



118-49

They Prefer English Medium Schools

The Guardians in the Indian State of Punjab prefer to send their children to English medium schools in spite of higher fees charged by them.

AMRITSAR—With a growing demand for schools for children between three and five, there is a mushroom growth of nursery and kindergarten institutions in this city. This is also noticed in the rural areas.

The number of such new schools constructed is not known but to go by the signboards and the daily handbills inserted in newspapers, there must be about 300 such schools in this district alone.

The Government is eager to promote Punjabi as the medium of instruction. But parents' insistence on English is so strong that the

nursery and kindergarten schools have invariably English as the medium with Hindi or Punjabi as second languages.

Almost all such schools are run by educated young women and some retired women teachers. It is considered a lucrative business for young educated girls.

Well-known educational institutions like the DAV and the Chief Khalsa Diwan have also entered this field by establishing, what they call, model or modern public schools on the pattern of the ones run by the Christian missions. Demand for admission into the established

schools is so great that names are being registered two to three years in advance.

The heads of such well-established institutions test the child before admission. The child may be asked to name some flowers or animals. The parents often teach the names at home and many students start using English words in their daily parlance. Parents are interviewed to judge their capacity for coaching their children.

Such schools realize large amounts in admission fees, donations for various purposes, cost of uniforms, books supplied by the schools or transport charges. Most of the money is taken in advance and the cost may run into hundreds. Some schools have purchased their own buses or vans for the children. (The Statesman).