

**SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL CHOICE AMONG MIDDLE
CLASS PARENTS IN AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR**



Researcher

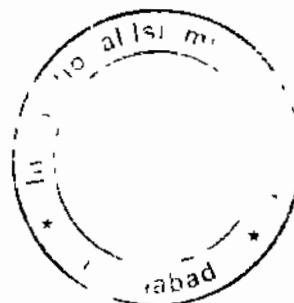
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CLASS PARENTS IN AZAD JAMMU AND KASHMIR**



By:

MUHAMMAD AKMAL KHAN

216-FSS/MSSOC/S15

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of
MS in Sociology

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

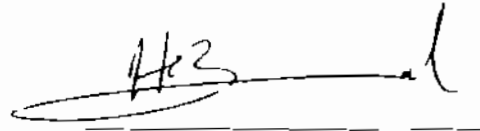
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It is certified that thesis submitted by Mr. Muhammad Akmal Khan
Registration No. 216-FSS MSSOC S15 titled "*Sociological Analysis of school choice among middle class parents in Azad Jammu and Kashmir*" has been evaluated by the following viva voce committee and found that thesis has sufficient material and meets the prescribed standard for the award of MS degree in the discipline of Sociology

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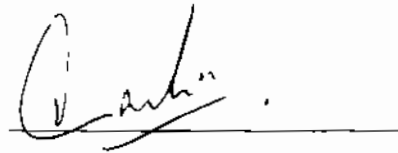
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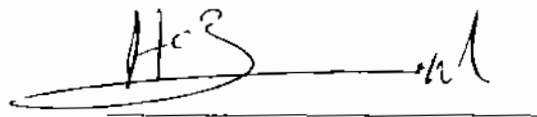
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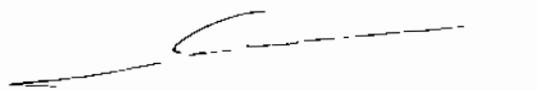
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M. Akmal Khan

ABSTRACT

This study analyzed the factors affecting school choice among middle class parents in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The core objective of the study was to explore the influence of parental cultural capital on school choice of their children. The study covered 399 parents from two districts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (Bagh and Muzaffarabad). Respondents were selected from two districts through the proportionate allocation method. The data was collected through questionnaire carrying open and close ended questions. The study contains quantitative and qualitative data. The qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis and the quantitative data was analyzed with the help of SPSS. Chi-square test was applied to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Quantitative and qualitative findings have been combined in the last chapter as findings and discussion. The study findings resulted that cultural economic and social capitals have strong influence on the school choice among middle class parents. On the basis of study findings it can be suggested that quality and free education should be provided in all the accessible areas of the country without the distinction of class and location.

CHAPTER 1

I. Introduction

School choice is one of the trickiest decisions in contemporary time. Middle class parents are so disconsolate about their children education regarding making school choice. School choice among middle class parents is one of the biggest challenges in present time and parents try to find the best way which they can make decision. The school choice decision can be affected by different factor across social class. This study aims to examine how middle class parents make school choice for their children. I have tried to explore how cultural, social and economic capitals affect the school choice among middle class parents in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K).

The majority of AJ & K people constitute middle class. According to Ball, S. J. (2003) Social researchers have explained middle class as a combination of standards, expectations, and aspirations, as well as income levels of the social group between the upper and working class.

School choice among middle class parents is widely researched area in sociology of education. Many researchers, policy makers, educational experts have studied school choice among middle class parents the world over. Friesen, *et al*, (2012) studied that parents make school choice decisions on the basis of public information, imitate neighbors, through web sites and school result cards. This means school choice is one of the most complex decision and need to be done with considerable consideration. School choice plays an important role in educational output. However, school choice among parents across all levels is one of the most neglected and under researched phenomenon.

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This study is an attempt to explore how middle class parents in AJ&K make school choice on the bases of gender, school location, language, neighborhood, personal relationship or school type (English medium school, Urdu medium school, religious school) Both religious and modern education, school discipline, on the basis of high qualified school teachers, syllabus (Punjab text book, AJ&K text book), modern technological education, on the basis of school different events (parents day, annual result, sports games, cultural shows, debate competition, naat competition, quiz competition) hostel and transport facilitation There is no proper policy about school choice decision among parents

1.1 Statement of the Problem

School choice is a process in which parents choose school for their children on the basis of multiple criteria School choices constitute an important area of educational research in contemporary time However, the area of school choice among middle class parents in AJ&K is rarely studied There is hardly any study focusing on school choice among middle class families This study is an attempt to examine factors regarding school choice among middle class parents The selection of middle class as the target population has many reasons Middle class people are much conscious about their children education As they wish their children to make career through education They try to equip their children with the best cultural capital (educational credential)

1.2 Study objectives

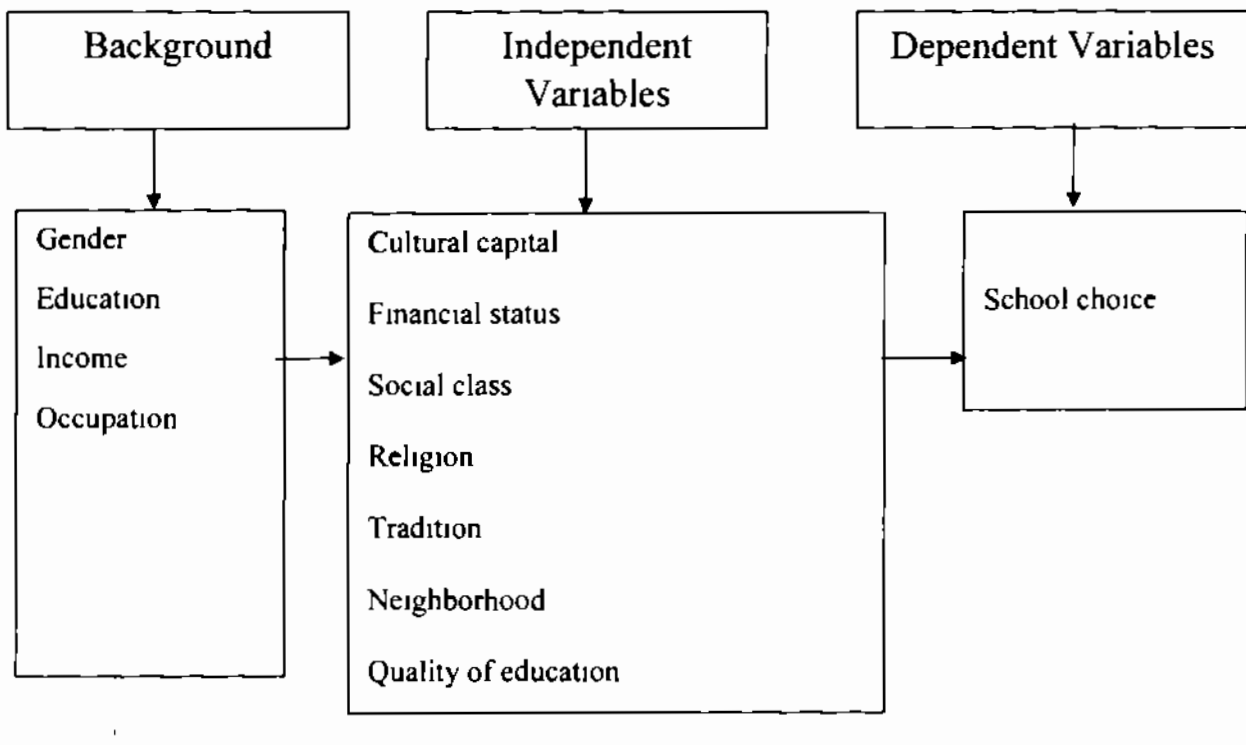
The research study has been carried under the light of these objectives

- To explore what cultural factors affect parents' choice of school for their children
- To examine the influence of religion on school choice among middle class parents
- To explore the influence of parental cultural capital on school choice of their children
- To examine the role of social capital in deciding school for children

1.3 Hypotheses

- School fee affect people’s school choices
- Teaching staff affect the parents school choice
- Distance between home and school affect the school choice of parents
- Religiously affects school choice

1.4 Conceptual Framework



1.5 Significance of the study

This study has a great significance. It will find those factors which are involved in the process of decision making of school choice among middle class parents. In the complex situation among middle class parents regarding school choice, this research will suggest a better guideline in the decision process of school choice. Only few studies have highlighted this issue as a

minor part of broader study. But no significant work has been done specifically on school choice among middle class parents. It is a distinctive sociological study in the area of sociology of education. This study will be much helpful for middle class parents in decision making process regarding school choice of their children.

1.6 Organization of the Study

This study has been organized into five chapters. **Chapter one** consists of introduction to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research hypotheses and significance of the study.

Chapter two deals with literature review. It discusses the theoretical and empirical review of literature on school choice among middle class parents. It also covers the sociological literature which strengthens my research that is sociological analysis of school choice among middle class parents. Sociological literature has provided deep study of, how the middle class parents make school choice and what kind of factors involved in decision making process. It has helped me to know parents' choice of school for their children and the difficulties they face in decision making. The literature review discusses concepts that have been engaged in the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework is included at the end of the literature.

Chapter three highlights the methods of the research. It has proper research design and methods that provide guide to my research from the very beginning to the end. This chapter discusses universe of the study, sampling and sample size, tools and methods of data collection, data analysis, the chi-square distribution and statistical inference, testing of hypotheses about independence of two variables, attributes, association, testing of hypotheses of association for contingency table, limitation and delimitation of the study and ethical consideration.

Chapter four comprised on data analysis and presentation. In this chapter responses from the target population has shown in the form of tables with interpretation. It helps to know percentage of the parents' response that how the intensity of economic, social and cultural factors involved in the process of school choice.

Chapter five combines the key quantitative and qualitative findings and present a discussion in the light of theoretical frame work. The quantitative findings are either supported or neglected by qualitative data. I have attempted to make sense of the data and generate a debate and discussion from a sociological perspective.

CHAPTER 2

2. Literature Review

This chapter deals with literature review. It covers a wide range of scholarship on the topic of my research "sociological analysis of school choice among middle class parents". The chapter focuses on the theoretical, philosophical and empirical reviews regarding school choice of middle class parents for their children. The philosophical and theoretical review provides proper guideline to my research. It is pertinent to mention here that the work of Bourdieu has great importance and significance for my research. His concept of cultural, social, and economic capitals has been employed as a theoretical framework for the study (see theoretical frame work). The forthcoming discussion gives a comprehensive picture of the literature that I have reviewed for this study.

2.1 Socio-economic background and school choice

Waits (2010) argued that school choice among middle class parents is affected by multiple factors such as geographically assigned schools or economic, cultural, symbolic, and social capital. In the process of school choice, cultural capital plays an important role. Those who have higher level of cultural and economic capitals make choice for academic reason and those who have low cultural and economic capital they opt for logistical or practical reasons.

According to Ball and Vincent (1998), social capital might allow parents with less economic or cultural capitals to enhance the levels of their knowledge about the educational institutions and get approach to the core thinking on what makes high quality education. Related researches discover that consciousness of parents might be associated to school choice. Parents who have high levels of social capital seek facts and figures about schools and make choice for their children's strong academic career.

Beales and Wahl (1995) studied that the main source of school choice for parents are their various family networks, are great means of knowledge about school choice. Bosetti (2004) asserted that parents with formal education and greater income rely more on social networks, while on the other hand parents with less income and education make school choice on the bases of awareness which are regulated in society about schools.

Solo (1955) argues that poor parents neighborhoods may change their decisions about school choice according to new information. Giving information about achievement of school-level to parents will have direct impact on school choice.

Goldhaber (1999) found that Economic capital is evaluated in terms of domestic income because household income is most significant part of the economic capital. Evidence shows a strong correlation between parents and socioeconomic status regarding school choice of their children. Schneider *et al.*, (2000) discovered that families at lower and higher socioeconomic status more probably exercise the option of school choice. Families are making school decision according to their socio economic status. Vanderhoff (2008) studied that there is an increase in school choice for their children according to the data from the Center for Education Research which demonstrates that student enrollment increased (81%) in charter schools from 2003 to 2007.

According to McArthur E (1995), differences in income play an important role in parent's choice of school, as those students in a household with greater income were more interested to be in a chosen school than students with lower income. Domestic income indicated the type of school the child attended and when household income exceeded \$50,000, private schools were more often the choice than public schools, when household income was \$30,000 or less, students were much less likely to attend private schools. So families with higher income sent their children to private schools and rest opted public schools.

Reay and Ball (1997) studied that economic differences make heavily shaped the family experiences of school choice. Selection of school is a new phenomenon through which social class categories are represented in educational system.

2.2 Multiplicity of schools and school choice

According to Coons (1981), numbers of reasons play their role in the selection of school. The biggest factor is the increasement in available numbers of school. Today public has maximum option, in past there were no alternate option of schools. The options were like private, Govt or religious institutions. Many policymakers, researchers, and guardians were thinking to get rid from the monopoly of the existing structure and their way of education. Researches explores that the current system of education was unable to fulfill the requirements of certain subgroups, particularly middle class who were getting enroll their children in inferior schools than the high class.

Kozol (1991) argued that the handsome salary packages for teachers and low scores on standardized tests, poor performance of the students facing numerous of personal and family stressors. These sorts of issues promote the alternate option of best schools selection for children of their bright academic future. The pleaders of public school selection identified the class differences and regarded school choice one of the solutions to the problem.

Young and Clinchy (1992) found that limited options enhance learning opportunities and equity for middle class and minorities by providing them chance to select the same school in the district. According to the intercessors, school choice by appreciating the parents school choice the school system quality, performance and focus on children will progress and poor children will get the better education and there will be overall educational competition.

Stuart Wells (1996) asserted that the educated and learned parents think for the options of schools while uneducated and poor parents do not make use of school option. The findings explored that the racial differences have also significance in school choice among the parents. White parents adopted private schools for their children, on the other hand, black students were used to adopt public school by the decision of parents.

2.3 Parental Cultural capital and school choice

According to Bourdieu (1986), cultural capital as the forms of knowledge, skills, education, and advantages that a person has, higher status in society. Parents provide their children with more or less cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the dominant high-culture educational arena. High culture is determined by the dominant cultural capital, and education is a form of social reproduction that provides children of those in high culture with the skills and knowledge they need to maintain that position in society. Education can also provide an opportunity for those with low cultural capital to improve their capital, but Bourdieu was primarily concerned with the ways in which the educational system maintained a system of stratification and inequality. According to Bourdieu's theory of cultural reproduction, children from middle-class families are advantaged in gaining educational credentials due to their possession of cultural capital.

Bourdieu (1979) found that public meet their needs according to their taste. In different categories, cultural and social class has their own taste in life. Middle class families has their own taste just like dinner in lower standard hotels, use the local markets, busy in daily routine works, their school choice whereas upper class use high standard hotels, super markets, high ranked school, expensive dress and new models vehicles so the choice of educational institution for children parents make decision according to their taste.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argued that Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction, cultural capital refers to transmissible parental cultural codes and practices capable of securing a return to their holders. Cultural capital embodies the sum total of investments in aesthetic codes, practices and dispositions transmitted to children through the process of family socialization. Habitus is an important form of cultural inheritance, reflects class position or the actors location in a variety of fields and is geared to the perpetuation of structures of dominance. Because family habitus varies by class, only middle-class or elite cultural resources can become cultural capital valued in society."

Bourdieu (1977) Children are benefited in schools who adopt and are exposed to leading culture at home. Teachers identify and give this benefit such children and thus the children who do not have alike cultural capital, are excluded. This action shows that only those students are mostly rewarded who have dominant cultural capital and others students are faced some sort of difficulties during educational career because lack of cultural capital. However, parents make choice with preference which favors all sided to their children for their educational success.

According to Bourdieu (1986), Economic, social and cultural capitals provide opportunities to the individuals. Middle class improvement in school choice processes comes via economic capital (advantage in terms of financial assets and income), social capital (the social networks relied upon to inform school choice decisions) and cultural capital (the attitudes and knowledge, defined by those in power, which makes the education system a comfortable and familiar place in which they can succeed easily). These capitals passed from one generation to another as the middle classes pursue relative advantage social development and mobility.

Bourdieu (1984) argued that nature of class habitus qualification have discovered the culture and habitus of middle class and lower class parents with specific attention on school selection.

practices, expectations, proficiencies and standards Burgess and McKenna (2014) asserted that parental choice in England is based on families are invited to choose school on the bases of categorized list of schools which are given preference for their children the parents' choice is influential if there is difference at these schools

Baglay (2014) found that the reorganized school system has been operational throughout the 1990s An important part of this rearranging is the establishment of more competitive public market school system intended at increasing opportunities for parents for selection among schools which are publicly funded

Stigler (2011) argued that parents played role in school choice for their children just like a consumer in free economy market to check the quality, price, packing labeled and advertisements in print and electronic media of the product and then purchased Middle class parents make school choice on school safety, where crime rates and deviant behavior or lower Convenience and location are notable considerations for parents choosing schools outside of their home district Those parents who are busy in their daily works and have maximum children are more likely to choose the schools which are situated near the home and at waking distance because parents do not have enough time to look after the school activities of their children The parents, who have long term resident in an area, were affected by their cultural capital as well as family networks and an emotive involvement to the countryside and hence these parents were more inclining to support these schools which are located in their vicinity

According to Swatz (1997), Parental involvement in the shape of cultural capital has shown the positive results Lee and Bowen (2006) argued that parental involvement mediates the effect of race and socio-economic resources and reduce the achievement gap Gewirtz and Bowe (1995) found that middle class skillful parents selection, who thinks for bright future of

their children therefore that selection of primary school is usually the first of some important decisions provide proper guideline in the building of career their children

Heather *et al.* (2012) studied that parents make school choice on the basis of social class because parents are very conscious about their own family status, race ethnicity family ties and relations in society Ranson *et al.* (2004) found that parental involvement in schools, identified the gaps and weaknesses of schools, and played important role to the best performance of schools Reay (1999) argued that mother play central role and very careful about their children school education and communicate on, weekly, monthly and annual basis with school teachers regarding children's education

According to Lynch and Moran (2006), the Govt unwillingness to completely authorize an inner market between schools has led to using personal capital in middle class parents to make an academic market in the private sector to support securing the futures of their children They further argued that cultural capital effects the academic achievement They analyzed data from the "National Longitudinal Survey of Youth Children and Young Adults" and indicate that cultural capital has direct positive influence on study of children and it varies high and low socio economic status environments

Swartz (1997) asserted that cultural capital is a rare means which provides individuals with practical skills, knowledge, and an intelligence which is considered by institutional caretakers and organizers. in the education system

Symeou (2007) found that parents educational back ground has great importance to their children's educational success and wanted their children to do well in school Bernstein, (1975) argued that working class and middle class children are taught different language codes at home and language has also played central role in the selection of school because

parents understand that our children feel uncomfortable, inferior and may fall in complex in other schools which are used different languages Swartz (1997) argued that most of the parents choose school on the basis of attitude and behaviors of teachers because parents want to equip their children with good manners

According to Friesen (2012), the basics tools which are encourage and attract parents to make school choice for their children are public information, websites, media campaigns, school reports cards Students most probably change their school when poor school level performance is revealed by information of the community Some parents' make decisions of school selection early when public news spread around them and while the others change their school in reaction to the information which is dispersed and discussed in the media

DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) studied that Children early and later educational attainment are affected by parental cultural capital, parental cultural capital has own importance in the process of school selection Parents make choice with under consideration of cultural capital

According to Van de Werfhorst and Hofstede (2007), parents' education played key role in school choice and academic performance of the children, because educated parents preferred to make the high achieved status of their children in society and its only possible when the parents takes right decision about schools selection

Goldhaber (1999) concluded that the most educated parents like to exercise school selection in comparison to parents who are less educated The concept in discussion is useful when they consider cultural capital because this phenomenon transmits from one generation to the next Pishghadam and Zabihı (2011) argued that educated parents are the part of cultural capital chain and its impact on students achievements and literate parents are always careful at the time of school choice Goldring and Philips (2008) found that those parents who are

most indulged or want to indulge in school activities, easily select a school for their child than those parents who do not involve in school activities Minitrom 2007 suggested that the possibility of parliamentary attention and endorsement of school choice as a policy making phenomenon

2.4 Gender, class and school choice

Howe *et al* , (2006) argued that the impact of school selection might enhance racial and economic differences in our state schools but it may not increase little or no in the performance of weak students

Orfield *et al* , (1997) Studied that the class and racial differences between families and neighborhoods are more strengthen to the parents make school choice in their favorite institution and feel satisfied to send their children that particular school Bast and Walberg. (2004) asserted that parents choices generally depend on the notion that parents are logical decision maker who transfer the knowledge they have evaluated their preferences before final school selection

According to Ullah & Ali (2013), in Pakistani society there were different curriculum used in public and private schools i.e public schools used the national curriculum which approved by the government and private schools followed oxford and other local agency's curriculum They also found that text books in schools give more strength to gender and class hierarchies

Reay (2009) studied that the role of gender in the dynamics of choices is also discussed Most of the traditional families make decisions about school on the basis of gender Like male children in males' schools female children in females' schools Viteritti 2012 found that school choice can be a powerful tool for achieving equal educational opportunity He argues

that school choice is indeed constitutional. According to Brian (2013) school selection has become very effective strategy for the achievement of the academic goals of the students.

2.5 Non-academic reasons and school choice

Glazerman (1998) counted these major factors such as, parents social class, race and distance from home to school in school selection process. Hamilton and Guin (2005) found that institutional effectiveness is an influencing factor in school choice. Most of the parents were concerned of school timing and security, whereas parents with better income were interested in teaching hours in school. Researchers have studied that parents do not only concentrate on school results and academics while selecting school for the child, they consider factors like socio economic status, safety measures and convenience to the home. Bomotti (1996) argued that many parents make decision about school due to the encouragement of parents in school involvement, discipline, and teaching values such as respect and responsibility, attitude and behaviors, manners and discipline. Parents also select those institutions which provide multi language, learning environment and cultural diversity.

Vincent *et al.*, (2010) studied that Perceptions of working-class attitudes, values and behavior has traditional division in society that's why they choose those options which were easily approachable to the working class. Gewirtz *et al.*, (1995) argued that bourgeois class parents like to be skilled and fair examination performance and working class parents have habit to move towards contradictions and select those schools which are outside the range of the middle class.

Vincent and Tomlinson (1997) explored that state education policy in UK focuses on giving more power to parents to become good decision maker in the light of information and guidelines about schools.

Coldron *et al* , (2009) argued that in 2006, the Education and Inspections Act in England ordered to all local educational authorities to introduce Choice Advice services for learners especially those who were the most deprived segment of the society. The objectives were to make school selection a fair phenomenon to ensure the parents and families that they have equal access to education system and learning. The lower class parents were appreciated to think and plan about the school to which they want to send their children.

Wilkins (2010) found that mothers who were the victim of inferiority complex try to seek the best for their children. Mothers were disconsolate about their children education rather than fathers. Hsu M (2006) argued that Taiwan's compulsory education setup implements a neighborhood school attendance plan, called the school district plan, where learners are allotted to a designated locality school based on where their residence is registered.

Siao (2009) found that the less number of children of the parents play role in the tendency to send them in to school out of the district, if it is necessary. If the parents have minimum number of children then they utilize the maximum available resources to the selection of best school in their area.

2.6 School performance, educational environment and school choice

Young and Clinchy (1992) found that the current system was failing to provide the better education and the school selection options are considered the best way to strengthen educational chances for the middle class parents. Nicholas and Ozek (2010) studied that right decision of school choice is very important for satisfactory results and better outcomes of the students in educational career.

Stevenson and Baker (1987) argued that mother's personal education have interrelation with the performance and achievement of children. This study found that the level of mother's

education effect the children education and those parents who take part in their children's indoor and outdoor activities as well as their cultural capital geared up to the children success in education. Downey and Pribesh (2004) studied that when teacher biasness is reported, it is not clear that such biasness is in the reaction of student performance or their attitude and behaviors. Teachers character is also attract and repel the parents to make decision of school for their children. Goldthorpe (2007) argued that mostly parents were very conscious about the role and attitude of teachers in schools. Accordingly parents make decision for the better socialization of their children. Halsey *et al.* (1980) found that the development in educational system of England, the existing injustice do not represent any segregation of lower class students because those students have practiced improved educational intergenerational agility.

Young and Clinchy (1992) argued that the existing setup was unable to fulfill the requirements of some subgroups, mainly poor class minorities who were more likely to be enrolled in low quality schools than the upper class children. School selection choices were observed as the best way to enhance the learning opportunities for these students and willingness of parents were to get admission for their children in innovative and visionary school. Simon Burgess and Leigh McKenna (2014) found that Social class stratification in school selection, bourgeois class incline to prefer the performance and their peer group.

Nicholas and Ozek (2010) found that in present time the government institutions are under huge threat to display high percentage results in competitive examination and different tests. Charter and non-government institutions get benefit by getting rid from low performers. Some schools might take advantage by dropping the students with poor performance to charter or private schools through vouchers while observing rise in marks in school. Selecting school for children is considered the fundamental right for parents particularly as some

researches have revealed that selection of school has been connected to the progressive student results on reading and mathematics tests in educational career

Cullen *et al* , (2005) studied that schooling and higher high school graduation rates, regularity and better performance that would probably have a vital effect on children's achievement Milwaukee study on school choice points out that parents are more contented and more engaged in their children's school when matched to alike families which are not involved in school choice

Bomotti (1996) discovered that parents who selected schools for their children were well aware of educational problems and already engaged in the activities related to their children's education Because parents has concerned with their children educational future Teske and Schneider (2001) argued that researches find that the main cause for selecting school are parents cite academic factors

James Vander Hoff (2008) found that the academic effectiveness of schools that emphasize quality education in their mission declarations interpret into significantly lengthier wait lists in New Jersey schools as compare to their counterparts and features of other schools do not have impact on parents' selection His results show that the number of wait listed students is directly influenced by school test marks, showing high demands for admission in schools with higher test marks These works point out the significance that parents put on academics while selecting school for children

Chang S (2006) argued that most of the parents make school choice decision after evaluating the school principal's beliefs and values of education, school culture, administration and discipline The parents also focus on the administrative setup of the school and transportation

Lin T Y (2009) asserted that recreating the quality education of school, may improve its capabilities by applying the present contribution and community resources in a significant way. The school may make proper educational atmosphere that would influence parents and the school staff. Parents prefer the security of the campus in the schools' environmental elements and Parents thought of a fruitful learning atmosphere could function as a reference for schools that aim at to make progresses.

According to Wu T (1997), educational philosophy of schools played central role in school choice option, in which school's management and discipline, curricular advancement, teaching methods, learning progress of the students, environment, professional attitudes, values and its relationship with its neighbors.

2.7 Geographical Location, specialties and school choice

According to Elliott (1982), most of the middle class parents are more likely to send their children to those schools which are situated at walking distance from their home. David *et al*, (1994) studied that from the large literature on parent give importance to schools that are closely located. Glazerman (1998) argued that parents give importance to school which are situated near to their homes over schools with high standards in quality.

Rubinowitz and Rosenbaum (2000) found that Gautreaux housing program that relocated Chicago families to economical housing in the outskirts and parents realized that it was not convenient for their children to adjust into their suburban schools.

Bosetti (2004) found that parents selecting religious institutions because of values, beliefs and academic reputation of that special institution. Most of the families are religious mind and they want to socialize their children in religious environment. Different families has

different religious affiliation The curriculum of religious institution are separate from the other schools in the context of curriculum many families choose the religious institution

According to Farida & Madeeha (2000), "comparative study of private and public schools with respect to administrators role found that heads of government schools performed better in their administrative planning for whole year and academic activities while the heads of private schools show more concerns about co-curricular activities "

Armor and Peiser (1997) argued that parents did not properly inquire test results or visits to the schools their children would go Parents connect meaning to class makeup of the student based on race and social status

P M De Graaf (1986) asserted that Sociological explanation for the link between family background and educational achievement of children normally refer to the significance of parental cultural and economic capitals Berends (2015) argued that becoming more widespread in the United States, with charter schools composing the most rapidly growing choice sector Betts, (2005) studied that free-market approach to education assumes that choice will increase competitive pressure on individual schools to deliver higher quality education

Kisida & Wolf (2010) found that maximum information about schools also affect the choice of parents Stein *et al.*, (2010) explore that parents engage in a complex, dynamic, and multistep procedure of selecting a school for their children

Rhodes & DeLuca (2014) found that school decision making may also differ by socioeconomic status The lower socioeconomic status families have a more limited set of options for both housing and available schools Stein *et al.*, (2010) found that 63% of parents reported that academics was an important factor in their choice of charter schools

Lareau (2014) studied that middle class parents engaged in concerted cultivation when parenting their children out of school, but they did not rely on similar behaviors when choosing schools one of the most economically and socially consequential decision of their lives Holmes (2002) argued that Parents rely on their social networks when deciding among school options

Lareau (2011) argued that Parents' behavior for out of school experiences was consistent with what Lareau has called "concerted cultivation that is, middle-class parents used organized activities like sports and arts, language development, and institutional interventions to develop their children's interests, talents, and skills Middle class parents did not actively pursue information or engage in the same thoughtful research when selecting a school Bishop (2008) studied that higher income families have a greater selection of social resources and connections to trust when choosing a school Bell (2009) studied that in community Trusted members and the information exchanged within networks are highly valued for the exchange of school

According to Rhodes and DeLuca (2014), migration of families is stressful because their children left the school and search a new one In these circumstances families are more likely to focus their choices on a place of residence that is safe and provides access to childcare and transportation Low income families have a more limited set of options for housing, personal transportation, and available schools Henig (1995) argued that school safety and discipline as important aspects of school choice Chen J S (2007) found that school's proficient usage of services, and outside location were vital concerns when parents select schools for their children Many other reasons involved like campus safety, limited strength of students in class, reputation of school in the surrounding area, and cooperative administration Provision of conducive environment for learning, schools should make advancement which let students

to study in a secure and learning environment so that parents can be assured of the safety of their children and much better than other schools Barneston (1997) studied that as parents trusted on the information given to them by the surrounding people during selection school for their children and advertising tools impress potential students as well as their parents

According to Wu Ming-qing (2008), teachers-students relation qualified teaching staff, school administrative setup, parents' active involvement, and school environment, are the salient features for the development of school and make the difference shape of school as compare to other schools Teachers' dedication and commitment, student active role, and a school's strategies help to make the school outstanding and popular in community

Schneider *et al.*, (2000) found that when families make choices about schools, lower socioeconomic status parents are more focused on the bedrock values of schooling in order to have academic fundamentals in place for test performance, as compared with higher-SES parents

Flatley *et al.*, (2001) argued that parents generally give importance to their children's schooling and they are careful about quality education and discipline Levacic and Hardman, (1998) studied that upper class families more often get access to demanded school rather than middle class families Hastings *et al.*, (2006) asserted that poor family have very few choices to make for their children's schools

DeLuca and Rosenblatt (2010) studied that the mostly parents migrated one place to another because of their relocation of residence they cannot choose the best quality school for children

Bayer and McMillan (2005) asserted that school choice is only possible by moving house and educated parents move just for high quality education school for their children in new city

Nesheim (2002) found that there is strong connection between parents' education and willingness to pay for school quality

West and Pennell (1999) studied that middle class parents' focus on skills and social capital to gain information about school advancement and enrollment procedure in a large number ways Schneider *et al.* (2000) found that middle class parents have strong social capital of maximum quality information with lower income families only able to use social networks to access less reliable data

Exley (2012) asserted that the middle class parents select schools based on family relation, neighbors and friends Woods (1993) argued that mostly parents choosing popular, high reputation schools, for their children Bussell, (1998) studied that parents who belong to lower class backgrounds are less well informed and incline to choose later than those from higher class in society Reay and Ball (1997) conclude that the middle class values, families may appear to be bad selector, but this is entirely a cultural decision Jacob and Lefgren (2007) argued that low-income parents have less attention on academic characteristics when they choose school for their children Coldron *et al.*, (2008) asserted that educated parents were tried to get more information very few parents felt they were lacking basic information about schools and then choose for school for their children Wilson *et al.*, (2007) argued that the distance from home to school also has great importance in decision making process of school choice

2.8 Theoretical framework

This study is informed by Bourdieu theory of social, cultural and economic capitals Bourdieu, (1986) "identifies four types of capitals economic capital (wealth or money), cultural capital (the ability to navigate the systems of knowledge deemed significant by a

society, including technical, sociopolitical, and aesthetic knowledge), social capital (networks of relations), and symbolic capital (marks of prestige) ”

These four forms of capitals play an important role in informing school choice among middle class parents. Nevertheless, cultural capital is believed to play the most significant role in school selection (see Ullah, 2013). “Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body, in the objectified form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.) and in the institutionalized state (educational qualifications)” (Bourdieu 1986: 243). Bourdieu also defined cultural capital as the forms of education, skills, knowledge and advantages that make higher status of person in society. Parents provide their children with more or less cultural capital by transmitting the attitudes and knowledge needed to succeed in the dominant high-culture educational arena. High culture is determined by the dominant cultural capital, and education is a form of social reproduction that provides children of those in high culture with the skills and knowledge they need to maintain that position in society. Education can also provide an opportunity for those with low cultural capital to improve their capital.

Bourdieu is interested in how formal education and informal everyday cultural habits and experiences enhance an individual’s cultural competence. Bourdieu’s theory gives that one purpose of school selection is to level the playing field, that is, reduce dissimilarity in education experience and outcomes (Bourdieu 1991/2002: 268). “The other main resource, and the one of primary interest here, is the types of capital available to the parent to tap when making a school choice decision. Capital is a key resource used to create the habitus out of which the parent approaches school choice. Cultural capital has been the variable most

widely used by education researchers, partly as a reflection of Bourdieu and partly because of its bias in favor of education”

Drawing on Bourdieu’s theory of capital, this study attempted to unpack how educational parents (having the institutionalized form of cultural capital) make their children’s school choice and how those who lack the institutionalized form of cultural capital make the school choice for their children. The study also engaged Bourdieu’s concept of social capital to know whether people use their social network in the selection of school for their children or not. My focus here is also to unpack to what extent social capitals or network affects school choice decision. It is pertinent to mention here that the study explores the co-relation between economic capital and school choices. To sum up, it can be argued that Bourdieu’s theory of capital is the most appropriate theoretical framework for the study.

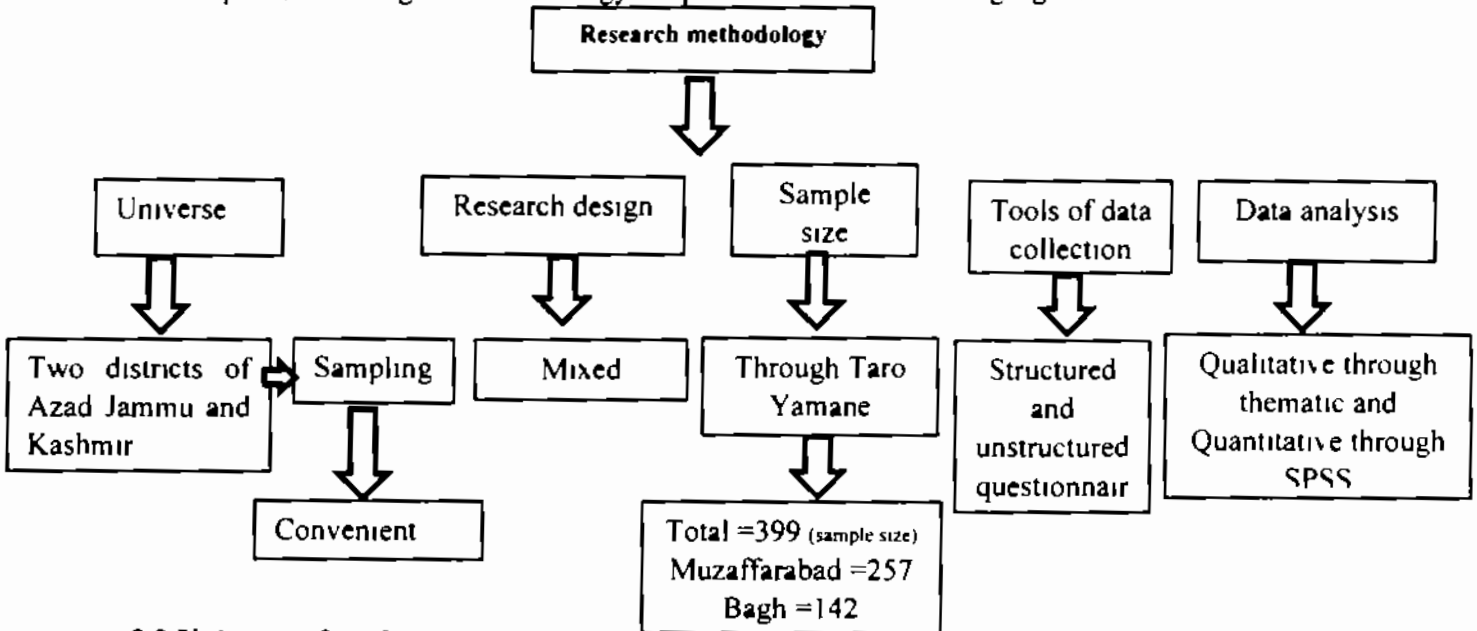
CHAPTER 3

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter gives a comprehensive picture of the literature review and theoretical framework used in this study. This chapter deals with the methodological steps taken for conducting this research. It provides detailed discussion of methods and process through which the data was collected and analyzed. The study is dominantly by quantitative approach. However, some qualitative data emerged which has been analyzed qualitatively (see data analysis in chapter 4). Loosely speaking, the study use both qualitative and quantitative methods. My rationale to use mixed method is based on the belief that this approach help to carry out detailed and comprehensive study.

The steps taken during the methodology are presented in the following figure



3.2 Universe of study

This study was carried out in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. AJ&k is a self-governing administrative division of Pakistan. The area of AJK is 13,297 Sq Km and the total population is 4 361 million. AJK has ten administrative districts: Muzaffarabad, Bagh

It is pertinent to mention here that I selected the sample from two districts through proportion allocation method, I have selected 142 respondents from district Bagh and 257 respondents from district Muzaffarabad

Proportionate stratification

The sample size of each stratum is proportionate to the population size of the stratum. Strata sample sizes are determined by the following equation

$$n_h = (N_h / N) * n$$

Where n_h is the sample size for stratum h , N_h is the population size for stratum h , N is total population size, and “ n ” is total sample size

No of districts	Name	Population	No. of respondents
1	Muzaffarabad	615,000	257
2	Bagh	351,000	142

3.5 Tools and method of data collection

The data was collected through questionnaire. Questionnaire consisted of open ended and close ended questions. Such simple and understandable questions were developed so that the respondent might not feel any difficulty to answer.

Population of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJ&K) was large and it was not possible to cover the whole population. I have studied school choice among middle class parents in AJ&K. Accessing all the parents of AJ&K was not feasible therefore, the purposive sampling technique was used to select the two districts of AJ&K. Bagh and Muzaffarabad. The very technique enables the researcher to identify potential factors contributing decision making of

parents regarding school choice for their children. Convenient sampling technique was used for the collection of data from the two districts.

In all forms of research, it would be ideal to test the entire population, but in most cases, the population is just too large that is impossible to include every individual. This is why most researchers rely on sampling techniques like convenience sampling, the most common of all sampling techniques. Many researchers prefer this technique because it is fast, inexpensive, easy and the subjects are readily available as its name implies. Convenience sampling refers to collection of information from members of population who are conveniently available to be studied.

3.6 Data analysis

As mentioned earlier and reiterated here that the questionnaire consisted of open ended and close ended questions. Therefore, the collected data were in quantitative and qualitative forms. Quantitative data was analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in the form of tables. Qualitative data was analyzed in line with qualitative rules such as thematic analysis and presented in descriptive form.

3.7 The chi-square distribution and statistical inference

The distribution has broad application such as a test of goodness of fit, as a test of independence, as a test of homogeneity. The Chi-square distribution contains only one parameter, called the number of degree of freedom. The chi-square test is used to test the hypotheses of the study.

3.8 Testing of Hypothesis about Independent and dependent variables

The statistics can also be used to test the hypothesis about independent of two variables, each of which classified into a number of categories or attributes

3.9 Attributes

A variable which cannot be measured numerically is called attribute e.g. male or female, tall or short, high or low, positive or negative, etc. are called attributes. The attributes cannot be measured but they can be divided into classes and their number in each class can be counted.

3.10 Association

The relationship or interaction between two attributes is called association. Symbolically, A and B are supposed to be positively associated, if

$$(AB) > \frac{(A)(B)}{N}$$

On the opposing side, there is negative association between A and B or there is a disassociation

$$(AB) < \frac{(A)(B)}{N}$$

A and B are not associated if

$$(AB) = \frac{(A)(B)}{N}$$

3.11 Contingency tables

A table that consists of two or more rows or two or more columns, in which 'n' observations are categorized according to two different criteria (or variables), is usually known

as contingency table, a name, probably due to Karl Pearson. Contingency tables provide a useful method for comparing two variables.

3.12 Hypothesis testing of independence in contingency tables

The test of independence in contingency table is a non-parametric test. The data presented in contingency table can be used to test the hypothesis that two variables of classification are independent. If this hypothesis is rejected, the two variables of classification are not independent and we say that there is some association (or interaction) between the two variables of classification.

The procedure for testing the null hypothesis of independence in contingency tables is as follows:

Testing of hypothesis of association for contingency table

1) Formulate the null and alternative hypothesis as:

H_0 : There is no association between two attributes

H_1 : There is association between two attributes

2) Level of significance: $\alpha = 0.05$

3) Test statistics:
$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

With the degree of freedom $(r-1)(c-1)$ and $e_{ij} = \frac{(A_i)(B_j)}{n}$

4) Calculation:

Compute the value of χ^2 from the given data

5) Critical Region:

$$\chi^2 \geq \chi^2_{\alpha/2(v)} \text{ Where } v = (r-1)(c-1)$$

6) Conclusion:

If our calculated value falls in critical region, then we reject our null hypothesis otherwise accept

3.13 Limitation and delimitation of the study

As the study is focusing on the specific social class and definite social process involved in affecting the decision regarding school choice. Therefore, only middle class parents in the selected area were targeted and only those field of life were explored which was the demand of the study

3.14 Ethics of research

The respondents were informed about the research before gathering information from them and were provided full understanding of the research. No personal information were used without the permission of the respondent. Respondents were also acknowledged for their cooperation. Confidentiality and privacy was maintained

CHAPTER 4

Data Analysis and presentation

This chapter deals with the data analysis and presentation. The chapter has been furnished with the responses of the target population. It has presents the quantitative data which is analyzed through statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) and presented in the form of tables.

4.1 Table No. 1: Age of the Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30	78	19.5
31-40	147	36.8
41-50	118	29.6
51-60	46	11.5
61-above	10	2.5
Total	399	100.0

The above (Table no 1) manifests five categories of respondents' age. Age group 20-30 years consists of 19.5% respondents, age group 31-40 years consists 36.8% respondents, age group 41-50 years consists 29.6% respondents, age group 51-60 years consists 11.5% and age group of above 61 years consist of 2.5% respondents.

Table No. 2: Gender of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	236	59.1
Female	163	40.9
Total	399	100.0

The above (Table no 2) shows that the gender of the respondents as 59.1 % respondents were male and 40.9 % respondents were female. The reasons for more male and less female respondents were as in targeted area, there is absolute majority of the males working outside the home like in different offices, shops, schools, police stations, courts, on roads and various walk of life while on other side, females have less participation in different spheres of life. I have already mentioned in chapter three that I have used the convenient sampling for data collection from those parents who have school going children and I have found maximum availability of males respondents as compare to females respondents.

4.3 Table No. 3: Level of Respondents' Education

Education	Frequency	Percent
Below matric	19	4.8
Matriculation	52	13.0
Intermediate	85	21.3
Graduate	159	39.8
Post graduate	84	21.1
Total	399	100.0

The above table exhibits the education status and level of respondents' education. The demographic indicators shows the literacy rate of two districts (Bagh 74% and Muzaffarabad 72%) Majority of the population is literate, I have selected the literate parents because educated parents can better respond as compare to the illiterate parents and the literate parents at their different level of education provided the actual responses which fulfill the demand of the conducted study. Educated parents easily understand the question as compare to uneducated parents. The above figures demonstrate that 4.8 % having below matric level education, 13.0 % having secondary level education, 21.3 % having higher secondary level education and 39.8% having graduate level education and 21.1 % having post graduate level education.

4.4 Table No. 4: Occupational/professional status of the Respondents

Profession	Frequency	Percent
Govt employee	182	45.6
Semi-govt employee	62	15.5
Non govt employee	94	23.6
Other	61	15.3
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows the respondents occupation, there were 399 total respondents in which 45.6 % selected the option of Govt employee, 15.5 % selected the option of semi- govt employee, 23.6 % selected the option of non govt employee and 15.3 % respondents selected the option of other (self-employee, business agriculture)

4.5 Table No. 5: Respondents' Monthly Income

Income	Frequency	Percent
Below 20000	88	22.1
20000 -35000	139	34.8
36000-51000	92	23.1
52000-67000	38	9.5
>67000	42	10.5
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows the monthly income of the respondents. There were 399 total respondents in which 22.1 % having less than 20 thousands Pakistan Rupee (PKR), 34.8 % respondents having (20000-35000 PKR), 23.1 % having (36000-51000 PKR), 9.5 % respondents having (52000-67000 PKR) and 10.5 % respondents having above (67000 PKR) monthly income.

4.6 Table No. 6: Respondents' Family Type

Family	Frequency	Percent
Joint	259	64.9
Nuclear	140	35.1
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows the family type of the respondents. Out of 399 total respondents, 64.9% were living in joint family and 35.1% were living in nuclear family.

4.7 Table No.7: Number of Respondents' Children

Children	Frequency	Percent
Total children		
1-3 children	142	35.6
4-6 children	195	48.9
>6 children	62	15.5
Male Children		
1-2 Male	197	49.4
3-4 Male	111	27.8
>4 Male	30	7.5
Total	338	84.7
Do not have male children	61	15.3
Total	399	100.0
Female Children		
1-2 Female	219	54.9
3-4 Female	108	27.1
>4 Female	20	5.0
Total	347	87.0
Do not have female children	52	13.0
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows the total number of children of the respondents and their gender. Out of 399 respondents, 35.6% respondents have 1 to 3 total children, 48.6% respondents have 4 to 6 children, and 15.5% respondents have above 6 children. The collected data shows that 49.4% respondents have 1 or 2 male children, 27.8% respondents shared that they have 3 or 4 male children, 7.5% respondents have male children and 15.3% respondents do not have the male children. The data represents that 54.9% respondents have 1 or 2 female children, 27.1% respondents have 3 or 4 female children, 5.0% respondents have above 4 female children and 13.0% respondents do not have the female children.

4.8 Table No. 8: Respondents' School going Children

Responses	Frequency	Percent
1-2	178	44.6
3-4	169	42.4
>4	52	13.0
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows the no. of children of the respondents who are going to school. There were 399 total respondents in which 44.6% respondents have 1 or 2 children who are going to school, 42.4% respondents have 3 or 4 children who are going to school, 13.0% respondents have above 4 children who are going to school.

4.9 Table No. 9: Decision of children' schooling

Decision	Frequency	Percent
Husband	178	44.6
Wife	92	23.1
Both	129	32.3
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows that who made the decision of enrolling children in school. There were 399 total respondents out of 44.6 % respondents said decision regarding enrollment of children were made by the husbands, 23.1 % respondents said that wife made the decision of enrolling children in school and 32.3 % respondents said that both (husband & wife) made the decision enrolling children in schools.

4.10 Table No. 10: Equal opportunity of Education to Children

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	276	69.2
No	123	30.8
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows the children enrollment in the same school. There were 399 total respondents in which 69.2% respondents said that their children studying in the same school and 30.8% respondents said that children do not studying in the same school. Majority of the parents argued that their children studying the same school because it convenient for them due to distance, security, transportation but other parents argued that of fee structure affect their decision regarding school for their children and they enrolled their children in geographically school. Others parents of the targeted population shared that their children do not studying in the same school because of separate governmental education system (male and female) and the low fee structures of public sector school and we do not have enough resources to access the other institutions. Parents also said that we supported to co-education at primary level but not at the middle or higher level because of religion.

4.11 Table No. 11: Factors Affecting school choice

Factors Affecting school choice		Frequency	Percentage
School fee	Yes	293	73.4
	No	106	26.6
Teaching staff	Yes	268	67.2
	No	131	32.8
Quality of teaching and knowledge	Yes	230	57.6
	No	169	42.4
Secularity	Yes	105	26.3
	No	169	73.7
Religiosity	Yes	228	57.1
	No	169	42.4
Sex Segregation	Yes	229	57.4
	No	170	42.6
Co-education	Yes	217	54.4
	No	182	45.6
Distance from home	Yes	284	71.2
	No	115	28.8
Reputation of school in terms of previous results	Yes	257	64.4
	No	142	35.6
Due to others family members' children	Yes	253	63.4
	No	146	36.6

4.12 School fee affects the school choice

The above (Table no 11) highlighted those factors which directly and indirectly affect the parents' school choice. In the present time, parents make decision for the children schooling under consideration of different factors. The above table shows the responses of parents who are affected by these factors. The above mentioned facts and figure shows that 73.4 % respondents said that the school fee factor influenced their decision regarding school choice for their children, 26.6 % respondents said that the school fee factor do not influenced their

decision regarding school choice. Majority of the parents said that school fee affect their choice because there are different standard and level of school fee in the area (like in Government sector schools have less fee structure and various private schools have multiple schools fee structure for the students). Those parents who have less monthly income they verify and check the fee structure and then make decision of school for their children and those parents who have higher level of monthly income they do not have any concern of fee and they kept in mind the other factors regarding school choice like (quality education).

Many research studies also confirmed this factor such as

Schneider *et al* , (2000),found that socioeconomic status of the family play key role in school selection. Goldhaber (1999) found that Economic capital has significantly associated with school choice.

4.13 Teaching staff affects school choice

The above (Table no 11) shows the factor of teaching staff influenced the decision of school choice of the parents. The mentioned facts represented that 67.2 % respondents said that the factor of teaching staff influenced their decision regarding school choice, 32.8 % respondents said that the factor of teaching staff do not influenced their decision regarding school choice. Majority parents kept in mind teaching staff at the time of school selection. Because teaching staff always like role model for the students especially in the age of childhood when a child newly join the school. The research study also confirmed this factor (see Simon Burgess and Leigh McKenna, 2014).

4.14 Quality of teaching and knowledge affects school choice

The quality of knowledge and teaching has own importance in the domain of education. The above (Table no 11) represented that 57.6 % respondents said that the factor quality of teaching and knowledge influenced their decision of school choice, 42.4 % respondents said

that they do not influenced by the quality of teaching and knowledge Majority of the respondents decision affected by the teaching quality and the knowledge because parents want to equip their children with up to date knowledge because it's the demand of the present time

4.15 Secularity affects school choice

The above (Table no 11) mention facts shows that 26.3 % respondents said that the factor of secularity influenced their decision regarding school choice, 73.4 % respondents said that the factor of secularity do not influenced their decision regarding school choice because existence of Islamic ideology and intensive religious environment The area of AJ&K is not considered as advanced as compare to the other areas of the country

4.16 Religiosity affects school choice

The above (Table no 11) shows 57.1 % respondents said that the factor of religiosity influenced their decision regarding school choice, 42.9 % respondents said that the factor of religiosity does not influenced their decision regarding school choice Majority of the respondents' decision of school choice affects by the factor of religiosity and parents must have checked the religious environment and socialization process while school selection for their children The people of the AJ&K followers of the Islamic ideology The large area of the AJ&K is rural and there is solidarity, they followed the values traditions and their culture

4.17 Single sex Education Affects school choice

The above (Table no 11) highlighted that 57.4 % respondents said that the factor of separate education system influenced their decision regarding school choice, 42.6 % respondents said that the factor of single sex education does not influenced their decision regarding school choice

4.18 Co-education affects school choice

The above facts (Table no 11) represented 54.4 % respondents said that the factor of co - education influenced their decision regarding school choice, 45.6 % respondents said that the factor of co -education does not influenced their decision regarding school choice

4.19 Distance from home to school affects school choice

The above (Table no 11) highlighted 71.2% respondents said that the factor of distance from home to school influenced their decision regarding school choice, 28.8 % respondents said that the factor of distance from home to school do not influenced their decision regarding school choice

4.20 Reputation of schools in term of previous results

The above (Table no 11) figures shows 64.4 % respondents said that the factor reputation of school in term of previous result influenced their decision regarding school choice, 35.6 % respondents said that the factor reputation of school in term of previous result does not influenced their decision regarding school choice. The similar finding confirmed the study as, Woods, (1993) asserted that mostly parents choosing popular, high reputation schools, for their children

4.21 Family networks affect the school decision

The above (Table no 11) shows 63.4 % respondents said that the family member's children in the same school influenced their decision regarding school choice, 36.6 % respondents said that the factor of the family member's children in the same school does not influenced their decision regarding school choice

4.22 Table No. 12 Consultation for school' selection

Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	240	60.2
No	159	39.8
Total	399	100.0

The above table shows that the respondents consultation for selecting school of their children. There were 399 total respondents in which 60.2 % respondents consult the others one for selecting the school and 39.8 % respondents do not consult the others for school selection of their children. Majority of the parents consults with their family members like brothers, sisters and neighbours, where the matriarchal and patriarchal consultation also involved in decision making process regarding school choice. Many parents consulted with high qualified peoples who lived their surroundings.

4.23 Chi-Square Test

4.23.1 Hypothesis 1

H₀ There is no association between school choice and teaching staff

H₁ There is association between school choice and teaching staff

Chi-Square Test

	Value	Df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.518 ^a	5	.001

(p = .001 < 0.05 there is highly significant relationship between school choice and teaching staff

$$\chi^2 = .001)$$

The chi-square test has been applied to verify the hypothesis. The above table shows that the p-value is less than the significant level (0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is relationship between the school choice and teaching staff.

4.23.2 Hypothesis 2

Ho There is no association between school choice and religiosity

H₁ There is association between school choice and religiosity

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	14.551 ^a	5	.001

($p = .001 < 0.05$ there is highly significant relationship between independent variable and dependent variable $\chi^2 = .001$)

The chi-square test has been applied to verify the association between independent and dependent variable. The table shows that the p-value is less than the significant level (0.05) which implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis is accepted and there is highly significant relationship between religiosity and school choice. The religiosity influence the parent's choice regarding school. The similar findings has also supported the study such as, Bosetti (2004), found that parents select religious institutions because of values, beliefs and academic reputation of those institution. Most of the families are religious mind and they want to socialize their children in religious environment. Different families has different religious affiliation on this basis parents choose school for their children.

4.23.3 Hypothesis 3

Ho There is no association between school choice and distance

H₁ There is association between school choice and distance

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	28.819 ^a	5	.000

($p = .000 < 0.05$ there is highly significant relationship between independent variable and dependent variable $\chi^2 = .000$)

The chi-square test has been applied to verify the association between independent and dependent variable. The table shows that the p-value is less than the significant level (0.05) which implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis is accepted and there is highly significant relationship between school choice and distance from home. The similar finding also supported the study such as, Wilson *et al* (2007) asserted that exercising a choice to attend a non local school usually involves greater travel distances on routes that are not served by dedicated school transport, such as school buses. Distance from home to school also has great importance in decision making process of school choice.

4.23.4 Hypothesis 4

H₀ There is no association between respondent's income and school fee while school selection

H₁ There is association between respondent's income and school fee while school selection

Chi-Square Test

	Value	Df	Asymp Sig (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10.704 ^a	5	.030

($p = .030 < 0.05$ there is highly significant relationship between independent variable and dependent variable $\chi^2 = 0.030$)

The chi-square test has been applied to verify the association between independent and dependent variable. The table shows that the p-value is less than the significant level (0.05) which implies that the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus the alternative hypothesis is accepted and there is significant relationship between respondent's income and school fee while school selection. The similar finding has also supported the study conducted by McArthur E (1995), he studied that more economic capital increase the more choices.

CHAPTER 5

Major Findings, Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I am going to sum up the study and conclude the findings in a meaningful argument. The study findings are debated and discussed in the light of literature review and theoretical framework. The chapter brings together quantitative and qualitative findings and makes philosophical arguments by embedding findings and concepts from the review of literature. The study unpacked that school choice is one of the most stressful decisions that parents make for their children. When parents get the opportunity to choose among multiple schools, they get into trouble to make choice. The study findings suggested that school choice is one of the difficult decision and multiple school option make it more difficult. The findings are summarized into the following key arguments.

5.1.2 Economic capital and school choice:

The findings about the monthly income of the respondents showed that majority 34.8 % respondents having 20000-35000 rupees. Monthly income is considered as a key factor in school choice as many of the studies included in literature shows a significant association between school choice and economic capital of the respondents. The similar findings also supported (see literature review Bourdieu, (1986)) Bosetti (2004) asserted that the dependency ratio on social network is higher in people who have higher economic capital. Researcher found these responses through a questionnaire that 73.4 % respondents shared that the school fee factor influenced their decision regarding school choice for their children. Majority of the parents responded that school fee affect their choices because there are different standard and level of school fee like there is remarkable difference in school fee structure among the Govt. and private sector.

Those parents who have less monthly income they definitely verify and check the fee structure and then make decision of school for their children. And those parents who have higher level of monthly income they do not have any concern of fee and they see the other factors regarding school choice. These findings are also being supported by different studies included in the literature such as Schneider *et al.*, (2000), presented that higher economic capital is a key factor in choosing the school for their children. Families are making school decision according to their socio economic status. According to McArthur E (1995), economic level is an essential factor as those students who have higher economic background are there in the selective schools while lower economic level students are not being there in the school selected on the basis of specific factors.

5.1.3 Parental cultural capital and school choice:

Sociological literature reviewed that there is a strong correlation between parental education and their wiliness to pay and spend on their children education (see Nesheim (2002)) Bomotti (1996) found that parents who chose schools for their children were well informed on educational issues and already involved in their children's educational activities because parents has concerned with their children educational future.

5.1.4 Patriarchy in school choice for children:

The collected figures depicts that 44.6 % respondents said that husband made the decision of enrolling children in school, 23.1 % respondents said that wife made the decision of enrolling children in school and 32.3 % respondents said that both (husband & wife) made the decision of enrolling children in schools. Patriarchal and matriarchal system of family can also affect the decision making process. As our society is considered as male dominant society so as all other decision school choice is also being made by the male parent.

5.1.5 Equal opportunity of children' schooling:

Same school for all the children of the family or different school choice for the children within a family is also the important point to be noticed. The collected information shows 69.2 % respondents were of the view that their children are studying in the same school and 30.8 % respondents said that their children do not study in the same school. Majority of the respondents shared that their children studying in the same school because the geographically assigned school, distance, not alternate transports, Limited resources children company with their friends, neighbors and co-education system in private schools at primary level. Many parents said that their children do not study in the same school because of sex segregation in government schools, and they shared that they cannot afford fee of private schools also avoided the co-education system because of religious factor.

5.1.6 Teaching staff affects school choice:

Teachers' qualification makes a huge difference on the learning of the child. The literate part of the society keep that factor at priority while school selection. The mentioned facts presented that 67.2 % respondents said that the factor of teaching staff influenced their decision regarding school choice. Maximum parents kept in mind teaching staff at the time of school selection. The similar study also supported the findings Goldthorpe (2007), argued that mostly parents were very conscious about the role and attitude of teachers in schools.

5.1.7 Quality education and children's future career as decisive factor:

The facts gathered shows majority 57.6 % respondents shared that the factor quality of teaching and knowledge influenced their decision of school choice. Majority of the respondents decision affected by the teaching quality and the knowledge because parents want to equip their children with up to date knowledge because it's the demand of the present time. The similar study also supported (see literature review Wu Ming-qing (2008)

According to Wu T S , (1997) educational philosophy of institution had a vital role in school selection options in which school's management, curricular advancement, teaching methodology, students' results, environment, professional attitudes and culture. The findings shows 64.4 % respondents said that the factor reputation of school in term of previous result influenced their decision regarding school choice as they measure the quality of education from the previous result.

5.1.8 Religiosity affects school choice:

Religion is considered as the pillar of society therefore its effects can be observed in each and every corner of the society. In the present study regarding the school selection religious factor cannot be ignored. The information gathered shows 57.1 % respondents agreed that the factor of religiosity influenced their decision regarding school choice. The traditional setting and due to the presence of social solidarity in the area where maximum people are religious mind and they are quite sensitive regarding the maintenance homogenous religious setup. The people of the AJ&K followers of the Islamic ideology. The similar findings have supported the study such as, Bosetti (2004), found that parents select religious institutions because of the values, beliefs and academic reputation of those special institution. Different families have different religious affiliations. The study findings suggest that parents were concerned and bothered about religion and religious knowledge while selecting school for their children.

5.1.9 Co-education is not preferred in the study area:

The demographic and social characteristic of the targeted area shows that due to the strict involvement of social and religious value the people of those areas shape their life according to the social expectation. Therefore, school choice is also been influenced by the presence of single sex and co-education setting of the schools. The information highlighted that 57.4 %

respondents said that the factor of separate education influenced their decision regarding school choice

5.1.10 Distance from home to school affects school choice:

From the demographic characters of the area it is clear that due to the lack of standard transportation and communication facility, most of the people were quite conscious regarding the distance of school from the residence. The majority 71.2% respondents said that the factor of distance from home to school influenced their decision regarding school choice. The similar finding also supported the study such as, Wilson *et al.*, (2007) argued that exercising a choice for the school is greatly influenced distance from home to school also has great importance in decision making process of school choice. According to Elliott (1982), most of the middle class parents more likely to send their children in that school which are situated at walking distance from the home. David *et al.*, (1994) studied that from the large literature on parent prefer schools that are conveniently located. Glazerman (1998), argued that the preference for schools close to home can be more important than parents' preference for high academic achievement.

5.1.11 Social capital and school choice:

In the study it was also been observed that the school choice is affected by the relative's decision regarding the school. The findings show that majority 63.4% respondents agreed that the family member's children in the same school influenced their decision regarding school choice. During school selection opinion and consultation from the other people about the choice of school is also been done. From the study it comes to know that parents do consult with their friends, family members, neighbors and school teachers etc. The gathered facts shows majority 60.2% respondents consult others for selecting the school.

5.1.12 More choices disable rather than enable

The multiplicities of school system disable rather than enable people to make easy choice of school for their children. A considerable number (16.1%) parents revealed that they faced difficulty in selecting of school due to more choices in the education market. Many respondents said that "multiple school option is a problem". Similarly, they asserted that public and private school choice make problem for the parents. It can be argued here that multiplicity of school system is a problem and there is a need for a uniform education system.

5.1.13 Learning environment of institution and school choice

At the time of school selection, learning environment of school are significant concerned for the parents. 17.04% parents said that they must keep school learning environment (discipline, curricular and co-curricular activities, personality development and career counseling, education according to the need of present time, confidence building and personality development) in mind while selecting school for their children.

5.2 Conclusion

The study which was conducted to explore the factors affecting school choice among middle class parents in AJ&K concludes that school choice is considered as an important decision by the parents while they keep many of the core circumstances in mind. This study aimed to examine that how middle class parents make school choice for their children. School choice among middle class parents is one of the biggest challenges in present time and for this purpose parents try to make the best possible decision. Due to the scarce availability of resources the middle class parents have to make every decision of their life very carefully. During the study it was found that many of the factors such as social, economic and cultural affect parents' decision regarding school choice. The study consists of the entire important steps as included for social science research to make it more rational and reliable. After the transparent completion of the all basic steps the data was analyzed which shows that school fee is affecting parents decision because it is significantly associated with the income level of the parents. Parents are quite sensitive in school choice and keep their monthly income and expenses in mind. The findings also highlight that the qualification of teaching staff, quality of education and the distance of school from residence also affect their school choice. The respondents asserted that they also keep in mind other factors such as reputation of school in term of pervious results, religiosity, family traditions, co- and separate education while school selection.

5.3 Recommendation

This study recommends

As mentioned earlier, the multiplicity of education system confused parents and make the choice more complex, it is strongly suggested that uniform quality of education will help the parents to enroll the children in the right education system. If the uniform education system is a difficult job, people should be able to make the choice in line with their resources so that they and their children may not set distinction during the schooling process.

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16. What do you think are the main concerns of parents while selecting school for their children?

17. What do you suggest others parents for making school choice? _____
