

# Factors Influencing Parents Decision in Selecting Private Schools in Chittagong City, Bangladesh

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this research is to examine the factors influencing the parents' decision in selecting private schools in Chittagong city, Bangladesh. The factors are school popularity, school quality, future option, parents' income level and parents' educational level. There has been many researches on parents' involvement on school selection and related factors which influence them to select private schools. The current study conducted in the port city of Bangladesh as it is not possible to cover the whole country with 3 months. This is conclusive research used quantitative approaches. 150 questionnaires have been sent to the parents of 4 private school students through online survey and 110 responded. The results were analyzed through SPSS using correlation and multiple regression to find the answers for the hypothesis. In the results, it showed that school popularity, school quality, future option and parents' income level have a relationship with private school selection but parents' educational level doesn't have a relationship with private school selection in Chittagong city. The factors influence parents' decisions are school quality, future option, parents' income level, but school popularity and parents' educational level doesn't influence parents' decision in selecting private schools in Chittagong, Bangladesh.*

**Keywords:** School Choice, Private School, parents Decision

## I. INTRODUCTION

In developing a nation and individual character, education is an important factor and a basic human right (UNFPA; UNAIDS; UNIFEM, 2004). Human capital play an important part to achieve higher labor productivity and economic growth of a country. Few theoretical frameworks showed that, providing education is a profitable investment such as tuition fees and admission fees of schools. Which can get a return in the long run through earnings. Education can give positive effects in the economic growth of a country (Benjamin, et al., 2011). In the process of learning, students, teachers, parents and institute have their own importance. Especially family plays an important role in the academic achievement and development of a child. The characteristics of a family such as education, income, occupation and beliefs have an impact on the performance of child. Reliable research studies indicate that parents' socio-economic status is the best predictor of student academic achievement (khan, et al., 2015).

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Illiteracy is a major barrier to economic growth in many countries. Due to rapidly growing population and limited amount of government budget, some developing countries face difficulty to increase the delivery of education service (Riley, et al., 1997).

Opening classroom doors for all children will help to decrease poverty because education is related to all development. At least 40 percent of adults should be able to read and write, otherwise no country can gain continuous economic growth. Through each year of schooling, a person's earning can increase 10 percent (UNFPA; UNAIDS; UNIFEM, 2004).. Today in North Vietnam and China, an increased importance on education of new generation is reducing their labour contribution. Which increased the labour burden on their parents. It's difficult to find in developed countries that children want to follow schooling frequently. Education has been prioritized in urban areas because of better earnings in future, whether it is white collar work or skilled manual work (Punch & Sugden, 2012).

Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and poorest countries in the world and Gross National Income (GNI) is USD 1529. Though in Bangladesh, gender equality rates in education are better than other countries in this income group. In the last thirty years, Bangladesh has made strong progress in economic growth and social transformation and a reduction in poverty (Salam, 2015). Over the past two decades, Bangladesh has made excellent progress in the education sector. In a recent report of World Bank, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are the only countries that has achieved gender equality and urban-rural equality in school enrollments in South Asia. In Bangladesh, a person who can read and write Bangla is considered to be a literate. The female population is lower in literacy rate than the male population but female literacy rate has been improving rapidly than males. The table below shows the literacy rate for two population groups, age 7 and over and age 15 and over (Ahmed & Sharmeen, 2004).

Figure 1: literacy rates (Ahmed & Sharmeen, 2004)

District	N	Population age 7 and over		Population age 15 and over			
		Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Rangpur	119	45.3	41.7	43.6	38.0	35.3	36.7
Kurigram	508	61.1	51.4	56.4	58.1	42.5	50.5
Bogra	296	73.6	55.5	64.5	72.6	48.7	60.6
Naogaon	229	57.0	54.1	55.6	49.8	47.6	48.7
Pabna	373	57.4	50.2	53.8	53.3	41.4	47.3
Meherpur	352	49.9	44.6	47.1	44.7	34.6	39.5
Narail	135	45.3	45.7	45.5	48.4	44.8	46.8
Barisal	261	65.0	57.9	61.5	64.4	52.3	58.3
Bhola	235	26.8	26.7	26.7	24.4	22.6	23.6
Sherpur	454	50.7	43.9	47.4	47.7	38.8	43.3
Mymensingh	131	41.7	37.2	39.6	37.3	28.6	32.9
Tangail	435	61.5	54.4	57.9	58.6	45.6	52.1
Gazipur	287	58.1	53.2	55.6	55.3	48.5	51.9
Manikganj	410	67.5	50.4	59.1	62.8	41.9	52.4
Shariatpur	103	43.3	39.6	41.4	40.4	35.9	38.1
Habiganj	464	59.4	39.0	49.1	57.8	28.5	43.1
Comilla	360	80.9	72.1	76.3	78.7	64.7	71.4
Noakhali	246	74.8	65.0	69.7	73.3	59.1	65.8
Chittagong	342	64.8	56.9	60.7	63.3	51.3	56.9
Rangamati	110	68.0	45.1	55.8	63.0	37.7	49.7
All	5,850	59.7	50.9	55.3	56.9	43.7	50.3
Standard deviation		13.1	10.3	11.3	13.6	10.4	11.3
Coefficient of variation (percent)		21.9	20.2	20.4	23.8	23.7	22.5

Source: Based on data from the "Primary and Secondary Education Assessment, 2003: Village Census," Bangladesh. N = Number of households in the sample villages.

Note: A person who can read and write a sentence in Bangla is considered to be literate.

According to this chart, literacy rate of age 7 and over is 60.7 percent and 56.9 percent of age 15 and over in Chittagong city. In Bangladesh, there are three major levels of education system, first one is primary level, second one is secondary level and third one is higher level. Primary level is the first five years of schooling, secondary level is divided by three parts: junior secondary level which is from grade 6 to 8, and higher secondary level is from grade 9 to 10 (Sarkar, 2011).

Public schools are financed and managed by the state and private schools are funded through tuition fees to maintain their school and manage teacher and staff salaries (Riley, et al., 1997). Private schools develop teaching practices, staff training and educational materials effectively which indicates that they compete to retain students (Jimenez, et al., 1991). Some private school provide service at low fees to attract poor families but the quality of the service might not be good. These parents are low income, illiterate and are not concern about their child's education (Alderman, et al., 2001). There are thousands of primary and secondary level institutions with 19 million students in primary schools and 12 million students in secondary schools including madrasas by government (UNESCO, 2014). Bangladesh has progress in some areas of primary education such as increases of school enrollment, reductions in gender gaps and dropout rates. But the quality, achievement and competency levels of many children are very low in most primary institutions of the country. Even 66 percent of children do not achieve basic literacy (Salam, 2015). For basic education, UK has two major projects currently running in the country. They are providing 223 million pound to support "Building Resources Across Communities" (BRAC) development programme, which gives basic services (health, education, water and sanitation) and support the living of some poorest people in Bangladesh

(CfBT, 2013). BRAC's education programme (BEP) became the largest secular and private education system in the world. BRAC's non-formal primary schools gives a second chance to leave out children from formal education system due to extreme poverty, violence, discrimination. They provide training and support for both teacher and students in secondary level. Their e-learning materials improve mobile libraries for reading and using IT (BRAC, 2017). Learners of BRAC School get less physical facilities but they maintain quality inside classroom and receive good treatment from schools compared to public schools where the students have better physical facilities and seem less concerned to maintain quality at different stages of teaching and learning inside classrooms (Salam, 2015).

There are many Bengali and English medium private schools in Chittagong city. Comparatively private Bengali medium schools are with low tuition fees and complete education under National Education Board (NEB). Few names of private Bengali medium schools are: Saint Placid School, Ispahani Public School and College, Chittagong Ideal High School, Mirza Ahmed Ispahani Smriti Bidlaya etc. English Medium schools provide education of international standards and very good facilities, because of this they take good amount of money from students. Few names of private English medium schools Chittagong are: little Jewels School, Sunshine Grammar School and Collage, Bay View School, William Carey Academy, Chittagong Grammar School, CIDER International School, Mastermind International School (Mokhduma, 2010).

National curriculum and textbook board (NCTB) is an independent organization under the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Bangladesh.



NCTB has been created to develop the curriculum, production and distribution of textbooks in primary, secondary and higher secondary level in schools. For the difficulties faced by middle and lower middle class of people, the aim of the many schools was to upgrade their children in English because nationally and internationally English language is recognized as an international language. After the government announced to start National Curriculum in English, many English Medium and Bengali medium schools shifted or opened NC for students (NCTB, 2015).

Since the mid-20s, English based schools started to flourish to speed up the process of development in Bangladesh. Around the world today, governments are making English classes compulsory at younger ages. Even national curriculum in Bengali medium schools have establish in English and usually have only one Bangla class per day. There is growing availability of English medium schools in Bangladesh. The purpose of this paper is to find out the relation and the impact of the factors on the private school selection in Chittagong (Hassan, 2011).

Another feature of the Bangladeshi education is the Islamic institutions of religious learning, known as madrasas. With large number of Muslim populations, Bangladesh has the religious education sector with both state-owned madrasas and independent private madrasas. Most of the madrasas are registered and funded by government, which are regulated under a unified state recognized Madrasa Education Board (MED). There are also unknown number of private and traditional madrasas which are not funded by government and privately owned madrasas. Most private madrasas follow modern curriculum with traditional religious subjects. Though many of the parents believe that, graduates from madrasa fail to follow a productive economic life and therefore stay unemployed. Because these schools provide skills that are not compatible with the modern competition. Academic standard is lower than in general education (Asadullah, et al., 2009).

There has been many research done on private schools in other Asian countries like Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh etc. Sadly, studies which related to private schools did not came up with all this factors and studies which are related to all these factors gave importance to the private schools' verses public schools (Alderman, et al., 2001). In Chittagong, past studies related to focusing on the parents' perception on private school has not been conducted, which indicated as a problem while doing this research.

But there is not any research done on private schools (English medium, Bengali medium, madrassa) in Chittagong city situated in Bangladesh. To identify the most influencing factor effecting the selection of private international, Bengali or English medium schools is the purpose if this paper. This study will help to take the debate further and will give a difference perception and to identify the reason of selecting private religious, national curriculum, English or Bengali medium schools in Chittagong city, Bangladesh.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Selection of private school

Today, parents are highly involved in selecting a secondary school for their children. For almost all parents, selecting a school is very important. Most of them expects that their children will complete their schooling successfully on time with great result. Parents would probably require better evidence than those which are available, while choosing between public and private schools (Beavis, 2004). There are many factors which parents think about before taking a decision related to selecting a private school. This studies is focus on five factors such as school popularity, school quality, future option, parents' income level and parents' educational level (Beavis, 2004).

Among observers, exactly what is an excellent education differs from one another. Some would say that high student performance or standardized achievement tests and some would say students should meet important levels of knowledge in key subjects and other would highlight the ability to solve problem and to find complex situations (Levin, et al., 2007). Students from developing societies have very different conditions compared with more developed societies. The class structures are less different, educational system depends in the extent of the institutes and occupational structures are formed by levels of economic development in the world system. Educational inequality is an outcome of interrelationships between family decisions about education and the provision of educational opportunities. There is some research on how aspects of family background (socioeconomic status, family size) effects children's educational outcomes in developing countries. Some studies have examined how family and school factors combined to produce educational stratification (Buchmann & Hannum, 2001).

The literature review has been carried out to identify the factors influencing the parents' in selection a private school. Several factors have been certified by researcher using several private schools in Selangor. There are many studies analyses different opinion regards to the topic. West (2001), Bo Setti (2004), Jackson C. and Bisset M. (2005) and Ungerleider (2003) identified that exam results and school reputation influence parents to choose a school for their children. Van Pelt and Allison (2007) found that parents' educational level is the reason to select private school for their children. Another study prepared by Beavis (2004) stated that family background factors influence parents to choose private school. The main advantage of private schools is that they are self-sustain and independent. The schools which are tough in selecting students and prepared it as a challenge, parents are motivated with such schools. On the other hand, researcher also stated that, parents educational, income level and school quality, reputation play an important part in the selection of a private school. Private school students who are usually from high income and better educated families, are expected to do well in studies.

## Factors Influencing Parents Decision in Selecting Private Schools in Chittagong City, Bangladesh

Parents naturally want the best for their children especially in terms of education. Parents have the right to select a school that they want their children to attend. They can prepare their child on personal knowledge and work directly with them on learning activities at home (Yaacob, et al., 2014). School choice is made by families and parents use their knowledge, skill and social connections to enrol their children in school. Sometimes parents financially sacrifice and decide to send their children to private schools (Fuller & Elmore, 1996).

One research indicated that parent involvement is necessary for children's learning, outcomes in school and their future goals. The education background or social class of parents doesn't matter; students do good at all grade levels if their parents encourage their education and learning at home (Dauber & Epstein, 1989). Parents usually decide to send their children in private school when they are dissatisfied with the public schools. There are many reasons which help them to select a private school such as teacher student ratio, small size of classes, educational environment, educational quality, parents' education, parents' profession etc. A study in Beijing by Lai et al (2009) regarding parent's choice of school selection. The study collected data from students finding that whether parents' wrong selection of a school can affect the child performance. The result indicated that, due to parent's wrong decision in school selection many students were admitted in a low-quality school which effected in their results of examination. Moreover, another researcher found that education has a positive and significant relationship between economic growths. Education improve citizens and their standard of living. Therefore, a good decision of a parents in providing their children a good education is very important (Rehman, et al., 2010).

Competitive education is essential for a better future but it is also wise not to forget that only education may not always guarantee a good career in today's competitive job market. Some parents think that children who study in international schools, develop their characteristics by not only within school's climate but also through friends, family environment and other external factors. While schools and universities provide good education but most companies focus is on the students' ability to solve problem, by effective team works and communication. The ability to bear uncertainty is important in today's constantly changing environment (Malaysian Digest, 2015). To find out how parents select the best education institution for their children, Malaysian Digest interviewed some parents. One of the parents said that most international schools in Malaysia is full of student from around the world as they have diverse student bodies compared to public schools. It is exposing the student to a culturally diverse environment and is helping them broaden their horizons. Public educational institutes do provide quality education but in international school, they have qualified teacher with experience and they are focused about their profession because majority of them comes through international job fairs. At international schools, they use English language which is the most important language in the world and it is important in our daily lives. Preparing children to use English language at a young age is giving them competitive advantage. Less

students in a class in international schools help students to focus better as teachers can attend on every student. Most international schools provide International Baccalaureate (IB) Curriculum which develops creative and critical thinking and preparing the students for their academic performance apart from participating in extra-curriculum activities available (Malaysian Digest, 2015).

Goldring and Rowley (2006) stated that parents usually selects a school based in where they stay. The respondent who admit the importance of location are basically the people who need to have necessary transportation for their child to go to school or people who stay far away from school location. However, some parents consider the distance of the schools. Bernal (2005) stated that there are specific groups from the middle-class families who consider that the nearest school may not be the best educational institution for their children (Yaacob, et al., 2014). Overall there are many factors which is considered by parents before selecting a private school. In this study, five factors have been taken to see the relationship between the factors and parents' private school selection for their children.

As stated by Laciereno-Paquet and Brantley (2008), the primary motivation for parents to involve in school choice varies by states and district. Parents are influenced by race and class of the school population. For example, white people have the tendency to avoid those schools with a high minority enrolment. Some parents have the tendency to avoid those schools with high percentage of students from low-income families. Thus, school selection process has the probability of greater ethnic and racial separation (Davis, 2011). In several studies, it is mentioned that though parents choose a school based on the school's educational achievement but when parents help their child in few subject at home, the child's achievement in those subjects are likely to increase. Parent's involvement can encourage teacher to think positive about parents and increase their willingness to involve parents in other ways but some teacher at school don't want parents to know how to help their child at home. Few parent's decision on selecting a school might not increase student achievement (Brandt, 1989).

The most common choice of parents are those schools which attract the most. The trend of school selection is growing since the option of a private school education is provided to some families. The voucher programs are given to minority students from low-income household to attend private schools in major cities. The Voucher programs have been successful with growing test scores and parental satisfaction in Milwaukee, Cleveland and Washington D.C. (Lips, 2005). Some parents choose a private school for their children because of a more disciplined environment, sense of security for their children, a religious education or a high opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, even if there are not any academic advantages. Parents consider more than academic achievement when choosing a school (Davis, 2011).

To teach the necessary skills to their children, many parents choose private school education.

One of the main benefit is that they provide challenging and exceptional experiences through extracurricular activities, advanced placement courses, the International Baccalaureate (IB) program etc. The IB program not only focuses on the school work, it also develops a student as whole person. On standardised test and college entrance exams, many private school students constantly score top marks. These are the main reasons, why parents choose private schools and why it's worth the financial investment (Our Kids, 2017). More than 4000 schools have chosen to teach IB program for students' personal development. It often helps students to perform better and develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics and encourage them to think independently. Student can enrol in top universities of the country (Ibo, 2017).

### Theoretical framework

There is research done on the factors which parents take account when making their decision (Gill, et al., 2001). The processes parents use to select schools, have not been investigated by researchers. Bast and Walberg's (2004) explained that parents choose schools based in cost and benefits (incentives), the availability of information and for the opportunities. Basic aspects of the choice process are, for example, which schools are assessed and how parents assessed those schools. To understand more about the choice process, Herbert Simon's bounded rationality can be used. Herbert Simon's work which won Nobel Prize on decision making, satisficing and bounded rationality is related to parent's choice. He indicated that human beings cannot think about all options when they select. Parents use shortcuts, they have bounded rationality. His work also indicated that parents do not select the best option, they are cognitive misers and satisfice (Simon, 1986). When parents select school, it is expected that parents will not think about every school in their city, they will not choose the best school and they will select reasonable school which meet their expectation of reasonability.

Humans' bounded rationality and opportunity costs of assessing school in which parents could move their child is required to consider some smaller set. The set is the choice set of schools a parent considers. The aspects of the choice set are size, geography, prestige and expense which is the understanding of the shortcuts parents use to simplify the decision-making process. Parents create their choice set and it might be school's location or school popularity. By considering the steps and processes of the choice set, it is better to understand how parents' agency and market structures connected to parents' decisions. When selecting a middle school, parents does not suddenly invent choice set. They gradually collect all information over time.

Hossler and Gallagher (1987) suggest a three-stage choice process model (predisposition, search and choice) that student use to select an educational institution for their further education. The preposition stage is when student decide to continue their schooling more than high school or not. After that students move on to the next stage which is to search. They collect information about institutions for their higher education. In these stage, sometimes students' judge schools. The final stage is the choice which is use when students decide which institute to attend. Hossler and

Gallagher explained that, throughout the stages, both individual and structural factors interact to generate outcomes, which influence the selection of school. This three-stage model is generative and can use to understand the process of making the choice set. It highlights the individual and structural factors shaping parents action. This three-stage model can help to understand parents' selection process. When parents are deciding, which school will be best for their child, they do it in a segregated, stratified social context. Parents do not have time to visit schools, tuition fees, transportation or English language skills, all together. All these resources (material and immaterial) are not available among parents of different social backgrounds.

Studies of parental involvement find that social capital is an important resource which indicate how parents help their children succeed in school (Horvat, et al., 2003; Holme, 2002). Horat and her colleagues (2003) found that when parents faced problem such as inappropriate teacher behavior, middle-class parents provide the information then the authority fix the problem on the parents' favor. On the other hand, working-class did not provide such information and were less successful than middle-class parents (Horvat, et al., 2003). Holme interviewed middle-class and upper middle-class parents and found that parents' schooling decisions depends solely on information from upper status members of their society. Usually those information is often inaccurate. Few studies highlight both the importance of social network and how network information can be not accurate (Holme, 2002). The studies on decision making, school choice and parental involvement indicates the historical and social factors that may shape parents' selection processes (Bell, 2009).

The social development theory by Vygotsy (1934) argues that social interaction is a kind of development, consciousness and cognition is a part of socialization. Vygotsky concentrated on the connections between people and the sociocultural context in which they interact in shared experiences. Vygotsky stated that the environment of student has an impact on the student learning process.

The Hierarchy of Needs theory by Maslow indicated that people are motivated by needs and our basic needs are inborn. This theory explain that we must satisfy each need which deals with the most obvious needs for survival. In keeping with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, parents choose a private school because they belief that it is better for education and safer in environment for their child which will help them to bettering themselves so that they may have a brighter future (Hartsell, 2011).

### School quality

Student achievement in the school indicated the school's quality. A study explained that, there is a strong demand for private schools in Pakistan because of the quality and service provided for their students (Alderman, et al., 2001). Student from more wealthy family background and with more ability, choose a private school in India.

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Two argument mentioned that private schools are higher in educational quality than public school. Private schools are growing in demand even in remote rural areas. A study stated that, in India public school have low demand because of the low quality and absence of enough resources (Kingdon, 1996).

Private schools in South Asia has recently experienced exceptional growth as mentioned in a World Bank survey. In Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal, almost one-third of school students go to private schools. There are various forms of private education such as schools which are financed and managed by private sector, tutoring outside the classroom, private school voucher. Many private school are unregistered of government regulation and are doubted as a weak institution because government has a policy for private schools which is school registration, teacher and fees must be credential.

Private school students' minimum scores are almost equal to average scores of public schools' student in India, Pakistan and Nepal. Poor quality of government schools may create a low standard for private schools. Indian government has recently passed a policy in the Right Education Act, which requires private school to reserve 25 percent of seats for children from disadvantage background and the tuition fees will be paid by the government. In Bhutan tutoring outside the classroom is banned but in many countries, it is common (The World Bank, n.d.).

A study in Pakistan showed that parents select school by its educational quality. High student teacher ratio effects on the students' achievement which give a negative impact on school quality. When selecting public school, there is a high student-teacher ratio. Therefore, private schools have better outcomes than government schools. The study showed that low income households also have strong demand for private schools for better quality and learning opportunities offered by them (Alderman, et al., 2001).

In developing countries, the predicted performance of a students from private schools is higher than students from government schools (Alderman, et al., 2001). Therefore, while enrolling in a school, parent should be aware of this information. A person's education is important to determine that he or she will become a productive member of the society or not. That is why, the quality of education is as important as the education itself. A quality education is very important in today's rapidly advanced workplace (Hartsell, 2011).

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), private school student's score higher on standardized tests, had more demand in graduation requirements. It also indicated that private school students who complete at least eight grade, are twice as like as other students who graduated from college as young adult (Hartsell, 2011). Smith (2000) defined that, school building should be located on a site with a surrounding for students to concentrate and learn. A school is not a place only to focus on developing academic outcomes but also to develop personal or social aspects among students. Education quality depend on the environment of the school. School facilities and resources also affect the students' academic performance. Private school usually provide facilities to support instructional needs. According to NCES study,

private school students performed better than public school students (Yaacob, et al., 2014).

The advantage of private schools has been the subject of debate in many developed and developing countries over the past two decades. Development of teachers' quality is an important part to develop school quality. According to Nurahimah (2010), quality supervision can affect teacher effectiveness positively or negatively. Though teacher effectiveness requires knowledge, interpersonal skills and technical skills. In the study, it concluded that private schools produce better teachers than those of public schools. The information of teachers' quality gives some important suggestion on the competitiveness of types of school for some parents to make selection decision (Yaacob, et al., 2014).

Kraushaar (1972) stated that, reasons parents give for selecting private schools are, they believe these schools offer a superior kind of education that provide more services for their children. Private schools provide better education than public school is one of the main reasons for the existence of private school. Martinez, Thomas and Kemerer (1994) examined the characteristics of families and the rationale for choosing private school and found repeating messages saying that families want the best quality education available for their children (Davis, 2011).

A research in Bangladesh showed, the parents and students have blamed that the Bengali-medium school and public school quality is deteriorating which drives the population to take up private schools. Therefore, it is pushing forward to the demand of English-medium schools connected to international qualification. Neither the government nor the general population have detail information about these schools. In the future, more accurate research should be done about these schools because it is growing in number (Mousumi & Kusakabe, 2017).

A study by Bruce Biddler and David Berliner (2002) on class size showed that, the smaller the class size, the better the average student performs on academic test. Many private schools focus on the importance of small class size to help individual students' and advance their strengths. Private schools also build communication between parents and administrations to involve parents in the community. Through frequent parents-teachers' meetings and social events, families become essential part of the child's education. A survey did by Fraser Institute (2007) indicated that, 91 percent parents said teachers are the main reason for choosing private school. Teacher are qualified, passionate and have advanced degrees in their field. Student have a good relationship with their teacher and become role models. While academic remain the priority, on the other hand quality resource and extracurricular provided to the student which give them the opportunity to fully explore their interests and talents (Our Kids, 2017).

### Parents' income level

Parents' professional status is related to the selection of a school for their children.

Parents with high level of occupational status choose a private school compared with those with low level of occupational status in Australia. Maximum parents' who don't choose a private school are from middle or low level of job status. Income level is related to the job and influence school selection process. Maximum families with high level of income (\$100000) send their children to private school and Maximum families with low level income (\$25000) end their children to public or other schools (Beavis, 2004). Lowering private school tuition fees and distance, will increase the private school enrolment because poor household make decisions for selecting a school in terms of tuition fees, distance from school, which is mentioned in a study conducted in Pakistan. When the household income increase, the choice of selecting a private school also increase. Distance from school effects the same way as like tuition fees because of the transportation cost. If the distance from one school type increase, then there will be an increase of enrolment in other school type. But the option of distance decreases when the income level increases. In Pakistan, private school students enjoy fees advantage because of the low cost of operation and the quality is superior to public schools (Asadullah, 2008). Parents with low income level in Bangladesh seek for local schools because they do not move houses to be close to a good school. Therefore, children's' education quality and their way of growing is effected and cannot be overcome in the future due to parent's wrong taste for education (Asadullah, et al., 2006).

Income level becomes an important factor for the parents when choosing a school for their children due to the involvement of financial contribution towards school. In some cases, there are middle income parents with good educational background who ensure their children are admitted in the best private school. But as because private school are expensive than public schools, many low-income level parents can't choose private schools. Rehman, Khan, Triq and Tasleem (2010) sated that, higher occupational status of parents indicates higher choice of selecting private school (Yaacob, et al., 2014).

In the last 30 years, English medium schools have spread up in many places in Bangladesh. It is run by private ownership where the medium of instruction is English. As mentioned earlier, it is not monitored by the government authorities in terms of their syllabus, recruitment policy, admission procedures or their tuition fee structure. It is generally the upper class of the society who can afford English medium education as it is very expensive and parents are very anxious to give their children such education because the opportunities and admitting children in English medium schools is a sign of status and prestige (Haque & Akter, 2013). In a research regarding private madrasas, it is found that madrasas are in poor rural areas and there is a positive relationship between household poverty and selection of madrasas. The income level influences the enrolment of madrasas in Bangladesh and in three districts of Panjab Pakistan.

### Future option

Children choose their future study direction in their secondary level in Bangladesh, for example; science, business, economics, IT, etc. It indicates that, parents need

to decide the type of school for their children's better future before the secondary level. (Sarkar, 2011). Private school graduates in Pakistan can earn 16 to 18 percent more than public school graduates, which indicates the effectiveness of education in private school. Indonesia is also similar with Pakistan in terms of labour market (Asadullah, 2008). Government registered Madrasas in Bangladesh are also growing and providing subjects beside religious studies (Asadullah, et al., 2006). The parents' attitudes towards their child's education is generally very positive which is stated by TNS Social research (2004). 97 percent of parents agreed that good education will help their children in the future, 93 percent thinks that the grades are important for their child's future, 90 percent thinks children learn important life skills at school, 76 percent of parents agreed that school is good at communicating with their children, only few parents think that school are too interested in their child's home life and most of the things their child learns at school are not relevant to life. Therefore, it indicated that most parents are interest and concern in their child's future (Samal, 2012).

Many studies have indicated that, parents generally involve in child education for the benefits of children's learning and school success. The forms of parental involvement have been an important part to understand why parents choose to become involved and why their involvement often function to create positive outcomes for their child. Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995) suggested that parental involvement influence educational development in children. Their initial choice to choose school and getting involved for their children's better future (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997)

Parents select that type of private school through which they can select a way for their children's better future they want them to follow. However, 'better' means different to different parents. It could mean the value perspective of the parent by selecting a religious education for their children, it could mean better preparing students for college, parents want their children to be with others who have similar characteristics or parents might also desire their children to interact with a specific group of peers (Davis, 2011). These schools follow the British curriculum and many people in Bangladesh are becoming interested in it because good knowledge of English provide many opportunities. After completing O-Level and A-Level from school, most of the students' study in the private universities or go abroad (Haque & Akter, 2013).

Though, these schools give success in the future and improves prospects for education and careers in foreign countries, but not all parents want to send their children to abroad. They select English-medium schools for their children because higher education in Bangladesh demand English proficiency skills (Mousumi & Kusakabe, 2017). Private schools offer beyond the compulsory subject required by the curriculum which help students to focus and think about their future goals (Our Kids, 2017).

## Parent's educational level

Undoubtedly, economic status influences a family and family environment and background have larger impacts on the behavior, education, health and future income of the children and this is a repeated cycle. Children's education and family's income level are largely dependent on parent's education level. The more educated the parents are, the more likely it is for the family to have higher income and for the children to be highly educated and vice versa. However, mother's education level has a higher impact on the overall growth and stability of the family than fathers because mothers tend to be closer to the family and households. Theories as such enable government to provide subsidies for education especially for families that are on low income or where the parents are not very well educated. This can work as a multiplier because the aim of getting one generation educated may lead to getting the next generation educated too – that is, when government gives educational subsidy to one person in a family, he/she gets educated and then that subsidy (directly or indirectly as in the case of parents-child relation of education) passes on to the next generation and this goes on. The intergenerational correlation is argumentative but the level of (government) intervention depends on the characteristics and extent of the correlation (how much is it going to relate/affect the overall family). It is difficult to find that, how it is transferred from one generation to another but it could be due to genetic inheritance or environmental factors. This could also be due to unobserved genetics rather than just parental education. Parental education has both direct and indirect inputs in the family. It may directly affect the level of education of the children and indirectly affect the additional income (Chevalier, et al., 2005).

Parents' educational level have an impact on parents' decision of selecting a school. Maximum parents with high level of education in Australia, select private schools and parents with a bachelor or less than that selects a government schools. (Beavis, 2004). According to Haveman and Wolfe, students academically perform better whose parents are highly educated than those students whose parents are less educated because of the spread of genetic establishment or environmental factor. The educated parents provide motivation, fees and discipline to their children which effects positively in their children's future and these efforts become important in secondary education (Feinstein & Symons, 1997).

According to Cameron and Heckman (1998) using US data and Chevalier and Lanot (2002) using UK National Child Development Study, showed that parent's income level does not explain their child's educational level but parent's educational level has a positive role on their child's education. Many researchers identified that parent's educational level and income level has an effect in school selection but not both effects at the same time (Chevalier, et al., 2013). Therefore, many educated parents collected many information about a school such as their teachers' qualification, students result, education quality of the school and the environment of the school etc., before admitting their child there. Many less educated parents show less

concern about the school characteristics than well-educated parents.

A child is more confident, experienced and resourceful whose parents has a better education. Parents' educational level is considered as the most permanent aspect of social-economies status. Thompson et al (1988) says that, mother's educational level influences students' their children's educational outcomes expectancy. Using NAEP data, Campbel, Hombo and Mazzeo (1999) indicated that students' score higher than average whose parents' have higher parental education (Khan, et al., 2015). Educated parents are likely to have small family size and provide good quality education to their children in Bangladesh (CfBT, 2013).

## School popularity

Parents' view about schools popularity with the achievement in school's 12th grade results. The school which are recommended in top universities are consider as popular in term of parents' perception (Beavis, 2004). Some parents are attracted to popular school so that in the future, their children can admit at the good university more easily as these school has a recommendation for some universities. Without the support from the government, the private schools are increasing in Pakistan. All private school can maintain their quality and become superior without any interference because they are free of government regulation. On the other side, majority of private schools are dependent on the government which stop these school to create popularity compared with public schools in Bangladesh (Asadullah, 2008). According to the researcher, parents can choose between private religious and non-religious schools. It became more popular because public schools are rural areas of Bangladesh. (Asadullah, et al., 2006).

International or English medium schools provide education of international standards. The schools are becoming more popular because besides teaching all subjects, they are also providing variety of extra-curricular activities such as sports, music, dance, drama, debate, creative writing etc. They also organize several training programs for their teachers so that they perform better (Mokhduma, 2010). The popularity and unpopularity of school is somehow connected to the strategic location of the area. Flatley (2001) highlighted, the location of the school must be convenient so that parents consider when they want to select a school. Most schools do not provide transportation from the school. Therefore, distance should be convenient according to Goldring and Rowlet (2006) (Yaacob, et al., 2014).

Many researchers doubted the ability of parents to make good decision on school choice. The Carnegie Foundation (1992) found that, many parents have nothing to do with the quality of education. Few parents are willing to collect necessary information to make good educational choice. But the researchers have also argued that among low-income parents, there is a strong tendency to make bad choice. The Carnegie Foundation also stated that some parents make better decision than others.

Moe stated that, critics often argue that especially low-income parents care about how close the school is or whether it has a good sports team and give less importance on education quality and other properties of effective schooling. He highlighted that many parents will fail to choose schools based on educational quality and they base their choice on irrelevant school characteristics such as the number of football games won rather than the number of students going on to college. Parents' school choice could prove disastrous for the quality of learning across the country. As many parents' select schools for the wrong reason, bad schools driving out good ones (Schneider & Buckley, 2002).

For maintain high standard for discipline and respect, private schools have good reputations. They also discourage dangerous behavior and allow more effective observation and control in the school ground. Fraser Institute's (2007) survey showed, 72 percent parents and children strongly agreed that private school has a safe and good environment which improves the quality of education. Because of the discipline, students' rates of success in post-secondary education. 62 percent of parents and students said, private school's environment is motivating, nurturing and supportive (Our Kids, 2017). Therefore, these days' private schools are gain more popularity than public or other school because of their good quality in term of education, facilities and extra-curriculum. And more parents are selecting private school than other institutions for educating their children.

### III. METHOD & MATERIALS

This study is a casual research, using a quantitative method that aims to identify the relation between factors and

private school selection. 150 questionnaires have been distributed by the researcher due to the time and cost factors. From 150 respondents, 110 respondents have participated in the current study which is 73.3 percent of the total number of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents. Data was analyzed using Excel and SPSS. To analyzed the demographic data of the respondents, descriptive analysis was used. Through correlation matrix or cross tabulation, correlation analysis was used to find the result. To describe the degree and direction of linear association between variables, correlation analysis has been used. Advantage of correlation analysis is that; it shows the causes-effects of the relationship between variables and prediction of a future outcomes from the variables. To summarize the collected information, descriptive statistical analysis was used by which statistical conclusion are made based on the surveyed sample for the whole population. For the convenience, simplicity and to understand the results, descriptive analysis is used in this research. The find the impact of independent variable on dependent variable, multiple regression was carried out. It helped to identify each factor has an impact on a private school selection or not.

### IV. RESULTS

In this study, the demographic characteristics those were selected are gender, age, marital status, child in private school, number of children and children in grade. The table below represent the demographic data of the respondents. In the table, the frequency, percentage and cumulative percentage were used to describe the profile of the respondents.

Variables category		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Cumulative percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	36	32.7	32.7
	Female	74	67.3	100
<b>Age</b>	21-29	9	8.2	8.2
	30-39	45	40.9	49.1
	40-29	36	32.7	81.8
	50-59	20	18.2	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	84	76.4	76.4
	Divorced	12	10.9	87.3
	Separated	6	5.5	92.7
	Widowed	8	7.3	100.0
<b>Child in Private School</b>	1	19	17.3	17.3
	2	22	20.0	37.3
	3	18	16.4	53.6
	4	10	9.1	62.7
	5	10	9.1	71.8
	6	13	11.8	83.6
	7	12	10.9	94.5
	8	6	5.5	100.0
<b>Number of Children</b>	1	15	13.6	13.6
	2	54	49.1	62.7

## Factors Influencing Parents Decision in Selecting Private Schools in Chittagong City, Bangladesh

	3	26	23.6	86.4
	4	13	11.8	98.2
	5	2	1.8	100.0
<b>Children in Grade</b>	1	16	14.5	14.5
	2	16	14.5	29.1
	3	13	11.8	40.9
	4	10	9.1	50.0
	5	10	9.1	59.1
	6	16	14.5	73.6
	7	18	16.4	90.0
	8	11	10.0	100.0

Bivariate analysis was carried out by using Pearson correlation coefficient. It is used by the researcher to identify and examine the strength and occurrence of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The table below indicates the result of the bivariate analysis in SPSS.

	IV1	IV2	IV3	IV4	IV5	DV
IV1 School Popularity	1					
IV2 School Quality	.209*	1				
IV3 Future Option	.468**	.199*	1			
IV4 Parents Income Level	.140	.125	.239*	1		
IV5 Parents Educational Level	.108	.092	.080	.102	1	
DV Private School Selection	.239*	.348**	.408**	.368**	.099	1

The table above indicated that, in IV1, there is a weak and positive relationship between school popularity and private school selection in Chittagong city ( $r = .239^*$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It means with 95 percent confidence with any improvement in school popularity also improves private school selection. In IV2, there is a moderate and positive relationship between school quality and private school selection in Chittagong city ( $r = .348^{**}$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It means with 99 percent confidence with any improvement in school quality also improves private school selection. In IV3, there is a moderate positive relationship between future option and private school selection in Chittagong city ( $r = .408^{**}$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It means with 99 percent confidence with any improvement in future option also improves private school selection. In IV4, there is a moderate positive relationship between parents' income level and private school selection in Chittagong city ( $r = .368^{**}$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). It means with 99 percent confidence with any improvement in parents' income level also improves private school selection. In IV5, there is no relationship between parents' educational level

and private school selection in Chittagong city ( $r = .099$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ).

According to Cohen's rule of thumb for explaining relationship size (1997), the results can be presented in a descending order of strong to weak relationship with private school selection: future option ( $r = .408^{**}$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ); parents' income level ( $r = .368^{**}$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ); school quality ( $r = .348^{**}$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ); school popularity ( $r = .239^*$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, there are a positive relationship between school popularity, school quality, future option, parents' income level and private school selection, which indicates that these four factors influence parents' decision in choosing private schools in Chittagong city, Bangladesh.

The aim of this analysis is to determine the factors (school popularity, school quality, future option, parents' income level, and parents' educational level) have significant influence on parents' decision of choosing private school. Multivariate analysis is the method of statistical research. The table below represents the multivariate analysis.

### Model Summary<sup>b</sup>

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.553 <sup>a</sup>	.306	.272	.13786

a. Predictors: (Constant), Parents\_educational\_level\_Avg, Future\_option\_Avg, School\_quality\_Avg, Parents\_income\_level\_Avg, School\_popularity\_Avg

b. Dependent Variable: Private\_school\_selection\_Avg

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics		
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
			Beta										
1 (Constant)	-.696	.871		-.798	.426	-2.424	1.032						
School_popularity_Avg	.006	.044	.012	.127	.900	-.081	.092	.239	.012	.010	.761	1.313	
School_quality_Avg	.686	.230	.253	2.988	.004	.231	1.142	.347	.281	.244	.933	1.071	
Future_option_Avg	.236	.079	.285	3.005	.003	.080	.392	.406	.283	.246	.741	1.349	
Parents_income_level_Avg	.219	.070	.263	3.106	.002	.079	.359	.368	.291	.254	.930	1.076	
Parents_educational_level_Avg	.015	.049	.025	.300	.764	-.082	.112	.099	.029	.025	.977	1.024	

a. Dependent Variable: Private\_school\_selection\_Avg

The results of multivariate analysis (multiple regression)

There are two value at the Collinearity statistics, Tolerance and VIF (variance inflation factor) indicates the presence of multicollinearity which determines the certain coefficient of independent variable is not significant when they are significant. If the Tolerance value is more than .10, it shows that there is no presence of multicollinearity and when VIF value is less than 10 then there is no presence of multicollinearity. In the table 5, Tolerance value of each variables is more than .10, so it determines that there is no presence of multicollinearity and the VIF value of each independent variables are less than 10 which indicates that there is no presence of multicollinearity. The column of Sig. compares significant contribution of independent variable to dependent variables where p-value must be less than 0.005 (Sig<.005). The table above showed the result of the multivariate analysis, which indicates factors such as school popularity (B = .006; Sig = .900) and parents' educational level (B =.015; Sig = .764) have no significant influence on parents' decision on private school selection in Chittagong city, Bangladesh. On the other hand, school quality (B = .686; Sig = .004), future option (B = .236; Sig = .003) and parents' income level (B = .219; Sig = .002) are the factors which have a significant influence on private school selection in Chittagong city, Bangladesh. The column of Beta shows, the contribution of each independent variable can be compared. The large beta value of IV determines the strong unique contribution of IV to explaining the DV. In the table, beta result indicates that school quality is 25.3% of unique contribution on private school selection, future option is 28.5% of unique contribution on private school selection and parents' income level is 26.3% of unique contribution on private school selection.

What factors influence the parents' decision to select private schools have been analyzed through the data collected from the 110 parents in Chittagong city, Bangladesh. Therefore, school popularity have a weak and positive relationship with private school selection but have no influence on the parents' decision, school quality have a

moderate and positive relationship with private school selection and also have a significant influence on the parents decision, future option have moderate and positive relationship with the private school selection and also have a significant influence on the parents' decision, parents' income level have a moderate and positive relationship with the private school selection and have a significant influence on parents' decision, parents' educational level have no relationship with the private school selection and also have no significant influence on parents decision of choosing private school.

V. DISCUSION & CONCLUSION

The result of the analysis showed that there is a positive relationship between school popularity and private school selection in Chittagong city but the relationship level is weak. In the literature review, it is mentioned that some parents select a school in terms of the schools' popularity such as achievement in school's result in 12 grade which make the school renown and universities take students from these schools (Beavis, 2004). Private English medium schools are popular because they not only provide good education they also provide extra-curricular activities for students, some school train their teachers, some school location make the school popular etc. (Mokhduma, 2010). Though school popularity is related to school selection but in Bangladesh, parents doesn't make decision based on school popularity. In the multiple regression result, it indicated that in Chittagong city school popularity doesn't influence parents' decision before selection a private school for their children. Parents' of private school student doesn't take decisions by only looking at the popularity level, they look at other features of the school also such as the environment of the school, quality of education, future options for their children and their income level.



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For parents in Chittagong, school popularity doesn't matter and it also not affect their decision.

The relationship between school popularity, school quality, future option, parents' income level, parents' educational level and private school selection were examined and the significant impact of each factors on private school selection. This research paper also contains the discussions and explanation related to each part of research. It also contains previous study related to this topic and theoretical and practical contribute is also mentioned here. The data collected was analyzed and the findings and conclusion indicated the relationship between the five factors with private school selection in Chittagong city, Bangladesh and their impact on parents' decision before selecting a private school. The main contribution of this paper is to know why parents choose private school for their children and to understand their perception.

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