

## **Exploring Parents' Opinion Regarding School Selection for Their Children at Secondary Level in District Quetta:**

By

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### **Abstract:**

*In the present days there appearing a growing trend of parents' involvement in the selection of schools for their children at the secondary level. Many of efforts have been put for development of the quality of education at the school for example facilities in education, improvement in the quality of teachers and an increase in the quality of learning. The involvement of teachers, staff of the school, school committee and the families of students are appearing as the major concern in the success of the learning process and standard of the school. It will be the first scientific study for highlighting that factors which cause parents to prefer private school for children education. In light of the finding of this study suggestion could be offered to address those factors in public schools teaching standard. Sampling technique that deals with the identification of all private sector schools working in Quetta city, while in the second part the responses of respondents were gathered by using convenient sampling technique. Thus parents' confidence on public school could be reinstated and flow of children from public to private schools be declined. Parents should possess the arguments that parents having the ability to look the school that best fitting the requirements of the children.*

**Keywords:** Exploration, School selection, Parents, Children, Quetta etc.

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## **Introduction:**

Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today (Malcolm X). The importance of education children is felt everywhere in this world. Proceeding on these line the constitution of Pakistan in its article 25A consider it state responsibility to provide free and compulsory education to a child of age 05 to 16 years. Similarly, our country is signatory of United Action Millennium Development Goals of achieving universal primary education by 2015.

For education our children the government has established schools of various age group (i.e. primary, middle, secondary etc.) where free education is imparted to children. Government provides free books to students pay for staff salaries, infrastructure development and other utilities. Beside the private sector was allowed constitutionally to establish or over burden. In private school parent bear fee for their children and purchase books and other required materials., In last decades it has been observed that a growing trend persist in the flow of public to private school. According to Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (PSLM) in Pakistan the ratio of enrollment in private school has been increased from 25% in 2001 to 30 % in 2009 this was only 12% in 1998. In Balochistan the trend of private school's enrollment is steeply rising especially in big cities. This time the ratio is about 35% of total enrolled students in the province.

The continuous rising in the ratio of private school students indicate parents are not satisfied of public sector schools. Factors which influence parents to select private schools need to be explored. Various studies have been conducted to unearth reason that influence parents to choose private school and avoid public schools are increasing in numbers. Various studies conducted worldwide on this particular issue but this study will be different from previous studies and their finding. This study aimed at explores the declining factors of public school's educational standard if exist. And also that surfing that attractive reason of private schools which attract parents towards.

## **Statement of the Problem:**

Beside government of the province firm commitment and allocate and allocating 24% of the total provincial budget to the education sector and a growing trend persist among the present to choose private school for children the purpose of the study “exploring parents” opinion regarding schools selection for their children at secondary level in district Quetta is to explore that factors which cause parent reluctant to choose public schools

for educating their children but choose private school bearing cumbersome fees.

### **Research Objectives:**

- The purpose of this study is to achieve the following objectives.
- To explore parent's opinion regarding school selection for their children at secondary level in district Quetta.
- To explore the causes of preferring a private school over a public school for pupil's education.

### **Research Questions:**

Following are the research questions of the study.

- To what extent factors like school curriculum, school atmosphere, learning environment and children needs affect parents' opinion regarding selection of school for their children at secondary level in district Quetta.
- Why parents prefer private schools over public school for their children even though public schools have better infrastructure, highly qualified teachers and well established curriculum, at secondary level in district Quetta.

### **Significance of the Study:**

- It will be the foremost study in the local context for highlighting that factors which cause parents to prefer private school for children education.
- In light of the finding of the study suggestion could be offered to address those factors in the public schools teaching standard. Thus parents' confidence on public school could be reinstated and flow of children from public to private schools is declined.

### **Delimitation:**

The results of the study will be applicable only to the public and private schools of district Quetta.

### **Literature Review:**

The parents possess the important responsibility of leading and supporting the child in various phases of development. They play an important role for leading the child in improving in attaining the specialization or communication with the development of academic's ability. Hence, a positive school improvises the skills and knowledge of the child. Parents appearing to have the responsibility that involves themselves for the sake of

childhood education for the school programs. According to Hornby & Smith (2013), the responsibility comes for the parents as they select the school for their children and may devolve their children in the learning process for the school. This term is supported by the that stated the parent's perceptions as they play the role for taking the children to the school that possesses the responsibility to educate the children that turn the parents to less participate in supporting children at both of home and school.

Smith et al. (2011) stated that parents decided to select a better school for children as they assume for providing guarantee in the success of the children and their associated involvement. Gamoran, (1996) said that ability of children in school appearing as be better as the parents appearing to have good selection of school. In addition to this, Fan and Chen (2001) and Yoder & Lopez (2003) stated that parents involved in the provision of choice to provide achievement and promoting their positive behaviors. Involvement of parents turned as critical issues with the national education system establishing rights and duties to the parents. Parents have the right to make involvement in the selection of education units and receiving information for the children education development. Parents of the compulsory school age appearing that provides the education to the children as involving as important aspects for the quality of education and have better outcomes.

According to Bast & Walberg (2014). the selection of school and assisting the children appearing as the most important duty for the parents. The school is expected for establishment and creation of programs that boosting the parent's involvements in the educational system. In spite of selection of schools, the parents have the responsibility to take care about school that provides development of curriculum, evaluation of teachers, application of teachers and allocating the regarding the budget. All such outcomes are there in promotion and contribution of the parents' involvements.

There are many different actors in parents' involvements for teachers, principal and also the students themselves. The definition of parents' involvement depends on the parents' experience, as they appear in researchers' way of variety. Parents appearing to be involved in taking care for a core of the family, raising, guiding, educating the children for better future life (Lassenet et al 2006). Selection of school appearing as an essential actor that improve the knowledge and provision of continuous support that referring the relationship among parents and children for the children progress and leading parents to take parts in school processing (Hills& Tyson 2009).

The selection of school turned the parent's involvement and supporting system that participating the school activities in making decisions for the proper administration structures. The establishment of development and learning progress identify the indicators for better grading and the good attitude. One form of parents' involvement in the selection of school-related with the communication among teachers, that communicates and makes a bridge for the actual involvement for the children education. Parents have the way for obligation and responsibility in carrying the education of the children that influence children development. The quality of education involving and improving the parents in education, where there exists the improvement in the academic achievement in students. At the time of school selection, the parents are involved in children motivation for attaining the betterment (Bernard, 2004).

(Bast and Walberg 2014) concluded in their research study that parents to select school with sound academic performance for their children.

### **Methodology:**

- 1. Nature and design of the study  
The nature of the study is exploratory and cross sectional survey is the design of the study.
- 2. Population: The populations were those children whose children are enrolled in secondary classes in public and private schools.
- 3. Sample and Sampling technique:

The sample of the study is determined on the basis of children enrollment in secondary school of district Quetta. A number of 8000 students are enrolled in secondary classes in district Quetta (EMIS 2016). The size of the sample i.e. parents, are determined on the bases of children enrollment in secondary classes. Two stage sampling technique was implied to select the respondents for the study. At first stage the cluster sampling was used to determine the sample of the study. Schools which are located in Zarghoon town Quetta are the main cluster of the study. At later stage, proportional sampling technique used to select the responses of the respondents of the study.

### **Instruments:**

Questionnaire was used as tool of study. In which 42 questions were put for parents' opinion. In questionnaire two options of Yes and No and Likert scale was used as measurement Likert scale consist of five option starting from agree and end with disagree.

### Data Collection:

The data was collected from parents of secondary school students of public and private school on weekly bases during weekly parent's teachers meeting.

Gender	Qualification	Age	Enrolled children	Monthly income	Profession
F %	F %	F %	F %	F %	F %
Male 257 89.5	Matric 257 43.4	25-30 111 17.8	Public 217 34.9	20-40 474 76.2	Govt 328 52.7
Female 65 10.5	Inter 75 12.1	31-35 56 9.0	Private 405 65.1	41-60 99 15.9	Self emp 202 32.5
	Graduation 78 12.5	36-40 154 24.8		61-80 20 3.2	Non Govt 92 14.8
	Master 85 13.7	40 abv 301 48.4		81 abv 29 4.7	
	Other 114 18.3				

### Validity of the Data:

Expert opinion was used to collect valid data from sampled parents.

### Reliability of the Data:

Pilot testing of data was carried out to increase the reliability of the data.

### Results and Discussion:

The respondents were selected randomly that consists of male and female. Out of 622 Parents, 557 (89.5%) were males and 65 (10.5%) were females. The data indicated that 43.4% were matriculate, 13.7 % were having the master's degree, 12.5% were the graduate degree holders and 12.1% were having an intermediate degree. The rest of the respondents which were 18.3% were having other degrees. The response rate was 100 percent for evaluation of age factor of a respondent. It was analyzed that 48.4% of respondents are the largest group of respondents having the age 41 and above. 24% of correspondents were between the ages of 36 to 40 years. The

parents between the 25 to 30 years were constituting the about 17.8% and 9 % was being constituted by the parents having age between 31 to 35 years. The Secondary schools where the parents were seeking to enroll their children or where their children were already enrolled were falling into two categories like government secondary schools and private secondary schools. It was noted that 34.9% of responding parents having their children enrolled in government school while 65.1% having in private sector schools. The largest group of responding parents that comprised 76.2% were having the monthly income between 20-40 thousand while 15.9% parents were having income between 41-60 thousand, 3.2% were having income between 61- 80 thousand and only 4.7% parents were having monthly income about 80 thousand or above. The responding parents were having the diverse profession like some of them were government job holders, some of them were engaged in non-governmental jobs while remaining were involve in Self -business. It was investigated that 52.7% of parents were having government jobs, 14.8% were having a non-government job while remaining 32.5% were involve in self-business.

It is evident from the results that all aspects of school are critically important in the life of a student. Parents' opinion regarding the selection of the secondary school is quite worthy. Physical and non-physical parameters of school are the key factors that appear essential for good learning and well grooming of a student. The opinion of parent comprised of two parts like their knowledge about respective school and the personal life of the student. According to this research work, the school with physical equipment like the proper school building, library, laboratory, playground, water facility, highly qualified teaching staff, proper conveyance, required practical articles, etc. are considered as the most suitable choice, determined according to the opinion of parents. Teaching methodology, state of art techniques, to develop the interest of the student in co-curricular activities, to produce the qualities like disciplines, confidence, moral values, knowledge, and belief on personal capabilities, etc. are crucial factors in the life of a student. This study also exposed the opinion of the parent regarding the secondary school. They determined the middle standard as the most critical stage of student where a student is required to develop confidence, well-groomed personality, and a good command over a subject, so a selection of the secondary school is quite important.

First statement deals with the degree of willingness for opting respective secondary school for their children. Where 95.2 % parents with mean value 3.90 showed positive response indicating that they were independent and free for the selection of school for their children. While, 91.6% of parent who were seeking admission for their children in secondary

schools described that they were well aware about school while 8.4% were ignorant about it. Out of 622 parents, 307 were reported that their children were admitted in the same school from very initial classes while other were new comer in those respective schools. So that 88.7% of the parents are well familiar with academic activities their children are performing in school. While 85.5% of parents are satisfied with all activities their children are performing in school. The question asked about playground 63.3% of total schools that were under consideration were having playground while 91.5% of schools were well facilitated with bathroom. When asked about clean drinking water 86.2 % school was reported to have facilities of drinkable water. When inquired about transport facility 52.9% of parents do not provide conveyance facility by them self but use other private pick and drop facilities. Part time job or side business of students besides their schooling is analyze and explore that only 19.1% of student were engaged in part time job or other business activities besides studying in schools while 80.9% students were only involved and concentrating their studies. A big difference was noted regarding the participation of parents in parents' teacher meeting as 53.5% parents showed positive response for participation in PTM (Parent Teacher Meeting) while 46.5% were reluctant about it. Analysis of co-curricular activities exposed that 62.5% parents admitted that their children actively participate in activities like games, debates; quiz programs etc. when inquired about co-curricular activities 26.0% parents gave negative response about the conductance of co-curricular activities in the respective schools.

#### **Testing of Major Questions:**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Teacher qualification	622	1.00	5.00	4.3574	.73261

The teacher quality is one of the important factors that the parents consider while admitting their children to the school. The survey asked 622 parents regarding their attitudes about the teacher's qualification. The mean minimum was 1 while the mean maximum was 5.00 On the other hand, the total mean was 4.3574. The standard deviation was 0.73261 which means some parents disagreed with the statement also. This is due to the reason although the teacher's quality is better in the government schools but since the school administration plays an important role in their choices, hence they disagree to a greater extent on this question.



	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
School environment	622	1.44	4.78	4.1451	.53326

The school environment is also an important factor in determining a student's admission in a school. The parents agree that they consider the overall school environment and the relative healthy activities while giving admission to their children. The parents agree to this statement to a larger extent as the standard deviation is only 0.53326. Hence it can be said that the parents do consider the important features like the school building, classroom environment, the presence of facilities like the library and laboratory and the overall surroundings while giving admission to their children

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
School administration	622	1.29	4.71	3.8891	.67006

There were six hundred and twenty-two parents taken in the survey whereby a minimum mean 1.29 and a maximum mean of 4.71 and a total mean of 3.8891 parents agreed that they were involved in the school affairs regarding admission, performance evaluation, sports and other extra-curricular activities. The standard deviation was 0.35216 which means that very few parents disagreed with the statement.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
School infrastructure	622	2.14	4.57	6.6922	.42689

There were six hundred and twenty-two parents taken in the survey whereby a majority of parents agreed that they consider the school infrastructure while giving admission to their children. The total mean of parents that agreed to the statement were 6.6922 while the minimum mean was 2.14 and the maximum mean was 4.57. Hence it can be said that a majority of parents do consider the school infrastructure while giving admission to their children. The standard deviation was 0.42689 which means that very few parents disagreed with the statement.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Parents involvement	622	2.20	4.50	3.6841	.35216

There were six hundred and twenty-two parents taken in the survey whereby a mean of 3.6841 parents agreed that they were involved in the school affairs regarding admission, performance evaluation, sports and other extra-curricular activities. The standard deviation was 0.35216 which means that very few parents disagreed with the statement.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.Deviation
Socio economic	622	2.00	4.00	2.8248	.63879

There were six hundred and twenty-two parents taken in the survey whereby a majority of parents whose socio-economic condition is good, said that they were willing in giving admission to their children in a better quality private school. On the other hand, those parents whose socio-economic condition is not better said that they shall give admission to their children in a school according to their monthly incomes. The mean maximum value was 4 while the mean minimum value is 2. The mean value was 2.8248 while its standard deviation was 0.63879.

### **Conclusion:**

Educational system in Balochistan, particularly in Quetta is very complex. There are certain educational systems prevailing in this district. In such situation the responsibilities of the parents are enhanced. So that parents should play their role while admitting their children. Contrary to the situation most of the parents are illiterate and weak economic position, so they fail to do well for their children. Keeping in view, the above situation parents are in ambiguous situation while selecting the school for their children.

Teacher quality is one of the important factors that the parents consider while admitting their children to the school. The survey asked 622 parents regarding their attitudes about the teacher's qualification. The mean minimum was 1 while the mean maximum was 5.00. On the other hand, the total mean was 4.3574. The standard deviation was 0.73261 which means some parents disagreed with the statement also. This is due to the reason although the teacher's quality is better in the government schools but since the school administration plays an important role in their choices, hence they disagree to a greater extent on this question. School environment is also an important factor in determining a student's admission in a school. The parents agree that they consider the overall school environment and the relative healthy activities while giving admission to their children. The parents agree to this statement to a larger extent as the standard deviation is only 0.53326. Hence it can be said that the parents do consider the important features like the school building, classroom environment, the presence of facilities like the library and laboratory and the overall surroundings while giving admission to their children. There were six hundred and twenty-two parents taken in the survey whereby a minimum mean 1.29 and a maximum mean of 4.71 and a total mean of 3.8891. Parents agreed that they were involved in the school affairs regarding admission, performance evaluation, sports and other extra-curricular activities. The standard deviation was 0.35216 which means that very few parents disagreed with the statement. There were six hundred and twenty-two parents taken in the survey whereby a majority of parents agreed that they consider the school infrastructure while giving admission to their children. The total mean of parents that agreed to the statement were 6.6922 while the minimum mean was 2.14 and the maximum mean was 4.57. Hence it can be said that a majority of parents do consider the school infrastructure while giving admission to their children. The standard deviation was 0.42689 which means that very few parents disagreed with the statement.

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### **Recommendations:**

1. parents could be sensitized to focus on their children education, in this regard provincial government should devise laws to dealt with parents not co-operating with school administration.
2. External pressure in work of school administration and management should be prevented.
3. As majority of public sectors schools are overcrowded and many more underutilization, thus a rationalization plan should be devised and implemented in teacher posting and teacher enrollment.
4. Students' physical punishment in public sector schools should be completely banned and existing laws need to be implemented strictly and efficiently.
5. Reward and punishment should be strengthened on past of teachers as it motivates as it teachers to take interest in professional responsibilities.

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