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**A Comparative Study between Private and Public Middle School in the  
United States of America**

Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a  
Master Degree in English

*Option:* Literature and Civilization

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## *Dedication*

*First, we thank God our creator for giving us the strength to accomplish  
this work.*

*My moral support and source of joy and happiness, the one who has  
always sacrificed for you see me succeed my father.*

*In the light of my life, the source of my efforts, the flame my heart, my life  
and my happiness; Mom I love.*

*To the one that I love and who supported me throughout in this project  
the man of my life: my husband*

*To my two brothers who I love and for whom I wish success in their life.*

## ***Acknowledgement:***

*My thanks must first of all go to my supervisor Dr. BETKA.R. NADIA for whom I am very grateful for her help and great efforts. Thanks for the inspiring exchange of ideas and reading suggestions that help me so much.*

*I am also grateful for all teachers of English department.*

*I would also like to express my thanks to my friends, my classmates and every person who has made a share of help and overwhelmed me with a piece of advice.*

## **Abstract:**

This dissertation explores the changing in education in America today, the main reasons that contributed to this change, the impact of such changes on society, parents, and students. We highlight the two types of education in light of the challenges of education and what are the major differences between the two new types of Education in American Schools and what is the influence those new types in the society .

By following a descriptive method to highlight the similarities and the differences between and by consulting and analyzing documents related to the issue and discusses the schooling system in the United States of America, the research found that ; in spite of the similarities between Public and Private Schools in the United States of America, the the state however the Private school are free .

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## List of Acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
HSTS	High School Transcript Study
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NCEA	National Center for Educational Accountability
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
SCCS	Classification of Secondary School Courses
GPA	Grade Point Average

## General Introduction

The US educational system is characterized it by flexibility and decentralization: in accordance to the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment of education is not a federal responsibility but a state and local matter.”

Teachers are appointed locally, school budgets (financed by property and sales taxes) are voted locally, educational standards are set locally and in each state, enormous variety is possible .As might be expected, educational institutions in the U.S reflect the nations’ basic values, especially the ideal of equality of opportunity from elementary school through college; Americans believe that everyone deserves and equal opportunity to get a good education.

With 6,9% of its gross national product allotted to education (about \$500 billion yearly),the US is one of the highest spending nations worldwide in education.

Public education is universally available, with control and funding coming from state, local and federal government (the College Board; National Center for educational statistics).

Private schools are generally free to determine their own curriculum and staffing policies, with voluntary accreditation available through independent regional accreditation authorities. The majority of schools’ are Public .Only one fifth are Private, whether affiliated with a specific denomination or not ;these educate about 12% of American children .

## **1. Statement of the problem**

It is very important to discuss the education in the U.S of America especially about the Public Middle Schools' and the Private Middle schools'. Private schools ,also known as independent schools, nongovernmental, or no state schools are not administered by local ,state or national governments. The advent of Private schooling in the U.S in 1992 marked a new type of education.

I choice this topic because it is very important also I want to make a comparison between the two types in the United States of America and Algeria.

The present study is an investigation in major differences and similarities; most can be found between the Public or Private schools in the U.S .The research will be based on the two types of schools' Public and Private schools'.

## **2. Research question**

We try to answer some questions in this investigation:

1-How was the advent of Private schooling Education in U.S.A?

2-what characterized the Public Middle schools' and the Private Middle schools'?

3- What are the main similarities and differences between the public middle schools and the private schools?

## **2. Research methodology**

In the present study ,the research will use descriptive method highlighting similarities and differences between the Public Middle schools 'and Private Middle schools

by consulting and analyzing documents related to the issue and , discussed the schooling system in the United States of America.

#### **4. The content of the thesis**

The present dissertation's frame work is divided into three chapters: The First chapter defines and discusses the Public Schools in United States of America including the Elementary, Middle, and High Public School . The Second chapter is devoted to study the Private Schools in United States of America. The third chapter is an analysis of the differences and the similarities of the Public and the Private Schools in America.

#### **5. Aims of the study**

This thesis aims at providing more information about Public and Private Middle Schools in United States of America, also it can helps readers and researchers to understand the benefits of using either of them.















































drawbacks of public and private schools: curriculum, athletics, cost, admissions, teachers, and discipline.

It's a question which parents ask almost as much as "Which is the best school?" That question is "How do private and public schools compare?" Coupled with that question, parents also want to know more about the differences and similarities between private and public schools.

### **3.1. Major Differences Between Public and Private Schools**

#### **3.1.1. the Private school tuition vs. public school taxes**

Everyone pays taxes, so you are already supporting the public school system. Why pay for both, you might ask yourself? The fact is that in numerous provinces and states, you can get tax breaks when you send your child to private school over a public school.

Funding differs greatly between private and public schools. Public schools are not allowed to charge any tuition fees in most jurisdictions at the elementary level. Public schools are funded largely by local property taxes, though many districts also receive funding from

state and federal sources. Private schools charge for every aspect of their programs. Fees are determined by market forces. Private school tuition averages about \$6,600 per student according to 2007 NCES data. Private schools take no public funding. As a result they must operate with balanced budgets ; Depending on what kind of private school you decide on, tuition can range from \$4,000 per year up to more than \$100,000. Public school costs nothing, of course. (NCEA(2007:45).

<b>Average Private School Tuition: 2011-12</b>				
	<b>All Levels</b>	<b>Elementary</b>	<b>Secondary</b>	<b>K-12 Schools</b>
All Schools	\$10,740	\$7,770	\$13,030	\$13,640
Catholique	\$6,890	\$5,330	\$9,790	\$10,230
Other Religions	\$8,690	\$7,960	\$16,520	\$8,160
Non-Sectaire	\$21,510	\$18,170	\$25,180	\$22,440

### **3.1.2.The admissions Standards in Public and Private Schools in America**

Another obvious distinction between public and private schools results from their respective admissions procedures. By law, public schools must accept all children. In many cases, enrolling your child involves little more than filling out a few forms and providing proof of your address to the local school district office. In practice, however, getting your

child into the public school of his or her choice can be much more complicated.(NCES,2009,p.3)

Because not all public schools have resources for helping students with special needs, enrolling a child with a learning disability or other disorder may entail a more complex process. Similarly, in school districts with "school choice" policies, the procedure for finding a public school may require that parents enter a lottery to gain admission for their child into their top pick. Finally, at the high school level, many districts in larger metropolitan areas offer special schools with competitive enrollment based on students' notes .

Private schools are allowed to expel students and can choose not to allow certain students admittance. In fact, many private schools are difficult to get into. Public schools allow all students, regardless of religious creed, academic abilities or any other factor.

to Send your child to a private school means enrollment is selective and demands are uniformly higher versus a public school where they will be exposed to a wider variety of people and abilities. In today's world, both are likely to incorporate students from various cultures and backgrounds. (Thattai( 1999 : 87).

### **3.1.3. Safety in Public and Private Schools**

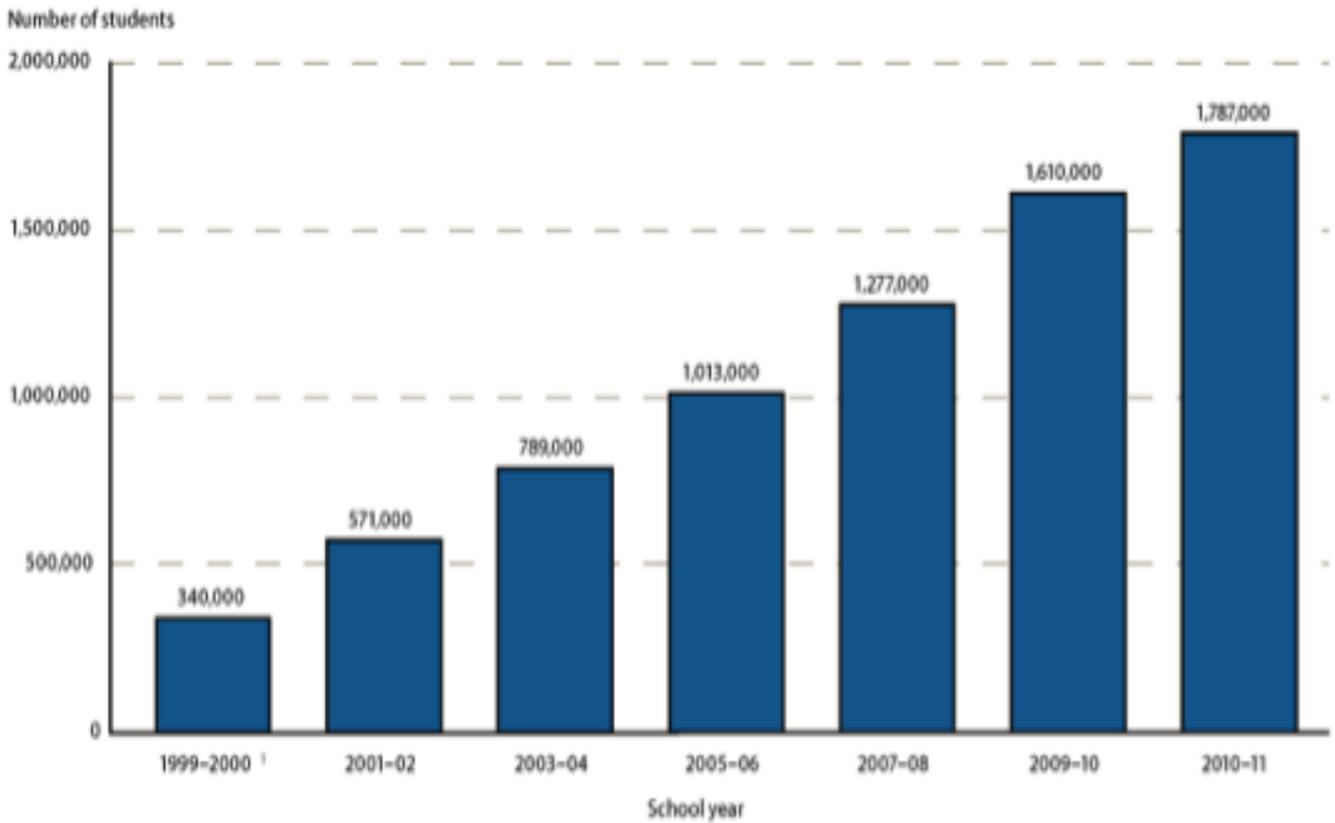
Safety at school and the general school environment is another factor that parents use to decide whether or not to keep their children in public school or move them into private school. In addition Many public schools have perfectly safe environments, yet in some school districts, children may be safer in private schools. Some of this may have to do with the fact that private schools may pick and choose who they enroll, therefore keeping Violence in public schools is a top priority for administrators and teachers. The highly-

publicized shootings and other acts of violence which have taken place in public schools have resulted in the application of stringent rules and security measures such as metal detectors to help create and maintain a safe learning environment . their classroom milieu safer. Private schools are generally safe places. Access to campuses and buildings is carefully monitored and controlled. Because schools usually have fewer students than a public school, it is easier to supervise the school population. (Clayton( 2005 :45).

### **3.1.4. Academic Programs in Public and Private School in America**

Public schools offer a general program, designed for all. This usually includes math, English, reading, writing, science, history and physical education. In addition, many public schools offer programs in music, art, languages, technology, and career education too. What students learn is decided by the state. In most states, learning is measured through standardized tests. The content and minimum achievement criteria in each course offered in public high schools are put forward by the state and each student must achieve this minimum criterion before receiving credit. (Clayton, 2005,p.44).

Private schools have the flexibility to create specialized programs for students. For example, private schools may use art or science in all classes, or take children on outdoor trips. They can create their own curriculum and assessment systems, although many choose to use standardized tests. Many parents are drawn to the alternative curriculums that private schools have to offer.



**Growth of Enrollment in private Schools by Academic Year**

### 3.1.5. School Size in public and private schools'

According to US Department of Education Data, Public schools are, on average, at least twice the size of private schools ; School size usually correlates to the population density of the local area. The average private school had 193 students in 1999–2000, whereas the average public school has 517 students, according to the NCES. The average public school had 535 students in the same area. Another way to look at this is to see that 80 percent of private schools have less than 300 students enrolled while only 29percent of public schools have less than 300 students enrolled.

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schools have less than 300 students enrolled while only 29percent of public schools have less than 300 students enrolled.

While smaller school size may be correlated to a more controlled academic setting, the flip side is that there is strength in numbers. Small schools, have some disadvantages as well such as providing a narrower set of programs and services. (Great School Staff 1.2).

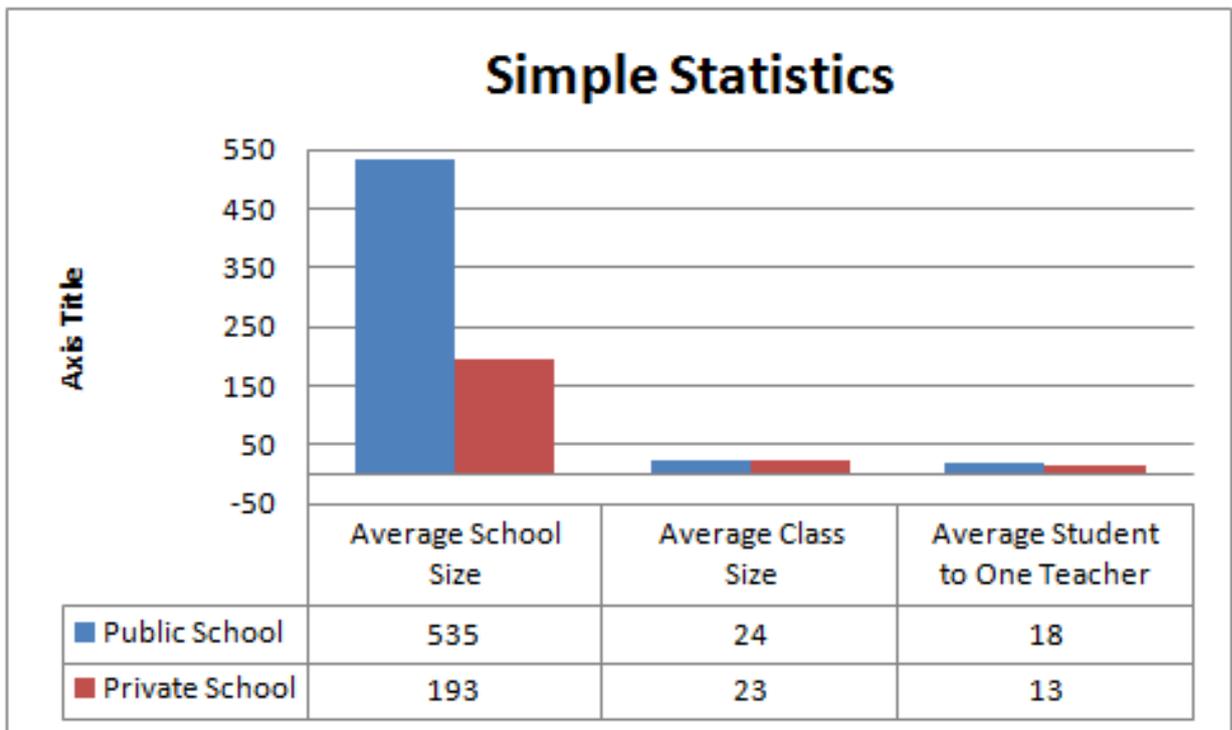
### **3.1.6 .Class size in Public and Private School in America**



Class size is one of the major differences between public and private schools. The class size in urban public schools can be as large as 25-30 students , while most private schools keep their class sizes at 15-20 students. There are even electives at some private schools with fewer students, meaning that the child has a lot of personal attention and the ability to contribute to classroom discussions that foster learning.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics study, private schools tend to be half as large as public schools. Many experts feel that children are less likely to get lost in the shuffle if they attend a smaller school, which naturally nurtures a sense of community and belonging. In addition, the teacher-student ratios in private schools tend to

be more favorable, says the National Association for Independent Schools. (Clayton, 2005,p.23).



Source: <http://www.publicschoolreview.com/articles/5>

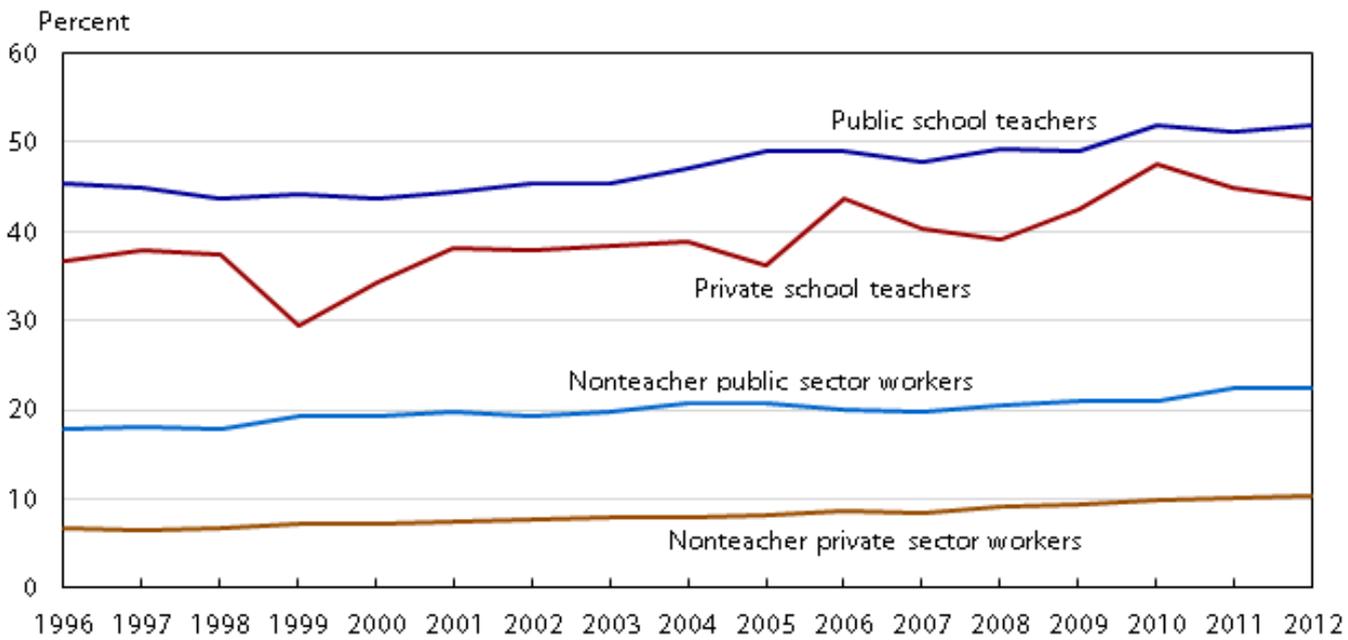
### 3.1.7. Quality of Teachers in Public and Private School in America

There are some slight differences between private and public schools. The quality of teachers is one of those differences . public school teachers must be certified by the state in which they are teaching. Certification is granted once statutory requirements such as education courses and teaching practice are met. The certificate is valid for a set number of years and must be renewed.

Public schools cannot terminate the terms of their teachers abruptly. After completing a probationary period, teachers are granted tenure by law. They cannot be dismissed without first going through a twelve-month rehabilitation period. This too, can only be done after a public hearing in which charges of incompetence or misconduct must be proven.

On the other hand, private school teachers may not be required to have certification, and often have subject area expertise and a degree in the subject they teach. Private schools have their own personnel requirements. Private schools can terminate the terms of their teachers abruptly. Schools are free to deal with personnel matters. (NCES,2007)

**Figure 2. Public and private sector teachers and nonteacher workers with a master's degree or higher, 1996–2012**



Source: Authors' analysis of CPS data, 1996–2012.

### 3.1.8 .Curriculum in Public and Private Schools

There's a similar discrepancy between curriculum development in private and public schools. Public schools must follow state guidelines that set out specific standards and assessment procedures. In theory, this creates a certain amount of quality control. Private schools, on the other hand, can choose whatever curriculum and assessment model they wish. This freedom to design their own curriculum or avoid standardized tests can result in higher standards for students or lower .

Private schools aren't limited by state guidelines in developing their curriculum, so they can offer classes that differ dramatically from public schools. That said, many private schools choose to use the same curriculum and follow the same state standards that public schools use.

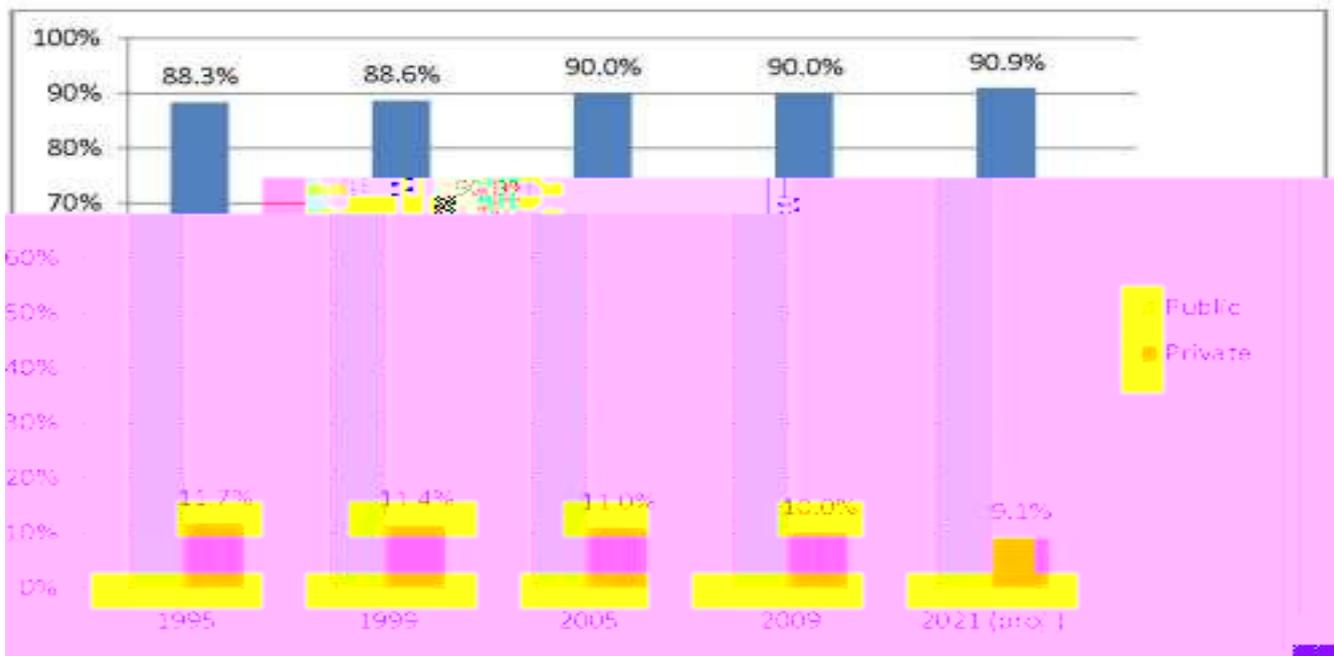
### 3.1.9. Discipline in Public and Private Schools in America

Discipline is handled differently in private schools vs public schools. Discipline in public schools is somewhat complicated because students are governed by due process and constitutional rights. This has the practical effect of making it difficult to discipline students for minor and major infractions of the school's code of conduct (Danial Schugensky,2009.)



Private school students are governed by the contract which they and their parents sign with the school. It clearly spells out consequences for what the school considers unacceptable behavior.

### 3.2. Statistics about Public and Private Schools in United States of America



#### Why Do Parents Choose to Send Their Children To Private Schools?

Private schools were the original educational entities in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2005) and they have played an important role in educating America's youth since the 1980's (Broughman, 2006). The number of private elementary and secondary schools in the United States has increased from 26,093 in the 1993-1994 school year to 28,384 schools in the fall of 2003, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (1996 and 2006). Whereas the total enrollment for private schools has increased from 1989 to 2005, the percentage of school-aged students in the United States has decreased from eleven to nine percent (Livington, 2008). Catholic schools

maintain the largest number of private school students. Although enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools has increased since the fall of 1985, private school enrollment has grown more slowly (NCES, 2008). Currently, private school enrollment is approximately ten percent of the total elementary and secondary school-aged children (Broughman, 2006).

The use of school choice and voucher programs has enabled private school enrollments to remain stable over the past decade and a half. This is an indication that private education can be expected to remain a viable alternative to public schools. School choice is provided under Title One of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (Bathon & Spradlin, 2007), affording students the opportunity to attend another public school in the district if their home school did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years. NCLB also provides benefits to private school students and teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). These services are governed by the

Uniform Provisions in Title IX of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and mandate equitable services to eligible private school students. These benefits, such as, targeted assistance for students who are having academic difficulty, financial assistance to improve the education for migrant students, and professional development for private school teachers, are considered services to students and teachers and not the private school entity (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Hoxby (2003) has contended that school choice momentum increased after the federal NCLB Act instituted statewide testing to determine AYP. An example of a school choice initiative is the San Antonio School Choice Research Project (1997) in which a private program provided scholarships to low income parents to enroll their children in private schools. This program offered scholarships for other choices including a public multilingual program and funding for students already attending private schools. One of the reasons cited from this four-year

study was parents' perception of the quality of public schools. Other major cities with similar voucher programs that provided limited funding for public school students to attend private schools of their choice include Milwaukee, Cleveland and Washington, D.C. (Lips, 2005). Each of these voucher programs uses a lottery system to select low income minority students. The purpose of voucher programs is to help lower income families receive the best education available. The programs are established based on assertions that education will be improved for all children when parents have the opportunity to choose their children's schools and when there is competition between public and private institutions (Hassett, 2001). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1995), parents who chose their children's schools were more likely to be satisfied with the school. It was also noted that according to the National Household Education Survey 1993, less than two percent of parents surveyed admitted that the assigned school was their school of choice (NCES, 1995).

Public schools have advantages that many private schools cannot match. Some of the advantages of public education include free books, competitive sports at multiple grade levels, state certified educators and administrators, free and reduced price lunches, and free transportation. Although many private schools receive public funds for transportation and special education services, some parents must provide transportation for their children (Cookson, 1997).

Parents choose to send their children to private schools for a variety of reasons, including the quality of education anticipated and their children's preparation for the future (CAPE, 2008). While several quantitative researchers have noted the parents' desire for a well-rounded education, to include academics, sports and social life, what has not yet been investigated are the reasons given by parents in qualitative studies (Kennedy, 2008). Private schools are fulfilling this desire by making every effort to insure that their

student population is racially, ethnically, and economically diverse (Kennedy, 2008).

Although the financial requirements can be burdensome, private school parents make the commitment and sacrifices to provide the best possible education for their children.

Researchers have noted that it was fairly common for families to make holiday and other luxury sacrifices to afford a private school education (Kennedy, 2008).

There are numerous studies that cited parent satisfaction for choosing a private school education (CAPE, 2008). However, the research is less clear on detailing how and why parents chose private schools. Research has shown that parents want the opportunity to choose the schools that their children attend (Moe, 2001). This investigation explained why parents chose private schools. The purpose of this study was to understand the reasons parents chose to send their children to private schools.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion it has been stated that a private and a public school has the same curriculum but different plans of requirement between the state and the local boards. It is also stated that the private require more to attend, then public school. For as a public school is funded and run by the government, and manage by the local city board.

## General Conclusion

This entire work is about the two types of Education in America, which raised some interesting points and it has been refreshing to see some of the differences and similarities of the Public and Private schools in America

The first chapter demonstrated that the Public schools in America are the old type of schooling and the most numerous schools' according to the statistics of the National Center of Education in the United States of America .The Public school in America are is universally available, with control and funding coming from the state, local, and federal government . We all know that the Public schools' are free or in another way they do not pay taxes; This is the typical one type of schooling which is the Public school in America.

The second chapter discussed the new type of schooling in America which is the Private school and all what contributed to find this new type of schooling. Private schools, also known as independent schools, nongovernmental, or non state schools are not administered by local ,state or national governments. the major benefits of Private school are the size of classes ,the few number of student ,and also the chances for exams and jobs.

The third chapter examined the major differences and similarities between the two types of schooling in the United States of America and the statistics about classes, teachers, and level of Education in each type of schooling.

Finally it has been stated that a private and a public school has the same curriculum but different plans of requirement between the state and the local boards. It is also stated that the private require more to attend, then public school. For as a public school is funded and run by the government, and manage by the local city board.

There are many differences between the two types of schooling but there is similarities between the Public and the Private schools in United States of America ; the major difference between the two types of schooling is Public controlling by the state in the other hand the Private school is free .

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