

*Determinants of Parent's School Choices for Primary Education in
selected districts of Punjab*



M. Phil Thesis

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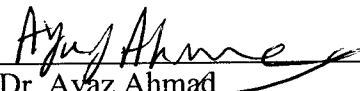
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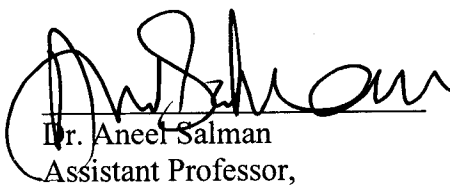
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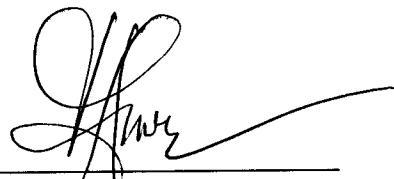
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Abstract

Primary education of the children is a serious matter for the parents. In current times, while the educational competition has increased significantly, parents make their decisions about the early education of their children after making the assessment of many social and economic determinants. As, primary education provides a base for the children, so, the process of making school choices means a lot to them. In this study, it is investigated that how the parent's choices vary from rural to urban areas about public or private school. Current study shows that social economic factors of parents and related to school play a key role in the determination process, While quality of the school ensures that how right they are in decision making and are they getting the expected returns from the school or not. The study is conducted in the selected districts of the Punjab, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalpur, Sialkot, Chakwal and capital city Islamabad. The results showed that parents choices vary with the change of the locale between public and private sector and how different factors determine their process of school choice.

Contents

Appendix.....	6
Chapter 1.....	7
1.1 Introduction.....	7
1.2. Problem statement:.....	10
1.3. Objective of the study:.....	11
1.4. Hypothesis of the study:.....	11
1.5. Significance of the study:.....	12
1.6. Limitations of the Study:.....	13
Chapter 2.....	14
2.1 Literature Review:.....	14
2.1.1 Parent’s School Choice:.....	14
2.1.2 Rural/Urban Differences.....	15
2.1.3 Family Income:.....	16
2.1.4 School Infrastructure and Quality of the School:.....	16
2.1.5 Social Repute of the School:.....	17
2.1.6 Medium of the School.....	18
2.1.7 Distance.....	19
2.2 Research Gap:.....	20
Chapter 3.....	21
Methodology.....	21
3.1. Conceptual Framework:.....	21
3.2. Study area and Sampling Technique.....	22
3.3. Econometric Model.....	24
3.3.1. Statistical Analysis.....	25
Chapter 4.....	26
Data Analysis and Results.....	26
4.1. Pilot Study.....	26
4.1.1 Findings.....	26
4.2. Actual Study Assessment.....	27
4.2.1. Respondent Profile:.....	27

4.2.2. Assessment of Reliability	29
4.3. Regression Analysis:	31
4.3.1. Regression Results:	33
4.4. Discussion and Hypothesis Testing	33
4.4.1. Socio-economic Determinants of Parent’s School	33
4.4.2. Characteristics of School:	35
4.4.3. Quality of the School:	38
4.4.4. The Impact of Area (Rural/Urban) and School Type (Public/Private).....	40
Chapter 5	43
Conclusion and Policy Implications.....	43
5.1. Conclusion and Policy Implications.....	43
5.2. Policy Implications.....	44
5.3. Future implications.....	47
References.....	48
Appendix A.....	54
Questionnaire	54
Appendix B	60
Results of Pilot Study Analysis	60
Appendix C	61
Number of Responses Against Every Question	61

List of Tables and Figures

Figures

<i>Figure 1</i> Conceptual framework for Determinant of Parent's Choice	22
Table 1 Demographics	27
Table 2. Monthly Income.....	28
Table 3. Income Allocated for Education	29
Table 4 Correlation Matrix	30
Table 5 Descriptive Statistics.....	32
Table 6 Regression Analysis.....	33

Appendix

Table A 1 Parents School Choice	61
Table A 2 Socio economic factors related the respondent.....	62
Table A 3 Characteristics of the School	63
Table A 4 Quality of School	64

Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

Over the time, the world has witnessed that the education has played a significant role in social and economic growth of developed and underdeveloped countries. Countries in which educational policies and reforms are more effective have made enormous progress in their socio-economic status and those countries which have not paid much attention to educational sector are still struggling to catch up the pace to compete with developed countries (Easterlin, 1981).

Education is the primary objective of any country and is being provided by both public and private sectors. It increases the skills of human capital and lately the economic growth. Though, both public and private sector are providing quality education, but actual role is being played by the parents who want a best educational environment for their children. The parent's choice of school determines the future of their child so, while choosing the right school, they take many social and economic determinants into an account. Countries where both sectors are providing almost same level of education, the selection of school is not an issue but countries where there is a huge gap in the quality of education, and there are diverse options for the school choice, parents become confused to choose the right school. Mostly, this problem exists in developing countries like India and Pakistan. In both countries, the trend of private schooling for primary education has risen in last five years or so. In a recent research (The private schooling phenomenon in India: A review by Kingdon, (2017), conducted in India, it is estimated that number of students in private sector has increased up to 17.5 million, while on the other hand public sector lost about 13 million students. It clearly shows the failure of policy and the efficiency of the concerning public institutions. There are two big issues which were identified, one is the gap of cost and benefits and the other is low communication between

parent's and the school administration in public schools. In Pakistan, according to the 18th amendment of Article 25A of the constitution, education is the basic right of every individual. Nevertheless, providing education only by the government, throughout the country, is not possible. To fulfill the gap for the provision of the education, the government invites private sector to invest. The investors of private education sector, like any other industry, always try to increase their profits and to decrease the costs. So, to attract the parents, these private school or school systems offer different academic and non-academic facilities i.e using Tablet Computers instead of the books etc. To gain the comparative advantage, these private school offers different type of syllabus like Oxford or Cambridge or even some school systems have introduced their own curriculum to teach the students (Ali, 2014). While in Public Schools and low-end private school, the courses of Textbook Board are being taught. Some schools are also teaching mixed syllabus of Oxford and Textbook Board. These differences of syllabuses create a learning gap between the students who are studying in private schools and those who are in the Public schools (Naseer, 2013). Major divide in public and private sector in Pakistan is the extent and methods of education delivery (Hamna Ahmed, 2014). Parent's involvement is higher in private sector for primary education as compare to the public. In private sector schooling, the profit orientation multiple market segments have been created resulting in extremely differing and in certain cases, polarizing the education in terms of quality. Due to this polarized situation, parents mostly become confused while making the right choice of the school for their children. The problem becomes more complex when it comes to rural and urban divide.

As income plays a key role in the process of determination along with the other factors, the parent's choice for primary school varies in different income groups (Hamna Ahmed, 2014). In Pakistan, most of the low- and middle-class-income group people are living in

rural areas (Economic Survey, 2016). The literature on parent's school choices shows that there are differences in parent's school choices in rural and urban areas (Alderman, 2011; Amin, 2016; Bast, 2004). The rural urban divide makes the problem even more complex while choosing the right school among public and private schools. Through different researches, it is identified that the focus of the parents in urban areas, on determinants of school choice, is different from those who are living in the rural areas (Christopher Colclough, 2005; Halai, 2011; Hamna Ahmed, 2014). For example, parents in rural areas focus on the determinants like distance from the school, social status of the school, parent teacher communication, infrastructure and other physical facilities of the school (Amjad, 2012; Farhat Saleem, 2014). While parents living in rural areas have other preferences like single sex school, fee of the school, history of academic achievements of the school, and, another factor that is identified in rural areas is, the social relation of the father with the school staff (Siddiqui, 2007). Due to the rural and urban divide, the prospect of parent's school choice may vary in both vicinities. Usually, the focus of the private schools is higher in urban areas as compare to the rural areas (Amin, 2016)

SDG's fourth goal focuses on to insure the inclusive and quality education for all and promote life-long learning while MDG's second goal emphasis on achieving the universal primary education. According to Educational Statistics of Pakistan (2015-16) that in Pakistan there are a total of 145,829 primary schools, out of these 125,573 (86%) are in the public sector, whereas, 20,256 (14%) are in the private sector. The primary stage of education in Pakistan enrolls 18.751 million learners/students. Out of which 11.461 million (61%) are in public sector and 7.290 million (39%) are in private sector. Out of the total enrolment at primary stage, 10.471 million (55%) are boys and 8.280 million (45%) are girls. The total number of primary teachers are 422,797 of which 324,561 (77%) are in public sector, whereas 98,236 (23%) are in private sector. The number of

primary schools in rural areas of Punjab is 44,524 and in Urban is 8352 including both public and private schools. Further, there are 3,449 public schools in urban areas and 33,526 Schools are in rural areas. In Private sector, there are 9,706 schools in urban areas and 4,409 schools are in rural areas. (Pakistan Education Statistics 2015-16, 2016).

Although there have been some segregated studies in Pakistan considering the choice of Parents like (Ahmed and Amjad (2014), Ahmad et al. (2014), Alderman et al. (2001), Lloyd et al. 2005), yet the phenomena of parent's choices in the context of social and economic determinants and the variation of these determinants in public/private, and rural urban divide to bring reforms in policy making process has not been extensively focused previously.

1.2. Problem statement:

Choosing the right school for the early education of the children is a very sensitive matter for the parents. While choosing the right school, the parents consider many factors related to school choice. The income of parents represents their willingness to pay or the affordability of the school fee as a key determinant. In Pakistan, 60.78% people are living in rural areas (Economic Survey, 2016) and most of the rural residents belong to middle- or low-level-income group. People who belong to upper middle class or upper class of the economy, are mostly living in urban area

Due to this reason, the focus and concentration of private schools is higher in the urban areas as the investors of these private schools are mostly focused on profit orientation and most of the people with higher incomes tend to reside in urban areas (Crozier, 2007). Most of the high-end schools prefer a location near the housing societies or urban areas where people with higher incomes are living. On the other hand, people living in rural areas are mostly belong to low income group, so the trend of private schools is less in

rural areas (Coope, 2013). So, it is necessary to investigate that is there a difference of school choices among the parents who are living in the rural areas as compare to the parents who are living in urban areas?

To increase the profits and to attract the parents, private schools mostly focus on the tangible facilities of the school like building, sports courts and other co-curricular activities. School with higher fees mostly follow international syllabus to teach the students. While in rural areas, low end private schools mostly follow textbook board or mixed syllabus (Yusuf Khan, 2005). The only difference that remain is the difference of quality of service that is being provided. Private school are more focused on student teacher and teacher parent communication while public schools lack this element of communication. These are the differences which are being assessed in the current study. How these different educational systems and the characteristics if the school attract the parents and impacts the parent's choices for the early education of their children? And, are the parents more attracted to private schooling while public schools are providing the education free of cost?

1.3. Objective of the study:

1. To identify that if school being public or private effects the parent's choice.
2. To explore how parent's choice determinants are varying in rural and urban area.
3. To investigate the impact of school characteristics on the parent's choice for school while taking quality of the school as a major cause behind the decision-making process.

1.4. Hypothesis of the study:

H₁: The Socio-economic Determinants do not affect the parent's school choice.

H_{1A}: The Socio-economic Determinants does affect the parent's school choice.

H₂: The Characteristics of the School do not impact the parent's school choice.

H_{2A}: The Characteristics of the School do impact the parent's school choice.

H₃: The quality of school does not impact the parent's school choice.

H_{3A}: The quality of school does affect the parent's school choice.

H₄: The difference of locale (rural/urban) and the type of school (public/private) does not impact the parent's school choice.

H_{4A}: The difference of locale (rural/urban) and the type of school (public/private) does impact the parent's school choice.

1.5. Significance of the study:

This study aims to identify the social and economic determinants of parent's school choice and to measure the extent of variation in the process of their decision making with the variation in those determinants. The gap of provision of quality education between public and private sector has provided the investors a suitable environment to invest in the education sector to earn more profits, though, most of the private schools or school system claim that their actual ambitions are to provide quality education to the children.

This study is based on three selected districts of Punjab (Rahum Yar Khan (RYK), Chakwal and Sialkot). The basic idea of conducting this study is to provide much generalized policy implications to improve the public sector education by meeting the differences which are providing gaps to private sector to overcome. So that quality education can become accessible and more inclusive for common people of the society abide from rural and urban divide and while making decision for the early education for their children, parents shouldn't hesitate to send them to public schools with a confidence that their children would get quality education in a very suitable environment.

1.6. Limitations of the Study:

Due to limited time and resources, the study is being conducted in three selected districts of the Punjab which are selected based on accessibility. Data being collected from parents is totally subjective matter and based on personal understandings so there could be biasedness in the information given by the parents and due to some cultural restrictions, the data collection from both parents could be difficult.

Chapter 2

2.1 Literature Review:

This study contends with the research of factors influence parent's school choice for the primary education of their children. Involving pre-primary and primary education school level (public and private) in selected districts of Punjab, this study listed several factors that have been highlighted by the researcher. Consequently, a literature review-based study has been carried out to identify the factors influencing the parent's school choice.

2.1.1 Parent's School Choice:

The current available literature shows that the process of parent's school choice is very complex to decide. In a general sense, the schools are viewed as a market where parents are the consumers who are buying the school services for their child. In a public school, the basic purpose is to provide an inclusive quality education which provides the students a strong base to get higher education and to meet the international challenges. Parent's school choice and their responsible behavior plays a key role in academic performance of a child (Hastings and Weinstein, 2008). Generally, parents prefer a school on the basis of the location and on the basis of academic points scoring like the previous performance of the student who score excellent academic achievement during their education (Leroux, 2015). Parents who are well educated and have strong socio-economic background consider the school choice as a serious matter and mostly choose a school with a strong academic history and with a suitable environment for co-curricular activities (Burgess, 2009). On the other hand, parents who are not well educated and are belonged to a lower level income group are less likely to make a choice after considering the overall performance of a school. The proper selection of the school is an important issue regarding the early education of a child (Gorard and See, 2013; Rockicka 2016).

The choice of school is the most difficult and important decision made by the parents who percept higher returns on the educational investment in the form of higher future employment opportunities for their children. The phenomena of parent's school choice exist in almost all the countries in the world over including Pakistan. In the process of selection, the characteristics of parents play a major role. Parents who are educated, and have higher family income, they'll judge the quality of education in a different way as compare to those who are not educated or not well off enough (Crozier, 2007).

2.1.2 Rural/Urban Differences

Previous studies shows that the parent's prespective related to their childern vary significantly due to rural and urban divide (Jaffery, 2012;Fazal Husain, 2014;Rasheed, 2000). People living in rural areas of Punjab have a different prespective about primary education of the childern as compare to those parents who are living in urban areas. A case study of District Vehari conducted by Zia, (2015) showed that major reason behind this rural/urban difference of choices, other than the income,is education. The rural ural/urban divide has a significant effect over the primary education of a child. According to economic survey of Pakistan, current literacy rate in rural Punjab is overal 55%, while literacy rate in urban areas is 77% (Economic Survey, 2016).Fazal Husain, (2014) investigated that trend of allocating higher expenditures on education is higher in urban areas as compare to the rural areas. He also investiagted that parents in urban areas are more likely to send their children to a private sachool as compare to sending them to a public school. Hamna Ahmed, (2014) explored the determinants of parent' school choice in rurall Punjab and found that the difference of income and the parent's education are the most basic reason among rural and urban areas.Another research about parent's behaviour for school choice in Pakistan and Bangladesh done by Crozier, (2007) shows that the parents in urban areas are comparitively more educated as

compare to those who are living in rural areas. So the actual difference about the parent's choice depends upon the understanding and perspectives of the parents.

2.1.3 Family Income:

Literature shows that many researches have been done on the issue of family income and the early education of a child (Andrabi, 2007; Alderman, Ozram and Paterno 2001; Hamna Ahmed, Shara Amjad, 2013; Masooma Habib and Ahsan Shah 2013).. It is important to recognize that even if public schools are providing education free of cost, parents still incur a certain cost in sending their child to school (Alderman, 2001). The cost of uniforms, books, and stationery coupled with the opportunity cost of not having the child there to help with household chores makes family income an important determinant of school enrollment (Anis-ul-Haque, 2014). The affordability for education is an important issue that restricts the parents to send their children to school and to provide academic facilities to get basic education. The total expense of a child who is going to school includes the cost of school fee, uniforms, books and stationery, pocket money and the cost of transportation (Hamna Ahmed, 2013).

2.1.4 School Infrastructure and Quality of the School:

Beamish and Morey (2013) believed that there are two major motivations behind parental school choice, their aspirations for their kids and their anxieties about the children's future. (Andrabi, Das & Khwaja, 2002; Jane and Domisiano, 2007) enlisted several factors that determine the primary school enrolment in Kenya. Glewwe and Jacoby (2015) claimed that improving school infrastructure, especially classrooms, affect students' attainment and, therefore, directly influence the parent's decision of school selection. The debate over quality of education usually involves the difference between the public and private schooling. Lloyd et al. (2005) point out that private schools have more teachers and smaller classes, which reduces the teaching load for a given teacher. According to Andrabi (2007), primary students' test scores in Punjab were higher among private than public school children. In 2007, a study

conducted by Andrabi pointed out that the academic scores of primary students of private schools were higher and compared to the students of a public school. Similarly, a study conducted in India by Jishnu Das in 2006 shows that the scores of private school students were 12% in three subjects, English, Mathematics and General Science as compared to the public-school students. Srivastava (2007) found out in his research that according to most of the parents in India, the early education of a child is better only in private schools and the public schools are only to fulfill a formality of education for the parents who cannot afford a private school. High test scores and other school facilities are most basic attraction for the parents in private school industry. Parents always prefer a school with a purpose building, a proper security system, with higher academic performance and with better facilities like building, washrooms and playgrounds etc. (Lloyd, 2005). Number of students in a class is another important factor. In private schools, the number of the students in a class is lower as compared to a public school. Average number of students in a private school is fifteen to twenty students per class and, the number of students in a class of public school is twenty-five to forty-five. (Ravish Amjad, 2009). In conclusion, a school with a good location, good physical and infrastructural facilities and with a better academic performance is preferable for the parents who are conscious about the better early education of their children (Allen, 2014).

2.1.5 Social Repute of the School:

Social repute of a school is also a key factor in the selection process. Mahmud Sagir, (2014) conducted a research in major districts of all the provinces of Pakistan and found that some high end schools have become a status symbol and parents with higher incomes prefer those expensive schools due to their social status. Similarly, some schools become famous due to their student's performance in examinations (Mahmud Sagir, 2014, Naeem Ur Rehman Khattak, 2010). Most of the time, low or medium level schools use their academic

performance to increase their reputation and parents in Pakistan judge the quality of school on the basis of annual results (Vyoma Shah, 2014). In the perspective of school's quality, teacher's behavior, school facilities (cleanliness, ventilation, seating etc) and ease of accessibility are mostly considered while selecting a school by parents (Harold Alderman, 2001). The quality of teachers or mentors is another factor influencing the parent's school choice. Dilshad and Rana Muhammad (2010) investigated the impact of teachers skills and academic qualification in selected districts of Pakistan in the perspective of student performance and found a significant positive relation exist between the two. Muralidharan (2006) points out that teachers in private schools perform way better than those in public schools in India. Similarly, Tooley et al. (2005) found that teacher activity is higher while teacher absenteeism is lower in the private schools as compared to public schools of Nigeria.

2.1.6 Medium of the School

Medium of school also played an important role in determination of school choice of the parents. In developing countries like India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, an English medium school is more preferable for the parents. It is general perception of the parents that having proficiency in English language is a key factor for the child to move on with academic career. Several studies conducted in India shows that most of the parents prefer a low-cost English medium school over a public school with free primary education. A study conducted in India and Pakistan showed that Muslim communities in Hyderabad and parents of mostly Lahore preferred an English medium school and they have no attention to send their children to an Urdu medium school with a higher academic performance (Tooley and Dixon, 2001) Another study conducted in Lahore and Delhi showed the same results (Alderman, Orazem and Paterno, 2001). Hyneman and Stern (2014) conducted a research in Pakistan and Tanzania and pointed out that parents in both developing countries are more likely to choose an English medium school for the better early education of their children. Many other research

shows that most of the parents who are less educated and are belonged to a lower income level, perceive an English medium school better than public schools or the schools which are practicing the medium of instruction other than the English (Baird 2009, Kingdon, 1996; Muralidharan and Kremer, 2008; Tooley and Dixon 2007). Sarangapani and Winch (2010) assert that English as a medium of instruction is not necessarily a meaningful factor in parental demand. Jahan & Haroon Jamal (2005) found out in their research that difference of medium of teaching effected the parent's choice of school and most of the parents preferred English medium schools as compare to the others. Harlech-Jones et al. (2005) believe that parents are extremely satisfied with the English medium private schools and it directly influence their school choice. Siddiqui (2007) suggests parents might pay less attention to a school's curriculum but they would go for it if it is branded English-medium.

2.1.7 Distance

Another determining factor is the proximity of schools to families (Ohara 2012; Srivastava 2008; Woodhead, Frost, and James 2013). The closer a school is located to a family's household, the more convenient it is for parents to select the school (Steve Higgins, 2005). Private schools are increasing rapidly, and Tooley and Dixon's (2003, 2006) findings show the presence of these schools on every street and back alley in urban areas. Distance and availability of schools near the student's residency is another determinant of the selection of school. In this study, the distance from school is being observed by the parent's perspective as a characteristic of the school. Research based on the distance, as a factor of school choice, in Pakistan reveals that parents are less comfortable to send their daughter to a far school than their sons (Andrabi, (2007); Lloyd, Mete, and Grant (2009)). However, if parents are more quality conscious then they might agree to send their daughters to a private school that is quiet far from their home (Andrabi, 2007). Most of the studies of Pakistan, in the context of parent's school choices showed that parents prefer a school located near to the household

(Andrabi, 2007; Hamna Ahmed, 2012). This factor becomes more important when it comes to choose a school for the female students. Parents prefer a single sex school which is in a proximity though it has a lower performance in academics (Fazal Husain, 2014). Most of the parents feel insecure while sending their daughters to a school which is at a longer distance from the household. A study shows that parents are comfortable to send their daughters at the maximum distance of three to five Kilometers (Naeem Ur Rehman Khattak, 2010). Such type of behavior is mostly observed in the parents who are less educated and belong to rural areas. On the other hand, the maximum distance for a male student is ten to twenty Kilometers from the household (Dilshad, 2010).

2.2 Research Gap:

The review of various research studies of determinants of parent's choice ((Dr. Tajammal Hussain Shah, 2014; Hamna Ahmed, 2014; Naeem Ur Rehman Khattak, 2010; Augenblick, 2014; Mahmud Sagir, 2014; Zia, 2015; R. Ejaz, 2012) shows that mostly the importance is given to the factor that effects the parent's decision for early education for their children such as school fee, distance from the house, repute of the school, time cost, commuting cost, the behavior of administrative and teaching staff, assessment criteria, student-teacher and parent-teacher relationships, annual results and performance of the students, co-curricular activities, school security, incentives provided to the students and teachers and type of school (public\private). There are a few studies for the policy making for the early education of the children focusing rural/urban and public private divide, and how the parent's choice varies with the variation of the locale. So, this study aims to fill the gap of policy implications for the early education of the children based on the parent's choices

Chapter 3

Methodology

The review of literature has enabled to carve out the issues related to parent's school choice for pre-primary and primary education. In previous studies, most of the variables used to gauge the extent of the issue are income of the parents, distance from school, characteristics of the school, school environment, physical infrastructure of the school, curriculum of the school, co-curricular activities, fee structure of the school, previous performance of the school, class room climate and parent teacher communication. Most of these variables cover the assessment of the issue of parent's school choice quite accurately. This study also contains socio-economic variables perceived from previous studies. On the basis of the literature, a pilot study was conducted before starting the actual study to test the reliability and the measurement of the extent of the study.

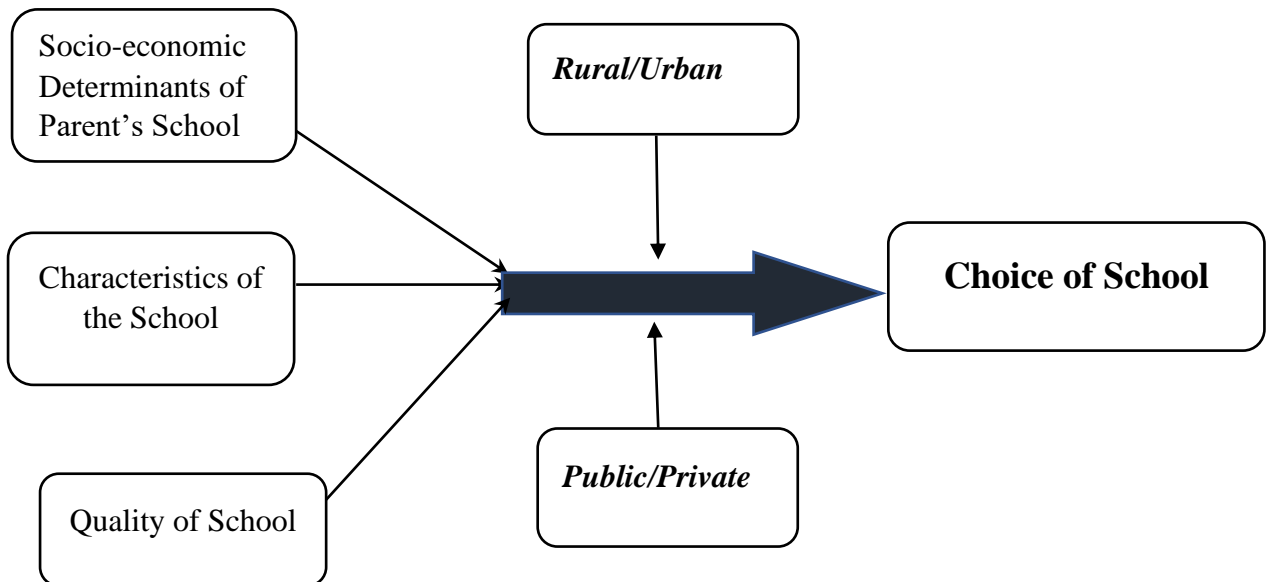
The questionnaire is developed based on the previous studies by identifying the questions which are mostly asked from the parents related to the parent's choice. The basic idea of questionnaire is perceived from two different surveys related to parent's school choice (OECD, Education at a Glance, 2014; University of Wales, 2018). The questionnaire is based on the questions related to defined variables and a Five Point Likert Scale is used to measure the extent of the response. Beside these, the questionnaire also contains demographic information related to respondents like age, head of the household and area where the respondents are living. (Questionnaire is provided in Annexure-I at Page No. 41). A pilot study was conducted to test the validity of the questionnaire.

3.1. Conceptual Framework:

For handling the complex hierarchical inter-relationship between the variables which are determinants of parent's school choice, here the researcher constructed a conceptual

framework for determinants of parent’s school choice, on the base of earlier research studies on the determinants of parent’s school choice. As, in literature review (Chapter 2), the variables are defined after analyzing the background literature, in Figure 1, the conceptual framework is designed to represent the concept of the study. Distribution of variables in this framework is in three groups: socio-economic factors, quality factors and factors related to the characteristics of the school. Whereas school type and area are external influencing factors. In short, parent’s school choice may be affected by these factors.

Figure 1 *Conceptual framework for Determinant of Parent’s Choice.*



3.2. Study area and Sampling Technique

The pilot study is conducting in Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur by collecting data from 50 parents whose children were in Preschool or in primary classes. 25 parents are engaged from private schools and 25 are from public schools. Half data is collected from urban area and half from rural area. Snowball sampling technique is used to collect data. The designed questionnaire was tested that if it is according to the study and meeting the objective of the study or not.

For the main study, three selected districts of Punjab along with the capital city Islamabad are surveyed covering 50 schools and 736 household respondents. The study, which focuses on urban and rural Punjab, considers cross-regional variations. Punjab is geographically divided between northern, western, southern and central Punjab. Since western Punjab was affected severely due to the floods at the time of survey, it would not have been representative of normal conditions in the area and was thus excluded from the sample. Southern Punjab is, historically deprived region in terms of socioeconomic conditions and access to public services. Private enrollment is relatively low in these areas as compared to the other parts of the province. The main objective of the survey was to avoid surveying a 'no choice' area since this would have affected the study objectives and it could become difficult to get desired outcomes of the study. On the other hand, areas located in central Punjab are relatively more developed and difference of socioeconomic conditions is relatively more effective in the terms of per-capita income. Similarly, the capital city of Pakistan, Islamabad has a higher average of per-capita income and the trend of private schooling is also higher. The districts selected for the study are selected on the basis of economic conditions and on the basis of accessibility to collect the data. Among schools, 48% are public while 52% are private schools. The three respected districts include Sialkot, Chakwal, and Rahim Yar Khan. From Sialkot, Daska is the major city to be surveyed while Ghuwainki, Ranjhai, Boobkanwala, Sabo Sara, Sehjokala, Motra, kotly Manga, Galotian, Gutranwala are the surrounding areas. Similarly, Chakwal is the major city in Chakwal district where Talagang, Dhudial, Dharabi, Thai, Balkasar, and Kotsarang are the other visited areas within Chakwal district. Liaqat Pur is the urban city and Muradpur, Ghokha, Aminabad, Shedani, and Trindan Gurgaj are rural villages surveyed from Rahim Yar Khan. Estimated time for the data collection and assessment of the results is four to six months.

The respondents are the parents of the students of pre-school to primary class. Data is acquired from the parents through a structured questionnaire designed after conducting a pilot study. The study will base on Snowball Sampling Method i.e. a Non-Probability Sampling technique where the researcher selects units based on knowledge and professional judgment. In judgmental sampling subjects are hand-picked from accessible population. The study is based on primary data and the information is obtained through structured questionnaire.

3.3. Econometric Model

Based on the preceding discussion and considering the type of research objectives, this study will be conducted by quantitative research methods. The data related to parents' choice is collected from the parents of those students who were present in the school at the time of data collection. For this purpose, the study is based on a methodological model. The model is designed to identify the determinants of Parent's School Choice (public/private) along with other social and economic variables. In the model, both bivariate and multivariate analyses is employed to identify the determinants of Parent's School Choice (public/private, rural/urban). This analysis focus on the outcome of Parent's School Choice for their pre-school to primary class children; either they choose public school or private school for their children. The socio-economic characteristics will control statistically because of confounding effect. The variables that will included as controls are; religion, gender of the household head and education of mother. In the model, the divide of public/private school and the location, rural/urban, are added as dummy variables. If the school is private, then its value is 0 and if it is public then it is 1. Similarly, if the school is in urban area then the assigned value is 0 while 1 is for the rural areas. Majorly this study is quantified through quantitative econometric analysis. In this econometric model the study will estimate a linear regression for Parent's School Choice (public/private). Parent's School Choice is taken as dependent variable and the divide of private/public and rural/urban are dummy variables.

$$\begin{aligned}
 \text{Parent's Choice} = & \alpha_0 + \beta_1 \text{ Socio-economic determinants of parent's choice} + \beta_2 \text{ Characteristics of school} + \\
 & \beta_3 \text{ Quality of the school} + \beta_4 \text{ Public School} + \beta_5 \text{ Rural Area} + \mu \\
 & \dots\dots\dots \text{Equation 1}
 \end{aligned}$$

Where

- Socio-economic determinants of the parent’s choice include parent’s income along with other determinates which are parent’s education, gender of the child and social connection of the parents with the faculty of the school.
 - Parent’s income is measured in rupees while other factors are measured with Likert Scale. Threshold level of the income group is an income of 20,000 or less.
- Characteristics of the of school are being measured through Likert Scale. This variable includes fee of the school, school reputation, distance of the school from the household, co-curricular activities and incentives provided by the school.
 - The measurement of school fee/ fee structure is in Pakistani Rupees (PKR).
 - Distance from school is being measured in Kilometers (Km).
- Quality of the school consists of the factors including the curriculum of the school, academic history of the school, medium of the instruction, the behavior of administrative and academic staff, ventilation system of the school, availability of co-curricular facilities like playgrounds, library and sports courts, parent-teacher communication and qualifications of the staff.
- Private and public schools are dummy variables taking the value 1 for public schools and 0 for the private schools.
- Rural and urban are also dummy variables and taking the value 1 rural regions and 0 is when it is urban regions.

3.3.1. Statistical Analysis

SPSS is used in this study for descriptive statistics and statistical significance level is $P > 0.0$.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Results

4.1. Pilot Study

As mentioned in Chapter 3, to test the validity and the reliability of the developed questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted in Rahim Yar Khan and Bahwalpur. Here are the results and findings of the study.

- The reliability coefficient is very high (.79) which means that high quality data is captured from the respondents.
- The values of the independent betas have positive values which means that these variables have significant impacts on the parent's choice. (See results in Appendix B).
- The *p-value* of all the variables is between .000 to .004 which means that null hypotheses are accepted while others are rejected.
- There were two dummy variables related to residence (Rural/Urban) and related to school type (Public/Private). The values of the both variables are positive which means that variation in residence and school type impacts the parent's school.

4.1.1 Findings

The findings of the pilot studies showed a significant relation between dependent and independent variables. The results drawn from analysis proved that questionnaire developed for this study is relevant and the instrument constructed to collect data is accurate. The response of the collected data indicates that the determinants of constructed variables impacts the parent's choice.

4.2. Actual Study Assessment

4.2.1. Respondent Profile:

For research purposes, data were collected from three district of the Punjab while pilot study was conducted in Rahim Yar Khan and Bahawalpur. The districts from where the data was collected are Rahim Yar Khan, Sialkot and Chakwal. In total 736 respondents were engaged from rural and urban areas of these districts. After screening the data, 736 response were selected for analysis which means that all the data collected from the respondents was authentic. The respondents were asked about their income, gender and religion and their choices for the school were also considered. Among 736 respondents, 251 respondents are from Rahim Yar Khan (34.1%), 67 respondents are from Bahawalpur (9.1%), 130 respondents are from Sialkot (17.7%), 205 respondents are from district Chakwal (27.9%) and 83 are from Islamabad (11.3%). Considering the gender of the respondents, 736 respondents were male (98.6%) while 10 respondents were female (1.4%). While about the school choice, 337 respondents choose public school (45.8%) and 399 choose private schools (54.2%). The demographics are shown in Table.

Table 1 Demographics

Demographics	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Rahim Yar Khan	251	34.1%
Bahawalpur	67	9.1%
Sialkot	130	17.7%
Chakwal	205	27.9%
Islamabad	83	11.3%

Residence

Rural	311	42%
Urban	425	58%

Type of School

Public	337	45.8%
Private	399	54.2%

Religion

Muslims	736	100%
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Gender

Male	726	98.6%
Female	10	1.4%

Table 2. Monthly Income

Monthly Income	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 20000	323	43.9%
21000-50000	261	35.5%
51000-80000	111	15.1%
81000-110000	38	5.2%
Greater than 110000	3	.4%

Table 3. Income Allocated for Education

Allocation Percentage	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 5 percent	457	62.1
More than 5 percent but less than Ten Percent	205	27.9
More than 10 percent	74	10.1

4.2.2. Assessment of Reliability

Bryman (2011) defined the reliability that how consistent is a concept in its measure. As instrument used in this research for data collection was adopted from (Evans, 2016), so it was necessary to check is this instrument was also reliable for the population defined in this research. For this purpose, to assess the reliability a test named as Cronbach's Alpha was applied in the SPSS software. The assessed value of the reliability test, Cronbach's Alpha is **.707**. Hinton (2014) described that the rule of thumb for checking the reliability through the Cronbach's Alpha's values, such as if the value of Cronbach's Alpha is less than 0.50 then it is considered as low reliability, and if the value is between 0.50 to 0.70 then it is known as moderate reliability while high reliability falls between 0.70 to 0.90.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix

Correlations						
	PS	SEDPC	COS	QOS	Rurl	Pub
PS	1.000	0.230	0.126	0.308	-0.096	-0.107
SEDPC	0.230	1.000	0.225	0.226	0.197	0.088
COS	0.126	0.225	1.000	0.109	0.214	0.135
QOS	0.308	0.226	0.109	1.000	-0.030	-0.024
Rurl	-0.096	0.197	0.214	-0.030	1.000	0.265
Pub	-0.107	0.088	0.135	-0.024	0.265	1.000

$$PS = \alpha_0 + \beta_1 SEDPC + \beta_2 COS + \beta_3 QOS + \beta_4 Rurl + \beta_5 PUBS^1$$

A correlation matrix shows that if there is a collinearity between the variables of the regression model. The values of collinearity should be less than 0.7. The correlation matrix of the regression showing that there is a very minor collinearity between the variable. This means that there is no significant correlation between the variables and model is significant to assess the parent's choice analysis. The positive sign of the values shows positive relation between the dependent and independent variables. While a negative sign shows that a negative relation. Which means that with increase of independent variable, the value of dependent variable decreases. The variables with negative values are dummy variables which represents the rate of change with the change of applied condition.

¹ *Ps*= Parent's School Choice, *SEDPC*= Socio-economic Determinants of Parent's Choice, *COS*=Characteristics of School, *QOS*= Quality of School, *Rurl*= Area (Rural/Urban), *PUBS*= Type of School (Public/Private).

4.3. Regression Analysis:

A regression describes and evaluates the relationships between a given dependent variable and one or more independent variables. Earlier research focusing on similar subjects has found significant results using regression analysis (Peng & Luo, 2000; Musteen, 2010). One can therefore assume that regression is an appropriate statistical method in order to confirm or disconfirm the chosen hypothesis. Cohen (2003) explained that the relative influence of independent variable on the dependent variable is assessed by applying the multiple regressions. This impact of independent variable on dependent variable is given in the form of regression coefficient that tells that how much impact is done by the independent variable. As this research aims to evaluate and compare the impacts of online word of mouth on purchase intention while considering two different forums. Therefore, this comparison was done on the values of regression coefficients. During the regression analysis, important assumptions for a valid regression will be elaborated and tested in order to ensure that the final regression models are not flawed.

The basic purpose of the study is to find out the socio-economic determinants of the parents for the choice of the school and how these choices vary with public/private and rural/urban differences. To investigate the study, four variables compared, 1 dependent variable Parent's School Choice and, 3 independent variables Socio-economic Determinants of parents' School Choice, Characteristics of School and Quality of School while rural/urban and public/private divide is added as dummy variable to moderate the model.

The descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation are reported in table.

Table 5 Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parent's Choice	19.1	5.19
Socio-economic Determinants of Parent's School Choice	22.3	5.41
Characteristics of the School	19.3	3.22
Quality of the School	19.4	6.18
Rural Area	4.5	4.98
Public School	3.4	4.77

The mean value (M=19.1, Std D= 5.19) indicates that parent's choice is an important factor for the early education of a child. Socio-economic Determinants of Parent's Choice factor (M=22.3, Std D= 5.41), Characteristics of the School (M=19.3, Std D= 19.3, Std D= 3.22), Quality of School (M= 19.4, Std D= 6.18), Rural or urban choice is as a dummy Variable (M= 4.5, Std D= 4.98) and Public or Private School choice are also dummy variables (M=3.4, Std D= 4.77) mean scores presents the normal distribution of the data.

4.3.1. Regression Results:

To analyze the model, Equation-1 was estimated by using SPSS statistical software. The results of the regression analysis are given in the table.

Table 6 Regression Analysis

Model	The Value of Coefficient (β)	Significance	Std. Error
Constant		.000	.124
Socio-economic Determinants of Parent's School Choice	.184	.000	.034
Characteristics of the School	.097	.007	.057
Quality of the School	.250	.000	.029
Rural Area	-.119	.001	.037
Public School	-.099	.005	.038

4.4. Discussion and Hypothesis Testing

4.4.1. Socio-economic Determinants of Parent's School

The results showed a positive impact of this set of variables ($\beta=.184$). The socio-economic determinant of parent's choice includes the factors of parent's income, distance from school, the behavior of school staff and the previous record of the school. The income of the parents plays a key role in the decision-making process of the parents. The demographic data showed that 43.9% people are those who are earning an income less than 20000 thousand, which we can consider the lower middle class of the population while 35.5% people are earning an income between 21000 to 50000 thousand which presents the population of middle class. There are 15.1% people among the data who are earning an income between 51000 to 80000 and are belonged to upper middle class. Parent's earning an income of 81000 to 11000

thousand per month are 5.2 percent which presents the higher class and parent's with income greater than 110000 per month are .4% which presents the almost the elite class of the total population. The percentage of allocated budget for education less than 5% of the income is 62.1%. which shows that most of the people allocate a very little amount of their income for the education of their children. Most of the parents related to this group are those who are living in the rural areas and prefer to send their children to the public schools as public schools charge a very low fee. There are 27.9% parents who allocate more of their income for the early education of their children. These are the parents who mostly like to send their children to a low-end private school. The parents who spend more than 10% and above of their income are 10.1%. These are the parents who prefer to send their children to a private school only. The survey showed that most of the people with low income are living in rural areas and they are not much interested in the early education of their children. To provide free and compulsory education up to Matric in compliance with the provisions of Article 25(A) of the Constitution. It is mentioned in the Education Policy document that Govt. is responsible to provide free education and to facilitate the students in possible way (Accessibility, quality and affordability of the education) (Education Policy of Pakistan, 2017).

During the survey, it is investigated that parents prefer a school which is located near the house of the parents. Many do not send their children to better schools only due to the distance from the school. Despite they can afford a rather costly school for their children but they send their children to a low-end school which is located near to their house only due to the distance. The overall efficiency, which is usually, based on the previous record of the school also a key determinant of the parent's school choice. Most of the private school allocate a handsome amount of their budget to advertise their prominent results in exams to attract the parents (Alejandra Mizala a, 2013). The parents who are conscious about the

result-based assessment of school prefers such type of school which shows a higher results mark in the exams. Socio-economic choices of the parents change with the rural-urban divide of locale. The study shows that parent's in rural areas prefer to send their children to a public school while parent's living in urban areas are most likely send their children to a private school. That is the reason that concentration of private schools is higher in the urban areas. **H1** hypothesis claims that the socio-economic determinants don't affect the parent's school choice and they are indifferent in school choice and are not being affected by rural/urban and public/private divide. While **H1A** claims that the socio-economic determinants do impact the parent's school choice. The model was tested through Multiple Regression.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	The Value of Coefficient (β)	Significance
Parent's School Choice	Socio-economic Determinants of Parent's Choice	.184	.000

The table shows the results of the test. The *p-value* is .000 which is >0.05 which shows that the model is significant. The value of coefficient (β)= .184 which is a positive value and it shows that one-unit change in independent variable β is causing 18.4-unit change in dependent variable. Here, the **H1** hypothesis is rejected while **H1A** is accepted.

4.4.2. Characteristics of School:

The model shows a positive result of characteristics of the school on parent's choice ($\beta=0.97$). This means a better socio-economic repute of the school impacts positively on the parent's school choice. It is usually examined that the parents prefer a school which has a good social repute in vicinity. In a small proximity like rural areas, the value of school reputation even increases as compare to the urban areas. The school reputation usually is

taken as the overall ethical behaviour of the school staff, the previous results and the social status of the school (Coope, 2013). In urban areas, some high-end schools have become a symbol of a particular social class (Roots Millennium School, Beacon House, City Grammar etc). Parents with higher incomes prefer to send their children to these schools only to present their social class or status (Augenblick, 2014). To maintain their label of social reputation, these high-end schools offer a different type of education like following the Cambridge or Oxford syllabus or by offering a different co-curricular activity. These schools charge a higher fee from the parents in the name of these activities.

The medium of school is also an important determinant related to school. Parents living in urban areas mostly prefer to send their children to English medium school so that their children could get the education in English to meet the challenges of their upcoming educational career (Farhat Saleem, 2014). During the survey, it is investigated that parents living in rural areas are not as conscious about the medium of the school as in urban areas. The private schools in urban areas face a situation of market competitiveness due to the diversity of the educational market. So, they offer different type of educational systems to attract the parents. The behaviour of the school staff is another key determinant of the parent's school choice (Hamna Ahmed, 2014). The current study investigated that the behaviour of the staff in public schools is not cooperative and polite with parents. It is observed that the number of school management staff is lesser in the public schools as compare to the private. During the survey, in Liaquat Pur, it is identified that most of the public schools located in the rural areas only have two to three staff members. One for teaching, one for the management and one for the security purposes. While, in the private schools, the number of staffs is higher. There is a separation in managerial and teaching staff. The management mostly consists of clerical staff, management staff and security staff, teaching staff and in some schools, the board of directors. All these facilities are provided to

facilitate the parents and the students of the school. In some Urban areas, like in Sialkot and Chakwal, the Govt. schools also have a different staff for different duties, but number of these schools is fewer as compare to the private schools.

The parent-teacher communicative relation is also a major determinant that impacts the parent's school choice (Memon, 2007). The element of parent-teacher relation is higher in private schools. During the survey it is identified that in public schools, most of the parents meet the teachers only when the mid-term or final-term results are announced. On the other hand, in private schools, parent teacher meetings are arranged more often to discuss the overall performance of the children and to discuss the issues that parents are having related to schools' staff. Even in the low-end private schools of rural areas has better mechanism of parent teacher communication than the public schools. The behaviour of the school and teaching staff also different in public private schools (Ali, 2014). The element of the accountability plays a role of moderator in the determination of the staff behaviour (Raju, 2015). In private schools, the accountability of the staff is quick and more responsive as compare to the public. Based on this reason the behaviour of the private school is, as observed, usually friendlier and politer as compare to the public schools. It is aimed in Education Policy of Pakistan that Government has allocated budget for the improvement of the overall efficiency of Primary education. To increase the enrolment, rate up to Primary education, Govt. has aimed to improve the infrastructure and the environment of the schools (Education Policy of Pakistan, 2017)

H2 Hypothesis stats that characteristics of a school don't affect the parent's school choice, while **H2A** claims that choices are affected by the characteristics of the school. The model is tested by applying Multiple Regression and the results are given below.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	The Value of Coefficient (β)	Significance
Parent's School Choice	Characteristics of the School	.097	.000

The results show that the value of p is **.000** which is <0.05 , so the model is significant. While the value of the coefficient ($\beta=0.97$) which presents that one-unit change in independent variable leads to 9.7-unit change in dependent variable. The positive value shows a positive impact of independent variable on the dependent variable. In this case the **H2A** hypothesis is accepted and **H2** hypothesis is rejected.

4.4.3. Quality of the School:

The analysis shows a positive in school quality and the parent's choice ($\beta=.025$). This shows a positive correlation among the two variables. The quality of school could include a lot of determinants related to school's overall efficiencies and environment (Anis-ul-Haque, 2014). These factors included to identify the quality of the school are facilities provided by the school like ventilation, seating facilities, building of the school, number of classrooms, security, playgrounds and sports courts, library and many other facilities provided by the school (Dilshad, 2010). Factors related to academic activities like school curriculum, test and assessment system, co-curricular activities, type of syllabus being taught in the school, medium of school and vice versa (Ali, 2014). Amjad and Ravish, 2012 investigated that the environment of the school plays a key role in the determination of parent's choice.

After conducting the survey in rural and urban areas of three under study districts, it is identified that the infrastructural condition of public schools is mostly worse. Schools located in rural areas have not enough classrooms and student are oppressed to sit in the open by sitting on the ground. Some school even doesn't have proper seating facilities. Many schools don't have toilets and other facilities. While, private schools, even in the rural

areas, have better facilities related to school quality. It is identified major cause for opting a private school for the parents for the early education of their children.

The other key finding related to school quality is the skill and the qualification of the teaching staff. It is investigated that academic qualifications of public teaching staffs are higher than the staffs in the private schools. The reason behind is that public sector teachers are selected through a systematically predefined criteria by taking tests and conducting interviews from the selected staff. On the other hand, the staff hired on private schools follows no predefined criteria. In some private schools, the qualification of the teaching staff is as low as matriculation or intermediate only. Salaries of the staff in the public schools are higher as compared to the private sector. During the survey, it is investigated that minimum salary of the teaching staff is 25000 and maximum up to 60000. On the other hand, the lower level salary is as low as 3000 per month. The average salary of the teaching staff in private school varies from 8000 to 20000 thousand.

Another difference that is identified is that the facilities provided to teaching staff, like staff rooms, stationary, pick and drop and other facilities are lesser in public schools as compared to private schools. These are the factors which directly affect the overall performance of the teaching staff. Although the teaching experience and the qualifications of teaching staffs are higher in the public sector schools, but due to lack of facilities, the overall performance of the public schools is lower. Overall school climate also plays a key role in the determination of parent's school choice (Anthony Wong, 2016). School climate includes the behaviours of the staffs, physical facilitation and the educational and academic environment of the school, facilities for recreational activities like school library, playgrounds and sports courts. During the survey, it is identified that only 4 private schools out of total of 40 schools have the facility of library for the children. The number of playgrounds for the students is higher in the public schools as compared to the private schools. Most of the private schools have a rather

smaller school buildings as compare to the public schools. As, the level of education is not standard in public schools, the parents mostly ignore the element of school infrastructure and prefer to send their children to private schools for a better education. Section-II, objective no 31 to 36 explain the Government criteria related to curriculum of the schools. In this section, only reforms for public sector school syllabus is discussed, while there is no discussion of unitary curriculum for public and private schools is discussed (Education Policy of Pakistan, 2017). While the differences of curriculum between public and private schools is on of the major issues.

H3 hypothesis states that the quality of school doesn't impact the parent's school choices while **H3A** claims that school quality impacts the parent's school choices. The test is applied, and the results are given below.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	The Value of Coefficient (β)	Significance
Parent's School Choice	Quality of School	.025	.004

The *p-value* is .004 which is less than .005 which means that the model is significant. The value of the coefficient of $\beta=.025$ which is a positive value and shows that one-unit change in β ca uses 25-unit change in dependent variable positively. The **H3** hypothesis is rejected while **H3A** is accepted. Rural/urban and public/private divide are used as dummy variables and their overall impact on the whole model is given below.

4.4.4. The Impact of Area (Rural/Urban) and School Type (Public/Private)

Through the study, this fact is identified that with the change of locale the parent's choices also change. In the econometric model (Equation-1), the rural/urban and public/private divide are used as dummy variables. The results of regression analysis and on the spot response of the respondents showed that the determination process of the parent's choice is different in

rural and urban areas while choosing public or private school. It is observed that parents living in urban areas are mostly belonged to second- and third-income group (Table-2) and are more conscious about the early education of their children. As mentioned before, parents who send their children to public school are those who earn a low income and tend to send their children to private school if they can afford.

Discussing the public and private divide, it is identified that there is a huge gap between the quality and standards of public and private schools. As we all know, that all the reforms which are made in public school, solely depend on budget allocated by the Govt., and the process of reforms is systematically prolonged, so it takes quite a long time to make changes in public school. For example, if a school needs to renovate its classrooms, first of all, the concerned department will make an assessment of the situation that whether it is necessary or not to release funds for renovation. After that, the Govt. shall call for the tenders to contract out the renovation of the school class rooms and through a systematic process, the highest bidder shall be granted the contract to renovate the school class rooms. This process sometimes could take more than a year in completion. On the other hand, as the owner of the school is itself responsible for any constructive or renovative measures, the process of renovation would be rather swift as compared to the public sector school. The other major difference between public and private school is two-way communication along with the other tangible and non-tangible factors. Due to the quality and standards of the schools, the parents mostly prefer private school. Even in the rural areas, parents who can afford low-end private schools, prefer to send their children to a private school as compared to the public school.

The hypothesis **H4** claims that rural/urban and public/private divide doesn't impact the parent's choices.

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	The Value of Coefficient (β)	Significance
Parent's School Choice	Rural	-.119	.001
	Public	-.099	.005

In the model, the value to the public school is assigned as 1 and private as 0, similarly, the rural areas as 1 and urban as 0. The value of the coefficient of rural/urban is $\beta = -.119$ and the significance *p-value* is .001 which is < 0.05 . It means that the model is significant. On the other hand, the value of public/private is $\beta = -.99$ which is a negative value and the significance *p-value* is 0.05 which is just equal to standard value of significance. The negative value of both dummy variables shows that there is a reverse impact of dummy variable on the dependent variable. Here, **H4A** hypothesis is accepted while **H4** is rejected.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study examined the parent's school choice for the early education of the children and how their choices are impacted by different socio-economic determinants. The overall results of regression analysis show that the parent's choices are significantly affected by different socio-economic factors and these choices vary with rural and urban divide. The concept and the theory of the study is based on the previous researches (Asim, 2013; Dilshad, 2010; Mahmur Sagir, 2014; Hamna Ahmed, 2014; Zia, 2015; Ali, 2014; Anis-ul-Haque, 2014). Parent's school choice is a diverse and complex process and in the current era, as the availability of different school type with different formats of study is diverse, it has become quite difficult for the parent's to choose the right school for the early education of their children (Anis-ul-Haque, 2014).

5.1. Conclusion and Policy Implications

The study shows that parent's school choices for the early education of their children is a complex process which includes many social and economic factors. As, the early education constructs the base for higher education, the parents take many aspects in to an account while sending their children to a school. The element of parent choice varies due to their income, accessibility and also due to social reputation of the school. Through the study, it is identified that parents in rural areas have different aspects related to school as compare to the parents living in the urban areas. In rural areas, the basic issue faced by the parents is income level. Due to limited income, parents prefer an affordable school for their children with less monthly fees. As, Govt. of Pakistan is providing free education and books for the primary education, so they most of the time parents prefer Govt. school to send their children. Parents with some what a little better income prefer a low-end private school. Other than income factor, parents in rural areas prefer a single sex school for their daughters. They also consider

the social relationship of the school faculty with the head of the household. Study shows that overall preferences of the parents are private schools whether they are living in rural area or in an urban area. Govt. schools are only preferable for those who are facing financial issues or have less interest in their child's early education. On the other hand, parents living in urban areas have different approach about the early education of their children. As, a diverse selection of schools is available to them, they consider every aspect of the school; from accessibility to the academic history. The physical or infrastructural facilities provided by private schools are far better than the public schools though the qualifications of the teaching staffs are not as standard as in public sector schools. So, parents, who have higher incomes, are more conscious about the early education of their children and they prefer the private sector education as compare to the public sector. The efficiency of the academic activities also impacts the parent's school choice. Private schools have more efficient parent-teacher communication. In Private schools, parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) are arranged so that they can discuss the issues that a student faces in his academic and domestic life. Through the study, it is identified that though the salaries and qualifications of public schools are higher than the private schools, but the standard of education is low. While, in private schools, the salaries and qualifications are lower but still the parents opt the private schools, the differentiating element in both education sectors is the element of accountability and management. So, it can be concluded that, the teaching staff is better in the public schools and the facilities related to academic activities are better in the private sector. The trend to opt private school for the early education is higher than the public schools only due to the lack of facilities and management issues.

5.2. Policy Implications

Despite all of the lacks and the issues related to public sector, without any objection, it provides more affordable and inclusive education for every citizen of the state. So, it is

necessary to bring incriminations in the education policy to improve the primary education. Based on the survey and the results of the study, these policy recommendations could be useful to improve the public sector education.

- Primary stakeholders in the education sector are the parents of the children. A survey should be conducted to take the suggestion of the common people of the state before initiating any educational project or before making any changes in the educational policy.
- In rural and remote areas, there is a need to run an awareness campaign to educate the parents about the importance of the primary education. While, in urban areas, accessibility to public school is one of the major issues. An affordable, secure and efficient transportation system is necessary to launch by the Govt.
- The condition of physical infrastructure is mostly worse in rural areas of Punjab. People living in the remote areas usually have a very lower income to live with, so, their only option to educate their children is to send them to the public sector schools. Due to less physical and academic facilities, most of the children in rural areas hardly complete their primary education. So, there is a need to focus on these issues.
- Private school systems, in urban areas have become a very profitable market for the investors to invest, to compete the market competitions; they offer different type of curricular and co-curricular activities to attract the parents. Most of the schools follow Cambridge or Oxford syllabi to teach. This type of differentiation is creating a gap between the knowledge of the public and private sector education. Even, some school systems have introduced a new trend to define and print their own syllabus to teach in the schools. The syllabus they teach can only be purchased by their own school shops and these books are sold at a very high price. Every year, the curriculum of every

class is revised so the student couldn't use a year older book, again. So, govt should also resolve these issues by implementing an inclusive syllabus for every student despite of the public/private differences.

- Some school systems charge a very high fee from the parents in the name of quality education. Parents who are more conscious about the early education of their children are pressed to bear such higher fees. These fees are charged in the name of co-curricular activities like sports day, color days or many other self-arranged events. Students are forced to purchase costly outfits to wear on these events and parents are advised to pay for those arrangements. So, there must be an accountability measures for such schools and their activities.
- As, the owner of the private schools are also investors like any other market, so their prime objective is also to increase their profits and to decrease their costs. The staff hired by these schools is often paid a very low salary as compare to the nature of their jobs. Govt. should take actions to enforce these private schools to follow the criteria of minimum wages set by the Govt. While, there is no specific academic standard to hire a teacher in private school. There should be a criterion for minimum academic qualification of teaching staff according to each grade up to Primary class.
- There is a desperate need to improve the parent-teacher communicative relation on the grass root level. The gap between the two stakeholders is causing a major damage to the educational system. Parent should be informed about their child's academic positions by every now and then. Teachers in public schools should be advised to have communication with the parents to update them.
- Private school systems are playing their role to fulfill the gap of availability of quality education, only public schools just cannot cover the whole population of the country.

But there is a need to make a positive and progressive public-private partnership. Govt. regulatory authorities must play their role to make private school system as a unified educational system by defining certain standards related to the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Difference of syllabus in different school systems should be banned and a unitary syllabus should be introduced by the Textbook Board according to the level of understanding of the students from pre-school to Primary class.

5.3. Future implications

It is attempted to make the study more generalized so it can be applied to other proximities, but still, with the area and demographic changes, the results may vary. For further research, this study provides the differences of the preferences of the parents and how it can vary between public and private schools in rural and urban areas. If anyone wants to conduct any further research based on these differences, this study could provide a platform to understand the extent of these differences and the changing behavior of the parent's choices.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

I Descriptive Identification of Parents	
1. Province	
2. District	
3. Tehsil	
4. Place of Residence (urban/city-1, rural-2)	
5. School type (Public-1, Private-2)	
6. Name of respondent	
7. Age of respondent	
8. Gender of the head of household (M-1, FM-2)	
9. Religion of household (Muslim-1, Christian-2, Hindu-3, other-4)	
10. Mother tongue	

II. Details of Family Members (Demographic Particulars)								
Sr. No	Name (2)	Sex (3)	Age in years (4)	Relation to Head (5)	Marital Status (6)	Education (7)	Profession (8)	Avg per month income (9)
1								
2								
3								
4								

5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								

Item-2: Name of Members **Item-3:** Male-1, Female-2 **Item-5:** Head of HH-1, Husband/wife-2, Son/daughter-3, Brother/sister-4, Relative-6, Others-7 **Item-6:** Marital Status: Married-1, Unmarried-2, Widowed-3, Divorced/Seperated-4 **Item-7 Education:** MA & higher-1, BA-2, FA-3, Matric-4, Middle-5, Primary-6, Illiterate-7 **Item-8 Profession:** Govt. Employee-1, Private job-2, Own business-3, Student-4, House wife-5, other-6

III Household Information

1. Family size:	No. of Adults-	No. of Children-
2. Number of dependents:		
3. Number of school going children:		
4. Number of Schools your child has changed:		
5. Average Monthly income (Rs./Month):		
Less than 20,000 -1, 21,000-50,000 -2, 51,000-80,000 -3, 81,000-110,000 -4,		
Greater than 110,000 -5		
6. Percentage of Income Allocated to Children's Education:		

7. Children's Grade in which your child is enrolled (Start from highest e.g. Class 5.....Play Group)

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

Instructions/Guidance Notes:

- This will be filled by Parents of Pre-Primary and Primary class students.
- The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect your views on the school choice. Your views are important in enhancing the quality of education in Pakistan.
- Please select one of the following choices which best reflects your views on the situations described in the sentence in section 3:
 - (1) Strongly Agree
 - (2) Agree
 - (3) Neutral i.e. neither agree nor disagree
 - (4) Disagree
 - (5) Strongly Disagree

Please answer all questions.

IV Dependent Variable						
Sr. No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neural	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Parents have a complete right to choose the school for their children					
2	Parents choose the right school keeping in mind various socio-economic factors					
3	Parents are well aware of the difference between the education provided by public and private school					
4	Three years is the right age for a child to start schooling					

V. Factors affecting your school choice

In the following set of questions you are asked whether you agree or disagree with various factors affecting your choice of school for your children. Please tick only one answer that represents your view for each statement

V.1. Socio-Economic factors related to the respondent:

Sr. No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neural	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The family monthly income is very important in deciding the child's school					
2	The family type is an important factor in deciding child's school					
3	The parents' education is an important factor in deciding the child's school					
4	The gender of the child affect parent's choice of school					
5	You prefer single sex school rather than co-education school					
6	If you have daughters, you would prefer to send them to the girl's school only					
7	It is important that friends of your child would also be attending this school					
8	It is important that you or other members of your family have attended this school					
9	It is important that other parents with a similar standard of living to yours should send their children to the same school					
10	Many children from our area are going to same school					

V.2. Socio-economic factors related to school:

Sr. No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neural	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	School should be highly reputed					
2	There is no gap between school's reality and its publicity					
3	Education in both public and private sectors are according to certain standards					

4	Parents prefer Private schools on public schools					
5	School should organize and encourage extra-curricular activities					
6	The security measures taken by the school admin are good enough					
7	School should provide religious education alongside the contemporary education					
8	The distance from the child's home to the school is important in deciding the school					
9	The school locality/neighborhood is important in deciding a particular school					
10	The fact that it is the only school in your locality affects your school choice					
11	The fee structure of the school is important					
12	The fact that you would have to pay for home tuition after school would affect your school choice					
13	School should provide opportunities for academically gifted students					
14	School should provide opportunities for academically struggling students					
15	School should provide opportunities for disabled students					

V.3. Quality of the School:

Sr. No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neural	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The overall quality of the school affects the choice of school for your children					
2	The quality of the education in primary/pre-primary is foundation for secondary school					
3	School should meet highest quality standards					
4	Schools should charge fee according to the standard of education it provides.					
5	Schools should not charge extra fee for co-curricular activities					
6	The medium of instruction should be English in school.					
7	School should follow Cambridge system					

	curriculum.					
8	School should have an efficient administrative system.					
9	School should have a huge air-conditioned building.					
10	School should have a great playground.					
11	School should have a well-maintained library for the students					
12	School should have a clean cafeteria that provides hygienic food.					
13	Teachers should have a close relationship with the students					
14	Teachers should be highly qualified and trained					
15	Teacher absenteeism should be very low					

Appendix B

Results of Pilot Study Analysis

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.585 ^a	0.343	0.284	0.40994
a. Predictors: (Constant), Public, Rural, Characteristics of School, Socio-economic Determinants of Parents, Quality of School				

Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Parent's Choice	1.8200	0.48456	50
Characteristics of School	2.0293	0.28735	50
Socio-economic Determinants of Parents	2.1460	0.46783	50
Quality of School	1.8700	0.45992	50
Rural	0.6200	0.49031	50
Public	1.8300	0.47213	50

Correlations						
	Parent's Choice	Characteristics of School	Socio-economic Determinants of Parents	Quality of School	Rural	Public
Parent's Choice	1.000	0.239	0.139	0.415	0.522	0.412
Characteristics of School	0.239	1.000	0.119	0.036	0.129	0.126
Socio-economic Determinants of Parents	0.139	0.119	1.000	0.006	0.273	0.286
Quality of School	0.415	0.036	0.006	1.000	0.446	0.449
Rural	0.522	0.129	0.273	0.446	1.000	0.126
Public	0.412	0.126	0.286	0.449	0.126	1.000

Coefficients			
	Beta	Std. Error	Sig
(Constant)	0.534	0.538	.000
Characteristics of School	0.170	0.206	.001
Socio-economic Determinants of Parents	0.648	0.132	.004
Quality of School	0.225	0.144	.000
Rural	0.398	0.140	.000
Public	0.569	0.369	.000

Appendix C

Number of Responses Against Every Question

Table A 1 Parents School Choice

Question*	Rahim Yar Khan					Sialkot					Chakwal					Islamabad				
	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q1	270	48	0	0	0	104	21	5	0	0	93	109	1	1	1	73	6	0	4	0
Q2	243	61	12	2	0	93	37	0	0	0	68	134	2	0	1	52	27	1	3	0
Q3	59	140	104	15	0	55	66	4	5	0	59	138	6	2	0	34	43	3	2	1
Q4	52	22	140	63	41	17	32	1	47	33	19	44	50	79	13	19	50	6	6	2

Questions*

1. Parents have a complete right to choose the school for their children
2. Parents choose the right school keeping in mind various socio-economic factors
3. Parents are well aware of the difference between the education provided by public and private school
4. Three years is the right age for a child to start schooling

Table A 2 Socio economic factors related the respondent

Questions*	Rahim Yar Khan					Sialkot					Chakwal					Islamabad				
	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q1	136	165	3	5	8	108	22	0	0	0	75	129	1	0	0	67	10	3	1	1
Q2	97	176	11	26	7	49	65	10	6	0	55	133	6	11	0	23	49	8	1	1
Q3	105	192	17	2	1	72	40	4	11	3	59	134	7	5	0	56	22	2	1	1
Q4	28	184	43	24	38	30	46	12	23	19	33	129	21	11	11	23	55	2	1	1
Q5	188	85	20	18	6	52	25	21	13	19	58	113	13	13	8	41	19	19	2	1
Q6	158	123	17	18	1	70	32	0	17	11	67	107	14	13	4	20	34	18	9	1
Q7	23	32	98	133	31	43	33	32	22	0	47	91	17	48	2	26	19	25	11	1
Q8	18	50	116	110	23	46	33	11	32	8	35	75	27	67	1	22	27	16	16	1
Q9	18	14	142	120	23	29	42	30	13	16	33	86	20	61	5	34	28	16	3	1
Q10	10	77	102	104	23	50	35	7	32	6	38	113	14	35	5	35	42	2	2	1

Questions*

1. The family monthly income is very important in deciding the child's school
2. The family type is an important factor in deciding child's school
3. The parents' education is an important factor in deciding the child's school
4. The gender of the child affect parent's choice of school
5. You prefer single sex school rather than co-education school
6. If you have daughters, you would prefer to send them to the girl's school only
7. It is important that friends of your child would also be attending this school
8. It is important that you or other members of your family have attended this school
9. It is important that other parents with a similar standard of living to yours should send their children to the same school
10. Many children from our area are going to same school

Table A 3 Characteristics of the School

Questions*	Rahim Yar Khan					Sialkot					Chakwal					Islamabad				
	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q1	248	60	4	4	1	31	71	24	4	0	79	109	7	10	0	64	10	3	5	0
Q2	74	47	158	36	1	46	46	14	24	0	52	90	27	34	2	20	46	12	3	1
Q3	189	82	33	12	1	31	83	8	1	7	67	111	10	17	0	21	19	10	12	20
Q4	8	25	85	165	34	43	58	19	2	8	74	103	12	14	2	56	24	2	0	0
Q5	227	78	10	2	0	83	37	8	2	0	71	124	9	1	0	32	49	1	0	0
Q6	35	175	99	7	1	63	31	7	21	8	46	152	6	0	1	36	41	4	1	0
Q7	248	50	16	1	1	88	41	0	1	0	99	95	6	5	0	52	28	2	0	0
Q8	73	174	36	28	6	59	50	9	12	0	45	120	21	19	0	19	55	4	3	1
Q9	57	64	23	167	2	34	52	24	20	0	41	71	31	62	0	23	42	13	3	1
Q10	17	200	77	23	0	35	37	15	37	6	43	136	17	9	0	27	11	3	40	1
Q11	67	52	172	24	1	66	39	10	15	0	64	108	17	16	0	35	31	16	0	0
Q12	80	54	156	25	1	4	64	24	38	0	43	63	37	58	4	29	48	3	1	1
Q13	263	49	3	2	0	71	55	0	4	0	68	120	9	8	0	55	27	0	0	0
Q14	277	32	5	1	2	55	68	0	7	0	66	131	7	1	0	32	50	0	0	0
Q15	275	39	2	1	0	64	54	0	4	8	104	78	15	5	3	69	13	0	0	0

Questions*

1. School should be highly reputed
2. There is no gap between school's reality and its publicity
3. Education in both public and private sectors are according to certain standards
4. Parents prefer Private schools on public schools
5. School should organize and encourage extra-curricular activities
6. The security measures taken by the school admin are good enough
7. School should provide religious education alongside the contemporary education
8. The distance from the child's home to the school is important in deciding the school

9. The school locality/neighborhood is important in deciding a particular school
10. The fact that it is the only school in your locality affects your school choice
11. The fee structure of the school is important
12. The fact that you would have to pay for home tuition after school would affect your school choice
13. School should provide opportunities for academically gifted students
14. School should provide opportunities for academically struggling students
15. School should provide opportunities for disabled students

Table A 4 Quality of School

Questions*	Rahim Yar Khan					Sialkot					Chakwal					Islamabad				
	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Q1	235	76	3	1	0	67	51	11	1	0	83	122	0	0	0	58	22	3	0	0
Q2	230	80	4	0	1	65	61	0	4	0	76	116	7	6	0	65	15	3	0	0
Q3	244	62	8	1	0	39	63	17	9	0	79	113	4	8	1	58	20	3	2	0
Q4	93	54	128	29	10	53	64	0	13	0	67	110	24	3	1	61	9	6	7	0
Q5	255	31	9	8	13	46	37	21	12	14	87	94	10	13	1	27	20	9	26	1
Q6	39	43	35	82	113	18	28	52	19	13	47	110	34	4	10	64	10	7	2	0
Q7	24	51	37	24	178	14	30	27	40	19	46	57	38	48	16	57	21	4	1	0
Q8	238	68	4	2	5	49	59	14	8	0	54	138	8	5	0	62	16	3	0	2
Q9	140	52	51	45	27	24	58	31	12	5	48	97	42	15	3	50	29	4	0	0
Q10	225	44	15	14	19	72	58	0	0	0	57	115	28	4	1	54	28	1	0	0
Q11	201	82	0	8	25	72	39	1	8	10	86	106	9	3	1	53	27	3	0	0
Q12	224	62	11	0	20	81	31	0	8	10	72	101	15	16	1	69	13	0	1	0
Q13	216	50	28	3	20	76	32	7	5	10	77	100	10	18	0	68	13	0	1	1
Q14	247	33	2	2	33	78	33	9	0	10	98	102	3	1	0	70	13	0	0	0
Q15	232	33	22	1	28	74	38	8	0	10	107	78	16	4	0	54	28	1	0	0

Questions*

1. The overall quality of the school affects the choice of school for your children
2. The quality of the education in primary/pre-primary is foundation for secondary school
3. School should meet highest quality standards
4. Schools should charge fee according to the standard of education it provides.
5. Schools should not charge extra fee for co-curricular activities
6. The medium of instruction should be English in school.
7. School should follow Cambridge system curriculum.
8. School should have an efficient administrative system.
9. School should have a huge air-conditioned building.
10. School should have a great playground.
11. School should have a well-maintained library for the students
12. School should have a clean cafeteria that provides hygienic food.
13. Teachers should have a close relationship with the students
14. Teachers should be highly qualified and trained
15. Teacher absenteeism should be very low

