sample size for a study that has a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 5, as under such an analysis there would need to be 314 respondents. (Bosetti, 2004)

To better understand the data presented in the responses, the data was analysed against certain demographic information obtained in the study. Aspects such as the mean response according to the combined annual household income as well as the distance the respondent resides from St Stithians College and the mean responses per factor are analysed below.

A study undertaken by Bosetti (2004) identified that parents that there is a difference in parents decisions based on their location (Bosetti, 2004), while Burgess, et al. (2015) identified a link between income levels and a parent's decision (Burgess, et al., 2015). As such these two factors will be further analysed and their influence assessed to assess if there is a link between these factors and the trends identified above.

4.3.9.1 *Income level*

While the study showed that many respondents have a joint annual household income above R 1 000 000-00, the need to then assess this large demographic for trends meant that a further analysis was done based on their responses.

Table 5: Mean response per factor according to income level

	0 - 300 000	300 001 – 600 000	600 001 - 800 000	800 001 - 1 000 000	1 000 001 - 1 500 000	1 500 001 - 2 000 000	2 000 001 - 5 000 000	5 000 001 and above
Social Background/Status	2,65	2,53	2,57	2,71	2,74	2,71	2,64	2,26
Income Level	1,36	1,30	1,47	1,58	1,45	1,32	1,27	1,13
School Environment/Facilities	3,29	3,26	2,94	3,32	3,39	3,19	3,36	3,22
School Performances	3,30	3,13	3,20	3,47	3,41	3,26	3,30	3,14
Location	3,63	3,52	3,92	3,75	3,55	3,63	3,61	3,78
Teachers’ Qualification	3,60	3,50	3,37	3,88	3,64	3,51	3,66	3,25
Distance	3,81	3,73	4,08	3,75	3,82	3,84	3,79	3,89
School Syllabus	3,50	3,41	3,31	3,58	3,65	3,45	3,48	3,51

This shows a decline in the influence of the income level as a factor and the higher the household income is, however, what is of interest is that the distance to the campus, the location of the campus and teacher quality are consistently strong factors that are considered across the various income groups.

This is further illustrated by the graph below:

Figure 48: Chart showing combined factors per income level



4.3.9.2 Distance from St Stithians College

Where a family resides could influence a parent’s decision differently as they may consider certain factors differently.

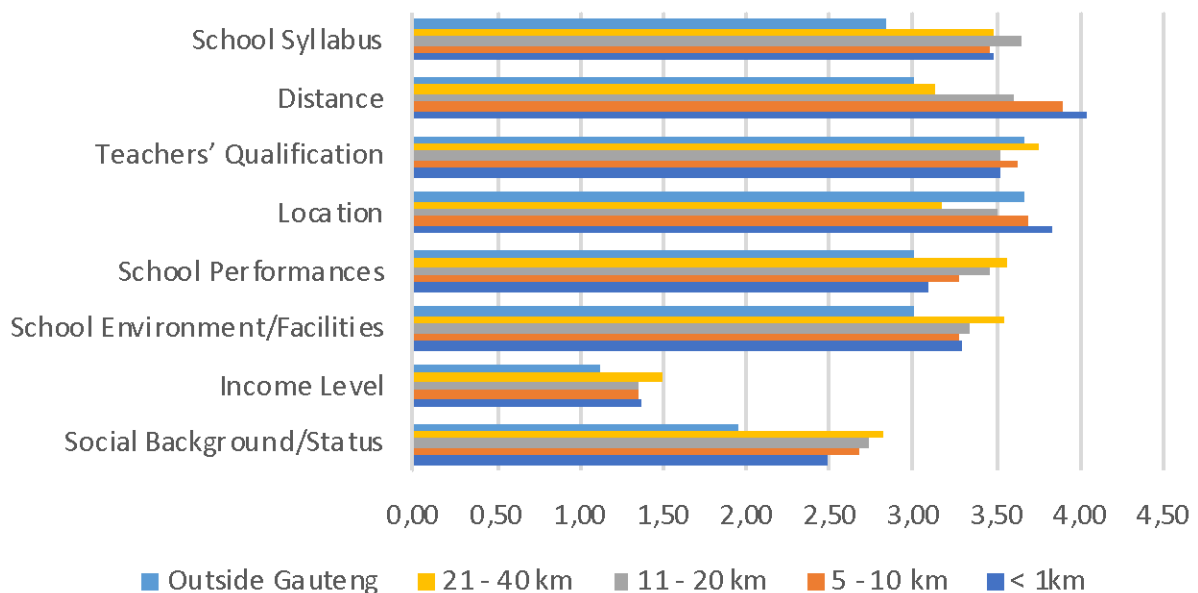
Figure 49: Grouped factors by distance to St Stithians College

	<1km	5 - 10 km	11 - 20 km	21 - 40 km	Outside Gauteng
Social Background/Status	2,48	2,66	2,72	2,81	1,95
Income Level	1,37	1,35	1,35	1,50	1,11
School Environment/Facilities	3,28	3,27	3,33	3,53	3,00
School Performances	3,08	3,27	3,45	3,56	3,00
Location	3,82	3,68	3,49	3,17	3,67
Teachers' Qualification	3,51	3,62	3,51	3,75	3,67
Distance	4,04	3,90	3,61	3,13	3,00
School Syllabus	3,48	3,46	3,64	3,49	2,83

This table shows that those that reside closer to St Stithians College campus have a higher interest in the distance to the campus as well as the location of the campus. It further highlights the importance of the syllabus as well as the teacher's qualifications and shows that those individuals who reside outside Gauteng do not see the influence of the cost of attending St Stithians College as a factor that needs to be noted.

Figure 50: Grouped factors according to distance to St Stithians College

Factors per distance to St Stithians College



What is shown by both these demographic breakdowns is that distance continues to be a factor that is influential for parents making their decision. However, this is influenced by where the parent lives as well as the level of the household income. This shows that depending on the economic background

of the family the influence of certain factors over others changes to reflect the possible economics of the given family.

4.4 Descriptive analysis

4.4.1 Section A

Section A allowed for the average respondent to be defined, this is interpreted as an individual who has at least one child enrolled in St Stithians College, has studied beyond a basic NQF 4 (Matric)¹, is aged between 36-55 years old², holds some type of formal employment³, did not attend St Stithians College as a child⁴, earns R 1 000 000-00 and above annually⁵, resides within a 10km radius of the school⁶, has 1 child enrolled⁷ who started in Grade R or 8⁸ and does not receive any form of financial aid⁹.

This is further defined as being an individual who was middle-aged, falling between the ages of 36 and 55 years of age, with 46,8% coming from people aged between 46 and 55 years old and a further 42,9% coming from the age range of 36-45-year-old grouping. These two groups combined reflect that an overwhelming majority of respondents, 89,7%, fall between the ages of 36 and 55.

Most respondents were also married, with 84,8% indicating that they married. Of the total respondents, only 10,6% indicated that they had been divorced, with a further 10% indicating they had never been married.

Of the total responses, the lowest level of education given was an NQF 2 (Grade 10) and only one respondent indicated that they fall into the category. A further 8,5% indicated they hold only an NQF 4 (Matric). The majority, 91,2%, hold an NQF 5 (Diploma) and above, meaning they have studied beyond a basic NQF 4 (Matric). Of these respondents, a total of 28% hold an NQF 8 (Honours) level degree, with 24,9% holding an NQF 7 (Bachelors) level degree. The third largest segment, 21,6% hold an NQF 9 (Masters) and above, this is broken into 20,4% holding an NQF 9 (Masters) and 1,2% holding an NQF 10 (Doctorate).

Given the level of education of most respondents, as well as the basic cost of attending St Stithians College in 2019 being R140 550-00, this study confirmed that most of the individuals with children at St Stithians College hold some form of employment. This was confirmed with only 8,2% indicating that they are not currently employed, the rest, 91,8%, indicated some level of employment with 50,2%

¹ Highest education level.

² Age range.

³ Employment status.

⁴ St Stithians College attendance.

⁵ Combined household income.

⁶ Distance from school.

⁷ Children currently enrolled.

⁸ Grade of first enrolment.

⁹ Scholarship recipients. Bursary recipients.

having formal employment, 35,9% being self-employed, 1,8% working part-time and 4% doing contract work.

Given the employment status of most respondents as well as the cost of sending a child to St Stithians College, it would be expected that the income level of the respondents would be higher than the national average. 78,7% of respondents said that the combined household income was more than R 1 000 001-00 annually.

This is broken down as follows:

Figure 51: Combined annual household income

Combined annual household income		% of respondent's
R 0	R 300 000-00	2,4%
R 300 001-00	R 600 000-00	6,1%
R 600 001-00	R 800 000-00	5,5%
R 800 001-00	R 1 000 000-00	7,3%
R 1 000 001-00	R 1 500 000-00	18,2%
R 1 500 001-00	R 2 000 000-00	23,1%
R 2 000 001-00	R 5 000 000-00	31,9%
R 5 000 001-00	And above	5,5%

What is shown in this table is that most of the respondents to this survey, and by extension, the general individual who elects to send their child to St Stithians College, are individuals who fall into the medium to higher income earners bracket (SARS, 2013).

The location of St Stithians College seems to be a desirable factor for parents as 73,3% of respondents revealed that they reside within a ten-kilometre radius of the institution. Of that, 12,5% live within a one-kilometre radius, 60,8% live between five and ten kilometres from the institution. 21,6% live between eleven and twenty-kilometres and a further 4,5% living further than twenty-kilometres.

Of the respondents, 49,5% currently have one child enrolled at the institution with 39,5% having two enrolled and a further 10,6% having three children enrolled. There was one respondent who indicated that they had four children currently enrolled at St Stithians College.

For a school that has a long and proud heritage, with a vast alumni network, it was interesting to note that 86,9% of respondents did not attend St Stithians College themselves and as such are first time members of the St Stithians College community.

In terms of financial assistance in the form of scholarship and bursaries, the split is consistent, with 87% being full fee-paying families and 13% receiving some form of financial aid.

Such a profile of individuals represents the average middle to high-income earners (Visagie, 2013) in South Africa. This is consistent with the target market of such an institution as well as the average person who resides in the surrounding areas (PayScale, 2018). While this type of profile is not reflective of the national average for South Africa (Trading Economics, 2018) it is reflective of the average individual looking to enrol their child in such an institution (Businesstech, 2018).

4.4.2 Section B

As shown in the graphs above, the results from the questionnaire show that there is a difference in the level of influence of the different factors with distance being the one factor which statically held the highest influence. This was closely followed by factors such as location, school syllabus and teaching qualification. While the one question which had the largest single influence was question 27 (I chose St Stithians College because of its reputation), this question ultimately feeds into the social background/status factor and contributed to that factors overall influence level. It can be argued that this is a result of parents seeking the best possible education for their children, but not at the expense of their own convenience.

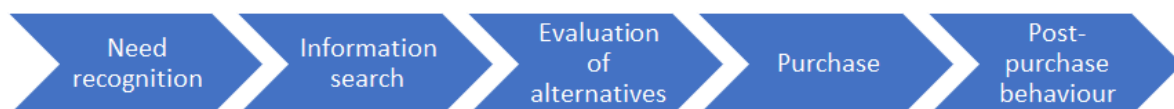
4.5 Discussion

Having shown that there is a difference in the influence of the factors, and revealing that distance is the most influential factor, the question is then why this is the case? One argument can be presented which is that this factor is unduly influenced by the fact that the largest grouping of respondents reside within a ten-kilometre radius of the institution, and in Johannesburg, where peak-hour traffic can add hours onto a commute time (IOL, 2017), and where most people commute using a private vehicle (Simpson, Z., McKay, T., Patel, N., Sithole, A., van den Berg, R., Chipp, K., 2010), the need for convenience seems to be a mitigating factor for many consumer decisions (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000).

As there are many private educational institutions that offer similar or like for like facilities, teachers who hold similar qualifications, as well as offer the IEB syllabus, these factors alone do not provide a competitive advantage for an institution. Instead what is shown in this study is that while it is possible for parents to find the same or better facilities and teaching standards at competitor schools, they may not be willing to travel further distances to gain access to them.

The reason for this can be explained through the five stages of decision making. For example, we can place the factors of distance and location as part of stages 2 and 3 in that it is here that the consumer, in this case the parent, will undergo an information search and evaluation of alternatives. It is here that they will gather information about the institution's offering as well as evaluate these factors against potential competitors. In the case of St Stithians College, there are 8 factors a parent might consider, however it appears from the study that a parent will favour or prioritise the distance and location factors above the others.

Figure 52: Illustration of the 5 stages in the consumer decision making process (Clark & Knutson, 1996).



This study revealed that parents seeking to send their child to an institution such as St Stithians College do not consider their income level as a factor nor the cost of the institution. However, this is influenced by the average annual income level of the respondents, which showed that the majority earn R 1 500 000-00 and above, placing them above the national average (Bezuidenhout, 2015). Given that St Stithians College will increase its fees to R 140 550-00 annually as a base fee for Grade 8 – 12 in 2019

(St Stithians College, 2018), and that the cost of living in the Sandton area is the highest in South Africa (Expatistan, 2018), the need to have enough after-tax disposable income is a mitigating factor that prospective parents consider before beginning the education provider search. As such, parents that do not feel they can afford St Stithians College may not even consider it as an option and as such, this study does not reflect the influence of this factor on all prospective parents seeking an education provider for their (Spren & Vally, 2006). This study, then, is not reflective of the average South African but rather reflects the decision-making process of a small sector of the market who earn above a certain threshold and therefore have access to an institution such as St Stithians College.

For an established institution such as St Stithians College, it is interesting that most respondents were not alumni of the institution. This is arguably consistent with the convenience factor highlighted above. As most alumni of St Stithians College work and earn within the income bracket required to be able to afford an education such as the one provided by St Stithians College, they do not reside within a 10km radius of the school (Old Stithian Association, 2018).

When looking at the location and distance factors of St Stithians College, the need to assess whether they are in fact a source of competitive advantage needs to be done by using the VRIO model (asking whether a resource is Valuable, Rare, difficult to Imitate, and whether the organization is positioned to exploit the resource) (Barney, 1991). As Barney's VRIO criteria shows, the location and distance to St Stithians College, is something that differentiates it from its competitors.

The land on which St Stithians College is situated on is valuable: A recent study of the average property price around the institution revealed a value of R 67 480-00 per square metre (Global Property Guide, 2018), this highlights that it is positioned on some of the most valuable property in the country with trends indicating it will increase over the next ten years (Numbeo, 2018).

The location is rare: No one else is permitted to build a similar institution in the near vicinity. The land around the campus is already bought up and developed, forcing new entrants to develop on the outskirts of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area, as schools such as St Peters College and Heronbridge have had to do. St Stithians College finds itself within five kilometres of Sandton which adds to the desirability of the institution's location.

The location is difficult to imitate: The campus sits along two of the northern-regions of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan vital roadways, William Nicol and Braam-Fischer Drives, which together form two of only three roadways that connect Sandton and the rapidly developing northern and north-western regions of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area (Hometimes, 2018). Midrand, for instance, which borders the northern reaches of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area is one of the fastest growing residential areas in South Africa and the number of sectional title properties being purchased has increased by 550% over the past fifteen years (Hometimes, 2018). The northern regions of the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan area are rapidly developing, and this is a positive aspect for the future viability of St Stithians College given its current location. This adds to the desirability of the location of the campus which will further increase as the city further expands and develops around it.

St Stithians College can exploit the location of its campus: As the location of the institution has been developed and the main source of the education services being offered. St Stithians College is organized, ready and able to exploit the resource/capability presented by its location.

As such, it can be presented that Ha can be accepted: There is a significant difference between the influence of factors and a parent, from a certain socio-economic background, decision to send their child or children to a specific school.

Previous studies have revealed that location as a key factor is consistent with similar results from around the world (Alyani, Osman, & Bachock, 2014). While parents seek the best possible education for their children they seem to prefer to choose the option that offers these services close to their place of residence (Rehman, Khan, Triq, & Tasleem, 2010.). This is consistent with Consumer Decision Making theory, which proposes that consumers make decisions based on the ease of access to a product (Morton & Fasolo, 2009).

Further to this a study undertaken by Varlaam & West (2006) identified four factors; good discipline, the child wanting to go, a good choice of subjects, the fact that the school was a church school and the school's proximity to home (Varlaam & West, 2006). While these results show a consistent thread in school syllabus and reputation it highlights, once again, the importance of location as a key factor.

This is further entrenched by a study published in 2010 by Jackson and Lunenburg (2010) which identified that the reputation, ease of access and exam results of schools are key features guiding parents' school choices. (Jackson & Lunenburg, 2010).

The results from this study therefore highlights a trend among consumers of educational services seeking providers that are conveniently located, while providing the best possible education for their child.

4.6 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the statistical outputs results in detail. This was done using frequency statistics and reliability statistics. Significant positive relationships between the factors that influence a parent's decision and the consumer decisions were identified and discussed, as well as the difference in the level of influence seen amongst the different factors. The average respondent profile was also identified and from this it is recommended by the study that further research be conducted with a larger sample, possibly covering more regions and using institutions in different economic contexts.

The next chapter will discuss the possible future research implications as well as provide the ethical considerations that must be considered when undergoing such a study.

CHAPTER 5 : RECOMMENDATIONS, ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The study set out to identify why parents choose one education service provider over other potential providers, drawing from Consumer-decision making theory and the resource-based view of an organization it used a closed-ended questionnaire to gather data on the consumer decisions made by current parents of St Stithians College. The data showed that parents do consider the eight factors when deciding and found that there is a difference in the influence of these factors. This then revealed that there is one factor, location, that could be a source for a competitive advantage for St Stithians College.

This chapter provides the recommendations of the research study based on the results presented in the previous chapter. It also highlights the key aspects of the research study results that were found and presented in preceding chapters.

5.2 Recommendations for future research

While location and distance are convenience factors, which parents consider when choosing the institution, these are complemented by other factors. Teaching qualifications, school facilities and school results were all close behind the location factor as being significant factors considered by parents. However, these factors are not differentiators in themselves as they can be replicated by any other private education institution.

Instead, the location of the institution and the commuting distance required to be travelled by most parents is a factor that should be further unlocked over the coming years. A recent study undertaken by the Gauteng Provincial Government (Gautrain Management Agency, 2017) highlighted transport needs for Gauteng in 2025 through to 2037 and indicated that congestion levels around the current location will continue to rise. What influence this will have on the institution will be a source of future research.

An investigation into the introduction of school transport or busses should be done to address the current congestion levels around the institution and provide possible opportunities for future growth. Congestion levels average 30%, meaning that commuters experience an average of 37 minutes extra travel time per day (Tom Tom, 2018), translating into an extra 141 hours of commuting per year.

What was not explored by this study was the factor of boarding in selecting St Stithians College. This is because boarding is only offered for boys from Grades 8 to 12, and as such is not a major feature of the institution. There are competitor institutions that offer a boarding experience, and for those such institutions the fact that boarding is offered, and as an extension greater convenience for parents, may well be the competitive advantage of such institutions. However, as the need for convenience grows and parents seek an alternative to the traditional lift and carry model, there is an argument being made for St Stithians College to increase the boarding capacity thereby assisting parents who

must navigate the grid-locked roads of Sandton, Johannesburg daily. Future research should be focused on this factor and how it contributes to the convenience factor identified in this study.

A growing trend among ISASA schools is the desire to replace the IEB curriculum with an internationally administered curriculum in the form of the International Baccalaureate (IB) or the A-levels (Bunnell, Fertig, & James, 2017). This factor will need to be explored in future research as there is a possibility that private institutions soon who follow this curriculum will be able to leverage this as a competitive advantage.

Further research will also need to be done into the impact different socio-economic factors have on the decision of parents. This will help to paint a broader picture about South African society and not just a small minority in the wealthiest suburbs of Africa's financial capital.

5.3 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations that were considered for this study was that the population sample that was used is not reflective of the general South African population. As such, while the study does give an insight into the considerations made by a market segment, these same luxuries are not shared by many South African families. Many of these families do not have the luxury of choosing a school or considering the factors associated with this study, and in some instances, children are required to walk long distances to reach their classrooms. Writing such a report in the context of South Africa poses some ethical dilemmas as it really speaks to the far end of the income spectrum, an end that the clear majority will never gain access to.

Another dilemma that must be considered, is that the questionnaire was distributed with the blessing of the institution being studied, and while this did assist in giving the study credibility to the families attending the institution it may have also placed an expectation on many to answer the questionnaire, or to answer it in a certain way. While every effort was made to show the anonymous nature of the results, some respondents may have felt that there was an answer the study was looking for. While others saw it as an opportunity to raise issues they have with the institution.

5.4 Conclusion

The study set out to identify why parents choose a certain private institution over other like-for-like institutions. It was not intended to identify why they choose private institutions over public institutions and the study set out to define what the competitive advantage is of a certain private education institution. This will then enable the institution to be able to define what sets the institution apart from its competitors.

This was accomplished by surveying the parent body of a large private educational institution in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg, South Africa. This parent body is not representative of the average South African but does represent a large population sample of individuals who can afford to send their children to exclusive, elite private institutions in South Africa and as such the sample is representative of the target market of these institutions. The survey was done using an electronic platform and was circulated to every family who has a child currently enrolled at the institution.

What was discovered was that while parents have many options when choosing the institution, they feel is best for their child, they ultimately base these decisions, after assessing information and analysing their options, on the convenience of getting to and from the institution and the location of the institution.

As an institution, St Stithians College does produce good results across the board, and this was highlighted by the fact that after the convenience aspect parents considered this as an important factor. Results are built by producing exceptional academic results, as well as sporting and cultural accomplishments. When a parent is willing to pay to provide their child with the best opportunity to learn, grow and develop they expect the institution they elect to send their child to, to be able to provide opportunities as such.

In the case of St Stithians College, it shows a commitment to excellence. This is seen through the look and feel of the campus, the facilities offered, the results generated across the academic, sporting and cultural spheres. As such, it is not one simple aspect, but rather its ability to excel across the board that attracts potential parents. Parents choose St Stithians college because of its reputation and the accessibility of it, in terms of location. However, it is not attracting potential parents from beyond a 15km radius and as such the institution is catering to a very localised market.

The facilities on offer, the quality of the education staff as well as the syllabus are important factors to prospective parents that cannot be overlooked, however, these are factors that any elite private institution can offer a prospective parent. Instead, the one thing St Stithians College has that no other competitor can offer is the institution's location. Its location, accessibility and proximity to Sandton attract large amounts of prospective parents to the institution and as such can be identified as the institution's competitive advantage.

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APPENDICES

1.1 Declaration

 RHODES UNIVERSITY <small>Grahamstown • 6100 • South Africa</small> Declaration Form To be completed by ALL students submitting a thesis. Please type or write clearly in BLOCK LETTERS. Declaration submitted by a candidate presenting a thesis for examination.		
Information		
Student Name: <u>David</u>	<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Arendse</u>
<small>First Name</small>	<small>Middle name/s or Initial</small>	<small>Surname</small>
Student Number: <u>17A5515</u>		
Title of thesis: <u>FACTORS INFLUENCING PARENTS' DECISION WHEN CHOOSING A PRIVATE SCHOOL.</u>		
The thesis which I now submit for the degree of: <u>MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION</u>		
<p>* (a) has been published / accepted for publication in</p> <p>_____</p> <p>(quote full name of the publication(s): use a separate sheet if necessary)</p> <p>Volume: _____ Part: _____ Year: _____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>* (b) is not being published and I hereby grant to Rhodes University permission to make additional copies of it, in whole or in part, for the purposes of research.</p> <p>* Delete (cross out) whichever does not apply</p> <p>I certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree in any other university and that it is my original work except as follows: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>		
SIGNATURE OF STUDENT: 		DATE: <u>31 October 2018</u>

Updated: 03/12/2015 DP

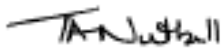
Page 1 of 1

1.2 Institution Consent Form

Factors influencing parents' decision in choosing a private school.

Institution Consent Form

Participation Consent	
I consent for you to approach the parent body of St Stithians College to participate in the Factors influencing parents' decision in choosing a private school research paper.	
I acknowledge and understand:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the institution is voluntary. • I may decide to withdraw the institution's participation at any time without penalty. • The parent body of St Stithians College will be invited to participate, and that permission will be sought from them too. • Only parents who consent will participate in the project. • All information obtained will be treated in strictest confidence. • The parents' names will not be used, and individual parents' will not be identifiable in any written reports about the study. • Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. • A report of the findings will be made available to the institution. • I may seek further information on the project from David Arendse on 082 909 0661. 	

Full Name:	Dr Tim Nuttall
Position:	Rector : St Stithians College
Signature:	
Date:	25 September 2018

Please return to:	David Arendse DArendse@gmail.com 32 Westview Drive, Bryanston Ext. 5, Sandton, 2191
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1.3 Letter from the school



**ST STITHIANS
COLLEGE**

40 Peter Place | Lyme Park | Sandton | 2191
Private Bag 2 | Randburg | 2125 | South Africa
+27 11 577 6000
www.stithian.com

25 September 2018

BY EMAIL

Dear St Stithians College Parent.

The education sector in South Africa is divided into the public and the independent sector. The public sector has a mandate from government, whereas independent schools are service providers. Understanding the competitive advantage of these institutions is vital when positioning ourselves in this competitive and complex market. As such, it is important for us to better understand our competitive advantages and how best to leverage them.

You have chosen to send your child/children to St Stithians College and your choice would have been influenced by factors that are relevant to your current circumstances. We would like to better understand what these factors were and are and how they influence your decisions. Your invaluable feedback will help us better define what our competitive advantage is, and what sets St Stithians College apart as a school.

I would like to invite you to please participate in the following questionnaire. This research will be conducted by David Arendse, an Alumnus of St Stithians College who works in the Admissions and Marketing Office for the Advancement Department. He will be doing the research as part of his studies towards a Master's in Business Administration (MBA). The results obtained will be used to inform and guide us.

The questionnaire should not take longer than 15 minutes to complete and the data gathered will be kept anonymous. Your personal details will not be requested or used. Your participation in this exercise is completely voluntary, however the greater the number of respondents the more accurate the data so we would appreciate your valuable contribution.

Yours sincerely

Alistair Stewart
Head of Advancement
St Stithians College

INSPIRING EXCELLENCE. MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Affiliations: Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) | Independent Examinations Board (IEB)
The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) | Round Square | Proudly South African
PBO: 181113631 | NPO: 119-838-NPO

1.4 Ethics letter of approval



Rhodes Business School
Leadership for Sustainability

Rhodes Business School
PO Box 94
Grahamstown
6140

25th September 2018

Dear Mr Rafferty and Mr Arendse

Research Ethics Application: Reference: 2018/08/80

This serves to confirm that on **21st September 2018**, ethical clearance was granted by the RUESC HE Committee for the research project with the following provisional title: **Factors Influencing Parents' Decision in Choosing a private school.**

The application was approved subject to the following stipulations:

1. You will need to obtain a final approval letter from the gatekeeper, prior to commencing with the data collection.
2. A copy of this letter is to be sent to the Chair of the Rhodes Business School Ethics sub-committee.

Please ensure that the Rhodes Business School Ethics sub-committee is notified of any substantive changes that are made, for whatever reason, during the research process.

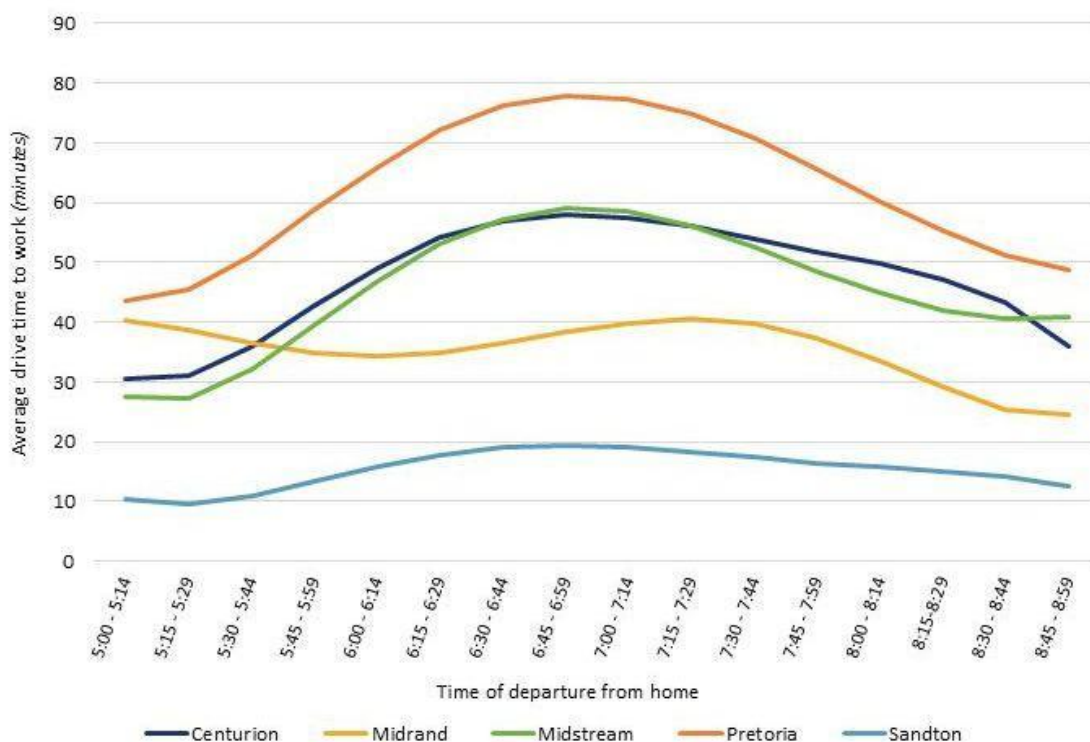
Please note that this application expires on 31 December 2018. A progress report is required in order to renew the approval for the following year.

Yours faithfully,

Prof Noel Pearse
Chair: Rhodes Business School Ethics sub-committee

1.5 Figure 1

Drive Time to Sandton from Northern Outskirts



Source: <https://www.iol.co.za/motoring/industry-news/how-the-time-of-morning-affects-commute-times-11213294>

(IOL, 2017)

1.6 Figure 2

Table 1: Number of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector, by province, in 2015

Province	Public			Independent			Public and Independent					
	Learners	Educators	Schools	Learners	Educators	Schools	Learners	As % of National Total	Educators	As % of National Total	Schools	As % of National Total
Eastern Cape	1 894 682	61 147	5 527	58 715	3 109	200	1 953 397	15.2	64 256	15.4	5 727	22.3
Free State	666 024	22 632	1 260	16 880	1 029	72	682 704	5.3	23 661	5.7	1 332	5.2
Gauteng	1 998 640	61 597	2 080	263 679	17 757	700	2 262 319	17.7	79 354	19.1	2 780	10.8
KwaZulu-Natal	2 811 418	81 638	5 899	70 100	4 855	238	2 881 518	22.5	86 493	20.8	6 137	23.9
Limpopo	1 694 884	53 310	3 893	58 850	2 620	162	1 753 734	13.7	55 930	13.4	4 045	15.7
Mpumalanga	1 052 207	33 461	1 744	27 073	1 692	118	1 079 280	8.4	35 153	8.4	1 862	7.2
Northern Cape	296 509	8 826	562	3 630	336	29	290 139	2.3	9 162	2.2	581	2.3
North West	797 438	24 116	1 490	16 435	1 010	54	813 873	6.4	25 126	6.0	1 544	6.0
Western Cape	1 046 477	32 886	1 460	51 032	4 072	223	1 097 509	8.6	36 958	8.9	1 683	6.6
South Africa	12 248 279	379 613	23 905	566 194	36 480	1 786	12 814 473	100	416 093	100	25 691	100

Table 1 shows the number of ordinary public and independent schools, learners and educators there were in 2015. It further shows that the highest and lowest percentages of learners, educators and schools in the ordinary school sector occurred in KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape, respectively. Majority of independent schools were situated in Gauteng 700 followed by KwaZulu-Natal with 238 schools.

Source: <https://www.education.gov.za/EducationinSA.aspx>

(Department of Basic Education, 2018)

1.7 Questionnaire

Factors Influencing Parents' Decision when Choosing a Private School

The aim of this research is to determine the factors considered by parents when choosing to enroll their children in St Sthians College. It is hoped that this research will help identify and provide evidence for what the institutions potential competitive advantage is.

Letter of introduction by Mr Alistair Stewart (Head of Advancement, St Sthians College)
<https://goo.gl/V2HN1k>

*Required

Informed Consent Form

- I understand the purpose of the research study and my involvement in it.
- I understand the risks of participating in this research study.
- I understand the benefits of participating in this research study.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research study at any stage without any penalty.
- I understand that participation in this study is done on a voluntary basis.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that I will receive no payment for participating in this study.

1. **The above is clear to me and I hereby voluntarily consent to participate in the above-mentioned research. ***

Mark only one oval.

- I hereby give consent
- I do not give consent *Stop filling out this form.*

Section A

Please complete this section as an individual. i.e. answering for yourself, unless otherwise asked.

2. **What is your age range? ***

Mark only one oval.

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- >65

3. **What is your marital status? ***

Mark only one oval.

- Divorced
- Married
- Separated
- Single (never been married)
- Widowed

4. What is the highest education level you have achieved? *

i.e. what level do you currently hold, not what you may be working towards.
Mark only one oval.

- Grade 9 (Adult Basic Education and Training level 4, NQF 1)
- Grade 10 (NQF 2)
- Grade 11 (NQF 3)
- Grade 12 (Matric) (NQF 4)
- Certificate, 1 year of tertiary education (NQF 5)
- Diploma, 2 years of tertiary education (NQF 6)
- Bachelors Degree, 3 years of tertiary education (NQF 7)
- Honours Degree, 4 years of tertiary education (NQF 8)
- Masters Degree, 4+ years of tertiary education (NQF 9)
- Doctorate Degree (NQF 10)

5. What is your current employment status? *

Mark only one oval.

- Contract work
- Formal employment
- Semi-formal employment
- Self-employed
- Unemployed

6. Did you attend St Stithians College? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

7. Are you a member of the Old Stithian Association? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

8. What is the combined household annual income: *

Mark only one oval.

- 0 - 300 000
- 300 001 – 600 000
- 600 001 – 800 000
- 800 001 - 1 000 000
- 1 000 001 – 1 500 000
- 1 500 001 - 2 000 000
- 2 000 001 - 5 000 000
- 5 000 001 and above

9. How far do you live from St Stithians College? *

Mark only one oval.

- < 1km
- 5 - 10 km
- 11 - 20 km
- 21 - 40 km
- > 40 km
- Outside Gauteng

10. How many children do you currently have enrolled at St Stithians College? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- > 5

11. What are your children's sex?

Sex indicates what your child was biologically born as and not the gender they may choose to identify themselves as. Please select from first enrolled to last enrolled. i.e. child 1 was the first child you enrolled at St Stithians College.

Mark only one oval per row.

	Female	Male
Child 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. In what Grade did you enroll your children St Stithians College?

Please select from first enrolled to last enrolled. i.e. child 1 was the first child you enrolled at St Stithians College.

Mark only one oval per row.

	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Child 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Child 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Are any of your children on any form of scholarship at St Stithians College? *

A scholarship is issued by the Head of the school based on merit and they allow for your annual fees to be reduced by a certain percentage. i.e. Sports, Cultural Academic.

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

14. Are any of your children on a bursary at St Stithians College? *

Bursaries are issued by an external funder and generally cover most if not all of the annual fees. i.e. SSP, Investec, Allan Gray, etc.

Mark only one oval.

- No
 Yes

Section B

The following questions allow for your answers to be ranked, when answering please indicate on the scale from 1 - 5 how much the factor influenced your decision to send your first child to St Stithians College. 1 being the least and 5 being the most.

In this instance, first child does not mean eldest but rather it means the first child that you enrolled at St Stithians College.

15. When compared to other schools I was looking at, because the annual fees charged by St Stithians College were less than my other options, I chose to send my child(ren) to St Stithians College. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

16. I chose St Stithians College because it is a Methodist school *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

17. I chose St Stithians College because the school offers opportunities to go on international tours. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

18. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's affiliation to the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA) *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

19. I chose St Stithians College because St Stithians College utilizes the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) exams. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

20. I chose St Stithians College because of the academic subjects offered by the school. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

21. I chose St Stithians College because of the look and feel of the campus. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

22. I chose St Stithians College because of the security offered on campus *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

23. I chose St Stithians College because of the access to medical facilities on campus.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

24. I chose St Stithians College because of the access to the various sporting facilities on campus.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

25. I chose St Stithians College because of the access to the various to cultural facilities on campus.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

26. I chose St Stithians College because of the sporting codes offered.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

27. I chose St Stithians College because of the cultural opportunities offered.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

28. I chose St Stithians College because of the access to computer and other e-learning platforms on campus. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

29. I chose St Stithians College because of the look and feel of the classrooms. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

30. I chose St Stithians College because of the racial demographic of the school. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

31. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's academic performances. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

32. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's sporting achievements. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

33. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's cultural achievements. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

34. I chose St Stithians College because of the qualifications held by the teaching staff at the school. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

35. I chose St Stithians College because of the teaching staff's level of experience at the school. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

36. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's location. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

37. I chose St Stithians College because of the distance and travel time to school. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

38. I chose St Stithians College because I once attended the school. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

39. I chose St Stithians College because my child was awarded a scholarship *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

40. I chose St Stithians College because my child was awarded a bursary *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

41. I chose St Stithians College because of its reputation. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

42. I chose St Stithians College because it was recommended by a friend or family member. *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

43. I chose St Stithians College for my child because I work at St Stithians College.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

44. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's legacy, heritage and history.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

45. I chose St Stithians College because of the school's community involvement.*

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
No influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	High influence when deciding to send your child to St Stithians College

46. Please list any other factors that influenced your choice in sending your child to St Stithians College.

47. Do you have any other feedback that may be of interest in this study?
