Provision of private education in Pakistan has witnessed significant expansion over the past decade.

Enrolment in private schools has increased from 26% in 2003 to 38% in 2014.

Although the private sector is rapidly expanding, the majority of schools in the country are still run by the government with a higher number of children attending government schools than private schools.

Of all the schools:
- 30% are private schools
- 70% are government schools

227,136 schools in Pakistan
- 68,848 are private schools
- 158,288 are government schools

1,415,113 teachers in Pakistan
- 696,405 are private school teachers
- 718,688 are government school teachers

49% teachers work in private schools
- 51% teachers work in government schools
The prevalence of private schooling in Pakistan varies by area

Percentage of children enrolled in a private school

- Balochistan: 10%
- KP: 31%
- Sindh: 39%
- Punjab: 43%

Punjab and Islamabad have the highest proportion of private schools

- Islamabad: 29%
- Punjab: 53%
- GB: 70%
- AJK: 75%
- Sindh: 82%
- KP: 83%
- Balochistan: 93%
- FATA: 95%

Private schooling is more common in urban areas

- Urban: 55% (children enrolled in private schools)
- Rural: 28% (children enrolled in private schools)

Children growing up in higher income households are more likely to attend a private school

- poorest: 22%
- poor: 32%
- middle: 38%
- upper-middle: 44%
- rich: 54%

Enrolment in private schools is at 22% among the poorest families as compared to the 54% among the richest
Learning outcomes are better among students in private schools

Private schools have better facilities

Parents perceive English medium schools to be better

67% students in private schools can read basic Urdu text, compared to 52% in government schools.

61% students in private schools can carry out basic mathematical calculations, compared to 47% in government schools.

65% students in private schools can read English text, compared to 45% in government schools.

Why is private schooling the preferred option?

Infrastructure and facilities in both type of schools are in a deplorable state

There does not seem to be a large difference between public and private schools when it comes to basic facilities.

However, unlike government schools, playgrounds are not available in most private schools.

Survey results show that 69% of Pakistani parents would prefer to send their children to a private school.
Private schools have a higher number of teachers but they are not necessarily better qualified or experienced than government school teachers.

Private school
- 21-30 years old
- Holds a Bachelor’s degree and a B.Ed
- Has less than 5 years of teaching experience
- Has received little or no in-service training in the last 5 years

Government school
- 41-50 years old
- Holds a Master’s degree and a Primary Teaching Certificate (PTC)
- Has almost 15 years of teaching experience
- Has received some professional training in the last 5 years

The typical teacher

The advertised medium of instruction, usually English, is cited by parents as a reason to opt for private schooling but ...

Private school teachers are not better qualified to teach in English.

In the Aptis test (2013), designed to measure basic knowledge of the English language, 62% private school teachers attained the lowest possible score, compared to 56% government school teachers.