Qatar Education Study 2018

Executive Summary
June 2019

Satisfaction Report

Social & Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI)
Qatar University
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1. PREFACE

This report – the first of five reports published by the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI) – summarizes the main results derived from the Qatar Education Study (QES) 2018. As was the case in the previous editions of the Qatar Education Study, which were implemented in 2012 and 2015, the 2018 round of QES is a set of four different surveys carried out by SESRI in October–November 2018. These consist of student, parent, teacher, and school administrator surveys.

The aim of the QES 2018 was to examine the views of participants toward various aspects of pre-college education in Qatar. More specifically, the focus of the QES 2018 is on preparatory (8th and 9th grade) and secondary (11th and 12th grade) education levels. Combined, the surveys included 3,380 participants representing 34 preparatory and secondary schools. Table 1-1 illustrates the number of schools and participants involved in the QES.

Four types of school make up Qatar's school system: Government (public) schools, International private schools, Arabic private schools and Community schools, which follow the curricula of particular countries. In addition to the first two types, Arabic private and Community schools are subsumed under the 'Other' category in this study.

The information included in this report is based on the main results arrived at from the 2018 Qatar Education Study (QES). As a whole, the five QES reports provide valuable information on areas that are of crucial importance to the school system in Qatar, including students' motivation and future aspirations, school facilities, the school curriculum, student and parental satisfaction, and private tutoring.

The main goal of these five reports is to inform education policy and practice whilst also contributing to achieving the overall goals outlined in the Qatar National Vision 2030 (QNV 2030). Based on the results provided in these reports, relevant implications for policy and practice will be offered as they relate to the specific areas covered in each report.

Table 1-1: Numbers of Schools and Participants in the Qatar Education Study 2018

Total Number of surveyed Schools	34 Schools		
	Government Schools 61.76% (n=21) schools	**International Schools** 20.59% (n=7) schools	**Other Schools** 17.65% (n=6) schools
Total number of surveyed students	1639 Students		
	Government Schools 52.96% (n=868) students	**International Schools** 29.47% (n=483) students	**Other Schools** 17.57% (n=288) students
Total number of surveyed parents	1142 Parents		
	Government Schools 46.58% (n=532) parents	**International Schools** 34.15% (n=390) parents	**Other Schools** 17.57% (n=220) parents
Total number of surveyed teachers	424 Teachers		
	Government Schools 62.97% (n=267) teachers	**International Schools** 26.41% (n=112) teachers	**Other Schools** 10.62% (n=45) teachers
Total number of surveyed school administrators	175 Administrators		
	Government Schools 69.71% (n=122) administrators	**International Schools** 13.14% (n=23) administrators	**Other Schools** 17.15% (n=30) administrators

The QES 2018 explores the views expressed by students, parents, teachers and school administrators and their attitudes toward the existing preparatory and secondary school system in Qatar. Available literature that examines K-12 education generally in Qatar remains limited and the overall school system in the country is largely under-researched.

The schools covered in this study represent a cross-section of the major school types (i.e., Government and private [International and Community] schools) as well as coeducational and single-gender programs. Taking this into account, the design of the QES 2018 allows for analyzing the data with a view to drawing comparisons within and between groups of students, parents, teachers, and school officials. This allows for studying relevant issues from the combined perspective of students, parents, teachers and administrators.

By examining respondents' beliefs about various aspects of the school system in Qatar, this study seeks to provide a realistic and up-to-date portrait of preparatory (8th and 9th grade) and secondary (11th and 12th grade) education in Qatar based on the results derived from the survey. The study's results will aid in painting a picture of the state of affairs at the different schools in Qatar and as such will depict what works and doesn't work in the school system. Ultimately, the study will be useful in tapping areas of schooling that need improvement and ways of fostering student success as they look forward to the future.

The results reported here shed light on four areas directly related to policy and decision-making:

- Satisfaction with schools in Qatar,
- The most and least satisfying aspects of the schools,
- The drivers of satisfaction with the schools, and
- The impact of satisfaction with the schools on students and their parents.

We welcome your questions and comments, which may be directed to sesri@qu.edu.qa.

2. INTRODUCTION

School satisfaction is a key indicator of children's quality of life. It is important that children feel good about themselves and the educational institution in which they study. Schools in particular should provide an educational environment that children value and enjoy.

The Sloan Consortium defines student satisfaction as "students [are] successful in the learning and (are) pleased with their experience" (Naaj, Nachouki, & Ankit, 2012, p.188). Similarly, Sweeney and Ingram (2001) define satisfaction as "the perception of enjoyment and accomplishment in the learning environment." In these two definitions, the focus is on success in learning, and pleasure and enjoyment with the experience (Naaj, Nachouki, & Ankit, 2012, p.188).

The level of school satisfaction is important because it affects students' psychological well-being, absenteeism, drop-out and behavioral problems, and as well as the school involvement, (Ainley et al., 1991; Reyes & Jason, 1993). School satisfaction also influences the student's level of motivation (Chute, Thompson & Hancock, 1999; Donahue & Wong, 1997), which is an important psychological factor in student success (Naaj, Nachouki, & Ankit, 2012). Hence, it is essential to understand how children rate their school and to identify the factors related to the level of school satisfaction (Verkuyten and Thijs, 2002).

Parents are the decision makers when it comes to their child's education. The relationship between parental satisfaction with their children's school and school choice seems obvious. For research has shown that satisfaction and school choice are intimately linked in such a way that we expect low satisfaction with school to be indicative of the desire to change school (Bond et al., 2003; Friedman et al., 2007; Goldhaber, 2000). Schools should understand parents' needs when making key academic decisions.

Indeed, school satisfaction is multidimensional and includes both academic, including the curriculum, and non-academic factors, such as school safety (Hausman & Goldring, 2000). Past research has shown that school communication, parent involvement, academic achievement, the curriculum, school environment, school safety, staff quality and transportation are all related to parents' overall satisfaction (Bond & King, 2003; Bosetti, 2004; DeVoe et al., 2004; Erickson, 1996; Goldring & Shapira, 1993; Griffith, 1997; Ham et al., 2003; Hastings, Kane, & Staiger, 2005; Renzulli & Evans, 2005; Schneider & Buckley, 2002; Maddaus, 1990; McGrew & Gilman, 1991; Tuck, 1995). Also, different institutional and socio-cultural variables are viewed as important factors shaping

parental satisfaction with school, including health and safety, care, gender-sensitivity, the provision of resources and facilities (Yaacob, Osman & Bachok, 2014) as well as commuting to school (Wilson, Marshall, Wilson, & Krizek, 2010).

Qatar's leaders recognize that education is the key to the economic, social and political progress (RAND, 2007) of the country and have chosen to invest the country's wealth in education. As a result, significant efforts have been made to improve Qatar's educational system. As such, assessing student and parental satisfaction with schools and understanding the drivers of satisfaction are key to policymakers and to the country. However, despite the importance of satisfaction to students and their families and the education system as a whole, little is known about it in Qatar. In order to bridge this knowledge gap, Qatari and expatriate students and their parents were asked a series of questions related to their satisfaction with their current schools. This report shows important results concluded from student and parental answers to those questions.

Four school types are available to all the students in Qatar: Government public schools, International schools, Arabic Private Schools and Community schools. These schools are not only different in terms of the curriculum they offer, but also in many other aspects such as their location, types of facilities, presence of gender-segregated classrooms, tuition fees or prestige of the school. All these aspects contribute to the whole school environment, which, in turn, contributes to the students' and their parents' school experience and satisfaction. Again, for purposes of this study and related to the relative number of these schools, the Arabic Private Schools and Community schools are being combined into the other schools category.

3. STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE SCHOOLS

To what extent are students' satisfied with the schools?

To understand their level of satisfaction with the schools in Qatar, students' were asked to indicate the extent to which they are satisfied with their school. In general, the results indicate that Qatari students seem to be less satisfied with the schools than their non-Qatari counterparts are. Specifically, 69% of the Qatari students are satisfied with their schools, whereas 78% of the non-Qatari students are satisfied with theirs.

Examining male and female students' responses, the data does not point to any major gender gaps. Indeed, the results by gender show that Qatari females are slightly less satisfied than Qatari males are: 67% of the females and 71% of the males are satisfied with their schools. As for non-Qataris, the results point to an opposite pattern, with 80% of non-Qatari females and 77% of non-Qatari males being satisfied with their schools.

Breaking the results down by school type, the data reveal that Government school students seem to be less satisfied with their schools than students at International schools are. In general, the data show that 83% of students in International schools are satisfied with their schools, followed by 76% of students in other schools (Arabic Private and Community schools). An additional 71% of students in Government schools are satisfied with their schools (Figure 3-1). As such, students in Government schools are the least satisfied with their schools.

Figure 3-1: Students' satisfaction with the school, by school type

Government schools: Satisfied 71%, Dissatisfied 29%
International schools: Satisfied 83%, Dissatisfied 17%
Other schools: Satisfied 76%, Dissatisfied 24%

■ Satisfied   ■ Dissatisfied
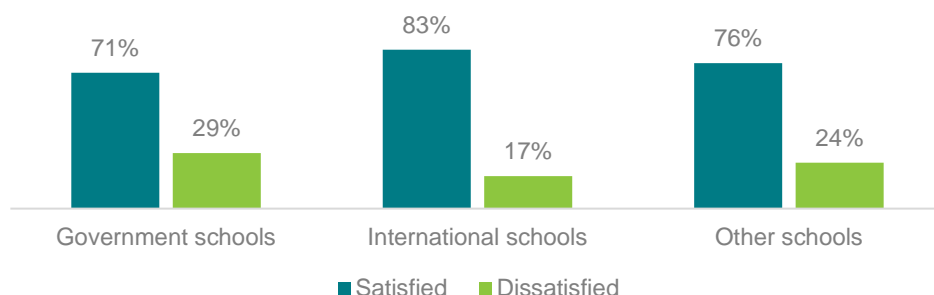
To gain better insights into respondents' level of satisfaction with schools in Qatar, students were asked about the likelihood they would change school if given the opportunity and were instructed to indicate to which schools they would go. Looking at students' nationality shows that the variance between Qatari and non-Qatari students is marginal. For, 52% of the Qatari students and up to 48% of non-Qataris are likely to change school. As for gender, female students expressed a slightly higher desire to change school than their male counterparts did. That is, 54% of females and 46% of males said they were likely to change school.

Examining the school type, the results reveal that students in International schools are less likely to change schools (Figure 3-2), which is consistent with their satisfaction level as they are the most satisfied with their schools, as is indicated above. Only 47% of students in International schools said they are likely to change school. However, although students in Government schools are the least satisfied with their schools, they are not likely to change the school: 51% of them indicated they were unlikely to change schools. The highest percentage of students who are likely to change school is observed among students in other schools, 62% of whom are likely to change school.

Figure 3-2: Students' likelihood to change school, by school type, nationality and gender
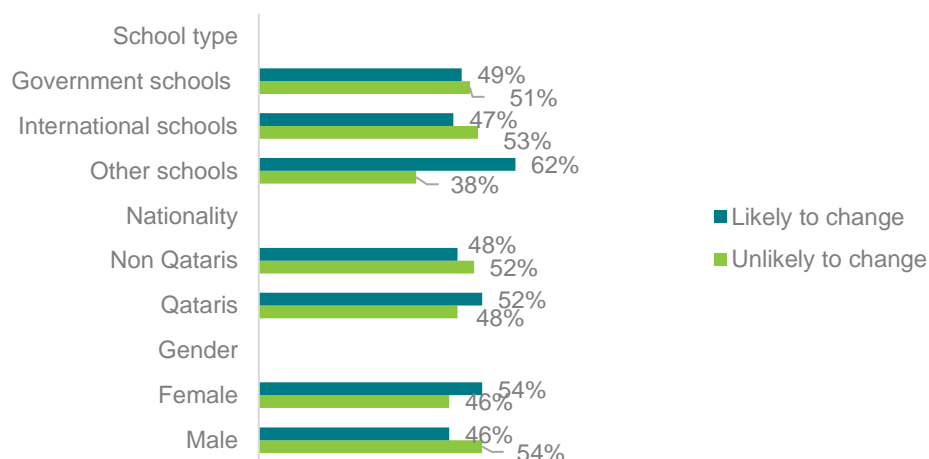
Students were then asked which schools they would go to if they are likely to change school. 61% of Qatari students indicated they would choose Government schools, followed by 21% who opted for Arabic private

schools. Only 17% said they would go to International schools. As for non-Qatari students, 47% indicated they would go to International schools and 35% said they would choose Government schools. 12% stated they would transfer to Arabic private schools and a mere 6% of non-Qatari students said they would go to Community schools.

Examining male and female students' responses, the data does not reveal any substantial gender variance. Indeed, the results indicate that, in general, both genders seem to opt for Government schools (around 44%), followed by International schools (approximately 36%) and Arabic and Community schools (15% and 10%, respectively).

Looking at the school type gives us a very interesting perspective. Indeed, the results show that students would still follow the same curriculum even if they were to change school. Therefore, 71% of the students in International schools said they would go to another International school. Only 12% of the students in International schools said they would go to Government schools. Similarly, 60% of the students in Government schools said they would opt for other Government schools while only 22% of them would transfer to International schools. Students in other schools, on the other hand, are likely to change their curriculum and would choose a Government school (47%) or an International school (25%).

What are the drivers of satisfaction for the students?

To understand the reasons that would drive them to consider changing their current school, students were asked to provide the most important reasons for which they would consider changing school.

When students' nationality and gender are taken into account, the results consistently reveal very similar patterns. Overall, for both Qatari and non-Qatari students, males and females, the two most important reasons for which they would consider changing the school are,: seeking a better curriculum in another school (respectively for 29% of Qataris and 43% of non-Qataris) and regarding the school environment of their current school as not good (for 33% of Qataris and 33% of non-Qataris). As for gender, seeking a better curriculum is the most important reason cited by 60% of females and 40% of males respondents. Perceiving the school environment at their current school as being 'not good' is the second most important reason for changing the school for 31% of females and for 35% of males.

Looking at the school type, the results reveal that for students in International schools, the two most important reasons for a likely change of school are: seeking a better curriculum in another school (56%) and 'the school environment is not good' (31%) (Figure 3-3). The two most important reasons for students in Government schools are the same as for students in International schools, but in opposite reversed order ('the school environment is not good' was chosen by 34% while 'seeking a better curriculum in another school' was selected by 30% of the students).

The school environment is an important contributing factor to school satisfaction. Because students in Government schools mostly wanted to change school due the environment, this may help explain the low satisfaction expressed with respect to the Government schools.

Figure 3-3: Schools to change to, by reason to change school, by school type
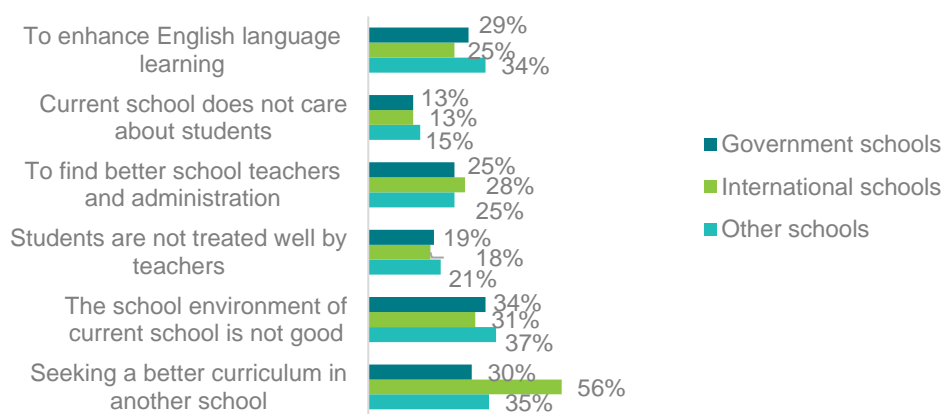
To gain more insight into students' drivers of satisfaction with school, respondents were given several statements related to their current school and were asked to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with each.

Overall, as shown in Figure 3-4, Qatari students rated these items consistently lower than non-Qatari students did. The biggest gap is observed in relation to the statement "I enjoy going to school," where 60% of Qatari students and 79% of non-Qatari students agreed.

With respect to gender, males seem to agree with almost all the statements more than females did, with the exception of the item related to enjoyment when going to school. In this case, female students concurred at a slightly higher level than males did, with 74% of females and 71% of males agreeing with the statement.

Figure 3-4: Students' drivers of satisfaction with the schools, by nationality
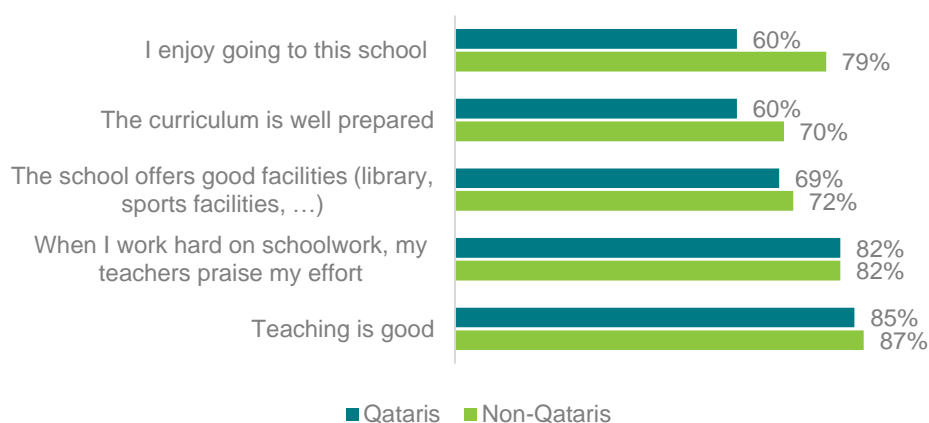
Concerning school type, as (Figure 3-5) below demonstrates, 88% of students in International schools agree that they enjoy going to school. On the other hand, students in Government schools stated they enjoyed going to school the least (65%). In addition, students in International schools agree that the curriculum is well prepared (76% of the students) more than their counterparts at those in Government schools (65%) did. By contrast, students in "other" schools enjoy going to school less than students in International schools did, but more than those in Government schools (70%) did. In addition, "other school" students agree that the curriculum is well prepared less than students in International schools did, but slightly more than students in Government schools (65%) did.

The data show that most items related to satisfaction are rated by International school students more than students at the other types of schools, and to a slightly higher extent than their counterparts in Government schools did. While the difference is small, it is consistent with the findings related to overall school satisfaction, where students in

Government schools tend to be less satisfied with their schools compared to those in International schools.

Figure 3-5: Students' drivers of satisfaction with the schools, by school type
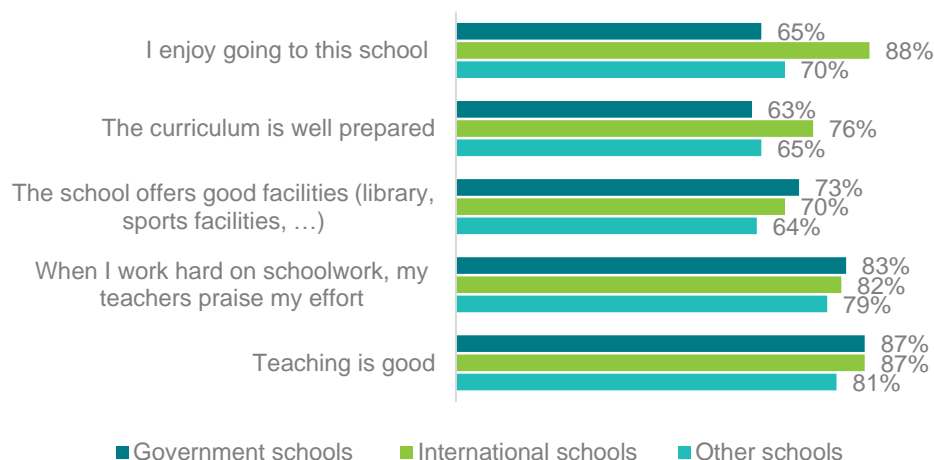
What is the impact of satisfaction on students' motivation?

Using different questions related to boredom, absenteeism and the efforts they put into studying, students were also asked about their motivation at school. First, we asked them to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement: "I do not put in my maximum effort in studying".

The results reveal that 12% of Qatari students strongly agreed with the statement, compared to 10% of non-Qatari students. Almost two times more males than females agreed with the statement, that is, 15% of males and 6% of females. As for the school type, the data show that 12% and 10% of the students in Government schools and other schools respectively agree with the statement, compared to only 8% of International school students.

We also asked students about boredom at school. The data shows that 34% of Qatari students always feel bored at school as opposed to only 19% of non-Qatari students. Looking at gender does not reveal any major gaps between male and female students' perceptions. Of males, 26% indicated feeling "always bored at school" compared to 22% of females. Students' responses by school type draw a sharper contrast, as shown in

Figure 6, for 30% of Government school students and 25% of students in other schools feel "always bored at school" while only 12% of the students in International schools feel this way.

Figure 3-6: Students' boredom at school, by school type

	Government schools	International schools	Other schools
Never	3%	6%	5%
Rarely	18%	21%	15%
Sometimes	49%	61%	55%
Always	30%	12%	25%

■Government schools   ■International schools   ■Other schools
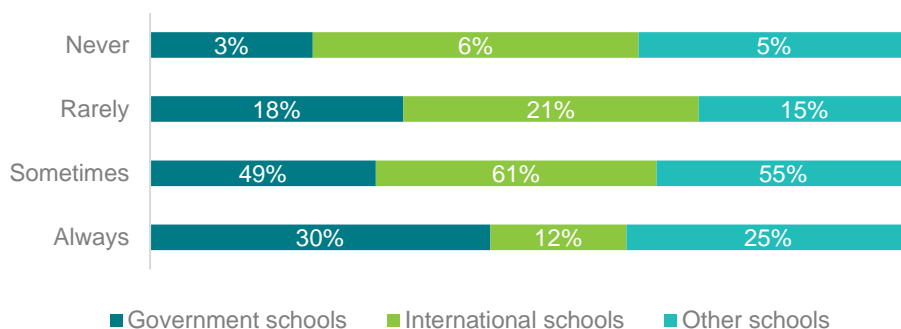
When asked how many days they miss school in a typical week (absent from school), 73% of non-Qatari students stated they never miss school, compared to only 49% of Qatari students. Similarly, 40% of Qatari students indicated missing school once a week, compared to only 22% of non-Qatari students.

The breakdown by gender does not reveal any specific variance between male and female students. Of males, 68% answered they "never miss school" and 64% of females reported the same thing. However, 24% of male students and 30% of female students said they miss school once a week, which shows a slightly larger gap.

Students in Government schools tend to miss school more than their counterparts in International schools do. 72% of International school students reported they never miss school, compared to 62% in Government schools and 65% in other schools. 29% of the students in Government schools and 27% of students in 'other' schools stated they miss school once a week in comparison to 24% of students in International schools.

Taken all together, the results demonstrate the following student satisfaction patterns:

- Student satisfaction seems to be lower with regard to Government schools compared to "other" and International schools;
- The most cited reason for considering changing school for students in Government school is the claim that the school environment is not good, whereas the reason cited the most for students in International and 'other' schools is seeking a better curriculum in another school; and
- Absenteeism and boredom are higher in Government schools when compared to International and 'other' schools.

4. PARENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE SCHOOLS

To what extent are parents satisfied with the schools?

To gain an alternative perspective on satisfaction with schools, parents were also given several statements related to their child's current school and were asked to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with each. We asked parents about satisfaction with the school curriculum, the level of communication, the child's teachers, the school climate and the school facilities. (Figure 4-1) summarizes the main results.

First, looking at the data points to a rating by non-Qatari parents slightly higher than by their Qatari counterparts. In the main, non-Qatari parents agree that their child enjoys going to school more than Qatari parents do. Specifically, 90% of non-Qatari parents agree, compared to 79% of Qatari parents. Similarly, 83% of non-Qatari parents agree that the curriculum is well prepared, compared to 74% of Qatari parents.

Figure 4-1: Aspects of parents' satisfaction with the schools, by nationality

Qataris   Non-Qataris
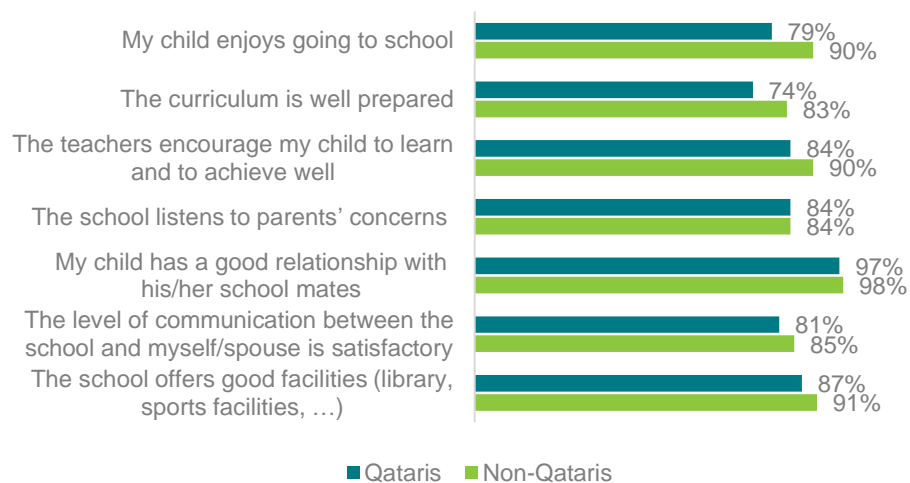
Looking at these results by gender shows that male parents tend to agree more with these statements and thus seem more satisfied than their female counterparts do. In particular, 90% of male parents agree that their child enjoys going to school, compared to 81% of female parents. In addition, 83% of the male parents agree that the curriculum is well prepared as opposed to 76% of the female parents.

As for the school type, parents of International school students agree that their child enjoys going to school more than parents of students in Government and other school (Figure 4-2). Indeed, 95% of the parents of International school students agree with the statement, compared to 82% of parents of Government school students and 85% of parents of students in other schools. The pattern is consistent with the students' preferences above where those in International schools are more likely to enjoy going to school than those in Government schools.

Second, more parents of International school students (86%) than parents of Government school (77%) or other school (76%) students agree that the curriculum used in their child's school is well prepared.

As for the child's teachers, we asked parents to indicate to what extent they agree with the statement that the teachers encourage their child to learn and to achieve. Again, parents of International school students tend to agree (90%) with the statement more than do parents of Government (88%) and other (85%) school students do. However, the contrast is not as high.

With regard to their communication with school, parents of students in International schools seem more satisfied (88%) than those in Government schools (82%) are.

Interestingly, the school facilities (the library, sports facilities, etc.) in Government schools appear to be rated as satisfying more than in International schools. In Government schools, 92% of parents concurred that the facilities in their child's school could be described as good compared to 86% in International schools.

Figure 4-2: Aspects of parents' satisfaction with the schools, by school type
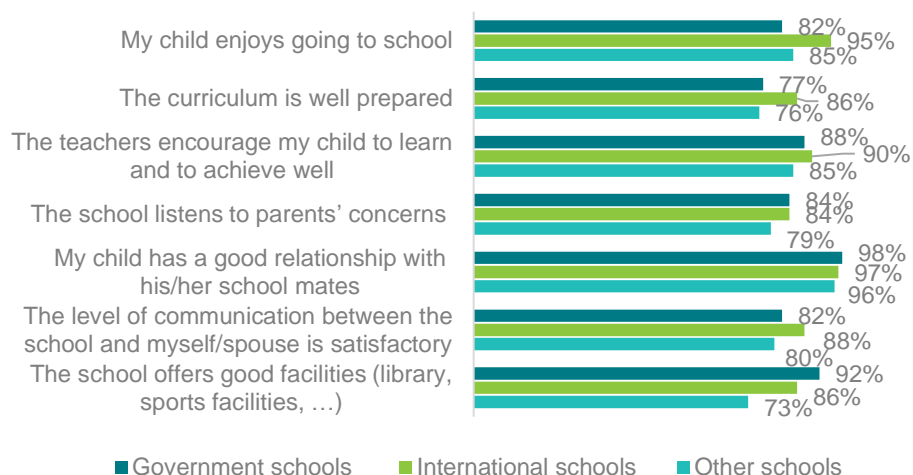
What are the drivers of satisfaction for the parents?

In order to understand what is perceived to be important when it comes to their children's school, parents were asked about the main reason why they selected the current school.

With respect to nationality, (Figure 4-3) shows that the most important criteria for Qatari parents is the proximity to their home as this was indicated by 54% of them. The most important criteria selected by non-Qatari parents is the quality of education offered by the school, as 52% of them chose this statement.

Figure 4-3: Main reason parent selected school, by nationality

The prestige of the school — Qataris 28%, Non-Qataris 26%
The school offers good instruction in valued subjects such as… — Qataris 18%, Non-Qataris 19%
The school prepares for the job market — Qataris 12%, Non-Qataris 10%
Gender-segregated classrooms — Qataris 17%, Non-Qataris 23%
The curriculum is well prepared — Qataris 15%, Non-Qataris 31%
The school preserves my values — Qataris 31%, Non-Qataris 30%
The quality of education offered by the school — Qataris 39%, Non-Qataris 52%
Proximity to the house — Qataris 54%, Non-Qataris 42%

Interestingly, the results by gender show that the proximity of the school to the house is equally important to female parents (51%) as the quality of education offered by the school was for males (51%). All the other criteria ranked about the same for both genders.

As (Figure 4-4) illustrates, parents who selected Government schools appear to value factors such as (a) proximity of the school to the house (69%), (b) schools offering good instruction in valued subjects such as the Arabic language, Islamic studies and Qatari history (57%) and (c) gender segregated classrooms (55%). A well-prepared curriculum seems to be the most important criterion for parents who chose International schools (51%).

Figure 4-4: Main reason parent selected school, by school type

	Government schools	International schools	Other schools
The prestige of the school	53	36	11
The school offers good instruction in…	57	23	20
The school prepares for the job market	47	41	12
Gender-segregated classrooms	55	23	22
The curriculum is well prepared	33	52	15
The school preserves my values	29	51	20
The quality of education offered by the…	42	46	12
Proximity to the house	69	22	9
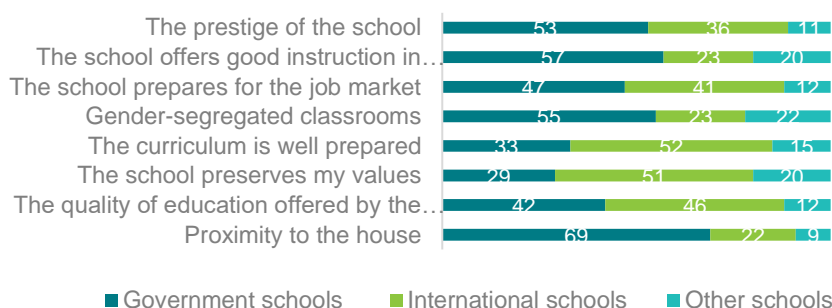
What is the impact of satisfaction with schools on parents?

School satisfaction is linked to school choice and, to understand how school satisfaction impacts school choice, we asked parents about the likelihood of them moving their children from the current school if they had the financial ability.

The breakdown by nationality reveals some discrepancy between Qatari and non-Qatari parents with only 35% of Qataris likely to change school, compared to 44% of non-Qataris. With respect to gender, around 40% of male parents and 43% of female parents indicated changing schools as likely under this imagined scenario.

Interestingly, while 43% of parents of students in International schools expressed their desire to change schools, only 37% of parents of students in Government schools expressed a similar desire. However, the highest percentage is to be observed for parents of students in other schools as 51% reported that they were willing to change schools. The pattern is similar for the students in Government schools who are less likely to change schools than students in International schools, regardless of their level of satisfaction.

In addition, parents were asked to provide the most important reasons that would make them consider changing their children's school. Seeking a better curriculum in another school seems to be the most important reason for a possible change in school choice for parents of students in Government, International and other schools. The results were as follows: 42% of the parents of students in other schools, 47% of the parents of students in Government schools and 65% of the parents of students in International schools (Figure 4-5). Therefore, while the main reason for considering changing schools for the students is non-academic, namely, the school environment, the most important reason for changing the school for parents is academic.

Figure 4-5: Parents' most important reasons for changing schools, by school type
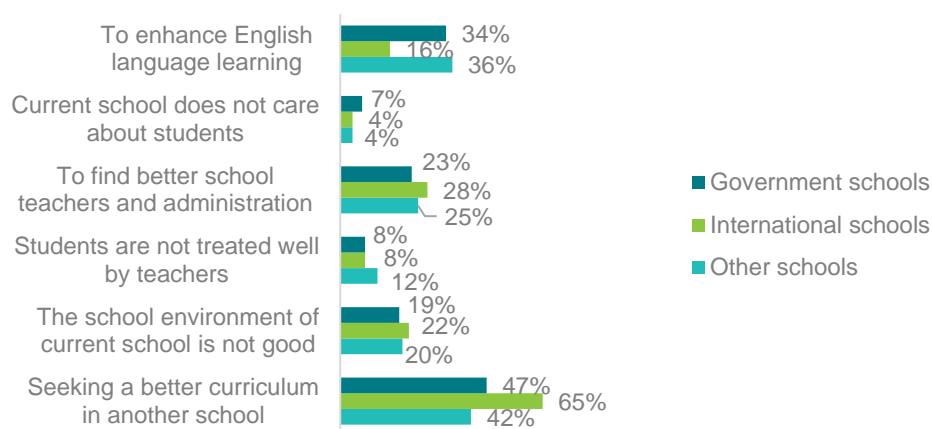
The fact that the most important reason for changing schools for Qatari and non-Qatari parents in all school types is to seek a better curriculum in another school does not mean that they share similar expectations with regard to the curriculum. A strong preference for excellence in instruction in subjects such as Arabic, English, Islamic studies or Qatari history will not be equally shared by parents from different nationalities.

To gain more information about the most important motivations behind parents' desire to change schools, we break the results down by nationality (Figure 4-6). The results reveal that the most important reason for Qatari parents is seeking a better curriculum in another school (42%). The second and third most important reasons are: (1) finding better schoolteachers and administration (34%) and (2) enhancing English language learning (30%), respectively. For non-Qatari parents, the most important reason is also seeking a better curriculum in another school (55%).

Figure 4-6: Parents' most important reasons for changing schools, by nationality

■Qataris ■Non-Qataris

Reason	
To enhance English language learning	Qataris 30%, Non-Qataris 29%
Current school does not care about students	Qataris 4%, Non-Qataris 6%
To find better school teachers and administration	Qataris 34%, Non-Qataris 23%
Students are not treated well by teachers	Qataris 15%, Non-Qataris 7%
The school environment of current school is not good	Qataris 23%, Non-Qataris 19%
Seeking a better curriculum in another school	Qataris 42%, Non-Qataris 55%

We also asked parents which school they would move their children to if they had the opportunity.

Both male and female parents share similar views on the schools their children would go to, where about the same percentage of both males and females indicated they would choose International schools first (48% males and 56% females) and Government schools second (27% males and 31% females).

Of Qatari parents, 43% would opt for Government schools and 38% would choose International schools. As for non-Qatari parents, 56% would choose International schools and only 24% would opt for Government schools (Table 4-1).

Table 4-1: Parents' perspectives on schools to go to if able to change, by nationality

If you had the chance to, which school would you change to	To Government schools %	To International schools %	To Arabic private schools %	To Community schools %
Qatari	43	38	19	0
Non-Qatari	25	56	11	8

As shown in (Table 4-2), breaking the results down by school type reveals that the majority of parents of International school students would transfer their children to another International school (69%), while parents of Government school students would choose an International school (44%) or another Government school (35%).

Table 4-2: Parents' perspectives on schools to go to if able to change, by school of origin

If you had the chance to, which school would you change to	To Government schools %	To International schools %	To Arabic private schools %	To Community schools %
From Government School	35	44	16	5
From International school	13	69	10	8
From other school	38	39	17	6

Overall, the results demonstrate the following patterns regarding parental satisfaction with the schools their children attend:

- Parents with children in International schools are generally satisfied with the schools more than parents with children in Government and other schools are;
- Parents with children in Government schools are less likely to change schools than parents with children in International schools are;
- When choosing Government schools for their children, parents value (a) proximity to the house, (b) the school offers good instruction in valued subjects such as Arabic, Islamic studies and Qatari history, and (c) gender segregated classrooms; and
- A well-prepared curriculum is the most important criterion for parents who choose International schools.

5. CONCLUSION

Despite its importance, satisfaction with schools in Qatar is a topic that has not been investigated. This report shows interesting findings related to satisfaction with schools from the perspectives of Qatari and non-Qatari students and their parents. Overall, both students and their parents display a lower level of satisfaction with Government schools as compared to satisfaction with International schools and other schools. The items related to satisfaction such as the curriculum, teachers, communication with school and school facilities are rated more highly by International school students and, to a lesser extent, by students in "other" schools than by their counterparts in Government schools. Consequently, absenteeism and boredom are higher in Government schools when compared to International and other schools.

The discrepancy between students' and their parents' responses is visible when it comes to the reasons for which they would change their school if able. The most important reason given by students in Government schools is that the school environment is not good. For parents with children in Government schools, the reason is to seek a better curriculum.

In general, parents selected Government schools because they value factors such as proximity to their house, good instruction in school subjects such as Arabic, Islamic studies and Qatari history, and because these schools are gender segregated. Parents who selected international schools are those who chose a school because of its well-prepared curriculum. Interestingly, while parents of children in International schools expressed their desire to change school, parents with children in Government schools seem to be less willing to change school. In addition, Qatari parents are less likely to change school when compared to their non-Qatari counterparts.

These findings reflect the reality that many parents face a difficult choice between perceived school quality and a school's teaching and learning environment. There is a tension between parents' desire for an education that will preserve their children's culture and values, on the one hand, and one that offers a quality curriculum that will help the child in the future, on the other. Consequently, many Qatari parents feel forced to choose between their values and the school's curriculum, that is, between their values and the quality of education.

In the span of a few years, and driven by a strong political will and substantial financial resources, Qatar has embraced an ambitious reform agenda to redress a weak public education system. Given that the state

has greatly invested in education, students and their parents' satisfaction with schools is an important tool for assessing the effectiveness of the education system and the reforms that have been implemented over the years. Assessing and understanding families' satisfaction with schools will help policymakers take decisions accordingly to ensure high quality efficient schools and to help achieve the 2030 Qatar National Vision which clearly articulates the need to develop citizens' knowledge, skills and provide a high quality education.

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7. APPENDIX A: SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Results from the Qatar Education Study (QES) come from four surveys administered under the direction of the Survey Operations Division at the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI). The surveys were sent to central stakeholders in K-12 education: students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Feedback from these stakeholders is critical to evaluating whether the reforms implemented in fulfillment of the targets outlined in the Qatar National Development Strategy 2011-2016 (NDS) are succeeding, and if not, which reforms may need reevaluation and additional support from the Supreme Education Council (SEC). This survey design is especially appropriate because it paints a clear picture of the participants' school experience.

Sample design

Sampling is the process of selecting those individuals from a population to estimate characteristics of the whole population. It plays a critical part in any school survey since the ability to make valid inferences to the population, which is the target of the investigation, relies upon a rigorous sample design. In the following, we discuss issues related to the sampling design used in the QES.

Students were the target population for the survey sampling. The sampling frame, which is a list of all those individuals in a population who can be selected, was developed by SESRI based on a comprehensive list of all public and private schools in Qatar which was provided by the Supreme Council of Education. In this frame, all schools are listed with information about school names, address, school gender (boy, girl, or coed), system (Government, international, or other type of schools), and the number of students in grades 8, 9, 11, and 12.

Based on the information about the school size, school system, gender and grade, we divided the sampling frame into several subpopulations (i.e., stratum). This stratification divided members of the population into subgroups that are relatively homogenous before sampling begins. We tried to make every member of the population have the same probability of being selected (i.e., self-weighting) so proportionate sampling was used to make the proportion of students in each stratum similar between the frame and the sample. That means the number of sampled schools needed to be proportionate to the number of respondents across strata in the frame (assuming that the same number of students was selected from each school).

Inside each stratum, students were randomly selected following a two-stage sampling process which is probably the most commonly used sample design in educational research (UNESCO International Institute for Educational Planning 2009). In the first stage, the school was selected with probability proportionate to its size (i.e., PPS). This gives an equal chance of selection for students while allowing for a similar number of students to be chosen from each school for each strata. In the second stage, for ease of the field work, we randomly selected one class for each grade in the school and all students in the class were included in the survey.

In the student study, students in grades 11 and 12 in the secondary schools and students in grades 8 and 9 in the preparatory schools were selected. For the parent study, the parents of the students selected in the student study were sent questionnaires. Lead teachers of the classrooms selected for the study were sent questionnaires as were the administrators for the school.

We account for the complex sampling design in the data analysis to ensure the unbiasedness and efficiency of the statistical estimates. Particularly, a weighting variable was created to take into account the selection probability and the non-response. Weighting is a mathematical correction used to give some respondents in a survey more influence than others in the data analysis. This is sometimes needed so that a sample better reflects the population under study.

Sample size, non-response, and sampling error

The sample size of this survey is 43 schools. However, 4 schools refused our survey requests. For the remaining 39 surveyed schools, all students in the selected classes fully participated in the survey. In the final data, we have 1,803 students, 1,462 parents, 495 teachers, and 234 administrators from these 37 schools.

With the above number of completions, the maximum sampling error for a percentage is +/-2.4 percentage points for the student survey. The calculation of this sampling error takes into account the design effects (i.e., the effects from weighting, stratification, and clustering). One possible interpretation of sampling errors is: if the survey is conducted 100 times using the exact same procedure, the sampling errors would include the "true value" in 95 out of the 100 surveys. Note that the sampling errors can be calculated in this survey since the sample is based on a sampling scheme with known probabilities. This feature of random sampling is an

essential element that distinguishes probability samples from other sampling methods, such as quota sampling or convenience sampling.

Questionnaire development

The questions were designed in English and then translated into Arabic by professional translators. After the translation, the Arabic version was carefully checked by researchers at SESRI who are fluent in both English and Arabic. Next, the questionnaire was tested in a pre-test of four randomly selected schools. This pretest gave valuable information allowing us to refine question wording, response categories, introductions, transitions, interviewer instructions, and interview length. Based on this information, the final version of the questionnaire was created and then programmed for data entry purpose. The questionnaires were sent to stakeholders in November 2015. Parents of the students who received the student questionnaire were also sent the parent questionnaire to be completed at home. Data were collected from teachers and administrators through interviews conducted in their respective schools.

Survey Administration

Each interviewer participated in a training program covering fundamentals of the school survey, interviewing techniques, and standard protocols for administering survey instruments. All interviewers practiced the questionnaire before going to the schools. In general, interviewers were expected to:

- Locate and enlist the cooperation of schools and students.
- Motivate teachers and students to do a robust and thorough job.
- Clarify any confusion/concerns.
- Observe the quality of responses.

Data were collected from students and parents using paper questionnaires (Paper-and-Pencil Interviewing – PAPI). Teachers and administrators from the selected schools were interviewed by SESRI fieldworkers using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

Data Management

After data collection was completed, interviewers manually entered responses from students and parents into Blaise, which is a computer-assisted interviewing system and survey processing tool. The responses were then merged into a single Blaise data file. This dataset was then cleaned, coded and saved in STATA formats for analysis. After weighting

the final responses, the data were analyzed using STATA 14 which is general purpose statistical software packages commonly used in the social sciences. Tables and graphs were generated in Microsoft Excel and Word.