

# Determinants of School Choice in Selected Urban Secondary Schools in Zambia

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Received April 03, 2021; Revised May 09, 2021; Accepted May 17, 2021

**Abstract** This research paper conceptualises the determinants of school choice by parents in selected secondary schools in urban Zambia. It empirically examines the extent school choice is determined by the following parameters: the school's academic performance; parents' socio-economic status; location of parents and moral and religious values of the schools. The rational choice and free market theories underpinned the conceptualisation of the determinants of school choice. Convergent parallel mixed-methods design was employed. The study was done in Lusaka district based on the fact that it is the most urbanised town in the country. The study used both simple random sampling and purposive sampling to select respondents. 120 parents responded to questionnaires, 8 parents were interviewed to crosscheck other parents' responses in the questionnaires. Interviews were also used to generate data from 6 head-teachers and 1 key informant at District Education Office. Multiple and single regression analysis were used to establish the significance of the factors of school choice under investigation. Key among the findings that show a departure from global literature in the context of Zambia is that of moral and religious values which was rated second and most significant determinant of School choice. Equally, school academic performance is the biggest determining factor in parents' school choice. In the third place was Parents' socio-economic status. Location of parents was however established to be insignificant as a determinant of school choice. The paper recommends that government should work at issues that enhanced school academic performance and discipline in schools such as intensifying monitoring and supervision especially in public schools so as to increase preference for such schools. Therefore, the study recommends for future research on examination of determinants of school choice should focus on primary level in both rural and urban settings.

**Keywords:** *determinants, academic performance, moral and religious values, socio-economic status, school choice*

**Cite This Article:** Gift Masaiti, Kennedy Mwila, Godfrey Kaoma, Francis Simui, and Harrison Daka, "Determinants of School Choice in Selected Urban Secondary Schools in Zambia." *Research in Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, vol. 9, no. 1 (2021): 1-8. doi: 10.12691/rpbs-9-1-1.

## 1. Context

School choice is quite a recent area of study in Economics of Education. School choice is defined as the parents' possibility to choose a school for their children [1]. Underlying the school-choice movement is the widely held belief that private schools respond to competition in ways public schools do not, and consequently are superior to public schools in providing educational services [2]. In the United States school choice was seen by its proponents as alluded to above in the context of improving quality education and contributing to economic growth through competition as determined by market forces [3]. The argument according to [4] was that, economic growth typically resulted when businesses, workers, investors, and entrepreneurs were free to compete, innovate, and work to better serve consumers by supplying new or improved goods and services. These incentives governed the marketplace, and when built upon a sound foundation

of property rights, the rule of law, open trade, minimal governmental burdens, and price stability, economic growth and prosperity emerged.

In Zambia according to the current educational policy [5], liberalization of educational provision entails fundamental changes in power relations within the education sector. Under a liberalized educational system, the right of private organizations, individuals, religious bodies, and local communities to establish and control their own schools and other educational institutions is recognized and welcomed. Liberalization of educational provision allows those with resources to establish institutions and to run them in accordance with their own principles- subject, however, to stipulated rules and regulations. In this way, liberalization contributed to expansion of educational opportunities while protecting the right of parents to send their children to educational institutions of their own choice, be they public, private, religious or communal [6].

From the above, it is clearly seen that the [7] respects parents and pupil school choice. Ministry of Education

encourages the private sector and non-governmental organizations participation in the provision of basic education (and by implication other levels of education) and improvement of its quality. It is against the backdrop of the above background that this study conceptualised the determinants of school choice by parents in the Zambian context. What really did parents look for in the choice of schools for their children since the government had apparently liberalized education?

### 1.1. Theory and Literature

The paper is grounded in the Rational Choice theory and Free Market theory. The Rational choice theory starts with the idea that individuals have preferences and choose according to different considerations. It informs most school choice plans. This theory according to [8], quoting [9] suggested that parents were utility maximizers who made decisions from clear value preferences based on calculations of the costs, benefits, and probabilities of success of various options; that they were able to demand action effectively from local schools and teachers; and that they could be relied upon to pursue the best interests of their children. School choice policy rested on rational choice theory [10], in which parents would engage in an orderly, sequential process, “gathering information about the quality of services that schools offer” [11], 490), and then make a “rational” decision based on such objective data as test scores [12].

One of the longstanding and highly debated proposals to improve primary and secondary public education in the United States and globally is to expand schooling options available to parents with the use of school choice reforms [13]. Even in Zambia, whether politician pay a lip service, they keep talking about increasingly possibilities for Zambians in the schooling of their children. Nichols and Ozek argue that many leading economists advocate that such market-based educational systems (parents ‘shop’ for schools) are efficiency-enhancing because they induce competition between schools and potentially produce better student-school matches. School choice reforms have been proposed as ways to enhance efficiency, equity, and effectiveness in education in North America and European Block [14].

[6] observes that increasing parental choice can also be regarded as increasing equality of opportunity, since it serves to level the playing field in terms of access to high-quality education for disadvantaged and marginalized students who cannot otherwise afford the higher-quality schooling options [15,16,17]. As already argued, school choice takes great interest in the role of parents in making sure that their children receive quality education in the schools they choose for them. School choice debate in developing countries like Zambia is increasingly becoming popular though its applicability is not well researched. [18] writes that the influence of particular family management strategies on the school-choice process is likely to be particularly salient during the transition from primary to secondary school. Empirical and theoretical arguments such as Wells and [19] continue to show that parents who exert a high degree of control over the management of their kids' educational occupations are more likely to be successful in placing

their children in non-neighborhood schools and in keeping them in these schools once they are enrolled.

[12] further argue that the role of parents in school choice is important. Arguments and criticisms advanced in the 1980s that failing schools were eroding America's place in the global economy, many urban school districts implemented increased accountability measures and the arguments around school choice were given prominence as a possible response. A key strategy narrative within the school choice movement, advocates that empowered parents acting as “citizen/consumers” will fuel the competition necessary for school improvement [11]. School choice advocates also suggest that because schools have become bureaucratic monopolies oblivious of the need for inner reform, new actors—namely, parents and private enterprise—must possibly enter the process. Two ideologies drive this restructuring narrative: restoring democracy, in which parental involvement is compared with reenergized citizenship, and privatization of institutions as argued by [20], in which schools kind of mimic private markets. Generally, these two ideologies have driven the debate “over whether public education should be seen primarily as a public good or a private good” [21].

Challengers of school choice, on the other hand, argue that school choice reforms hinder the progress of low-performing public schools by enticing the ‘best’ students and withholding much needed resources as students depart and enrollment numbers decline [6]. In the North America (Canada & USA) school choice is seen by its supporters as alluded to above in the context of improving quality education and contributing to economic progression through competition as determined by market forces. [4] postulates that economic growth typically results when businesses, workers, investors, and entrepreneurs are free to compete, invent, and work to better serve consumers by supplying new or better-quality goods and services. These incentives according to Keating govern the marketplace, and when built upon a sound foundation of property rights, the rule of law, open trade, minimal governmental burdens, and price stability, economic growth and prosperity emerge.

[4] makes a further argument that true choice and competition in education would shift that system's incentives melodramatically, with the education entrepreneurs and providers focused on supplying added value to the customers, that is, students and parents. The subsequent improvement in educational quality and achievement would raise productivity, personal earnings, and the whole economy. Increasing school choice and competition—ideally, changing a government monopoly into a universal school choice system—would meaningfully boost both educational attainment and education excellence. In turn, economic growth would be spurred through an assortment of channels [4,6].

[22] observes that at its core, school choice relies on very basic economic theory about the effects of competition. Hoxby argues that the absence of market forces in education is one of the greatest promising potential explanations of the puzzle that has yet been put forward. Clearly, market pressures are generally accredited with stimulating firms to be productive and efficient. Thus, it is natural that economists are interested

in the productivity consequences of choice: They know that there is a puzzle to be solved, and they know that market pressures are a potential solution that is worth understanding [22]. Nonetheless, some studies conducted earlier in the US and in the West, indicate that school choice does not necessarily impact on pupil performance. In order for this theory of school choice to realize the assumptions behind it, the scholars suggest that there is need for parents to be well informed on schools they send their children to [6,23]. Scholars say that this contention makes sense because sometimes school choice is taken by parents like shopping Maize meal (Rice) without being informed properly about the school the child is sent to. [12] found out that parents experienced school choice as a form of informal education and induction into the corporate world of free-market skills, where they engaged in the “Coca-Cola commercialization” of education.

In Bangladesh, the arguments of school choice are also valid. Private schools- usually Islamic generally offer lower quality of education than government. [24] elucidate that studies done found out that religious preferences may be important in explaining madrasah enrolment, but equally important, household choices can be driven by economic costs and benefits. In this latter respect, the household decision for a family in rural Bangladesh is not different to that of a family in a developed nation. [24] argues that irrespective of their manner of finance and management, faith schools especially in the US are considered to be superior to public schools in terms of quality of education provided. In the US it appears private enterprise might be perceived to have better quality provision than public ones. In the case of the US, these faith schools are overwhelmingly under private management and charge high fees which limit participation of children from poorer socio-economic backgrounds. Public school enrolment is thus inversely correlated with household income. In Bangladesh, it is the religious schools which offer a cheaper, but lower quality alternative to non-religious schools. In this sense, parents in both settings face a trade-off between school cost and school quality.

Free market theory basically states that corporations will govern themselves efficiently, no need of much regulations or oversight [6]. In the context of this study, market theory suggests that a system of school choice will create competition among schools for student enrolment resulting in schools being more responsive to the needs and interests of parents and students by providing different types of programmes for different types of families. [8] cited [25] that competition would result in improved school effectiveness, productivity, and service, leading to higher quality education. According to [23], market theories were particularly common, since the defining characteristic of a school choice reform strategy was its treatment of families as consumers and the corresponding accountability of schools to their enrolled — and potentially enrolled — families.

[26], in discussing the link between education and employment brought to play dynamics of school choice theory based on investments and production functions. He discussed the low productive capacity of Zambian economy which had hampered the real economic choices by its citizens. This was simply a desk review research

and did not solely investigate the issue of school choice in detail. [26,27,28] had discussed a number of issues related to cost sharing, revenue diversification, student loan policies and the roles of universities in the 21st Century. All these themes had implications on school choice theories and mostly anchored on neo liberal thinking. [28] further recommended that school choice in Zambia was at variance and needed to be studied in context.

Clearly, there seems to be a gap on studies relating to school choice in Zambia. Zambia’s current official policy document on Education, [5] encourages the school choice theory where parents can make a choice of where to take their children for schooling. According to this policy, the virtual monopoly exercised by the Government over the provision of education from independence until the early 90s, particularly at the primary level, had several negative consequences. Contrary to the provisions of the 1966 Education Act, the government greatly restricted parents’ rights to choose the type of education they wanted for their children. The provision of education was purely by government through tax funding but failed to leverage the valuable human and financial resources available in the non-governmental and private sectors. It fostered the oppressive culture of over-dependency on the state that served to prevent communities from tackling their own problems. Because of the scale of the education sector and competing other demands from other sectors Government increasingly became incapable of responding to all the needs and failed to provide education in either the quantity or the quality that individuals and the country needed [29,30].

In the current educational policy, there is emphasis on liberalization of educational provision which entails fundamental changes in power relations within the education sector. Under a liberalized educational system, the right of private organizations, individuals, religious bodies, and local communities to establish and control their own schools and other educational institutions is recognized and welcomed as noted by [6]. Liberalization of educational provision allows those with resources to establish learning institutions and to run them in accordance with their own principles- subject, however, to stipulated rules and regulations. In this way, “liberalization contributes to expansion of educational opportunities while protecting the right of parents to send their children to educational institutions of their own choice such as public, private, religious or communal. It is at the backdrop of the above background that this paper explores the determinants of school choice by parents in the Zambian context in Lusaka District. What did really parents look for in the choice of schools for their children since the government had apparently liberalized education?

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem and Purpose

The paper conceptualises the determinants of school choice by examining how parents choose secondary schools for their children in urban towns of Zambia considering the fact that the Government of the Republic of Zambia protects the right of parents to send their children to educational institutions of their own choice be they public, private, religious or communal [5].

It was not clear in Zambia the extent and what really determined school choice if such a choice existed in the practical sense. However, school choice appeared to be a preserve of the privileged in society. Already, some literature in Zambia indicated that government schools in Zambia were poorly funded and lacked resources [31]. Most of the more affluent residents sent their children to a rather expensive private school. The argument was that private schools operated independently of the Zambian government and had flexibility in their admissions, curriculum choice and academic year. It is important to know why certain schools were not preferred to others and how this impacted on the quality of education as a result. Are we going to have segregated schools based on different demographics? School choice might have implications on perpetuity, a situation where the poor would continue to be poorly educated and remain poor without improving their social-economic status as school choice seemed to be a preserve of the rich.

### 1.3. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were to;

1. Examine to what extent religious values upheld by particular schools influenced school choice at secondary level.
2. Determine whether parents' socio-economic status was a determinant of school choice at secondary level.
3. Determine if parent's location (proximity to schools) influenced the way they chose secondary schools for their children.
4. Establish the extent to which school academic performance, parents socio-economic status, religious and moral values and parents location influenced the way parents chose secondary schools for their children in Zambia.

## 2. Methodology and Design

The research design this study used in understanding the determinants of school choice by parents in Zambia was a convergent parallel mixed-methods design; an approach to inquiry that combines both qualitative and quantitative methods concurrently, prioritizing both methods almost equally [32]. In this case, the quantitative and qualitative methods complemented each other and provided for the triangulation of findings, hence greater validity of the emerging inferences. Whereas the former approach provided a more general understanding of the issue of determinants of school choice by understanding how parents chose secondary schools in Lusaka district, the latter provided a detailed and in-depth understanding of the same. Multiple and single regression analysis were used to establish the significance of the four factors of school choice under investigation. In quantitative approach, data collection involved questionnaires. [33] argued that, quantitative research usually emphasizes quantification in the collection and analysis of data. For qualitative approach, the study used in-depth semi structured interviews and documents analysis. The quantitative data from parents was collected through a designed questionnaire that had variables established from

the literature review as the main determinants that influenced school choice in many countries.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1. Academic Performance as Determinant of School Choice

All the 15 respondents (representing 100%) who participated in the interview in line with this objective were agreeable that the school academic performance was a major determining factor which parents looked for when choosing secondary schools for their children. This was somehow in tandem with what was seen in the responses in the questionnaire where 78% of parents agreed that school's academic reputation is critical in school choice. The ESO GI at DEBS office when interviewed acknowledged that:

At Grade 7 there is choice of school the parents want to send their child to. Parents work hand in hand with their children. Parents are supposed to be consulted by children. Head teachers ask pupils to go and talk to parents about the school they want to go to after graduating from primary school then bring feedback, for input. Parents are key decision makers for their children in their education. They know which schools are performing well and those not performing well (ESO 1, Interview, 2017).

Despite the acknowledgement of parents having freedom of school choice, it was discovered that they were prevented from sending their children to academic reputable schools due to failure by their children to reach the cut-off point. So here cut-off point emerged as a sub theme under this objective.

One head teacher at a grant aided school said that:

Our school is relatively cheap as opposed to the general perception of the public. Pupils only pay K2, 000 per year. And when we tell people this, they get surprised. The only major prohibiting factor why pupils who would like to come to this school fail to come is the high marks set as cut-off point for qualification (Head Teacher 4, Interview, 2017).

This assertion by the said head teacher seemed to have been supported by parents, head-teachers and the ESO GI who participated in the interview and questionnaire.

The conclusion was that the **cut-off point** that the child obtained at Grade 7 was critical to determine the type of school he or she went to. The results in the questionnaire that agreed with responses in the interview are illustrated in the pie chart in figure 4.9 where parents were asked if the Grade 7 ECZ exam results scored by their children determined the secondary school choice, 67% of the respondents agreed, 30% disagreed and 3% were not sure of the answer.

### 3.2. Moral and Religious Values as Determinant of Choice

The Moral and Religious values came out as the second major determinant of school choice in terms of descriptive statistics. This is also supported by the questionnaire responses from parents as shown below.

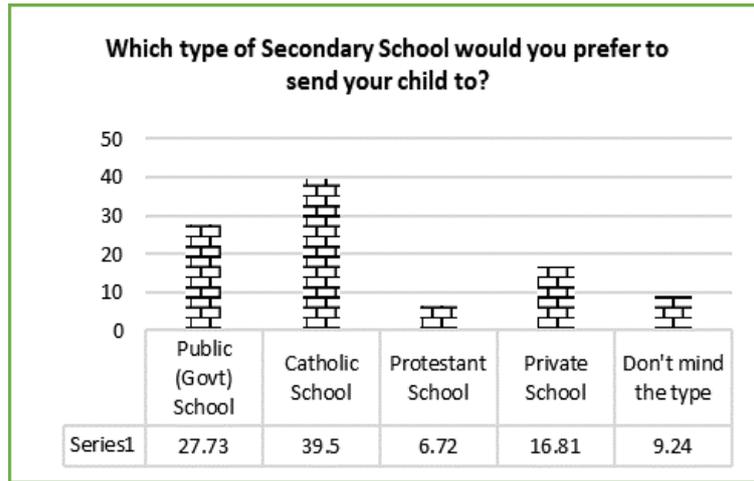


Figure 1. Preferred Secondary Schools

39.50% preferred to send their children to a catholic school, 27.73% opted for a public school, 16.81% favoured private school, 9.24% did not mind the type of a secondary school and 6.72 favoured a protestant school.

This was found to be important when exercising school choice by parents. The theme which emerged prominently here was the **issue of discipline**. All parents that were interviewed expressed willingness to send their children to secondary schools that were renowned for discipline. A head teacher from a grant aided school and one parent both said that discipline was cardinal for learning hence parents looked for this.

The ESO GI praised mission schools and some private schools of being attractive because of their discipline. He said that; “Mission and some private schools do well especially due to discipline. Supervision and monitoring is serious as opposed to government schools.”

### 3.3. Parents’ Socio-economic Status as a Determinant of School Choice was Significant

Showing Single Regression for AVEPSE (Parents’ socio-economic status as determinant).

Single regression output for parents’ socio-economic status as a determinant of school choice in quantitative

data was significant the p-value being 0.0232 (being less than the  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$  which was the standard to measure the level of significance. This indicates that socio-economic status was a key determinant of school choice.

Similarly the qualitative data there during interviews who revealed how critical this variable was in school choice. And among the themes that emerged under this was parents’ level of education and their economic status (in terms of their income).

When the ESO GI was asked as to what extent did parent’s socio-economic status affect the way they chose secondary schools for their children, this is what he had to say: “Level of education of parents is critical in school choice but those who are not educated may not understand some of these things. Educated ones even get annoyed if they are not consulted in this regard.”

This statement was supported by a parent who had a child at a private school who said that:

What I can say on the socio-economic status of parents vis-à-vis school choice is that, the middle class and literate parents appreciate the importance of school and hence make informed decisions. They also appreciate open days at schools. For us such interactions are very encouraging. The wealthy parents also tend to send their kids to well up schools because of affordability (Parent 6, Interview, 2017).

Table 1. Parents’ socio-economic status as determinant

Regression Analysis						
	$r^2$	0.043	n	120		
	r	0.207	k	1		
	Std. Error	0.723	Dep. Var.	AVEDSC		
ANOVA table						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value	
Regression	2.7671	1	2.7671	5.29	.0232	
Residual	61.7098	118	0.5230			
Total	64.4769	119				
Regression output				Confidence interval		
variables	coefficients	std. error	t (df=118)	p-value	95% lower	95% upper
Intercept	2.6828	0.3199	8.387	1.24E-13	2.0493	3.3163
AVEPSE	0.2934	0.1276	2.300	.0232	0.0408	0.5460

p- Value  $\leq 0.05$ .

From the above we can deduce that the **level of education and wealthy** of parents is critical to have informed decision in exercising school choice under socio economic status

### 3.4. Location as a Determinant of School Choice

The regression analysis on this variable suggested that location was not a significant factor in determining school choice as the P-value was a p-value of 0.3435. The chart below also shows questionnaire responses.

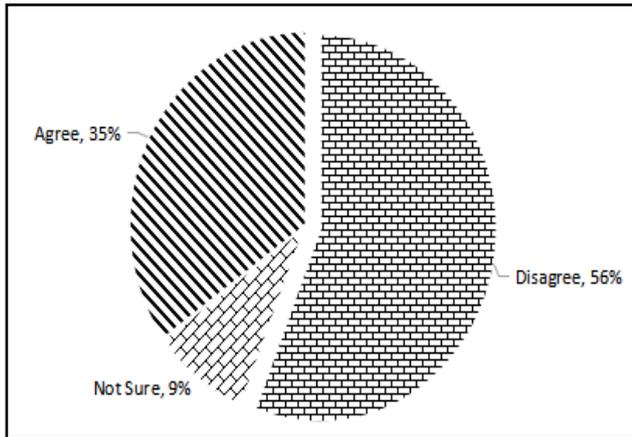


Figure 2. Location as a Determinant of School Choice

According to the results in figure above, 56% of respondents indicated that location was not a significant determinant of school choice only 35% agreed and 9% were not sure.

The qualitative data on Parent's and school administrators when asked about School Choice. Parents linked to choosing of secondary schools based mainly on

academic performance and discipline enforced at that particular school. Head teachers apparently from well performing schools indicated that they received pupils as far as Kafue or Chisamba which were not even in Lusaka because of the quality of education they offered. One head teacher at a private school intimated that:

I don't think that location of parent's has a big impact on school choice. For example at our school, we have pupils coming from as far as Kafue and Chisamba because of the quality of education we offer (Head Teacher 1, Interview, 2017).

Another head teacher at a grant-aided school said that:

I don't see location to be a big factor in parent's school choice for their children. Our school is ever on demand and where we are located is not the best. We are near to a big township.

Parents also indicated that proximity of their residence and school was immaterial in their choosing of a secondary school. Six (6) out of eight (8) parents who were interviewed on this variable attested to the fact that parents' location was not a big factor in secondary school choice. One parent said that:

My child is attending the school where he is because that is where he was allocated after the Grade 7 results were announced. I did not choose the school because it is near my home but the results he got determined the school he was selected to. Actually I wanted to send him to a mission school which is not even near to where I'm staying (Parent 8, Interview, 2017).

### 3.5. Multiple Regression Analysis of the Factors of School Choice

On the quantitative side multiple regression analysis was to establish the extent factors that significantly affected school choice in Zambia.

Table 2. Showing Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis						
ANOVA table						
Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value	
Regression	19.6134	4	4.9033	12.57	1.62E-08	
Residual	44.8635	115	0.3901			
Total	64.4769	119				
Regression output				Confidence interval		
variables	coefficients	std.error	t(df=115)	p-value	95%lower	95%upper
Intercept	1.0765	0.4497	2.394	.0183	0.1857	1.9672
AVESAP	0.3935	0.1050	3.747	.0003	0.1855	0.6016
AVEPSE	0.1068	0.1155	0.924	.3574	-0.1221	0.3357
AVELP	0.0629	0.0662	0.951	.0232	-0.0681	0.1940
AVEMV	0.2501	0.0837	2.990	.0034	0.0844	0.4158
R <sup>2</sup>	0.304	R	0.552			

p- value  $\leq$  0.05 was used as a standard measure.

#### Key to the abbreviations in the Regression Analysis

AVEDSC= Average for Determinants of School Choice

AVESAP= Average for School Academic Performance as a determinant of School Choice.

AVEPSE= Average for Parents' Socio-economic status as a determinant of School Choice.

AVELP= Average for Location of Parents as a determinant of School Choice.

AVEMV= Average for Moral and Religious values as a determinant of School Choice.

According to the multiple regression output above, School academic performance had a p-value of 0.0003, followed by moral and religious values with 0.0034 while Parents' social economic status was in the third place with a p-value of 0.0232. To that effect the inference here is that, these three variables were significant in school choice and location of parents had a p-value of 0.3435 that showed that this variable was not significant when it comes to parents practicing school choice.

## 4. Discussion

The paper investigated four factors as determinants of schools choice in urban Zambia i.e academic performance of schools; schools' moral and religious values; social and economic status of parents and location of parents in the context of proximity to school. The paper has established that school academic performance was a big determining factor on how parents in Lusaka district chose secondary schools for their children. It can be deduced that parents prefer to send their children for secondary school education to schools that were renowned for good examination results. This finding confirms [34] who asserted that in the public school arena, parents indicated that they chose schools for academic reasons (quality).

The findings established that the moral values and religious grounds were the second most significant determinants of school choice. Results showed that parents valued religious and moral values such as discipline upheld by a school they were sending their child to. Parents prioritised disciplinary measures upheld by the schools when choosing school especially for their girl children. Quoting [25, 8] argues that proponents of school choice argued that, in a liberal democratic society, parents had the right to raise their children in a manner consistent with their lifestyle and their religious, philosophical, and political values and beliefs. Education was a natural extension of child rearing preferences; therefore, parents were supposed to choose schools consistent with these preferences. Findings of this study confirmed [8] assertions. This could explain why most parents seemed to prefer mission schools to government schools.

The study established that parents' social economic status was also a significant factor in determining school choice. This is also supported by [8] who researched on school choice in Western industrialized countries and indicated that parents who actively chose schools were better educated, had higher levels of income, and were less likely to be unemployed than non-choosing parents was not necessarily the case in Lusaka at secondary level. As all parents interviewed from different socio-economic backgrounds confessed that they were all free to choose secondary schools for their children (even to choose the most academically performing ones which were relatively cheap).

According to the findings of the study, it has been established that parents' socio-economic status was also a determining factor in how parents in Lusaka district chose secondary schools for their children. The results showed that a good number of respondents (about 45%) agreed that parents' socio-economic status was also a determining factor in school choice. However despite the

socio-economic status being a factor in school choice, it was not found significant when regression was run on all the four variables of this research.

The literature as postulated by [8] that research on school choice in Western industrialized countries indicated that parents who actively chose schools were better educated, had higher levels of income, and were less likely to be unemployed than non-choosing parents was not necessarily the case in Lusaka at secondary level.

The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that parents' location or residence in terms of proximity to the school did not matter. This variable was found to be insignificant in school choice. However this contradicted the study conducted in Pakistan by [35] where he found out that the distance to school was found to be an important factor in parents' school choice behaviour.

All these findings have implications and supported by the Rational Choice Theory and Free Market theory in that individuals parents have preferences and choose according to different considerations. They inform most school choice plans in the Zambian context. Parents were also to some extent seen as utility maximizers who made decisions from clear value preferences based on calculations of the costs, benefits, and probabilities of success of various options as can be seen from their choices especially based on three issues: academic performance, religious and moral values and then socio-demographic characteristics. Parents can also make the schools accountable in that they were able to demand effective action from local schools and teachers. Using these theoretical undertone, these determinants of school choice could be relied upon to pursue the best interests of their children.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

It can be concluded that school academic performance is the biggest determining factor in parents' school choice in urban Zambia followed by moral and religious values and in the third place was Parents' socio-economic status. Location of parents was however, established to be insignificant as a determinant of school choice. Based on these finding, the following recommendations are made.

1. Schools should come up with various initiatives to improve academic performance in school so as to ensure they are preferred by parents.
2. Schools should ensure they are well grounded in the areas of moral and religious values as this was a key factor in determining school choice.
3. Government and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) should sponsor well performing pupils but vulnerable who would want to go to school of their choice because social economic status was a limiting factor to parents to send children to school with a record of sound academic performance.

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