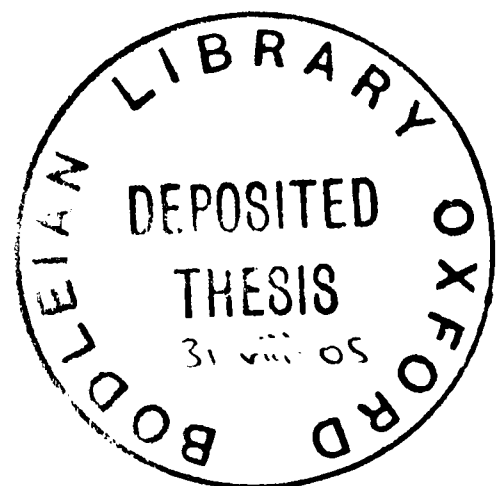


The Business of Schooling:

***The School Choice Processes, Markets, and Institutions
Governing Low-Fee Private Schooling for
Disadvantaged Groups in India***

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Thesis Abstract

This study is a multi-level analysis of the pervasive phenomenon of what is termed here as *low-fee private* (LFP) schooling in India focusing on Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh. The significance of the study is its focus on a private sector uniquely characterised as one targeted to a clientele traditionally excluded from private education.

The study follows a single-case embedded case study research design of the type explained by Yin (1994). Its guiding framework comprises theoretical levels of analysis which are the individual, organisational, and institutional, corresponding to the case sub-units of household, school, and state respectively. The research design is structured through a new institutional paradigm which is also used to analyse results at the institutional level.

Data were collected through interviews, observations, documents, and field notes. Direct household data sources were 60 parents/close family members at two focus schools (one urban and one rural); school sources were owners/principals of 10 case study schools (five urban and five rural); and state sources were 10 government officials. Analysis of the 100 formal interviews, informal interviews, observation events, and field notes followed a qualitative approach through an inductively derived analytic framework. Structured portions of household and school interviews were analysed through descriptive statistics providing data on household and school background characteristics. Documents were analysed using a modified content analysis approach.

Implications of individual-level results lie in highlighting the schooling choices and patterns of a group that is otherwise regarded as homogenous, i.e. children are not sent to school because parents are uninterested in schooling and fail to see its relevance. In fact, results indicate that disadvantaged groups accessing the LFP sector in the study are active choosers who made deeply considered and systematic choices about their children's education. A model to explain their school choice processes is empirically derived. Data suggest that households employed the strategies of *staying*, *fee-bargaining*, *exit*, and *fee-jumping* to engage with LFP case study schools.

Organisational-level results focus on case study school profiles, their organisational structures, and the strategies they employed to operate in the new schooling market. Results also focus on a qualitative understanding of the challenges case study schools faced as LFP schools, both by the institutional context and household demands. Finally, data point to the mechanisms instituted within the schools to deal with household needs and demands and the changing household-school relationship.

The implications of institutional-level analysis lie in exposing inconsistencies in the application of the formal institutional framework (FIF) for schooling to case study and other LFP schools by institutional actors. Differences in the FIF in principle and in practice are linked to *perverse incentives* embedded within it. The results strongly indicate the existence of what is termed here as, the *shadow institutional framework* (SIF), employed by case study schools to mediate the FIF to their institutional advantage.

The SIF comprises *internal institutions* common across the set of case study schools, allowing them to form linkages with other LFP schools and exchange institutional information; and *external institutions* or higher order institutions governing how case study schools interacted with the FIF for basic and/or secondary education and private schooling. The SIF tied together an otherwise independent set of LFP schools as a de-facto sub-sector of the greater private sector.

The study's main contributions are its analysis of an emerging local model of formal private schooling for disadvantaged groups; extending new institutional theory's application to education; and the methodological contribution of mediating the researcher's positionality through *currencies*.

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List of Abbreviations

AIE	Alternative Education Centre
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
BERA	British Educational Research Association
B.T.C.	Basic Teacher’s Certificate
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DIOS	District Inspector of Schools
DISE	District Information System for Education
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
ECCE	Early Child Care Education
EFA	Education For All
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
FIF	Formal institutional framework
GER	Gross enrolment ratio
GoI	Government of India
IAS	Indian Administrative Service
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
ICSE	Indian Central School Education Board
Kg	Kilogram
Km	Kilometre

LFP	Low-fee private
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
NCAER	National Council of Applied Economic Research
NCERT	National Council for Educational Research and Training
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NIE	New institutional economics
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
NPE	National Policy on Education
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
OBC	Other backward caste
PA	Private aided
POA	Programme of Action
PROBE	Public Report on Basic Education
PUA	Private unaided
QIS	Quality Improvement Scheme
Rs.	Indian rupee
SC	Scheduled caste
SCA	School Chalo Abhiyan
SES	Secondary Education Services Selection Board
SIF	Shadow institutional framework
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
ST	Scheduled tribe
TC	Transfer certificate
TLM	Teaching-learning Materials

UEE	Universal elementary education
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPBBE	Uttar Pradesh Board of Basic Education
UPBHSIE	Uttar Pradesh Board of High School and Intermediate Education
UPE	Universal primary education
VEC	Village Education Committee

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CHAPTER 1 *Introducing the Inquiry*

Outline for the Study

1.1 *Genesis of the Inquiry*

The study was sparked by a reaction to reports in various media about an emerging private sector in India (Kazmin, 2000; Tooley, 2001a; 2001b). Reports surprisingly claimed that socially and economically disadvantaged parents were spending money from their already constrained resources to educate their children despite the fact that state schools were essentially free. As Kazmin (2000) reported:

The story of Naini is not unusual in the northern Indian states. Government-run schools are in shambles, crippled by lack of resources and poor management. Although highly paid—at about \$100 per month—teachers are burned out by heavy workloads and long commutes. So many villages are placing their hopes in tiny, new private schools. Although the teachers are often ill-trained and poorly paid—about one-quarter the salary of a public school teacher—they have fewer students and are more responsive. And while many barely speak English, they nonetheless offer a few lessons.

Reports on this emerging model of private schooling coincided with Tooley (2000) questioning the role of the state in education, and stressing that it should be minimal (or non-existent) even regarding school provision for disadvantaged children. However, Kazmin's description of ill-trained and poorly paid teachers who barely spoke English but worked in schools that sold themselves as English-medium, seemed hardly the type of "...Indian entrepreneurial spirit in education that we

should heed here [in the UK]”, as was lauded by Tooley (2001a) when speaking of the same phenomenon in Andhra Pradesh.

These and similar accounts presented, what are termed here as ‘*low-fee private*’ (LFP) schools, with enthusiastic if ill-trained teachers, motivated students, sacrificing parents, and entrepreneurial school managers/owners. I was left with many questions about the nature of LFP schools such as: were they really low-fee or did they just reflect low fees from a Western perspective? Were LFP school owners really acting in a combination of philanthropy and enterprise, or were they out to dupe parents who had little experience of the formal sector? Were these schools functioning outside the formal system, were they recognised, or did they operate on the fringes rendering their services ‘non-formal’? If the latter was true, just what type of schooling did the parents get for their money, i.e. how much would it really help their children improve their socio-economic chances in the future? The breadth of questions spanned a host of concerns, many of which were beyond the scope of a doctoral study to tackle. However, it was apparent that given the relatively new emergence of LFP schools, an inquiry that sought to critically describe and interpret this phenomenon was a necessary first step.

1.2 Aims of the Inquiry

The mushrooming of private schools catering for socially and economically disadvantaged groups in India over the past decade has challenged traditional assumptions of private schooling (De, Noronha, & Samson, 2001; Kingdon, 1996a; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002; PROBE, 1999; Tooley, 2001a; 2001b; 2001c). The potential impact of this growth is particularly important within the framework of attaining the international target of universal elementary education (UEE) by 2015 in the context of constrained public resources in India (De et al., 2001; Mehrotra &

Panchamukhi, 2002). The significance of the rapidly emerging LFP sector is critical, not only because of its unique character as a private sector targeted to a clientele traditionally excluded from private education, but also because it can highlight the schooling choices and patterns of a group that has otherwise been marginalised in educational research. Secondly, it necessitates an examination of the structure of those schools competing with the state sector for clients, and the resulting school market for disadvantaged groups. Finally, a reported increase in private provision for disadvantaged groups has fundamental implications for the way in which education is structured and delivered to them.

With this in mind, the broad aims of the study were to critically describe and interpret the emerging phenomenon of LFP schooling in Uttar Pradesh, India over three theoretical levels of inquiry: (a) individual: to examine school choice processes and household schooling behaviours; (b) organisational: to analyse the organisational structure of LFP schools, their internal operations, and household-school relationships; and (c) institutional: to examine the regulatory framework guiding the operation of LFP schools and how they interact with it. The specific research questions and overall research design will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Finally, despite its reported pervasiveness, the LFP sector has neither been officially defined by the state nor operationally defined by researchers. For the purposes of this study, the LFP sector was defined as occupying a part (often unrecognised) of the highly heterogeneous private-unaided (PUA) sector (see Section 2.4.1), which is financially and administratively independent of the State. LFP schools were defined as those: that saw themselves targeting disadvantaged groups, were entirely self-financing through tuition fees, and charged a monthly tuition fee not exceeding about one day's earnings of a daily wage labourer at the primary and junior levels, and about two days' earnings at the high school and intermediate levels.

1.3 *Structure of the Thesis*

The thesis comprises eight chapters, the first four of which outline the context, key theoretical concepts, and the methodological approach employed in the study. Of the latter four chapters, three present analytical discussions of the results. Each data chapter is devoted to one level of inquiry, concluding with the final chapter as a synthesis of the main points of the thesis and critical reflections on the results. A breakdown by chapter follows.

Chapter 2 is concerned with locating the case of LFP schooling in Uttar Pradesh, within its geographical context, as well as in the main debates that frame it. The chapter will provide a critical analysis of the international and national policy dialogue surrounding education provision for disadvantaged groups in India, and the possible implications for the analysis of LFP schooling. Specifically, it will frame the debates of quality and provision of schooling in the context of international targets of 'Education for All' (EFA) and UEE, and public and private delivery of schooling. It will also provide an overview of the policy context for schooling in India and the structure of the education system in Uttar Pradesh.

The third chapter focuses on the three theoretical concepts that lie at the heart of the study: school choice, marketisation in education, and new institutional analysis. The study is informed by and problematises certain assumptions taken for granted in the literature surrounding quasi-market mechanisms in education and school choice, by extending their applicability to an emerging private sector in a developing country context, and to the schooling decisions made by disadvantaged parents. In addition, the review highlights the usefulness of new institutional economics (NIE) as an appropriate and powerful tool for examining the emergence of a new private model of schooling, and the overall impact it could have on the

greater institutional framework for the provision and delivery of schooling for disadvantaged groups.

Chapter 4 concentrates on the methodological approach and research methods employed in data collection and analysis. In addition to presenting the technical aspects of the methodological process, the discussion aims to act as a reflexive exercise to critically engage with the research process and frame the context from which insights about the data were gained. As such, the discussion presents a new way of assessing the role of the researcher in data collection and analysis through the use of '*currencies*' to mediate researcher positionality in flux, and the dynamics of language and translation through the constant interplay of the analytic languages of the '*language I use to think in*' and the '*language of the data*'.

The fifth chapter discusses individual-level data describing the school choice processes of the households accessing focus LFP schools. The discussion focuses on the empirically-derived school choice model to explain this process through the interaction of *macro-level attitudinal* and *micro-level contextual factors*. The discussion also centres on the presentation of data on the strategies of *stay*, *fee-bargaining*, *exit*, and *fee-jumping*, which households employed to engage with LFP schools. Statistical data on household schooling patterns are also presented, which show that gender selectivity was not apparent in the sample.

The presentation of data at the organisational level of inquiry in Chapter 6 takes on a more descriptive nuance beginning with an overall profile sketch of the 10 case study schools. The analysis focuses on the internal organisational structure of case study schools and their 'inner workings'. Furthermore, the data focused on the changing nature of household-school interactions and the strategies case study schools employed to effectively compete and maintain their client base in the LFP market niche. Fundamentally, the presentation focuses on a qualitative understanding

of how case study schools operated and the challenges they faced as LFP schools, both by the institutional context and household demands.

The study was structured through an institutional lens, and new institutional theory was explicitly used as the framework to analyse results at the institutional level of inquiry. Thus, the essential task of Chapter 7 is to reconcile findings to highlight the institutional frameworks and processes governing the functioning of case study schools as operating within a distinct LFP sector. The analysis outlines the regulatory framework for case study and other LFP schools in Uttar Pradesh. Furthermore, it examines how the formal institutional framework (FIF) was applied to LFP schools by institutional actors in practice. Most critically, it outlines the interaction of what is termed here, the '*shadow institutional framework*' (SIF), a set of common internal and external institutions specific to the LFP sector, and how it was used by case study schools to mediate the formal framework for maximum institutional benefit.

The concluding discussion in Chapter 8 returns to some of the methodological literature, contextual debates, and foundational theoretical concepts which shaped the study, and which are challenged or added to. It highlights the major themes of the results at each level and demonstrates how they have altered the understanding of the three main concepts of school choice, school markets, and the application of institutional theory to education. As the inquiry is in an emerging area of interest, the discussion ends with recommendations for future avenues of study.

Finally, a few points on presentation. All interview data quotes are translated in English from Hindi. They appear as indented numbered quotes in the main body of the chapters. Originals are presented in appendices, allowing readers that can understand both languages to access a more 'authentic' version of respondents' comments, and to provide a check on translations. All data excerpts (from interviews, observations, or field notes) are presented in a different font to that of the main text.

CHAPTER 2 Setting the Scene

Context and Debates

At the heart of this study lies the fundamental concern about the delivery and provision of education for disadvantaged groups and the ways in which they access it. The widespread emergence of LFP schools in India heralds the need to look beyond the international and national rhetoric framed by various EFA and Universal Primary Education (UPE) targets and campaigns, and closely examine local models adopted in developing countries facing the problem of increasing educational demand, constrained public budgets, and deteriorating actual or perceived quality of state education. This chapter is concerned with providing a critical analysis of the policy dialogue surrounding EFA and UPE by focusing on two debates that are most closely linked with the change in the education framework through the emergence of LFP schools: the issue of quality schooling and the issue of public versus private provision. The chapter also outlines the educational context in India and Uttar Pradesh, its administrative structures, and state initiatives for disadvantaged groups.

2.1 The National Policy Context for Education Provision

The post-independence national framework for education provision and delivery in India was laid out by the National Policies on Education (NPE) of 1968, 1986, and the NPE 1986 as Modified in 1992 (NPE 1992). The key feature of the NPE 1968¹ regarding schooling was the creation of the Common School System which was envisioned as ensuring a comparable level of education across the states and promoting equality in education. In Uttar Pradesh, basic or elementary education encompasses primary (grades 1 to 5) and junior levels (grades 6 to 8), and secondary education comprises high school (grades 9 and 10) and intermediate or higher secondary (grades 11 and 12). The NPE 1968 put in place the common structure of school education as 10 (up to high school) + 2 (intermediate) throughout the country. However, as Premi (2001) notes, education was solely a state responsibility at that time and there was an uneven implementation of the policy's provisions.

In an effort to reform education provision and delivery, the NPE 1986 resulted from a wide consultative process based on a diagnostic analysis of the state of education and areas for future development. By this time, education had been put on the "Concurrent List" (as of 1976) making it a shared responsibility between the Central and State Governments². The new and continuing relationship in education between the two levels of government realigned the role that the Central Government played in achieving policy targets:

While the role and responsibility of the States in regard to education will remain essentially unchanged, the Union Government would accept a larger responsibility to reinforce the national and integrative character of education, *to maintain quality and standards* (including those of the teaching profession at all levels, to study and monitor the educational requirements of the country as a whole in regard to manpower for development, to cater

¹ The NPE 1968 was based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission Report (1964-66) which examined education in India (Premi, 2001, p. 50).

² Under this new relationship there was a realignment of certain financial responsibilities for the Central Government. Typically the state governments finance 85% of their education budget and the Central Government the remaining 15%.

to the needs of research and advanced study, to look after the international aspects of education, culture and Human Resource Development and, in general, *to promote excellence at all levels of the educational pyramid throughout the country* (emphases added) (Part 3.13, NPE 1992, p. 7).

The latest policy, NPE 1992, is a modified version of the NPE 1986 and the result of the Acharya Ramamurti Committee established to make recommendations for improvements on past policies. Sharma (2002) notes that among unique features of the NPE 1986 and NPE 1992 were the accompanying Programmes of Action (POA), which were detailed strategies and action plans on policy implementation regarding established targets. Thus, at a pragmatic level it is useful to conceptualise the provision and delivery of education as structured by macro-level policy (such as the NPE 1992) and centrally administered schemes (such as *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*³ (SSA)), and a combination of state-devised policies, some which may be passed by state governments and others that may be circulated through executive order by the relevant State Department of Education (Premi, 2001).

The concern with providing free and compulsory elementary education is not new to India and predates the most recent international initiatives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the landmark 1990 Jomtien Conference setting the EFA agenda. While the beginning of the international movement is most often attributed to Jomtien, Colclough and Lewin (1993) explain that its murmurs began in the 1960s and 1970s through UNESCO. However, Balagopalan (2004) traces the history of the movement for free and compulsory education in India back to 1893 with an educational experiment that began in Baroda, Gujarat, and then to 1910 when a resolution for free and compulsory education in areas with a male school-aged population of 33% was made but rejected. In 1909, a bill introducing free and compulsory education was introduced by Gokhale in the Legislature following the Indian Council Act but was rejected in the Parliament (Drèze & Sen, 1995).

³ Explained in Section 2.2.

The *Uttar Pradesh Primary Education Act of 1919* was instituted to introduce compulsory primary education through municipal boards for children aged six to 11 in the state (Jain, 2001, p. 623). Two key features of the Act were the introduction of compulsion for parents with a fine if school-aged children were not sent, and the establishment of formal basic education as a distinct system covering a specific age group. Furthermore, Section 4 of the Act stated that boards must satisfy the State Government in making “...adequate provision in recognised primary schools for such *compulsory primary education free of charge*” (emphasis added) (Jain, 2001, p. 624). Subsequently, the *United Provinces District Boards Primary Education Act, 1926* was passed to ensure that “...universal, free and compulsory primary education for boys and girls should be reached by a definite programme of progressive expansion” (Jain, 2001, p. 628).

In the post-independence period, while adopting the Indian Constitution in 1950, Article 45 of the Directive of Principles of State Policy in Part IV further gave a policy direction to all states with the duty to provide free and compulsory education to all children until the age of 14 within a period of 10 years (Mehta, 1998; Rao, 2002). Two landmark education platforms, the Kothari Commission (of 1964-66) and the Acharya Ramamurthi Committee (in 1990) were launched to identify the best strategies to advance the goals of free education provision. While the Government accepted the Kothari Commission’s recommendation and announced the NPE 1968, the Ramamurti Committee report was subjected to further scrutiny through the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) Committee in 1992. Disconcertingly, most of its major recommendations regarding the Common School System, quality, and equity in schooling were rejected when announcing the NPE 1992.

The concern for free compulsory education has recently been enshrined as Article 21A in the 86th Amendment Act 2002 of the Indian Constitution which states:

“21A. Right to Education—The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by *law*, determine” (emphasis in original) (GoI, 2004b). Some government officials claimed that the insistence of including the term, “by law” was essentially to mark India’s outward compliance in the international politics of education agenda-setting, as the Supreme Court had already declared basic education up to age 14 a fundamental right in 1993.

The *Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2004*, officially posted on the Government of India (GoI) Education Department’s website for comments, has not been without debate. In its insistence on expanding education provision to meet targets increasingly influenced by international rhetoric, the 2004 Bill enshrined what critics claimed to be a two-tier or parallel system, through “approved schools” and “transitional schools”, both with different norms. For example, while trained teachers would provide instruction in approved schools, instructors who only completed high school and received 30 days training, were to impart instruction at transitional schools (Balagopalan, 2004, p. 3). The only compulsion in the Bill was that parents whose children did not attend any school had to send them to a transitional school or be penalised. Hence:

The ‘compulsory’ provisions in the draft Bill thus serve to institutionalise a parallel system that poor parents have no recourse to reject. The reason that this idea of ‘compulsion’ does not provoke more outrage is because the middle class strongly believes...that the primary reason that children are not in school is because of parental encouragement of child labour...‘compulsion’ takes precedence over quality of schooling issues, quite contrary to the ways in which ‘compulsory’ schooling provisions have been used in other liberal democracies (Balagopalan, 2004, p. 4).

The Bill has since been withdrawn and a CABE committee was delegated the task of drafting a new bill. That India is struggling with free and compulsory education after 45 years from the first cut-off period (1960) is encapsulated in the quote above. There are three issues to be considered. The first is the lack of focus on

the quality of schooling to be delivered in the mass education system. There was no mention in Article 21A or in the draft Bill about minimum education quality standards that states should provide at approved or transitional schools, although the implications of having teachers less qualified at the latter do not seem to advance the notion of quality schooling. Secondly, similar to the thrust on community mobilisation in many education programmes and central and state-level campaigns such as SSA and *School Chalo Abhiyaan* (SCA) (see Section 2.6), disadvantaged groups are presented as having homogenous views on schooling, i.e. they need to be mobilised as they are disinterested and do not see its relevance. This obscures the fact, as indicated in this study (Chapter 5), that their motivation to access schooling is conditional on a positive assessment of their options. In other words, they were only prepared to suffer the revenue loss associated with the opportunity cost of schooling, if the benefit of schooling seemed to outweigh it. In effect, they did not see the benefit of sending their children to school if their only option was the perceived malfunctioning state sector.

Finally, the Indian EFA discourse focused on state provision and, failing that, on non-formal education or alternative school models (i.e. transitional schools and Education Guarantee Scheme centres (EGS) (see Section 2.6)). This obscured the focus from grassroots models of formal education delivery outside the state sector, such as the LFP sector. While there is some recognition that disadvantaged groups have begun accessing the private sector (De et al., 2001, De et al., 2002; Duraisamy, James, Lane, & Tan, 1997; Majumdar & Vaidyanathan, 1995; PROBE, 1999, Tilak & Sudarshan, 2001), an examination of the LFP sector is largely ignored in state and central targets for meeting EFA goals. This is despite the realisation that there is a need to increase the number and the ratio of junior to primary schools in

educationally backward states like Uttar Pradesh⁴ (Tyagi, 2001), despite the increase in schools built through infrastructure intensive schemes such as the World Bank’s District Primary Education Programme (DPEP).

2.2 Reassessing ‘Quality’ in Education Provision & Delivery

Part 3.2 of the NPE 1992 states: “The concept of a National System of Education implies that, up to a given level, all students, irrespective of caste, creed, location, or sex, have access to education *of a comparable quality*” (emphasis added) (GoI, 1998, p. 5). While there is an insistence on some level of comparable quality throughout the document, ‘quality’ itself is not defined. Instead, several measures (summarised in Table 2.1) are proposed to minimise the level of variance prevalent in such a large education system with a view to promoting a level playing-field.

Proposed Measures, NPE 1992	Summary
Common Educational Structure	• 5 years of primary; 3 years junior; 2 years high school • Recommendation to incorporate the + 2 (intermediate) level as part of ‘school education’
Common Curricular Core in Addition to Other Flexible Components	• History of India’s freedom movement; constitutional obligations; components nurturing national identity • Promotion of common values: common cultural heritage; egalitarianism, democracy and secularism; equality of the sexes, protection of the environment; removal of social barriers; observance of the small family norm; and inculcation of a scientific temper
Provision of Equal Opportunity	• Equal access and conditions for success • Awareness of equality of all through the core curriculum • Although not stated in the NPE 1992, the national norms of 1 km radius for primary and within 3 km radius for junior as well as a maximum teacher-student ratio of 1:40 may be indicators here.
Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL)	• To be laid out for each stage of education
Essential School Facilities	• To provide 3 all-weather, reasonably sized classrooms under Operation Blackboard • Blackboards, maps, charts, toys, and other necessary aids • Minimum of 3 teachers increasing to one per class as soon as possible • At least 50% of teachers recruited should be women
Education for Equality	• Various provisions for women and girls; scheduled caste (SC), scheduled tribe (ST), and other backward caste (OBC) populations; minority groups

⁴ Tyagi shows that the emphasis on UEE has meant that there is a national norm at the ratio of 1:2 for junior to primary schools. However, according to 1998-99 educational statistics of the Ministry for Human Resources Development (MHRD), Uttar Pradesh is below the national average of 3.3 and has a ratio of 4.6 (Tyagi, 2001, p. 29).

	• Including incentives for families to send children to school; scholarships for specific groups; recruitment of teachers from SC groups; setting up residential schools; focusing on indigenous languages

Table 2.1 Compilation of Key Proposed Measures in the NPE 1992 and POA 1992

Quality provision and delivery of education assumes importance as one of the key issues framing the larger educational debate in India. In addition to an inadequate definition of quality, the notion is fraught with competing goals and target levels within the same policy. For example, Part 3.13 of the NPE 1992 states that the Central Government should “promote excellence at all levels of the educational pyramid throughout the country”. Elsewhere in the same document, however, the level of quality drops to “satisfactory” (Part 5.12), or rests at “substantial improvement” (Part 5.5). Nonetheless, the most important measures in the NPE 1992 highlighted in Table 2.1, can be seen as attempting to address quality by setting certain standards to be met in priority areas. These areas can be extrapolated from the NPE 1992 and the POA 1992 as: UEE, matching skills in the labour market, and equality of opportunity for various disadvantaged groups.

However, confounding standardisation with the notion of educational quality is nowhere more contentious than in the area of target achievement. A continuing debate in more economically advantaged countries such as the USA and the UK, this concern is emerging in the Indian context because of a number of increasing factors, partly due to the new Indian economy and an increasingly competitive labour market. Labour market forces have intensified in addition to existing competitive selection procedures in many professional fields (such as medicine or engineering) through public exams. Furthermore, parents of all socio-economic groups are increasingly sending their children to private tuition centres for regular instruction because they feel that teachers are not imparting required instruction in school (Majumdar & Vaidyanathan, 1995). These concerns have emerged when public confidence in

education (particularly the state sector) is decreasing (De et al., 2001; 2002; PROBE, 1999).

For example, the introduction of MLLs in the curriculum cloaked as “a strategy for improving the quality of elementary education [in] an attempt to combine quality with equity” (GoI, 1996, p. 41), can be interpreted as an attempt to address that lack of confidence by establishing basic “competencies” that all students should acquire regardless of the sector they access. According to the GoI, an MLL “lays down learning outcomes in the form of competencies or levels of learning for each stage of elementary education” (GoI, 1996, p. 41). However, focusing on basic competencies without addressing other areas of quality or equity in the curriculum, treatment of children at school, or broader issues of access particularly regarding the state sector, has been criticised as being rigid and promoting teachers to “teach to the test” (PROBE, 1999). The PROBE Report (1999) highlights that:

The slogan of ‘competency-based learning’ has made little difference to curricula and textbooks, which have religiously followed the unrealistic list of ‘contents’, only flimsily disguised as ‘competencies’ [...] Some textbook committees now assign chapters to be written given ‘MLL codes’ (p. 79).

If the country is to address quality concerns in its three priority areas particularly in the state sector, increasing public confidence in a sector largely characterised as malfunctioning should be of paramount importance. As Govinda (2001) disconcertingly asserts, “...government schools were never marked as of especially poor quality in comparison with their private counterparts as is done today with little exception” (p. 11). Parental perceptions of inferior state school quality and research studies documenting an iniquitous system rife with issues such as teacher absenteeism; little public accountability; teachers over-burdened with other state duties resulting in frequent school closures and minimal teaching activity; and teachers ridiculing lower caste children (Aggarwal, undated; Balagopalan &

Subrahmanian, 2003; Bashir, 1994; PROBE, 1999) all undermine notions of educational quality.

Ironically, the perceived growth of these “inequalities and dysfunctions” (Datt, 2002; Govinda, 2001) come at a time when the focus on access to and quality of education through UEE has officially been the utmost guiding concern. As stated in the NPE 1992: “The new thrust in elementary education will emphasise three aspects: (i) universal access and enrolment, (ii) universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and (iii) a *substantial improvement in the quality of education* to enable all children to achieve essential levels of learning” (emphasis added) (p. 13).

In 2001, the GoI launched the SSA, a national UEE campaign with “its central objective of mobilising all resources, human, financial and institutional, necessary for achieving the goal of UEE” (GoI, 2002a, p. 55). Its main goals are to ensure completion of elementary school by children aged six to 14 and to bridge gender and social gaps in elementary education by 2010 with a “focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality” (GoI, 2002a, p. 55). However, while the SSA reaffirmed its commitment to UEE a decade after the NPE 1992, it simultaneously threatened the quality of schooling by reducing the minimum number of teachers in a school from three in the POA 1992 to two. Nonetheless, significant financial outlay has been released to all states according to their *District Elementary Education Plans* for items such as the construction of new schools and the establishment of EGCs (see Section 2.6). During data collection, state officials reported that the proposed 2003-2004 SSA budget for Uttar Pradesh was Rs. 240 million (approx. £3.2 million) (FN 20-03-03), and they were confident of receiving near the full amount.

The establishment of the District Information System for Education⁵ (DISE), an electronic database recently established to gather data on recognised and unrecognised schools across India's 18 states, is one attempt at advancing quality assessment. Before DISE, most statistical education survey data reported on state or recognised private schools only, excluding unrecognised PUA schools (of which some LFP schools are a part). Household surveys provided a more accurate account of school enrolment by type but not much on the characteristics or numbers of schools in a given area. The recently launched DISE report (Mehta, 2004) attempts to meet some of these inadequacies by including unrecognised PUA schools in its assessment of provision and delivery of schooling. Disappointingly, however, it does not present disaggregated data for unrecognised and recognised schools. Nonetheless, the report yielded some interesting results.

The total number of schools was 853,601 in 18 states. While Uttar Pradesh is officially characterised as one of the most educationally backward states in India, it had the highest number of schools at 119,443 (Mehta, 2004, p. 32). Construction efforts under SSA in combination with those from the long-running DPEP (from 1994 to 2003) were attributed to the opening of 161,279 new schools across the country since 1994 (Mehta, 2004, p. 53). Uttar Pradesh saw the second highest number of new schools at 33,452. Furthermore, contrary to many assumptions about poor access to schooling in rural areas, DISE data indicate that the percentage share of all schools in rural areas was 87% nationally, and 91.5% in Uttar Pradesh. Table

⁵ An analytical report on DISE data (Mehta, 2004) was recently released in July 2004 by NIEPA. The report is the first of its kind in an attempt to generate time-wise data on elementary education through DISE. DISE is a detailed database developed through DPEP and designed to collect district-level data. The data collected seem to be more complete than the traditional periodic NCERT educational surveys as they include recognised and unrecognised schools and will be updated yearly. They also seem more reliable than household surveys as they capture detailed school characteristics inaccessible to households. Data were collected from 462 of 486 districts in the 18 states. All 70 districts of Uttar Pradesh were covered.

2.2 presents some DISE data extracted from the report used to assess quality across the three types of indicators used.

*School-Related Indicator	National (All Districts)	Uttar Pradesh	**Rank
Total number of schools	853,601	119,443	1
New schools built since 1994	161,279	33,452	2
Ratio of primary to upper primary	3.18 ***Prescribed norm: 2	5.24	17
% Unaided Schools	6.74	10.12	3
% Share of schools in rural areas	87.0	91.51	4
% Share of unaided schools in rural areas	4.6	7.93	3
% schools with 3 or more classrooms	36.89	51.48	5
Level of highest enrolment as a percent) in primary education	26.91% schools between 21-60 children enrolled	32.26% schools between 141-220 children enrolled	N/A
schools > 3 teachers	35.85	42.38%	5
Average number of instructional days in elementary schools/sections	215	209 ***State norm: 220 days	Tied at 14
% schools with a pupil-teacher ratio >100	8.94	24.2	3
% schools with pupil-teacher ratio >60	25.5	49.1	2
% single classroom schools	15.7	2.7	17
% single teacher schools	19.1	15.9	10
% schools with drinking water facility	71.9	91	1
% schools with separate girls' toilet	15.64	40.88	2
% schools with a book bank	40.76	63.98	3
% schools with playground	42.22	59.22	3
% Primary schools with classrooms needing major repair	27.3	9.9	10
% schools received school development grant	48.81	66.3	5
% schools received Teaching-Learning Material grant	39.69	65.47	2
Enrolment Based Indicators	National (All Districts)	Uttar Pradesh	**Rank
Gender parity in enrolment at primary	0.89	0.90	12
Gender parity in enrolment at junior	0.79	0.71	14
% of enrolment in government schools:			
Primary	89.9	87.5	13
Primary with upper primary	77.6	17.4	18
Primary with upper primary and secondary/high school	34.9	23.4	17
Upper primary only	80	77.7	11
Upper primary with secondary/higher secondary	60.1	14.7	15
% of enrolment in single teacher schools	12.2	13.2	5
% of enrolment school classroom ratio > 60	25.7	49.1	2
% of underage and overage children in primary	Under-age: 10.16 Over-age: 5.52	Under-age: 6.56 Over-age: 2.01	14 18
Transition rate from primary to junior	M: 65.96 F: 62.73	M: 40.22 F: 36.30	16 17

Teacher Related Indicators	National (All Districts)	Uttar Pradesh	**Rank
Average number of teachers in private schools	4.88	4.41	10
Average number of teachers in government schools	2.47	2.51	10
% Female teachers	34.4	27.5	Tied at 13
% Trained teachers	44.4	57.3	5
% of Para-teachers to total teachers	11.03	9.71	6
Pupil-teacher ratio	46	67	2

Table 2.2 School, Enrolment, and Teacher Indicators for Primary Schools in Uttar Pradesh and Nationally

Note. Source: DISE data for 2002-2003 as reported in, Mehta (2004) *Elementary Education in India, Where do we stand?*

- *: All indicators are for primary schools unless otherwise stated
- ** : Ranks were added by the researcher to enable a general comparison with the other states (1 = highest and 18 = lowest)
- ***: Researcher comments

School-related indicators regarding school facilities reveal that the picture for Uttar Pradesh may not be as bleak as expected relative to other states. The indicators show that it ranks quite highly (within the top three) for the highest percentage of primary schools with access to drinking water, separate girls’ toilets, book banks, and playgrounds. However, in absolute numbers, particularly regarding girls’ toilet facilities, the percentage of schools was low at only 40.88%. Nonetheless, it seems that compared with other states, Uttar Pradesh invested some money into its schools as only 9.9% of primary schools had classrooms in need of major repair, and 66.3% and 65.47% of primary schools received School Development and Teaching-Learning Grants respectively. While the percentage of single-teacher and single-classroom schools was quite low, improvement in physical access to schools is required. The ratio of primary to junior schools/sections was 5.24, placing it 17th out of the 18 states, even though the prescribed norm was 2:1.

Further examination of school-related indicators on classroom activities and enrolment and teacher-related indicators for primary schooling reveals a less rosy picture. While the gender parity index in Uttar Pradesh at 0.90 was higher than

expected, it only ranked 12th highest on this measure. Furthermore, Uttar Pradesh was 14th in the country for the average number of instructional days, which at 209 days was lower than the 220 prescribed by the State. Also, while the percentage of single-teacher primary schools was comparably lower than in other states, the percentage of enrolment in those schools was 13.2%, the fifth highest. Transition rates for boys and girls from primary to junior were also among the lowest in India, at 40.22% and 36.30%. Interestingly, however, the failure rate for Uttar Pradesh decreased across elementary education as grade level increased.

Finally, teacher indicators revealed that female primary teachers accounted for only 27.5% of the total primary teaching pool in Uttar Pradesh, placing it 13th. Nonetheless, while Uttar Pradesh ranked 5th highest on the percentage of trained primary teachers, this only corresponded to 57.3% of the teaching force. This is surprising given the clear insistence in state norms against the hiring of untrained teachers in state and private schools, but it indicates a possible lack in the availability of trained teachers in Uttar Pradesh and nationally. The relatively high rank in the percentage of primary para-teachers is in line with data collected from state officials and principals who claimed that there was an insistence in Uttar Pradesh to hire *shiksha mitras* (para-teachers qualified at intermediate level and provided with one month's training) to cover teacher shortfall, particularly in rural areas.

Most disturbingly perhaps, Uttar Pradesh is ranked second in the country for the largest average pupil-teacher ratio at 67:1 for primary level. When combined with the fact that 49.1% (second highest) of the total enrolment was accounted for in schools with a classroom ratio greater than 60, this highlights issues of real concern over adequate education delivery at the classroom level. This is further stressed as the percentage of schools with a pupil-teacher ratio greater than 100 was 24.2%, the third highest in India.

The variability in conclusions that can be made based on the different quality measures (i.e. Uttar Pradesh's high ranks in facilities versus its low ranks on classroom-teacher ratios or enrolment), highlights the importance of employing an array of indicators. The DISE school, enrolment, and teacher indicators are a first step. While a valuable contribution to providing an overview of the state of schools in India, the DISE report currently only examines how schools measure against certain established indicators and not how they fare against prescribed norms. The depth of analysis could be greater if comparisons were made with state or central-level norms. Furthermore, disaggregating data by recognised and unrecognised schools is of utmost importance for a more complete examination of the sources and types of variation across schools.

Finally, there is a need to expand the set of indicators currently employed. Aggarwal⁶ (2002) suggests examining the internal efficiency of India's education system through retention, transition, completion, and drop-out rates. While this is a necessary area of analysis, indicators relating to children's *lived experiences* at school, which might be a primary factor for families of first generation learners to ever enrol their children, cannot be ignored. For example, indicators focusing on household-school relationships or students' experiences at school beyond achievement should also be considered. If lessons are to be learned from studies documenting parents' level of dissatisfaction and the preferential treatment of students according to gender or caste, particularly in state schools (Balagopalan & Subrahmanian, 2003; Bashir, 1994; Duraisamy et al., 1997; PROBE, 1999), then a more encompassing notion of quality is required.

⁶ Aggarwal (2002) analyses internal efficiency by taking Tamil Nadu as a case and examines the completion rate (CRF) for primary school. He defined the CRF as children of a cohort completing primary education in 5 years divided by the total number of children at the beginning of the cohort and multiplied by 100.

A redefinition of quality building on Stephens's (1991) notion of three interrelated factors: efficiency (e.g. better use of available resources); relevance (e.g. to needs and contexts); and something more (e.g. to journey a little further than mere efficiency and relevance) (p. 224) seems to provide a starting point. Given that most international studies examining quality do not employ indicators beyond achievement, standardised tests, common exam scores, and the condition of school facilities (in developing countries), the thrust has generally been on efficiency indicators. Lloyd, Mensch, and Clark (2000) assert that: "Few studies of school quality have examined those aspects of schooling that are most conducive to *encouraging initial enrolment and retention*" (emphasis added) (p. 113). This is surprising given the current thrust on universal education, and undoubtedly applies to India. It seems that quality indicators related to 'relevance' and 'something more' should assume importance. Given the State and Central Government's goals regarding UEE for communities traditionally on the periphery of formal schooling, along with the notion that even the most disadvantaged parents "vote with their feet, exit the public schools and move their children to private schools" (Tooley, 2001c, p. 4) because of their perceptions of relative qualities of schooling, the very notion of educational quality and how it applies to India must be reassessed.

A recent paper by Filmer (2004) examines the relationship between an increase in school availability and school enrolment across 21 disadvantaged countries. The traditional logic behind the large outlay for school infrastructure has been that building more schools in greater proximity to where children live and "reducing the time it takes for children to reach school should increase enrolment" (p. 2). In fact, by using two household datasets⁷, his results for India showed that the

⁷ The study used Demographic Health Survey results for all 21 countries. Two datasets were available for India, one for 1992-93 and one for 1998-99. Both were used in the analysis. Filmer admits that one of the data-sets' shortcomings is that there are no data on school characteristics.

distance was not significantly associated with enrolment. The author further presents the results of an internal World Bank study on a large-scale education programme in India with a significant school construction component showing “that simple estimators that compare enrolment before and after the program[me] *overstate* the impact of the program[me] on enrolment” (emphasis in original) (Filmer, 2004, p. 12). In fact, the internal World Bank study reported that the enrolment increase between programme and non-programme districts was marginal, and in some instances was actually less than the increase in non-programme districts. Filmer (2004) concludes that the results of his study:

...imply a *limited potential impact of increasing school availability* on school enrolment. Other interventions, such as those geared toward increasing the demand for schooling or *increasing the quality of schooling, should be prioritised*—or at least be substantive complements to a school construction effort” (emphases added) (p. 3).

It seems that the missing link, particularly for increasing enrolments, is improving the actual standard and parental perceptions of the quality of schooling delivered. For example, as most large-scale construction programmes of the type described above partner with state and central governments, it is almost certain that the new schools in question would have been built as state schools. However, if the *a priori* perception of disadvantaged groups about the educational quality of state schools is that they are inferior to their other alternative (LFP schools) because of their *lived experience* at them, then it is logical to find either a constant rate of enrolment or only a marginal increase despite strong construction efforts. While the required data were not available in Filmer’s study, one could speculate that the instances of higher enrolment in non-programme districts could have been the result of greater LFP school openings in those areas.

Thus, perhaps quality indicators measuring conditions of school facilities and internal efficiency relating to enrolment are less illuminative than those of lived

experience. The latter could be akin to what Walford (2002) describes as process criteria⁸ which are “indicative of the capacity for human relationships, such as the happiness of the child” (p. 51). Simply put, what would compel a disadvantaged parent to send their child to a type of school perceived to be malfunctioning, abusive, or both, when the opportunity cost is already high? In fact, during data collection for this study, some parents confided that they would prefer not sending their children to school if their only option was a state school.

Some studies have attempted to expand the traditional notion of quality from Lloyd et al.’s (2000) characterisation as: (1) the more typical type: using data from a population survey where crude aggregate measures of school quality are used (school availability, resources per student, teacher credentials, student-teacher ratios)⁹ and (2) in a few cases where school data are linked with a population-based survey: latent school-quality variables are derived by regressing standardised scores on explanatory factors which are introduced into regressions estimating determinants of enrolment, drop-out, or attainment¹⁰ (pp. 115-116). While the latter study type, part of the school effectiveness programme (see Lockheed & Verspoor, 1991 in developing country contexts), give some indication of quality in more advantaged countries among which the variability in other factors (e.g. age of entry, enrolment, and attrition) is not as great, they do not provide an adequate explanation in countries striving for universal access or retention because they do not “separate empirically the critical elements of quality that matter” (Lloyd et al., 2000, p. 116) in initial enrolment and retention.

Three studies seem to break the mould. Lloyd et al. (2000) developed a model using 43 variables across various ‘dimensions of school quality’ to examine the effects

⁸ Walford explains the difference between ‘process’ and ‘product’ criteria based on Elliot’s (1982) original categorisation of these two types of indicators.

⁹ Reminiscent of the DISE report and the Filmer study.

¹⁰ For example, Hanushek and Lavy (1994) and Aggarwal (2002).

of primary school quality on school dropout in Kenya. The model included quality indicators for ‘something more’ such as: curriculum beyond the core, teachers who think “math is important for girls”, and students reporting the presence of advisors. The second study by Lloyd, El Tawula, Clark, and Mensch (2003), built on the one above and used a similar strategy to develop a model based on the Kenyan example to measure the impact of educational quality on school exit in Egypt. The authors defined the three major dimensions of school quality as (1) time available for learning during the school day, (2) material inputs, and (3) attributes of the school and classroom environment. Following a strategy similar to the Kenyan study, the authors isolated 19 variables across these dimensions to assess quality in relation to school exits and those elements of school policy and school environment that had a significant impact on drop-outs.

Both studies found that the school environment affected boys and girls differentially. For example, in the Egyptian case while boys’ drop-out rates were affected by parents’ socio-economic or educational status, girls’ rates were not. Instead they were affected by age and school environment¹¹. As Lloyd et al. (2000) note, “While a few studies have explored gender differences in the impact of certain elements of school quality on achievements, none have explored their implications for retention” (p. 120). The strength of both the studies lay in the fact that through consultation with students, parents, and teachers, they identified potentially relevant quality variables and isolated those found to be the most relevant for analysis. In so doing, they extended the notion of quality assessment to include contextual variables that have otherwise been ignored in traditional quality analyses (Handa, 2002;

¹¹ Lloyd et al.’s (2003) results show that girls’ drop-out rates were more often related to participation in extracurricular activities (decreasing effect) and being told by a teacher that she is a failure (increasing effect). Age was positively associated with increased drop-out rates.

Hanushek & Lavy, 1994; Heyneman, 1997; Kingdon, 1996b) focusing on achievement or enrolment.

Glewwe and Jacoby's (1994) study on school achievement and school choice in Ghana is attributed in the literature (Handa, 2002; Lloyd et al., 2000; Lloyd et al., 2003) as being among the first to include school quality attributes in parents' decisions for initial school selection, retention, and attendance. Results were drawn from a sample in which 93% of children in primary and 94% of children in middle schools attended public schools. Surprisingly, they found that repairing a leaky roof led to the biggest increase in achievement test scores, whereas establishing school libraries, reducing travel time, and raising teacher experience had little effect (Glewwe & Jacoby, 1994, p. 859). As explained regarding Filmer's study, this may be related to the types of schools that were being improved. It could be that fixing a leaky roof had more impact on achievement because it enabled greater retention or enrolment in public schools by directly targeting what parents perceived to be a prominent measure of quality in that school type.

The above example points to the endogenous nature of school choice, not just on achievement, but initial enrolment and retention related to perceived quality, and has direct implications for the current study. Glewwe and Jacoby (1994) claim that: "If parents choose schools based on their attributes, then these attributes are endogenous in an educational production function; any positive association between school quality and cognitive skills...may simply be due to the fact that more motivated students go to better schools" (p. 844). Where their analysis falls short is their insistence on determining school choice and quality factors indirectly through the analysis of achievement scores; i.e. based on what happens to children once they are already enrolled.

However, given the results of this study (Chapters 5 and 6) and in line with both Lloyd et al.'s frameworks, a traditional analysis can be extended to examine the effect of parental quality perceptions on decisions about initial enrolment and retention. Thus, an increase in results may not be because more 'able' children attend a certain school (or school type), but because of increased initial enrolment and retention in addition to the propensity of certain groups to choose certain schools or school types based on their assessments of school 'quality'. While the required data are not presented in Glewwe and Jacoby's study, it points to an interesting debate and foreshadows the need for further analysis. It also points to the relevance of the present study's findings in extending notions of school choice based partly on perceptions of quality and beliefs about education (Chapter 5).

Lloyd et al. (2000) state: "in developing countries where enrolment is not yet universal or where repetition rates and dropout rates are substantial during the primary years, an approach to measuring school quality that is limited to factors affecting the test scores of students who remain in school will be missing an important part of the story" (p. 113). Nonetheless, despite this small but emerging trend of re-examining and redefining quality indicators, it seems that the quality assessment pendulum in India swayed the other way (Aggarwal, undated; Aggarwal, 2002; GoI, 2004a; Kingdon, 1996b). Both of Aggarwal's papers call for large-scale achievement studies based on traditional school effectiveness methods despite his concerns to develop a more encompassing measure of quality. Kingdon (1996b) applies achievement on cognitive tests as a proxy of educational outcome and comments on the relative higher quality of PUA schools over state or private aided (PA) schools, without addressing real school attributes (by extension some related to quality) contributing to higher scores.

However, the real cause for concern is the increasing reliance on MLLs and the GoI's newest *Quality Improvement in Schools* (QIS) scheme. The proposed centrally-sponsored scheme aims to cover approximately 25,000 of the quoted 115,000 secondary or higher secondary schools¹² on a budget of Rs. 30 million (£400,000). While it has some innovative objectives such as sharing resources between state schools and PA or PUA schools, and stresses the importance of curriculum enrichment projects in areas as diverse as science, human rights, and yoga (to name a few), the remaining five of the eight objectives have to do with identifying "learning outcomes", "competencies", and "standards" in the curriculum, examinations for students and teachers, and teacher training (GoI, 2004a, p. 2).

The thrust on available funding for standardisation and achievement-related activities is further highlighted in the examples of "activities for improvement of quality in school education" in which proposals developing "minimum competencies" in curricular areas and teacher training are suggested. QIS objectives and proposed activities are in stark contrast to the supposed basis of the scheme, which distinguishes between what it calls school effectiveness and "contextual modes" of quality "...which takes into account the context, which means a *school's linkage* within the community, its *intake*, that is students seeking admissions in it, and *autonomy* given to its teachers to chalk up their plan and strategy" (emphases in original) (GoI, 2004a, p. 1). Sadly, the QIS funding priorities seem to equate school linkages with community participation expressed as equipment and maintenance fees of Rs. 10-15/month/student as sanctioned in the POA 1992; does not address strategies to increase enrolment or retention of disadvantaged groups in secondary education; and reduces teacher autonomy to being trained by and teaching to minimum competencies. These potentially detrimental initiatives to quality

¹² Primary and junior schools can be included if they are part of secondary or higher secondary schools.

improvement overshadow other innovative suggestions in the draft scheme for curricular and co-curricular activities in adolescence education, inter-school competitions and events, and the development of a school accreditation system based on indicators for equity, inclusiveness, and social responsiveness.

Thus, while QIS's premise seems to be based on an innovative approach to quality improvement, there is a mismatch with its proposed funding priorities. For example, the innovative objective of linking state schools with different school types is not stressed, nor are there any associated funding priorities despite admitting that "government schools are increasingly being perceived as a failing system" (GoI, 2004a, p. 1). Furthermore, LFP schools are not considered as having any potential role in advancing quality improvement, and private schools are presented as those "which largely accommodate the upper middle class students in urban areas" (GoI, 2004a, p. 1). Neither the heterogeneity of the private sector nor the existence of the LFP sector, are considered as potentially addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups jointly with the state sector. Thus, the emergence of the LFP sector heralds the need to reassess public and private delivery in education.

2.3 Reassessing Public and Private Education Delivery

Colclough (1993) explains that the main case for the public provision of education, particularly in developing countries, is due to the following concerns with market provision: (a) private provision would result in under-provision of schooling because of externalities which are social as well as individual; (b) 'merit goods' such as education may be under-supplied if left to the market; (c) investment in education has a long gestation period which the market may not be able to adapt to leading to inefficiency; (d) a concern with economies of scale that mass provision can meet; (e) *increased equity costs* since the private purchase of schooling is beyond the means of the

disadvantaged; (f) further *aggravating household cost-benefit analyses* which may compel even lower participation by disadvantaged communities; and (g) *low private demand particularly for disadvantaged groups* facing social and cultural barriers to enrolment calling for increased subsidies not increased costs (emphases added) (pp. 1-2).

Nonetheless, James (1993) notes that: (1) there are systematically higher proportions of secondary school private enrolments in developing countries compared with more economically advantaged countries, and (2) that there is a seemingly random distribution of private and public enrolment in developing countries at a given educational level and state of development (p. 574). James's data showed that the percentage of enrolment in private primaries in developing countries ranged from 100% in Lesotho to 1% in Algeria and Kenya, and 25% for India¹³. The spectrum for more advantaged countries was 69% in the Netherlands to 1% in Japan and Sweden, with England and Wales at 22% and the USA at 10%. Thus, according to James's data, India shared a larger percentage of its enrolment at the primary level in private schools than England and Wales and the USA.

The prevalence of private provision at all education levels in developing countries, has led some researchers, mainly economists, to focus on the relative efficiency of public and private schools (Cox & Jimenez, 1990; James, King, & Suryadi, 1996; Jimenez, Lockheed, Luna, & Paqueo, 1989; Jimenez, Lockheed, & Paqueo, 1991; Jimenez, Lockheed, & Wattanawaha, 1988; Kingdon, 1996b; Salmi, 2000). Proponents of private schooling expansion counter arguments for public education by insisting that private schools are more cost-effective leading to greater efficiency of the education sector as a whole. The second argument is that the

¹³ James's data do not specify whether the reported private sector corresponded to PA plus PUA schools, and further whether it includes recognised and unrecognised schools. The corresponding figures for secondary enrolment in the study are 52% for India, 16% for England and Wales, and 9% for the USA. Note the big jump in private enrolment from primary to secondary in India and the larger gain over England and Wales and the USA. Tooley's (1999) data show 42% enrolment at the private secondary level. He claims this to be from middle schools including PA, but does not state whether or not unrecognised schools are included. 'Middle schools' are also not defined.

expansion of private schooling will allow countries with constrained public resources to meet increasing educational demand. More recently, some studies have looked at the possibility of the private sector meeting increased educational demand in view of UEE targets in India (De et. al, 2002; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002; Tilak & Sudarshan, 2001).

While some studies on the private schooling context in India acknowledge the heterogeneity of the private sector (De et al., 2002; Kingdon, 1996a; 1999b; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002; Tilak & Sudarshan, 2001; Tooley, 1999), assumptions about the nature of private schooling in most literature on private schooling in developing countries are less clear. In fact, Colclough (1993) notes that most studies suffer from two inadequacies: the first is on the paucity of data available not allowing a full analysis of 'value-added'; and the second is precisely that they do not account for the heterogeneity in the private and public sectors. Thus, claims of relative efficiency or effectiveness (Cox & Jimenez, 1990; James, King, & Suryadi, 1996; Jimenez, Lockheed, Luna, & Paqueo, 1989; Jimenez, Lockheed, & Paqueo, 1991; Jimenez, Lockheed, & Wattanawaha, 1988) should be taken conservatively.

This present analysis would add two further caveats keeping the LFP sector in mind. Firstly, as previously noted, value-added measures from the traditional school effectiveness framework without including quality assessments based on an expanded set of indicators encompassing 'something more' (e.g. similar to those used by Lloyd et al., 2000 and Lloyd et al., 2003), would add to incomplete analyses of the possible role that the private sector can play in meeting increased and differentiated demand (both at different levels of schooling and by different social groups). Secondly, merely noting the heterogeneity of the private sector is an insufficient condition for a more complete analysis. An emphasis on precisely those models of private education accessed by disadvantaged groups is necessary for two reasons.

First, to distance the private schooling debate from traditional assumptions that it is accessed only by the elite, so as to focus on the schooling preferences and choices of disadvantaged groups as they actually are. Secondly, to refocus the debate on the potential for private models currently serving disadvantaged groups to challenge existing public systems and/or jointly meet UEE targets and possibly increasing quality of schooling delivered.

The existence of private schools serving disadvantaged groups is not specific to India. While models of such private schools in other countries may be different than the LFP sector in India, similar published reports from Haiti (Salmi, 2000) and Pakistan (Alderman, Orazem, & Paterno, 2001; Kim, Alderman, & Orazem, 1999) and unpublished accounts from experts in the field account for expanding private sectors for disadvantaged groups in Ghana, Nepal, and Indonesia. This suggests the merits of a broad study on such private provision to ascertain its different models, the school choice behaviours of disadvantaged households, and the implications for its role in EFA and UEE targets in wider international and national policy contexts.

Private models targeting disadvantaged groups, and specifically the LFP model as explored in this study, seem to challenge Colclough's assertions (e), (f), and (g) (presented above on pp. 29-30) critiquing private provision. Increased equity costs due to inaccessibility of private schooling for disadvantaged groups, a low private demand for it among this group, and aggravation of household cost-benefit analyses seem to apply to a limited extent in relation to the LFP model. This is because these critiques are made on assumptions that apply to high-fee models of private schooling and their associated concerns for disadvantaged groups in contexts where low-fee options do not exist. Furthermore, they do not take into account that the LFP model exists in the context of a (perceived or real) malfunctioning state sector, which itself

raises issues of equity, low demand, and aggravated household costs for disadvantaged groups.

As results from the DISE report (Mehta, 2004) show, the share of PUA schools in Uttar Pradesh ranked the third highest in the country at 10.12% of total schools. Contrary to traditional assumptions, the prevalence of PUA schools is not just an urban phenomenon. The report showed that 7.93% of all rural schools in Uttar Pradesh were PUA, again ranking the third highest. The share of enrolment in government schools shows another interesting phenomenon where Uttar Pradesh ranked among the lowest in the country at every school level and category in this sector. Related data are presented below in Table 2.3.

<i>School-Related Indicator</i>	<i>National (All Districts)</i>	<i>Uttar Pradesh</i>	<i>*Rank</i>
Total number of schools	853,601	119,443	1
% Unaided Schools	6.74	10.12	3
% Share of schools in rural areas	87.0	91.51	4
% Share of unaided schools in rural areas	4.6	7.93	3
<i>Enrolment Based Indicators</i>	<i>National (All Districts)</i>	<i>Uttar Pradesh</i>	<i>*Rank</i>
<i>% of enrolment in government schools</i>			
Primary	89.9	87.5	13
Primary with upper primary	77.6	17.4	18
Primary with upper primary and secondary/high school	34.9	23.4	17
Upper primary only	80	77.7	11
Upper primary with secondary/higher secondary	60.1	14.7	15

Table 2.3 School and Enrolment-Based Indicators on Private Unaided and Government Schools

Note. Source: Extracted from Mehta (2004)
*: Ranks were added by the researcher to enable a general comparison with the other states (1 = highest and 18 = lowest)

These data point to the necessity of reassessing traditional analyses of private schooling applied to developing countries where LFP models for education exist for disadvantaged groups. While certain elements of older analyses may be applicable, studies working from a new set of assumptions must be undertaken to adequately assess the possible contribution of private schooling and its interface with public provision. The following section sketches the state of private provision in Uttar Pradesh in order to contextualise the study and the application of preceding debates.

2.4 The State of Private Schooling in India

Researchers have found it considerably difficult to estimate the exact size and nature of the private sector in India. This is partly due to the heterogeneity of the sector in addition to inaccuracies in statistical data due to a lack of regularly updated time-series data and the exclusion of unrecognised private schools in most data sets. This section will attempt to provide a general picture of the nature of private provision, sources of heterogeneity, and enrolment and household expenditure trends in light of the available literature locating the present study within this context.

2.4.1 Disentangling the Government and Private Systems in India

There are three broad types of schools within the formal education system in India: government, PA, and PUA. PUA schools are further characterised as recognised or unrecognised schools. Difficulties in assessing the size and nature of private provision in India and Uttar Pradesh are compounded as much of the literature refers to both PA and recognised and unrecognised PUA schools when speaking of the private sector.

Furthermore, government schools are not homogenous. They are most typically referred to as schools run by state governments through their departments of education or local bodies¹⁴. However, some central departments also operate a small number of schools such as the Department of Tribal Welfare (for tribal groups), Ministry of Labour (targeted for child labour), Ministry of Defence (*Sainik* schools), and Ministry of Social Justice (for children with disabilities). The Central Government also established three types of schools located in most states: *Kendriya Vidyalayas* or Central Schools mainly for employees of the Central Government,

¹⁴ Local bodies are institutions developed for local governance at district, sub-district, and village levels created under the Indian Constitution.

*Navodaya Vidyalayas*¹⁵ for talented rural students regardless of socio-economic status, and Tibetan Schools for Tibetan refugees. These are all centrally funded and administered. In practice, however, state officials explained that most statistics collected by them either do not differentiate between government school types, or that data collected at district level on government schools are only on those run by the Department of Education and local bodies¹⁶.

For the purposes of this study (and for the sake of clarity) if the private sector is conceptualised as comprising schools that are both financially independent of the state and privately managed, then the true private sector is composed only of recognised and unrecognised PUA schools. LFP schools, as defined in this study, occupy a part of that sector. When state schools are referred to in this study, they should be conceptualised as those run by the Uttar Pradesh Departments of Education or local bodies. Any data tables from secondary sources will present data on non-private or non-aided sector provision as ‘government schools’, since it is unclear exactly which centrally or state-run school types data are referring to. Table 2.4 presents a typology of the primary financing, management, and accountability structures by school type as developed through data from the study and the literature.

¹⁵ Navodaya Vidyalayas were set up in 1986 across 280 districts across India and a survey in 1989 revealed that 40.7% of students were below the poverty line and 16% were first generation learners (POA, 1992, p. 50).

¹⁶ One notable exception is Mehta’s (2004) DISE report which presents data on schools run by: State Department of Education, local bodies, Department of Tribal Welfare, PA, PUA, and other managements.

	Government and State	Private Aided (PA)	Private Unaided (PUA)	
			Recognised	Unrecognised
Financing	• Central and state governments (directly and through centrally or state sponsored schemes) • Very slight parental contributions	• State Government (up to 95%) • Private (typically parents through parent-teacher associations)	Private Sources: e.g. parents, individuals, charitable trusts, NGOs and other agencies	Private Sources: e.g. parents, individuals, charitable trusts, NGOs and other agencies
Management	• Central/State Government structures • Relevant boards	• District and State-level Committees • School committee	• School Committee of Management and managing society in principle; owners in practice • Network if part of a chain	• Managing society if registered in principle; owners in practice • Network if part of a chain
Accountability Structure	• District • State and Central Governments (as applicable) • Relevant board	• District • State Government • Boards • Parents (secondary)	• Parents (market) • Network if part of a chain • District office and State through the concerned Board	• Parents (market) • Network if part of a chain

Table 2.4 Typology of Primary Financing, Management, and Accountability Structures by School Type

PA schools are privately managed but heavily funded (up to 95% of a school’s budget) through state government grant-in-aid (Kingdon, 1996a; Tilak, 2001). In practice, most state funding covers teachers’ salaries equivalent to those in government schools, as well as recurrent spending on non-teacher inputs (Mehrotra, 2002), while management must ensure that teachers meet state qualifications. In addition, PA schools must raise their own funds for initial and on-going costs, typically through parents’ contributions to the school’s parent-teacher association. Because of the nature and amount of state intervention in the management and funding of PA schools, Kingdon (1996a) and Tilak (2001) assert, that they could be called “semi-government” or “government-aided” schools.

There is some confusion in the literature about the hiring procedure and the authority that PA schools have in recruitment. According to Kingdon (1996a), PA

schools “cannot recruit or dismiss their own staff” and states that in Uttar Pradesh “the U[ttar] P[radesh] Government Education Service Commission selects and appoints their staff” (p. 3306). However, according to Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2002), “the decision to hire teachers lies with the management [of PA schools], who can also finance additional teacher posts and other recurrent expenditure from their own funds” (p. 9). Like Kingdon, the researchers also comment on the existence of a recruitment board or committee, but seem to accord a different balance of power to PA and government representatives on it. Kingdon does not mention the role of PA members, implying that they have little say in the recruitment process of staff. On the other hand, Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2002) describe the PA recruitment committee as having only one government representative, but in Kingdon’s analysis a government board is entirely responsible.

Typically, the literature has accepted the claim that private schools start off as part of a cycle as unrecognised PUA to recognised PUA schools, en route to achieving PA status due to the appeal of state funding (Kingdon, 1996a; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002). However, data collection revealed that while this may have been the case earlier, it no longer holds true, at least in Uttar Pradesh. From 1996, the State Government stopped disbursing grant-in-aid for an indefinite period due to decreased availability of State funds (GO2-2, p.2). Furthermore, some case study school owners explained that they would not apply for it even if the provision was still available. The main reason was the severe restriction of their autonomy as managers through stringent state control.

Unlike PA schools, PUA schools are autonomous, privately managed, and entirely free of state financing, though recognised schools are more accountable to the State and their respective boards than unrecognised schools. They span a range of schools with varying fee structures that are run by voluntary organisations,

missionaries, philanthropic bodies, or individual owners as business enterprises (Tilak, 2001), despite a Supreme Court ruling that recognised PUA schools should not be run for profit (De et al., 2001). De et al. (2002) note that the role of private provision is changing: “private educational initiatives have gained new prominence in recent years, though in a somewhat different way from the old—as *substitutes for, not supplements to government schools*” (emphasis added) (p. 131).

Under the Indian Constitution¹⁷, PUA schools may exist regardless of whether or not they are recognised (Balagopalan, 2004; De et al., 2002; Majumdar & Vaidyanathan, 1995). However, state legislation applies in governing schools on this criterion. In principle, for a PUA to be recognised it must conform to regulations of the board with which it seeks affiliation. The institutions governing recognition in Uttar Pradesh and how case study schools sought or operated without it are the topic of detailed analysis in Chapter 7. In summary, recognition criteria for state boards¹⁸ vary on the particulars but cover such areas as norms for infrastructure, teacher qualifications, language of instruction, and fees.

Despite the conditions that recognised schools must meet, the main incentive for PUA schools to seek recognition is that only recognised schools can issue official documentation such as transfer certificates (TC), or officially send their students as “regular candidates” for Board exams (Chapter 7), which increases a school’s credibility and reputation in local school markets. According to procedural norms TCs are required for students to gain admission from one school to another. However, as Kingdon (1996a) notes, and as results of this study indicate, in practice

¹⁷ Majumdar & Vaidyanathan (1995) note: “Articles 28(1) and 28(2) [of the Indian Constitution] imply that all citizens shall have the freedom to establish private educational systems in order to provide religious instruction of their choice. The right to establish private schools, even without official recognition, has also been given to all citizens under Article 19” (p. 9).

¹⁸ Kingdon (1996a) explains that in Uttar Pradesh a recognised PUA school must “be a registered society, have an owned rather than a rented building, employ only trained teachers, pay salaries to staff according to government prescribed norms, have classrooms of a specified minimum size, and charge only government-set fee rates.” (p. 3313).

students had little difficulty transferring schools at the elementary level, although it was more complicated from junior to secondary school. This study extends the traditional analysis and focuses on the procedures that unrecognised LFP case study schools employed to circumvent procedural norms and ensure that their students gained benefits similar to those at recognised schools (presented in Chapter 7).

Finally, an analysis of the literature on private schooling in India and data collection not only confirmed heterogeneity in the PUA sector, but enabled the identification of the following sources of heterogeneity and how they were expressed across PUA schools.

Sources of Heterogeneity	Manifestation
Recognition	Whether or not PUA schools are recognised have a bearing on how they function because of the state norms that recognised PUA schools must adhere to. Obvious differences between the two types of schools include infrastructure requirements, teacher qualifications, and eligible fee charges.
Target Group or Clientele	PUA schools target different groups (rural/urban, socio-economic class, social background). Each target group has different needs and expectations which partly influence the relationship between them and their schools, somewhat because of the power that they have in exerting their voice in the functioning of the school. Fee structures and fee collection practices will be affected by this.
Management	Different schools have different management structures. However, compared with PUA schools, the internal management of government schools are much more restricted in exerting individual decisions because of prescriptive state norms. By contrast, PUA schools rely almost entirely on the internal management structure of the school which would be a greater source of heterogeneity in this group of schools over any other.
'Branding'	Tooley's (1999) conception of a "brand name" for a school or chain of schools borrows the concept from marketing and applies it to the commodification of education and schools as consumer goods. PUA schools that are part of a chain or network differ from those that are not by having a brand identity attached to them. However, for individual PUA schools not part of a chain board recognition acts similarly. Differences caused by branding may result in the share of the education market occupied by these schools, their management structure, and relationships with other schools.

Table 2.5 Sources of Heterogeneity in the PUA Sector

2.4.2 Introduction to Major Studies in the Field

Studies on private education, especially at the primary and junior levels in India are scarce. A comprehensive picture of private schooling in India is difficult given the discrepancies of the various states in economic and educational development, demographic characteristics, and the conflation of statistical data due

to the inconsistent categorisation of 'private schools' themselves. Nonetheless, some recent studies have attempted to analyse national private sector trends in relation to the government sector. A summary of the major studies and their main aims and methods are presented in Table 2.6. In addition, some studies have focused on the nature and size of the private sector specific to various states (Bashir, 1994; Duraisamy et al., 1997; Kingdon 1996a, 1996b; Tooley, 1999).

Author(s) & Title of Study	Main Aim	Methods
Majumdar & Vaidyanathan (1995): <i>The Role of Private Sector Education in India: Current Trends and New Priorities</i>	To delineate various dimensions of private provision of education and derive trends in privatisation over time Focused on all educational levels	Used national level data from the National Council for Educational Research (NCERT) All India Educational Surveys (up to the 5 th survey which was the most recent of the time); Government Census data 1971, various National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) data, and data from other studies
Tilak (1996): <i>How Free is 'Free' Primary Education in India?</i>	To examine the costs incurred by households sending their children to government primary schools and compare them to those of the PA and PUA sectors Focused on primary education	Analysed official education survey data from the NCERT and macro-level household survey data from the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and the NSSO.
PROBE team of researchers (1999): <i>The Public Report on Basic Education in India</i> (PROBE)	To determine patterns of enrolment, household expenditure on education, and parents' perceptions of schooling from the standpoint of the underprivileged focusing on rural areas. Focused on primary schooling	Field survey of 234 randomly selected villages and 1376 households in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. These states account for 40% of the country's population and half of its out of school children.
De, Noronha & Samson (2001): <i>India: Private Schools and Universal Elementary Education</i>	To "...explore the relatively new and growing phenomenon of establishing private schools to serve low-income, disadvantaged children, and to examine the potential role of private elementary provision to achieve the objective of UEE " (p. 1). Focused on elementary education	Analysed NCERT, NSSO, and NCAER data. Also conducted case studies in one rural and one urban area in Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.
Tilak & Sudarshan (2001), NCERT, <i>Private Schooling in Rural India</i>	To examine the relative size of the private education sector in India, the attributes of students going to private schools, and estimate a demand function for private education. Focused on elementary education	1994 NCAER Data: Human Development Indicator Survey, NCERT Survey data including the 6 th survey (latest one available); Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) 1998 data
De, Majumdar, Samson, & Noronha (2002): <i>Private Schools and Universal Elementary Education</i>	To examine how far the private sector is able to shoulder the burden of providing EFA with reference to disadvantaged groups. Focused on elementary education	NCERT Educational Surveys; 1998 NSSO survey data; NCAER 1994 data; PROBE data
Mehrotra &	To analyse enrolment and education	Large-scale survey. Analysis of 1973-

Panchamukhi, UNICEF, (2002): <i>Universalising Elementary Education in India: Is the Private Sector the Answer?</i>	trends exclusively in the private sector (PA and PUA) in eight states in India. The study included: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, Assam, and Tamil Nadu. Focused on elementary education	1993 NCERT, 1994 NCAER, 1995-96 NSSO, PROBE and various UNICEF-led survey data.

Table 2.6 Summary of Studies Assessing National Trends in the Private Sector in India

These studies provide a broad understanding of emerging trends in enrolment and household expenditure in the private sector across the country. Nonetheless, they admit that their analyses are complicated because many data used for calculations are dated and because most analyses are through secondary data sets. With the exception of the PROBE and Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2002) studies, which employed some primary data sources, the latest data available to other studies were the 1998 NSSO household survey data. Additionally, many data sets only report on recognised private schools, or in some cases, combine data for PA and PUA schools under the heading of ‘private schools’. Kingdon (1996a) further warns of the tendency of government schools to over or under-report certain figures.

While NCAER and NSSO household surveys can better capture true enrolment trends (in unrecognised and recognised schools) than NCERT educational surveys, they are less likely to capture certain data on schools accessible at the school-level only. Thus, the unavailability of reliable time-series data and information on new unrecognised schools (which is how LFP schools are likely to start off) allows at best an estimate of trends. While the inclusion of unrecognised schools in DISE data is an attempt at reconciling some of these difficulties, further macro-level analyses on these data are awaited at the time of writing this thesis. However, one problem can already be foreseen. The DISE report only presents the percentage of enrolment in government schools as a share of total enrolment, and does not give a breakdown of enrolment by management type. It also does not indicate how many recognised and

unrecognised schools form part of the PUA sector, or an indication of the amount of fees charged across private schools. Nonetheless, within certain limitations, a few overall trends from these studies are presented here.

Research indicates that there is an increase in private schools serving socially and economically disadvantaged communities (De et al., 2002; De et al., 2001; Tooley, 1999; Tilak, 2001). An examination of PUA enrolment patterns in elementary education for disadvantaged groups revealed that there was bias favouring the enrolment of boys and more privileged groups (De et al., 2001; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002; PROBE, 1999). This was not found to be the case in the current study (results in Chapter 5). De et al.'s (2001) analysis also indicated that private school enrolment was biased towards more prosperous locations and those with higher asset status in those locations. The following sections will summarise household educational expenditure and enrolment trends in elementary education, with special reference to Uttar Pradesh.

2.4.3 Trends in Household Expenditure on Elementary Education

Tilak (1996) found that “even at [the] elementary level of education parents have had to incur huge expenditures” (p. 356) in all sectors of education provision, shattering the myth of an option of free government education for disadvantaged households. His study highlighted the different forms of fees charged in government and private schools: tuition, examination, admission, physical education, and library fees are just some examples. Tilak further discovered that less than 1% of students were partially or totally exempted from fees.

Unsurprisingly, he found that, “Household expenditures on primary education are 2-3 times higher in private schools than in government schools” (Tilak, 1996, p. 361). This was also corroborated by PROBE (1999) results. Furthermore,

while some of the national level data available to Tilak were not disaggregated by government, PA, or PUA sector, overall household patterns on expenditure on elementary education by socio-economic group were clear. His analysis of 1994 NCAER survey data demonstrated that while the per capita amount of household expenditure on elementary education increased with rising income groups, the percentage of income accounted for by that expenditure decreased. In effect, families in the lowest income group devoted the largest proportion of their per capita income to elementary education relative to higher income families. This was true for all 15 states in the study including Uttar Pradesh.

Cross-state and national longitudinal comparisons are difficult due to discrepancies in the data available to the studies examining household expenditure in elementary education in the private sector. Nonetheless, private sector figures are interesting and may be indicative of patterns or trends warranting particular attention in light of this present study. As expected, PUA schools are the costliest of the three school types (De et al., 2001; PROBE, 1999; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002). According to rural parents' estimates in the PROBE report, comparative annual costs of educating one child at the primary level was Rs. 940 for private schools (not distinguished by type) versus Rs. 318 for government schools¹⁹. The PROBE private school figure is much closer to the rural PUA figure of Rs. 914 than the PA figure of Rs. 611 in De et al.'s (2001) analysis. This may indicate that most rural parents in the PROBE study in fact enrolled their children in PUA and not PA schools. This is a surprising finding considering the approximate 30% added expense of sending one child to a PUA versus a PA school, and may indicate greater proximal availability of PUA schools or other perceived advantages.

¹⁹ Note that Rs. 644 were spent on non-fee expenditures (67% of the total cost) in private schools compared to Rs. 302 (95% of total cost) in government schools.

Additionally, cost differences between rural and urban PA and PUA schools were pronounced, with all urban schools costing more than rural ones (De et al., 2001). However, Mehrotra and Panchamukhi’s (2002) state-by-state analysis shows a varied expenditure trend between rural and urban areas as presented below in Table 2.7. While urban costs are greater for parents sending their children to government schools in all states (except Tamil Nadu), the same applies only for Assam and Bihar in the PA sector. In the remaining states for which comparative data are available, PA costs in rural areas are actually greater than in urban areas. In the PUA sector the trend is as expected, where PUA costs are higher in urban areas for four out of five states for which comparable data are available. For Uttar Pradesh, the estimates are the third highest for rural PUA and the third lowest for urban PUA schools relative to other states.

State	Government		PA		PUA*	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Andhra Pradesh	576.06	683.19	1617	992.14	1971.43	1842.72
Assam	668.77	1222.07	583	3516.52	1266	NA
Bihar	846.27	859.70	1492.92	2008.81	1444.69	2029.17
Madhya Pradesh	704.04	723.55	929.42	NA	1149.32	2317.81
Rajasthan	1131.83	1261.57	NA	2289.99	1539.50	2779.44
Tamil Nadu	1329.03	890.01	2172.42	1438.56	2054.50	3310.33
Uttar Pradesh	920.49	1005.86	2233	1883.78	1753.18	2159.46
West Bengal	960.70	1567.94	4725	2686.38	NA	2815.75
Total	890.88	1100.59	1818.07	2830.60	1587.86	2268.23

Table 2.7 Household Expenditure on Elementary Education in Eight States (Rs./child), UNICEF Survey Data

Note. Source: Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002, p. 61.

*: The PUA data are for recognised schools only

As demonstrated by the brief presentation on household expenditure on elementary education, the variation in statistics drawn from different sources complicates the generation of overall trends. Although the data are dated, it is possible to ascertain that average costs for household expenditure on elementary education were greater in urban areas for the government and PUA sectors. Furthermore, as expected, both PA and PUA expenditure on elementary education is

higher than in the government sector but the PUA sector is the costliest option of the three. This, combined with the relatively higher cost of PUA education in rural Uttar Pradesh (almost double that of government schooling in rural and urban areas), highlights the importance of focusing on the school choice processes of disadvantaged groups accessing LFP schools, despite the fact that less costly options are available to them (discussed in Chapter 5).

2.4.4 Enrolment Trends in the Private Sector

While much has been said about the growth of the private sector in India (De et al., 2002; De et al., 2001; Kingdon, 1996a; Tooley, 1999), there is considerable debate on its exact size. In reference to her study on Uttar Pradesh, Kingdon (1996a) stresses that official figures “...underestimate the growth and size of the PUA school sector not only because they relate merely to the recognised part of the PUA sector but also, very importantly, because they exaggerate the growth and size of GPA [government and private aided] elementary enrolments due to the large-scale over-reporting of student numbers²⁰” (p. 3308). To compensate for these inaccuracies it is important to examine data from a variety of sources such as official macro-level education statistics along with national level household surveys, and targeted field and case studies. Comparative findings from these sources are discussed below.

Data show that there has been an increase in enrolment in all elementary education levels. Note that in India elementary education refers to the combined primary level (grades 1-5) and the junior or upper primary level (grades 6-8). Table 2.8 presents official 1982 and 1992 NCERT education survey report data for growth

²⁰ Kingdon presents a formula for calculating the true government and PA enrolments (treating government and PA as one category, GPA). Deflate the departmental primary enrolment figure by 51% to get the true total enrolment, x . Subtract PUA enrolments from x to get the true GPA enrolment (Kingdon, 1996, p. 3310).

in elementary enrolment by sector in urban India between 1976 and 1986²¹. It is evident that the government sector claimed the majority of students who enrolled during this period at the primary and junior levels. DISE data also support this although the figures were different (Table 2.3). However, the absolute increase in enrolment was largest in the PUA sector at the primary level and almost equivalent to that in the government sector at the junior level. Furthermore, the percentage increase of the PUA sector at both levels (117.4% for primary and 185.8% for junior) shows an explosion in the sector.

Level	School Type	1976	1986	Absolute Increase	Percentage Increase
Primary	Government	10,270,760	11,189,956	919,196	8.9
	PA	4,735,795	5,304,932	569,137	12.0
	PUA	1,663,969	3,617,791	1,953,822	117.4
Junior	Government	3,173,594	4,272,930	1,099,336	34.6
	PA	3,33,413	3,874,078	537,665	16.1
	PUA	48,266	1,395,610	907,344	185.8

Table 2.8 Growth in Elementary Education by School Type in Urban India, 1976-1986 NCERT Data

Note. Source: Extracted from Kingdon, 1996a, p. 3308.

Nonetheless, this should be kept in context. If the PUA sector was miniscule to begin with, the actual percentage figure is not relevant. What is relevant is the trend that the PUA figures uncover—more families chose to send their children to PUA schools than ever before. This may be due to greater spending power, increased parental perceptions of rapidly deteriorating school quality, and a greater availability of PUA schools charging a range of fees. Disadvantaged households’ reasons for choosing LFP case study schools are presented in Chapter 5.

Tilak (2001) estimates from NCAER data that in Uttar Pradesh, 30.3% of those children enrolled in primary and 22.7% in junior schools are in PUA schools. This would rank Uttar Pradesh first among the other 15 states in the study. However, Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2002) estimated that Uttar Pradesh had the second

²¹ As DISE data are different in nature (including recognised and unrecognised schools) and do not show absolute increases they are omitted here.

highest distribution²² of private school enrolments in elementary education at 44.6%. Again this shows the variability in different analyses. Nonetheless, a pattern seems to emerge for Uttar Pradesh as one of the leading states regarding the share of its enrolment in PUA schools, which could account for its low rankings in DISE data on government enrolment. When examining the share of enrolments that the PUA sector claimed as a percentage of all enrolments, De et al. (2001) compute the following figures shown in Table 2.9 for rural areas in Uttar Pradesh and nationally according to different data sources.

	NCERT, 1993		NCAER, 1994		NSSO, 1995-96	
	PA	PUA	PA	PUA	PA	PUA
Uttar Pradesh	9.3	13.2	16.5	27.2	10.5	19.3
All India	11.1	3.6	22.2	9.8	8.4	7.4

Table 2.9 Percent Share of Private Sector Enrolments for Rural Areas in Elementary Education

Note. Source: Extracted from De et al., 2001, p. 21.

It is obvious that there is a discrepancy in NCERT’s official school survey data, which seem to underestimate the role of the PUA sector in relation to NCAER and NSSO household survey data. Since NCAER and NSSO data encompass all types of schools (recognised and unrecognised), it seems that the true enrolment trend in the PUA sector is greater than previously thought, and is probably closer to the 9.8% reported by NCAER or the 7.4% by NSSO, rather than the 3.6% reported by NCERT. For Uttar Pradesh, all data sets report larger shares in the PUA sector than the PA sector, and are greater than all-India figures.

NSSO survey data from 1995-96 have also been analysed by Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2002) regarding elementary education enrolment rates in private sector recognised schools for urban and rural areas for the eight states in their study. Their analysis does not include national figures. Enrolment rates at primary and junior

²² This distribution figure refers to enrolments at the elementary level (primary + junior) in recognised PUA schools only. This figure was extracted by Mehrotra & Panchamukhi from the latest NSSO household survey of 1995-96.

levels are presented for Uttar Pradesh in Table 2.10 below. Ranks have been added to assess its position relative to other states.

	Primary				Junior			
	Govt	PA	PUA	PUA Rank	Govt	PA	PUA	*PUA Rank
Distribution of all children enrolled in recognised schools	66.6	8.6	24.8	2	52.0	28.2	19.8	2
Distribution of all children enrolled in recognised schools: urban areas	30	21	50	2	37	38	25	3
Distribution of all children enrolled in recognised schools: rural areas	76	6	17	2	61.3	19.4	19.4	1

Table 2.10 Distribution of Elementary School Enrolment by School Type for Uttar Pradesh

Note. Source: Extracted from Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002, Tables 1-3, based on NSSO survey data 1995-96.

*: Rank added by researcher.

Once again, according to the NSSO data it is evident that the PUA sector claimed a significant proportion of total elementary school enrolments in Uttar Pradesh at 24.8% for the primary and 19.8% and junior levels. Even in rural areas, the PUA sector comes second relative to the other states in share of enrolment at both levels. Perhaps more importantly, Uttar Pradesh consistently ranks at the top for PUA enrolment in elementary education, highlighting the need to further explore PUA schooling there as it is also classed as an educationally deprived state.

2.4.5 Summarising the Main Arguments for Private Education in India

A synthesis of the overall arguments in the literature on the prevalence of PUA schools revealed that the main explanations regarding the sudden growth of the private sector in India are based on four central arguments:

- Increasing demand for education as evidenced by increasing enrolment in rural and urban areas
- The inability of the state to adequately supply education to meet this demand due to a lack of funds or inefficient spending
- Increased household expenditure even among disadvantaged groups
- Deteriorating quality (real or perceived) of public education

Macro-level field-based studies indicate that parents have responded to a perceived deterioration in school quality of public schooling by increasingly opting for private schools (De et al., 2002; De et al., 2001; Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002; PROBE, 1999). Parents in the current study gave similar accounts for their reasons for choosing LFP schools (Chapter 5). According to the PROBE (1999) report: “Most parents stated that if the costs of sending a child to a government and private school were the same, they would rather send their children to a private school” (p. 102). According to PROBE’s findings, parents’ perceptions of private schools were generally favourable, as summarised below:

- *More accountability to parents*
- *Higher levels of teaching activity*
- *Less social discrimination*
- *More parental willingness to make sacrifices to send children to private schools because of their desire of a better quality school thought to exist in the private sector*

As previously discussed, while some studies have acknowledged the emergence of a private sector catering for disadvantaged groups, none have specifically focused on this sector. This highlights the need to examine parental perceptions about quality and reasons behind school choice in the PUA sector. Furthermore, it is necessary to explore household schooling patterns to examine whether there were differential enrolment patterns of children in LFP schools, given disadvantaged households’ constrained resources. Finally, within the EFA/UEE policy contexts, further issues about the nature of LFP schools and how they operate within state policy frameworks must be addressed to fill the gap on how educational needs can be better met. The final section briefly outlines the education system in Uttar Pradesh, and the State initiatives instituted for disadvantaged groups during the data collection period.

2.5 *Structure of the Education System in Uttar Pradesh*

Uttar Pradesh is India’s most populous state with a population of 166,197,921 (GoI, 2001). At the time of data collection, it had 70 administrative districts, Lucknow District being the capital district, with Lucknow City as its capital. Uttar Pradesh, along with Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and West Bengal, is classed as one of the most educationally backward states in India. These six states account for two-thirds of the country’s out of school children (Mehrotra & Panchamukhi, 2002). Furthermore, with a literacy rate of 57.36%, Uttar Pradesh was ranked 31st of the 35 states and territories in the latest census of 2001 (GoI, 2001). Latest available data during data collection show that Uttar Pradesh allocated 19.66% of its total budget for education expenditure, 17th out of 32 states and territories for which data were available (GoI, 2002b).

The latest data available during data collection showed the gross enrolment ratio²³ (GER) for elementary education in recognised schools only was the lowest in the country at 54.91% (GoI, 2002b). The same data reported a gross drop-out rate²⁴ for Uttar Pradesh as 61.02% in elementary education, which was the sixth highest in India (GoI, 2002b). Further GER and drop-out data are summarised in Table 2.11.

<i>Educational Indicators</i>	<i>Girls (UP)</i>	<i>Boys (UP)</i>	<i>Total (UP)</i>	<i>All-India Total</i>
Overall GER	40.90	67.57	54.91	81.58
GER for SC groups	43.90	79.60	62.40	86.77
GER for ST groups	77.73	120.92	100.08	88.04
Overall Gross Drop-out Rate	68.54	56.26	61.02	53.67

Table 2.11 GER and Gross Drop-out Rates for Children in Recognised Schools in Uttar Pradesh in Elementary Education

Note. Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2000-2001, (GoI, 2002b)

²³ GER is defined as the percentage of enrolment at a given educational level (for example in elementary education) to the estimated child population in the relevant age group (e.g. 6-14 years). However, as enrolment may include children over and under-age the GER can be greater than 100%. The GER presented here was calculated based on recognised schools only. It is therefore estimated that the actual GER is higher than reported.

²⁴ Gross drop-out rate was defined as the percentage of pupils who drop out from a given cycle or level of education in a given year. The Government of India report calculated it as: {1-(Enrolment in grade 8 during 2000-2001/enrolment in grade 1 during 1993-1994)} * 100. Discrete drop-out rates for children belonging to scheduled caste or scheduled tribe groups were unavailable.

Note the low GERs and high drop-out rates for India as a whole in addition to Uttar Pradesh's even lower performance. Surprisingly, however, the GER for children belonging to ST groups was 100.08%. Nonetheless, despite the gender parity of 0.90 reported in DISE data for unrecognised and recognised schools, these data on recognised schools show considerable gender gaps on all indicators. One could speculate that girls, if enrolled, were more likely to be enrolled in unrecognised private schools than government or recognised private schools. Given low literacy levels and performance on educational indicators, it is surprising that as previous enrolment analyses and DISE data show, Uttar Pradesh ranks in the top positions for private school enrolments in elementary education and for the number of recognised and unrecognised PUA schools, making it an ideal location for this study.

The organisation and administration of education in Uttar Pradesh is complex. Uttar Pradesh has a four-tier administrative set-up at the levels of the state, region, district, and sub-district (GoUP, 1990). Government officials reported that the result of such a large and differentiated system complicates coordination between the different units and those in charge of basic (primary and junior) and secondary (high school and intermediate) education. For the purposes of this study and given their relevance, only structures governing these levels will be discussed.

At the Secretariat level, the Minister of Education (Secondary) and the Minister of State (Independent Charge), Basic Education, are the two officials in charge of basic and secondary education in the State. The Principal Secretary (Education) is the Chief Executive Officer of the Department who oversees the work of the Secretary (Basic Education) and Secretary (Secondary Education) (Tyagi & Shardindu, 1999). There are five Directorates of Education: Directorate of Education (Basic), Directorate of Education (Secondary), Directorate of Adult Education, Directorate of Urdu Education, and the State Council of Educational Research and

Training, each headed by a Director of Education (GoUP, 1990; Tyagi & Shardindu, 1999). Most of the overall administrative work and educational planning is done through the concerned directorates of each sector.

The 'field-level' set-up is coordinated through the Inspectorates of Education for Basic and Secondary Education, which are again headed by the Directors of Education as above (Tyagi & Shardindu, 1999). This is where the regional, district, and sub-district officers assume importance, and where most of the day-to-day administration and planning is undertaken. The Regional Assistant Directors (for basic education) and Regional Joint Directors/Deputy Directors (for secondary education) are responsible for a set of districts under their purview. For Lucknow Region this constituted 6 districts (GO7-1, Struc/St, p. 8).

According to the Government of Uttar Pradesh (1990), the "district is the most important unit of planning and implementation for school education in the State" (p. 14). Each district has a District Education Officer (DEO) (*Basic Shiksha Adhikari*) for basic education, and a District Inspector of Schools (DIOS) for secondary education who is the main point of contact for schools. These officers assumed the most importance for LFP case study schools (discussed in Chapter 7). Finally, at the sub-district level, each district is divided into educational circles according to a number of schools (which may or may not correspond to development blocks²⁵), corresponding roughly to 60-75 schools for basic education and 50 to 60 schools for secondary education with an Inspector of Schools (GoUP, 1990, p. 15). Sub-deputy Inspectors (SDI) in Basic Education assume this role for basic education.

²⁵ According to GoUP (1990), the general administrative set-up for Uttar Pradesh at the district level is headed by the District Magistrate, with two branches: the revenue set-up and the developmental set-up. The developmental set-up includes a 'block', a collection of villages headed by the Block Developmental Officer, under this comes the Village Developmental Officer at the grass-roots village level. SDIs most often work at the block level.

To facilitate the monitoring of education at the grassroots village and district level, three additional committees have been established: District Basic Education Committee (*Zilla Basic Shiksha Samiti*), Basic Education Committee (Urban) (*Nagar Basic Shiksha Samiti*), and Village Education Committee (VEC) (*Gram Shiksha Samiti*). Each committee is responsible for monitoring the state of education in its immediate vicinity, and was envisaged as an agent of direct contact and change at the grassroots level. Some international development programmes such as DPEP actively involved the VEC to mobilise parents to achieve set targets. However, some case study principals did not see them as adding to a positive educational climate. Some district officials felt that even though large bureaucratic machinery was necessary to cover all schools, villages, and districts, it promoted inefficiency due to poor coordination.

2.6 State Education Initiatives for Disadvantaged Children

The main priority areas for education in Uttar Pradesh were girls' education, the removal of educational disparities between different social groups, non-formal education, adult literacy, access to secondary education, vocationalisation in secondary education, changes in the examination system, quality improvement, and the strengthening of teacher education (Premi, 2001; Tyagi & Shardindu, 1999). Many of these goals, specifically those to do with girls' education and minimising educational disparities between different groups of children, were targeted under the broader national and international EFA/UEE goals. The following discussion will summarise State initiatives for disadvantaged groups that were being implemented in Lucknow District during the data collection period in order to contextualise the state scenario for the LFP case study schools' target group.

The State provided a variety of incentives to girls and children belonging to SC, ST, or OBC groups. State officials most often mentioned the free provision of

textbooks to all girls in government schools until grade 8, and free textbooks to boys from SC, ST, or OBC groups in government primary schools. All children attending state primary schools were eligible for the 'mid-day' meal scheme, which was implemented by providing 3 kg of wheat per month per child, provided that they had a minimum attendance of 80%. In addition, children belonging to SC, ST, OBC, or minority groups were eligible for scholarships at increasing rates at all levels of education. State officials saw these as incentives promoting enrolment and improving retention for children already enrolled.

While the state incentives above indirectly contributed to the focus on universal enrolment, access, and retention some schemes were implemented to directly address these goals. While the World Bank DPEP programme and the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Project (which grew out of DPEP) were lauded by some officials, they were not operational in Lucknow District. This is because the initial selection of programme districts was contingent on the female literacy rate, which was comparatively higher in Lucknow District than those selected.

The centrally-sponsored SSA scheme (described in Section 2.2) was the main programme covering UEE and EFA in India and was operational in Uttar Pradesh and Lucknow District. Special initiatives under SSA were the EGS and Alternative and Innovative Education Centres (AIE). EGS and AIE centres were to be implemented in underserved areas or where there are no primary schools in a 1 km radius (GO6-1, GovtIni/St, p. 5; GO8-1, GovtIni/St, p.3). The total number of EGS and AIE centres sanctioned for Uttar Pradesh was 2179 (GoI, 2002a).

Programme officials explained that the EGS scheme enabled the establishment of an educational centre where there were 25-30 children between the ages of six to nine who were never enrolled in school. This could be in areas where children could not regularly attend because of conflicting school and working hours,

or in slum areas, remote villages, and underserved locales. A community member who was at least a high school graduate was selected to be a “child-worker”, and was provided some training. EGS centres were designed to provide four hours of instruction per day at a time convenient for the children. In the case of child labour, this may be in the evenings. AIE centres operated under the same aegis but were designed to cover all of elementary education, whereas EGS centres were specifically geared for instruction equivalent to grades 1 and 2. The scheme also supported “flexible strategies including schools in unserved habitations, seasonal hostels or condense[d] courses for migrating children, bridge courses, residential camps, drop-in centres for street or slum children, remedial coaching for children enrolled in formal schools and short duration summer camps” (GoI, 2002a, p. 68).

Additionally, there were attempts to strengthen *Anganwadis* which operated through the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), and the establishment of Early Child Care Education (ECCE) centres. *Anganwadis* were set up by ICDS as pre-primary centres attached to primary schools in order to promote enrolment and retention of girls, who were otherwise entrusted with looking after younger siblings. *Anganwadis* were established as four-hour centres, which did not coincide with teaching hours at all schools. ECCE projects aimed to strengthen this by providing training, “teaching-learning materials”, and extra honoraria to instructors for extending hours to coincide with schools and to ensure that *anganwadis* were brought into school campuses or in their immediate vicinity.

Janshala, a programme funded by five United Nations agencies²⁶, that was operational in nine states, began covering two urban and eight rural areas in Lucknow District from 2000 (GO9-1, p. 1). The agencies contributed 85% of the programme budget and the State was responsible for the remaining 15%. *Janshala*’s main aims

²⁶ The five UN agencies contributing to *Janshala* are: UNICEF, UNESCO, ILO, UNDP, and UNFPA.

were community mobilisation, teacher empowerment, and inter-departmental convergence to meet educational goals. The programme employed a “step-by-step community-based approach” by visibly marking houses where children were not enrolled, intensive programme awareness through workshops, training of the VEC, and quality improvement of state schools through Mother-Teacher-Associations. Originally finishing in 2002, a programme extension was granted until March 2005.

Finally, SCA the ‘Let’s Go to School’ Campaign, was launched specifically in Uttar Pradesh in 2000 and intensely in Lucknow District, by the then Chief Minister as an enrolment drive focused on disadvantaged groups. The campaign is run each year during the month of July to encourage as many new enrolments as possible, and to increase awareness of the State’s various education incentives for disadvantaged groups. The campaign was launched as a door-to-door initiative and involved government officers and state school teachers. Officers noted that while they were successful in increasing enrolment, retention was not as easily achieved.

Most of these initiatives were either centrally-sponsored or had a strong external funding component to them. As Dyer (2000) notes, “The inflow of central funding, often in the guise of centrally sponsored and conditional schemes, allows the centre to determine what that innovation should be—a very powerful way of setting the direction of the development of education” (p. 19). It seems that the Central and State governments were more concerned with UEE and EFA in a rush to meet international targets rather than addressing quality issues and adequately assessing disadvantaged households’ schooling choices and behaviours. Thus, none of the schemes at the time of data collection were specifically geared towards quality improvement in the state sector with the exception of one of Janshala’s components. Even though initiatives were geared to attract students, most did not incorporate disadvantaged parents’ conceptions of quality or assess their reasons for not enrolling

children in the first place. The issue is further compounded as results of this study show that disadvantaged households would rather not enrol children than send them to a perceived low-quality state school.

The context for the emergence of LFP schooling and this study is undoubtedly diverse, and based on relative notions of quality, debates on public/private provision, and state initiatives for disadvantaged groups. In addition to contextual debates, the study was underpinned by three theoretical concepts: school markets, school choice, and new institutionalism, which are the focus of the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3 Foundational Theoretical Concepts

A Focused Review of the Literature

This review concentrates on the three theoretical concepts that lie at the heart of this study. The study is informed by and problematises certain assumptions taken for granted in the literature surrounding market mechanisms in education and school choice, by extending their applicability to an emerging private sector in a developing country context and to the schooling decisions made by disadvantaged parents. In addition, the review will highlight the usefulness of NIE as an appropriate and powerful tool for examining the emergence of the LFP sector as a new private model of schooling, and the overall impact it could have on the greater institutional framework for the provision and delivery of schooling for disadvantaged groups.

3.1 Key Concepts about Marketisation in Education

Any analysis on an emerging model of private schooling must take into account markets in education and their mechanisms. The analysis in this study on market mechanisms is unique, as much of the traditional literature on education markets has been developed almost exclusively in Western contexts where the idea of

marketisation has been applied to public education by introducing policy initiatives such as open enrolment in the UK and public school vouchers and charter schools in the US. The analysis in this study has a different starting point as issues of marketisation are linked very closely to privatisation. Chitty (1997) stresses that when examining marketisation, it is important to determine which system of privatisation (if any) the resulting education markets emerged from. He explains that privatisation in education can assume three basic forms: (1) private expense of educational services which ought to be free within the public system, (2) purchasing of educational service from private organisations at public expense, and (3) a sense of impoverishment of the “maintained sector to such an extent that anxious parents with adequate means felt more or less obliged to select some form of private education for their children” (Chitty, 1997, p. 46).

Interestingly, in the Indian context these three types of privatisation co-exist. As in the first case, even those parents who send their children to state schools are required to pay minimal fees. The second type of privatisation is supported through the PA sector, where the state provides PA schools with much of their operating budget through state funding. But of primary of interest here, is the third type of privatisation in Chitty’s categorisation. Preliminary reports about the LFP sector in India suggest that it has flourished as a result of the perceived deteriorating quality of state schools (De et al., 2001; 2002; PROBE, 1999). While there is a long-standing tradition in India for upper classes to send their children to private schools, it seems that this trend is becoming prevalent even among disadvantaged groups. The latter seem to send their children to LFP schools as a response to their perceptions of a malfunctioning system and as a recourse to ‘no other choice’. Since LFP schools, as defined in this study, are fully privately run and funded through client fees, they

would be considered as operating through privatisation in its purist form according to Chitty's analysis.

Thus, the analysis of an education sector disassociated from the state makes an interesting case for market analysis, approximating at least on the surface, a system much closer to what economists would term a "free market", rather than in cases applied thus far in the literature focusing on systems still closely linked to the state either in funding or management. As Vandenberghe (1999) notes, there are "Very few educational systems [that] operate like real markets where 'providers'...are financed directly by their 'clients' through fees, and where the 'clients' enjoy some freedom of choice" (p. 272). While the LFP sector fulfils Vandenberghe's two main criteria of being directly financed through fees and freedom of choice between providers, the issue for this study is to examine whether or not the LFP sector approximates the free market in practice or whether it performs differently due to its own peculiarities.

3.1.1 The Application of Market Theory in Education

The first application of markets to education has been attributed to Friedman¹ (1962) who introduced the concept of vouchers "redeemable for a specified maximum sum per child per year if spent on 'approved' educational services" (p. 89). In his conception, parents could top up the voucher for use at any approved for-profit or non-profit educational organisation of their choice. The crux of Friedman's conception lay in minimal government intervention in education, apart from setting minimum education levels and regulating approved schools through basic standards, primarily in curricula and school facilities. Friedman (1962) argued that the market would lead to increased efficiency in schooling as "Parents could

¹ The 1962 version of Friedman's paper, 'The Role of Government in Education', is a reprint of the original published in Solo, R.A. (Ed.) (1955), *Economics and the Public Interest*, Rutgers College, New Jersey.

express their views about schools directly by withdrawing their children from one school and sending them to another” (p. 91). Hence, in his analysis, the market mechanism of exit and increased choice over the “cumbrous political channels” of voice (Friedman, 1962) would result in competition between schools and improved provision and delivery of education. Ultimately he believed that in education “as in other fields, competitive enterprise is likely to be far more efficient in meeting consumer demand than either nationalised enterprises or enterprises run to serve other purposes [such as religious schools]” (Friedman, 1962, p. 91).

This argument for increased efficiency through the competitive nature of marketisation is one reprised by many recent advocates of markets in education (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hoxby, 2003; Tooley, 2000). Lauder and Hughes (1999) (although critics of the market) summarise the following related arguments and hypotheses of the literature on markets in education:

1. Parents will have equal knowledge about schools and the power to send their children to the school of their choice.
2. Schools will become more ethnically and socially mixed because less well-off parents will escape the iron cage of zoning.
3. Schools will become more diverse as they accommodate parental demands.
4. Education markets will drive up school performance through competition for students.
5. The quality of teaching will be raised in an education market. Bad teachers will be fired while good teachers’ morale, motivation and performance will be raised (p. 18).

The authors note that these assumptions about the effects of marketisation in education stem from closely conceptualising them to the economic model of “perfect competition”. Belfield (2000) further explains that the attractiveness for economists in so doing hinges on the fact that the “perfectly competitive market remains the benchmark against which other structures are compared” (p. 144). He concludes that

broadly speaking from an economic standpoint, except for the fact that there are certain barriers for new schools to enter the market and for existing ones to exit it, schooling seems quite amenable to the idea of increasing efficiency through competitive markets.

At this point it becomes important to state a further observation about some confusion in the literature on the concept of 'efficiency' when applied to education. While many studies use the term, they do not explicitly define it. So claims of increased efficiency are difficult to judge. For example, Belfield (2000) refers to improved efficiency as "leading to improved provision" (p. 145) and defines it in terms of school-level educational processes, such as the hiring of staff, more direct resource allocation to the classroom, and goal-setting. However, by his own admission, 'efficiency' may also refer to streamlining the number of administrative units in education or a reduction in per-pupil spending at the district or school levels.

Bartlett and Le Grand (1993) explain that efficiency can be examined in two basic ways: (1) "crude efficiency" that examines the cost of service provision and stresses the minimisation of the total cost of delivery or (b) "productive efficiency" which explicitly relates the cost of a service to the quality or quantity of its provision (pp. 14-15). They explain that a low-cost service with low quality or quantity provision is deemed to be less productively efficient than a higher cost system producing a higher quality and quantity of service, as the per unit cost may be lower in the latter. The latter is an example of 'value for money', whereas the former is simply a cost-cutting exercise. Therefore, when examining the virtues or vices of education markets in efficiency terms it is important to be explicit about what it is that is being measured, currently lacking in much of the literature on the topic.

With that caveat, we can now return to the discussion about the underlying assumptions of market mechanisms. Educational research takes exception to some of

the other assumptions exalted about education markets due to the particularities of education as a good. First of all, the assumption that all clients have equal information and knowledge about schools is shown to be mitigated by class factors (Ball, 2003; Ball & Vincent, 1998; Carroll & Walford, 1997; Gewritz et al., 1995). Secondly, in light of the above class-related factors, the assumptions about increased social diversity and mixing is theoretically at best approached with trepidation but mostly with outright dismissal (Lauder & Hughes, 1999; Walford, 1994a; Whitty, Power, & Halpin, 1998). Empirical studies paint a more complicated picture. After the introduction of market reforms in New Zealand, ethnic segregation increased in secondary schools while socio-economic segregation decreased tentatively (Waslander & Thrupp, 1997). However, the same study showed that while school segregation was less than residential segregation by ethnicity, it was higher than residential segregation for socio-economic class.

A comprehensive study on England and Wales by Gorard, Taylor, and Fitz (2003) showed that there were specific periods of interest with respect to segregation. The researchers note that from 1990-1994 socio-economic segregation and broadly decreased, from 1995 to 1997 it flattened, and from 1998 to 2001, segregation in England increased. In light of the trend towards increasing segregation, follow-up studies beyond the final period for which data were available must be conducted in order to ascertain which trend will hold: that towards decreasing or increasing segregation. Nonetheless, since the final segregation figure in 2001 was marginally lower than the initial figure in 1989, the researchers concluded that:

These policies are not associated with increasing concentrations of disadvantaged children in some schools and their absence in others, rather the reverse. The relevant legislation, enacted in 1988, only began to take effect in schools after 1989 and had increasing impact for successive cohorts. In the year following the 1988 Act, which allowed every family to request a place at any school, there was a slight increase in between-school stratification, followed by a marked decline representing a very large social

change involving hundreds of thousands of students (Gorard et al., 2003, pp. 52-53).

Even though the empirical studies mentioned above make a valuable contribution to understanding the effects of market-led policies, such broad-based studies in the international arena are scarce, meaning results like the ones above are treated with suspicion by many market critics.

The fourth assumption about competition driving up performance is also criticised because exit may be pre-empted by either insufficient supply of alternatives (as in rural or remote areas) resulting in a virtual monopoly of provision in certain areas, or the perceived high costs by parents of disrupting a child's educational experience by frequent exits from schools. The fifth assumption conceptualises an organisation where bureaucratic controls over the tenure of its employees are fairly minimal. Depending on the nature of the hiring, firing, and tenure procedures, and the degree to which employment contracts are centralised in various school systems (either through school boards, district authorities, or with state or central governments), it may not be possible for schools to take immediate action to increase the effectiveness of teaching staff.

Friedman himself highlighted two further peculiarities of education as a good, which add to the complications of treating markets in education as pure competitive markets. The first was related to what he termed, "neighbourhood effects", which are "circumstances under which the action of one individual imposes significant costs on other individuals for which it is not feasible to make him[/her] compensate them, or yields significant gains to other individuals for which it is not feasible to make them compensate him [/her]" (Friedman, 1962, p. 85-86). In other words, education is not purely a private good. The effect of the poor education of a group of children attending schools of comparatively low quality will have deleterious effects on others

in society. Similarly, for example, choices made by one group of parents at a specific point in time that lead to school closures can have resounding effects for future generations of children, particularly if demand increases due to higher birth rates or the numbers of school-aged children. As Walford (1994a) notes, it is easier to close schools than to open them.

The second is what Friedman (1962) termed the “paternalistic concern for children and other irresponsible individuals” (p. 86). There is the need for the state to be involved in education (particularly in developing countries) where schooling is not yet universal, making it compulsory to some minimal level and enforcing that compulsion to uphold children’s right to education. In addition, there may be added equity concerns in developing countries of instituting programmes that disproportionately benefit disadvantaged or excluded groups through bursaries or other incentives. Therefore, given the undoubtedly inescapable state role in education in some areas of provision and delivery (as outlined even by the staunchest of market supporters), a theory of “quasi-markets” in education was proposed to understand the particularities of markets in education.

3.1.2 *Quasi-Markets in Education*

Le Grand (1991) notes that the general trend towards quasi-markets in social services including education in the UK and elsewhere, stems primarily from a general disenchantment with large providers, public or private. As in the free market model, the main appeal of quasi-markets is that the introduction of competition can potentially empower those individuals who may have otherwise been excluded from making a choice about the service providers they wished to access. The main point is that quasi-markets frame choice differently, as there is a distinction between quasi-markets in the provision of social services and markets providing other goods:

They [quasi-markets] are 'markets' because they replace monopolistic state providers with competitive independent ones. They are 'quasi' because they differ from conventional markets in a number of key ways. [...] These welfare quasi-markets thus differ from conventional markets in one or more of three ways: not-for-profit organisations competing for public contracts, sometimes in competition with for-profit organisations; consumer purchasing power in the form of vouchers rather than cash; and, in some cases, the consumers are represented in the market by agents instead of operating by themselves (Le Grand, 1991, pp. 1259-1260).

Glennerster (1991) notes additional differences in the education quasi-market such as restricted entry and exit to and from the market, restricted choice because of limited diversity in curricula, and the setting of teachers' salary on a national salary scale in many countries. Thus, Greenaway (1991) reminds us that most reforms currently being witnessed will not completely transform education as totally market-based, but will simply alter the role of the state either as provider, financier, or regulator. Undoubtedly then, quasi-markets will have a different 'look' according to the specific institutional requirements placed on providers by the state in different contexts, as shown by Whitty, Power, & Halpin's (1998) and Whitty's (1997) analyses.

This last point has special application to the case at hand regarding the prevalence of the LFP sector in India, as in this model education is increasingly delivered through market provision which is financed directly through clients. Unlike the scenario outlined by Le Grand, LFP schools compete not for public contracts but directly for clients. One of this study's concerns will be to examine whether they are in fact run as for-profit or non-profit organisations. If LFP schools are found to run as for-profit entities, then the belief that "a for-profit company [a school] will be more rapid in its response to changing parental preferences because the opportunity to achieve higher profits through serving unmet wants will overcome adherence to 'tried and trusted ways of doing things'" (Adnett & Davies, 2002, p. 106), must be examined in relation to their responsiveness. A second difference is that clients (parents) make the choice for themselves and not through an agent. Finally, the role

of the state and its degree of involvement in the regulation of these types of schools assumes importance for determining whether the LFP sector functions more like a quasi-market or a free market.

Bartlett and Le Grand (1993) outline that reforms in education through the quasi-market should be judged through the criteria of: efficiency (productive efficiency), responsiveness to clients, choice, and equity in relation to need. Therefore, a greater proportion of resources spent on disadvantaged groups would be considered equitable in this framework. Bartlett and Le Grand (1993) also outlined certain conditions for successful quasi-markets with respect to the conditions above: (1) a competitive market structure in which providers are unable to influence the market price by changing output and purchasers are unable to influence price by changing their purchases; (2) both sides should have cheap and accurate information: for the providers this relates to information allowing them to properly price the service and for clients this relates to information on monitoring the quality of service so that lower cost does not translate into lower quality; (3) transaction costs and uncertainty: transaction costs should be low and there must be mechanisms to deal with uncertainty that should not be too costly to be more efficient than systems already in place; (4) motivation: providers should be motivated at least in part by financial considerations and in the case where purchasers are made by agents, they must be motivated to pursue the welfare of the actual users; and (5) mechanisms must be in place to prevent cream-skimming of clients.

Of particular importance is the authors' assertion that the success of quasi-markets depends on the extent to which *all* of the above conditions are met. It seems therefore, that the checks placed on quasi-markets are more stringent than on free markets, marking another fundamental difference between the two models. Nonetheless, despite these checks, Whitty (1997) concludes from his analysis of

quasi-markets in England, New Zealand, and the US that “the creation of quasi-markets is likely to exacerbate existing inequalities, especially in instances in which the broader political climate and the prevailing approach to government regulation are geared to other priorities” (p. 5). Thus, if it is found that the LFP sector acts more like a quasi-market than a free market primarily because of the degree of state involvement, the need for it to be judged by these criteria assumes primary importance, specifically regarding equity implications since its clients are mainly disadvantaged groups. However, it must also take into account the broader institutional framework within which the LFP sector operates to determine its success in promoting efficiency, responsiveness choice, and equity. As a result, a focus on the institutional framework will be the final aim of the study, using the paradigm of new institutionalism (Section 3.3). However, the role of “lived markets” must also be addressed in such an analytic programme.

3.1.3 The Applicability of ‘Lived Markets’

As Waslander and Thrupp (1997) highlight, “market behaviour can only be understood in terms of the specific *cultural contexts* in which markets are located and the *practices of cooperation and collusion which emerge from those contexts*” (emphases added) (p. 439). Hence, the concept of the lived market ties together the operation of specific market mechanisms framing the nature of school choice with the broader institutional framework within which it operates, providing the backbone for this study. Approaching the analysis through lived markets is crucial to examining the emergence of a new model of private education operating through some form of market mechanisms (whether free or quasi) in a country where little detailed analysis of education market operations and choice factors has been carried out.

In order to focus on the specificities of the market regarding organisational arrangements that materialise (e.g. cooperation or collusion) and the cultural context within which individual actors (parents) interact with those organisations to make their choices, it is essential to focus on the institutional framework in which such arrangements and choices are made and how they are influenced and influence it in turn. As Waslander and Thrupp (1997) stress, “the outcomes of any specific market will be determined by the combination of formal properties and informal arrangements within the market. We call this combination of formal properties, informal arrangements and outcomes, the *lived market*” (emphasis in original) (p. 439). Regarding LFP schools it may be helpful to approach the institutional analysis by keeping the following explanation of the lived market in mind:

Markets need to be studied in context because the outcomes generated by education markets will be determined both by the *formal properties and informal arrangements of and within the market*. The formal properties are typically established by legislation. Informal arrangements within a market are created by the actors, in this case schools, who will *respond to competition by modifying it to their advantage* (emphases added) (Lauder & Hughes, 1999, p. 84).

This is particularly crucial in a developing country context where national education agendas often result as the influence of large international organisations. As Lauder and Hughes (1999) stress regarding the spread of privatisation and marketisation in education in developing countries:

Ideas may travel quickly around the globe but they do not travel at random. Powerful global agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and the OECD [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development] are sympathetic to such concepts as decentralisation, privatisation, and markets in state education...and help them spread around the world. Indeed, the World Bank has sought to impose these ideas in the so-called Third World. The problem is that it is one thing to entertain an ideal notion of how markets should work and it is another thing altogether to realise that ideal when markets are actually introduced (p. 34).

The lived market will be important in mapping out the actions of organisational actors in LFP schools and their interaction with the formal

institutional framework in response to competitiveness. It will be even more crucial, perhaps, in understanding the influence that these schools may have in altering the current provision and delivery of education for disadvantaged groups. This will be analysed by applying concepts from new institutionalism presented after a discussion of school choice concepts key to this study.

3.2 Key School Choice Concepts

Traditional school choice literature has concentrated on more economically advantaged countries such as the UK, USA, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia. This makes an assessment of school choice regarding groups traditionally excluded from education in developing country contexts difficult. Apart from studies on voucher programmes in Chile and other developing countries (Gauri & Vawda, 2004; McEwan & Carnoy, 2000; Mizala & Romaguera, 2000), (which have little relevance to public and private sector choice by disadvantaged groups in the absence of a programme of government or private financial support), other literature on school choice in developing country contexts is limited (Alderman et. al, 2001; Glewwe & Jacoby, 1994; Kim et. al, 1999). An extensive literature search and consultation with experts in the field revealed that the majority of the literature surrounding schooling behaviours in developing country contexts rests either on examining the public-private mix of provision and delivery (James, 1993; James et. al, 1996; Jimenez et. al, 1989; Jimenez et. al, 1991 Jimenez et. al, 1988); comparative achievement studies (Kingdon, 1996b), or educational expenditure (Bray, 2002; Ebel, 1991; Patrinos & Ariasingam, 1997).

Much of the rhetoric surrounding international development and education presents disadvantaged or excluded groups as homogenous. They are characterised as being disinterested in schooling, ignorant of its benefits and, when faced with limited

financial resources, unwilling to send their children to school. This can be seen in the international push for public school enrolment drives under the EFA banner and the MDGs, without substantial analyses of disadvantaged parents' schooling decisions and preferences (as discussed in Chapter 2).

It seems that the missing link in the analysis of schooling behaviours, decisions, and preferences of disadvantaged groups in developing countries, is sufficient literature from educational studies on school choice, and an over-reliance on economic literature through large international organisations with vested interests in setting the international education agenda. While some studies may look at schooling patterns based on economic models within households, they do not examine *how such schooling decisions are made within households*. Given the very real consequence that international organisations have in influencing developing countries' education agendas (Colclough & Lewin, 1993; Crossley & Watson, 2003; Lauder & Hughes, 1999), coupled with the fact that such analyses are heavily reliant solely on economic models, the need for educational researchers to tackle such issues is crucial.

While traditional school choice literature largely fails to present models based on disadvantaged groups in developing country contexts, it nonetheless offers some concepts that can act as springboards for the development of such a model and add to the limited understanding that currently exists. As the school choice literature is vast and not wholly applicable to developing country contexts, the following review extracts the most useful concepts in providing a theoretical underpinning for the current study. In the process, it hopes to extend our current understanding of school choice concepts by applying them to a different context. As this is an area of emerging research, the review is meant to highlight concepts immediately crucial to the study and is not meant as a definitive analysis.

3.2.1 Reframing School Choice for the Indian Context

As Willms and Echols (1992) stress: “Contextual effects have important implications for the choice process, which have been neglected in discussions of the likely effects of choice mechanisms” (p. 341). The importance of context when framing school choice debates is highlighted by many theorists, whether it be as Walford (1996a) notes, with respect to the degree of regulation of the education quasi-market, the extent of the involvement of the private sector, or crucially the relationships between choice and competition. While many studies have looked at the importance of local context for choice in more economically advantaged countries (Adler & Raab, 1988; Gorard et al., 2003; Willms & Echols, 1992), the same is not true for developing country contexts. Given the international push to achieve education targets, it is rather surprising that little research has been conducted on school choice processes in developing countries. The precise context of the Indian situation necessitates that an analysis of school choice must depart from traditional school choice literature in the following ways.

Firstly, unlike the USA or UK, school choice as a “policy that is designed to reduce the constraints that current school configurations place on schools and students” (Goldhaber, 1999, p. 16), is not applicable to India. This is because the system of catchments dictating public school allocation does not exist in principle, while it may be that most parents who send their children to state schools do so based on distance. As per most State and Central Government regulations, most government schools are not to deny admission to any child who wishes to be enrolled in that particular school. Therefore, at least in principle, parents have a choice in terms of which government school they would like to access. This marks a crucial difference between the two contexts.

Secondly, as in the case of the UK and USA, where more privileged parents had the freedom to choose private schooling for their children (Ball, 2003; Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995; Goldhaber, 2000; Power, Edwards, Whitty, & Wigfall, 2003), the same existed for the upper middle class and elites in India. However, the use of the private sector by parents from lower middle-class and disadvantaged groups marks the need to examine changing school choice patterns. The change seems to be linked at least partly, to an increase in differentiated private sector education provision largely distinguished by the level of fees charged (discussed in Chapter 5). Thus, contrary to assumptions about disadvantaged groups' schooling behaviours, school choice analyses must focus on public and private choice among this group as well.

This leads to the final distinction, which is that the main contributor to increased school choice for disadvantaged groups seems to be increased privatisation and not voucher schemes or other public sector reforms. School choice in the current Indian context must therefore be analysed through a distinction of different choice systems. The distinction between what Tooley (1997) describes as choice_s, the system where parental choice exists within heavy state regulations, funding, and school provision; or choice_m, choice between competing suppliers, with an opening of the supply-side reducing state monopoly in supply and funding, can prove to be useful here. As Carnoy (2000) notes, "When choice is about privatisation, we need to know much more about how such an educational system would look" (p. 15). Given that increased choice for disadvantaged groups is related to increased privatisation, this study takes Carnoy's assessment as one of its central premises. The increase in the number of LFP schools targeting precisely those households that had little choice before, highlights the need to assess how that choice is made in light of increased privatisation and marketisation.

In light of a context fuelled by increased privatisation resulting in greater school choice to disadvantaged groups within as well as between sectors, we find ourselves at the centre of the debate that has concerned Western countries: the issue of increased public and private school choice and its influence on equity (Brighouse, 2000; Gewirtz et al., 1995; Walford, 1994a). This is in addition to the other familiar debates of choice for its own sake (Hargreaves, 1996a; Hargreaves, 1996b) versus concerns over increased stratification (Power et al., 2003; Tomlinson, 1997; Walford, 1996b; Walford, 1996c); and increased educational standards through increased competition in the market (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hoxby 2003) versus concerns over the influence of school choice and “sink schools” or “spirals of decline” (Adler & Raab, 1988; Gorard, Taylor, & Fitz, 2002) and student achievement (Gorard et al., 2003; Stevans & Sessions, 2002).

However, these debates are outside the dominant education discourse in India, which is mainly concerned with access to schooling for disadvantaged groups primarily in the public sector (discussed in Chapter 2). Empirical evidence and theoretical debates linking school choice to any debates above for the Indian context are virtually non-existent². Focusing on the dynamics of school choice for disadvantaged households has gone relatively ignored in development and educational research, despite the fact that it can provide a more realistic account of its potential effects on and consequences for existing public and private sectors, and extend our current understanding of the concept by applying it to a new context.

It is argued that this is because educational research agendas, (like education policy agendas) are set by middle-class elites (Balagopalan, 2004), who view

² Much of the research on public/private schooling in India can be summarised as relating to issues of efficiency and effectiveness and some on achievement. As the relevant research presented in Chapter 2 showed, while some focused on girls' and boys' schooling patterns and some on general quality perceptions, none focused specifically on the dynamics of school choice of disadvantaged groups.

disadvantaged groups with either no choice at all (despite the burgeoning LFP sector targeting them), unwilling to exercise any choice they have, or uninterested in playing an active role in their children's education. The focus of the following section is on recentring this agenda by applying theoretical concepts that may be relevant to school choice processes in this group, as well as focusing on strategies they may use to engage with schooling in light of an increasing privatised and marketised sector.

3.2.2 *Do Exit, Voice, and Loyalty Apply?*

Assessing school choice in the LFP sector necessitates an analysis hinging on patterns of interaction with a private consumer orientation. The concepts of exit, voice, and loyalty described by Hirschman (1970), provide a starting point for thinking about how the introduction of market forces in education provision for disadvantaged groups in India can alter or instigate their interaction and engagement with LFP schools in particular and the education sector in general. Although Hirschman developed the concepts to explain customer or member responses to declining firms or organisations, he explicitly intended them to be applied to other contexts and frequently used public/private education as an example to illustrate client behaviour.

It is therefore surprising that while the concepts are frequently referred to as generally accepted patterns of behaviour regarding school choice, relatively few studies as a proportion of the vast school choice literature (Adler & Raab, 1988; Gordon, 1996; King & Taylor-King, 2002; Matland, 1995; Moore, 1990; Willms & Echols, 1992) have actually used the concepts as explicit bases of analysis. As part of its focus on patterns of engagement with LFP schools, this study attempts to do so. It is hoped that as a consequence of applying them to a context other than the one

they were developed in, the analysis will question certain assumptions about the three concepts, which are often taken for granted.

Hirschman (1970) explains that in response to a decline in quality of an organisation's service or a firm's product, customers or members are likely to use one of two options:

- (1) Some customers stop buying the firm's products or some members leave the organisation: this is the *exit option*. As a result, revenues drop, membership declines, and management is impelled to search for ways and means to correct whatever faults have led to exit.
- (2) The firm's customers or the organisation's members express their dissatisfaction directly to management...through general protest addressed to anyone who cares to listen: this is the *voice option*. As a result, management once again engages in a search for the causes and possible cures of customers' and members' dissatisfaction (emphases in original) (p. 4).

The important distinction Hirschman makes between the two concepts is that exit is an economic mechanism and voice is a political one³. This distinction has largely gone unnoticed in some studies that equate exiting (largely within the public school sector) to choice (for example Ball, 2003, p. 40). In fact, many studies on school choice operationalise 'choosers' as those that have exited their local public school, requested special placements, or participated in a voucher programme (Adler & Raab, 1988; Stevans & Sessions, 2002; Willms & Echols, 1992). The problem in so doing is that the political mechanism of voice assumes secondary treatment, and parents who stay at their local schools are depicted as 'non-choosers' or disinterested without an analysis of their reasons behind remaining at the local school. There is little indication whether these parents indeed *made the choice to stay* at a particular school because they were actively engaging with voice to make positive changes in it, expressing loyalty towards the school, or were what Hirschman describes as "inert

³ Recall that Friedman also referred to voice as a political mechanism (Section 3.1.1).

clients” (discussed below). Not considering the option to stay in a local⁴ school as a choice in itself, and possibly using the political mechanism of voice, results in depoliticising school choice as much as those studies that Gewirtz et al. (1995) define as decontextualising it.

Loyalty assumes importance in such a discussion. According to Hirschman (1970): “As a rule then, loyalty holds exit at bay and activates voice” (p. 78). Hirschman notes that loyalty is most important for organisations that occupy the bottom tier of a quality spectrum which is densely populated by similar competing organisations. In such a scenario, loyalty can act as a barrier for a number of clients that are likely to exit to a competitor. The scenario seems to be particularly applicable to LFP schools which are abundant, in fierce competition with one another, and which, in comparative terms, are generally seen as lower quality than other schools in the private sector. The issue of significance for the study would be to see if these schools succeed in maintaining their client base by inculcating “loyalty and cohesive ideology” (Hirschman, 1970, p. 82) as a barrier to exit, since there are others that are “close substitutes so that a small deterioration in one of them will send customer-members scurrying to another” (Hirschman, 1970, p. 81). The issue will be to assess whether parents accessing LFP schools are more apt to express voice and loyalty and engage with the school politically or use exit and engage economically.

Finally, the application of exit, voice, and loyalty in the context of LFP schools should view the concepts from a dual perspective: from the viewpoint of how parents engage with the LFP sector on the one hand and the possible resulting implications for the public sector’s competitiveness on the other. While traditional

⁴ This is not to say all parents staying at local schools do so to express voice or that the potential of choice programmes to discriminate against disadvantaged groups is not prevalent. It neither disagrees with the fact that some parents may be staying because of default, a lack of other viable options as in rural areas, or because they may be ‘disconnected’ choosers (Gewirtz et al., 1995). It merely wishes to highlight the fact that staying in itself may be a considered choice for some parents.

arguments for greater choice through marketisation (resulting from affordable privatisation or not) hinge on raising the public sector's efficiency (however defined) and effectiveness (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hoxby, 2003, Tooley, 1997; 2000), they do not take into consideration systems where the public sector has *no incentive to compete*. Hirschman's theory was catalysed by his observations of the Nigerian railway system which, although experiencing large exit, did not have the mechanism's desired recuperation effect. This was because its revenue sources were diverse and relied more heavily on state contributions than private ones. This is strikingly similar to the Indian public education sector. Therefore, while the emergence of the LFP sector heralds an important and perhaps even desirable change for disadvantaged groups' school choices, it also poses a paradox of further deteriorating quality for the public sector, because as Hirschman (1970) notes:

While it is most clearly revealed in the private-public school case, one characteristic is crucial...those customers who care *most* about the quality of the product and who, therefore, are those who would be the most active, reliable, and creative agents of voice are for that very reason also those who are apparently likely to exit first in case of deterioration (p. 47).

Given that very little is known of the new model of LFP schooling, this study's scope is necessarily limited to school choice processes of disadvantaged groups, their engagement with their chosen schools, and the processes and mechanisms through which the schools interact with the broader institutional framework as a first step to a longer term area of analysis. Nonetheless, results of the study, particularly those about the institutional context (Chapter 7), can provide critical insights on how LFP schools interact with one another and the institutional framework, and the implications this may have for the broader scope of education provision in the public and private sectors for disadvantaged groups.

3.2.3 How do Disadvantaged Parents Choose?

Much of the existing literature on the effects and processes of school choice for disadvantaged groups focuses on social class or ethnic background⁵ (Ball, 2003; Carroll & Walford, 1997a; Gewirtz et al., 1994; Gewirtz et al., 1995; Reay & Ball, 1997; Reay & Ball, 1998; Reay & Lucey, 2000; Tomlinson, 1997). These particular studies outlined different class strategies of how middle-class parents mainly in England and Wales, “work the system” to secure social advantage to the disadvantage of others⁶, as well as the differences in working and middle-class strategies concerning school choice. However, Apple (2004) reminds us that the focus should be more comprehensive to include “a *systemic* quality, a set of values, skills, dispositions, and propensities that enables certain groups to employ educational reforms for their own and individual collective benefit” (emphasis in original) (p. 396).

Approaching the analysis of disadvantaged groups and their engagement with the education sector in the manner suggested by Apple is more inclusive, as it allows one to ask the question: ‘Is there a *systemic set* specific to disadvantaged groups in India allowing them to employ educational reforms for their individual and collective benefit, and if so how does it work?’; without the *a priori* assumption that it is necessarily or exclusively those in higher socio-economic strata who operate through them. The emergence of the LFP sector and disadvantaged groups’ engagement with it heralds the need to approach the analysis for this study as such, to ascertain whether, like middle-class parents in the UK, disadvantaged groups are also able to

⁵ This is in no way to imply that an ethnic background different from the majority is necessarily a disadvantage. In fact, this thesis takes explicit exception to the manner in which ‘ethnicity’ is homogenised and termed a variable for disadvantage in much of Western social science research, without much consideration to other intersecting and potentially more influential variables such as social class and gender.

⁶ Ball (2003) and Power et al. (2003) draw attention to the fact that the middle classes also have their own insecurities and fears related to choice and educational advantage.

extract benefit for themselves through this new sector. It necessarily puts the attention of the analysis on conceiving of disadvantaged groups accessing the LFP sector as potentially active agents in their children's education rather than passive bystanders.

Nonetheless, certain concepts from previous research in, admittedly, a very different context can provide a starting point for the examination here. The importance of localism and convenience, as well as distance, travel costs, and discipline (Morgan, Dunn, Cairns, & Fraser, 1993; Reay & Ball, 1997; Reay & Lucey, 2000), can also be applicable to disadvantaged groups in India, but to varying degrees and more in the context of physical access to schools than is reported in the existing literature. Material and social constraints (David, Davies, Edwards, Reay, & Standing, 1997; Reay & Ball, 1997) of a different nature are also necessary to take into consideration. Finally, the interplay of "hot knowledge" (Ball, 2003; Ball & Vincent, 1998) on school choice, particularly for parents in this study who have little direct experience of the formal school sector, must be incorporated into the analysis.

Also, for the purposes of the study, processes of choice within families (Gorard, 1996) and the differences between working and middle-class household strategies regarding the role of the child as more of an 'expert' in the former with little leeway in the latter for a choice construed as too important to be left to the child (Carroll & Walford, 1997b; Reay & Ball, 1998; Reay & Lucey, 2000), can also provide a useful starting point for thinking about how parents in this study potentially make their choices. Regarding children from working-class groups, Reay and Lucey (2000) explain that, "within working class families, the child is often seen as the 'expert' and...she has a greater knowledge of the local secondary school market than her mother" (pp. 89-90). Given that most of the children in this study were first generation learners and their parents had little prior personal experience of

formal school systems, this could be an important determinant. However, it could also be that since parents had a greater stake in the choice due to money spent from their already constrained resources, their role may be similar to those of parents in middle-class families.

Gewirtz et al. (1994) correctly point out that parents in much of the school choice literature “...tend to appear only as ‘cardboard-cut-out’ figures who seem to operate in a vacuum, unaffected by the material of socio-cultural context of choice making” (p. 3). This rings true for much of the development and economics literature on schooling behaviours of disadvantaged groups in which they are treated as not making any choice at all and are presented as disinterested individuals who need to be convinced of the value of education. The assumption is that once they are ‘turned around’, they will send their children to school (international and state education programmes in India focus on public school enrolment only), without assessing if there are systemic reasons related to the perceived quality of education which preempt parents from making such a choice in the first place (as discussed in Chapter 2).

Introducing the LFP sector in the dialogue on schooling behaviours and school choice processes of disadvantaged groups indicates that there are at least some parents who engage with their local education markets contrary to expectations and assumptions. It further highlights the need to examine their relationships with and positions in local education markets with respect to choice-making. Building on Hirschman’s concepts of “alert and inert clients”, Willms and Echols (1992) outlined certain behaviour of Scottish parents. Within Hirschman’s framework, alert customers are more quality conscious and are those more likely to exit first. Inert customers, on the other hand, are either unperturbed by the decline in quality or display more loyalty to the firm. Hirschman (1970) explains the importance of a mix of alert and inert clients for market competition because:

For competition (exit) to work as a mechanism of recuperation from performance lapses, it is generally best for a firm to have a mixture of *alert* and *inert* customers. The alert customers provide the firm with a feedback mechanism which starts the effort at recuperation while the inert customers provide it with the time and dollar cushion needed for this effort to come to fruition” (emphases in original) (p. 24).

Willms and Echols’s (1992) application of alert and inert clients to school choice in Scotland presents alert clients as those who made placement requests for their children and did not stay at their local designated school. These parents typically had significantly higher education levels and more prestigious occupations than their counterparts. Gewirtz et al. (1994; 1995) outlined three types of choosers: privileged/skilled choosers, semi-skilled choosers, and disconnected choosers⁷, which they found to be strongly class related. Gewirtz et al. (1995) point out that “choice is thoroughly social, it is a process powerfully informed by the lives people lead and their biographies—in short, their position within a social network” (p. 24).

This study has implications in revealing whether the engagement of parents with the education market through the LFP sector who are disadvantaged in the social arena mirrors their social relations or whether it is altered in any way. In other words, does the act of choosing a fee-paying school empower these parents and alter their bargaining power, or do schools take advantage of their relatively little experience with formal schooling and their lower socio-economic positions to ‘dupe’ them? Additionally, the study will also be able to shed light on whether any of the above typologies approximate the experience of parents choosing an LFP school in their lived markets (Gorard et al., 2003). This will lead to the development of a school choice model better able to explain the process in a context very different to the traditional literature, and as a result extend generally accepted school choice concepts.

⁷ Elsewhere, the typology is summarised as the skilled/privileged having a high inclination to and capacity for choice; the semi-skilled as having high inclination and low capacity, and the disconnected as having low inclination and low capacity (Ball & Vincent, 1998, p. 376)

Choice in the current context of individualism and liberal market reforms in education in more advantaged countries has traditionally been based on an extension of the concept of *homo economicus*, conceiving of the parent as a rational thinking individual operating in an 'open' education system for self-interest. As David et al. (1997) point out, from this perspective choice can be thought to involve various rational stages which are applied to the selection of a school:

- (1) possibilities are identified and separated out as 'different' and distinctive from one another;
- (2) information is acquired about each different option so that they can be evaluated one against another, and against previously held criteria; and
- (3) this rational appraisal leads to the selection of one option as the 'choice' (p. 399).

However, the three studies in the economic literature on school choice in developing country contexts (Alderman et al., 2001; Glewwe & Jacoby, 1994; Kim et al., 1999) indicate that such a rational model did not necessarily apply in disadvantaged parents' school choice decisions in Ghana or Pakistan. In fact, results from research on school choice in Western contexts are questioning this assumption as well (Ball & Vincent, 1998; Carroll & Walford, 1997b; David et al., 1997; Reay & Ball, 1998; Reay & Lucey, 2000). The two Pakistani studies found that school choice was affected by a number of factors such as fee amounts, distance to school, cultural prohibitions for girls, and assessments of school quality (Alderman et al., 2001; Kim et al., 1999). In their analysis, Alderman et al. (2001) highlighted the need to include "school versus no-school" as a necessary step preceding the choice between government and private school for disadvantaged parents in Pakistan (p. 307). As discussed in Chapter 2, Glewwe and Jacoby's (1994) results also indicate diversions from the rational model when trying to explain, for example, the effect of 'repairing a leaky roof'.

Not only do such studies herald the need to develop a model for school choice in a developing country context, they also indicate that assumptions of rationality that have bounded the discussion on markets in education, may not hold in the very context for which they were intended. If it is found that parents do not act as the quintessential *homo-economicus* in an increasingly privatised system (precisely the context in which they are expected to), it could signal a crucial shift in the way that school choice is conceived in a privatised and marketised system. It could be that the operation of the schooling market is highly influenced by the institutional constraints within which the new LFP sector operates, which in turn influences school choice processes. An examination of the institutional context is the third aim of the study.

3.3 The Institutional Parameters of the LFP Sector

School choice research has been criticised as being atheoretical, while research on marketisation has been criticised as being too narrowly focused on neoclassical theory, which according to North (1994) “is simply an inappropriate tool to analyse and prescribe policies that will induce development. It is concerned with the operation of markets, not with how markets develop. How can one prescribe policies when one doesn’t understand how economies develop?” (p. 359). This study takes North’s concerns as a central tenet and approaches the emergence of a newly developing education market in a developing country context by examining how individual actors (parents) make choices within that market, but adding the vital element of new institutional theory to the analysis, and focusing on the institutions and institutional framework within which LFP schools operate.

Including the element (missing from traditional school choice and market analyses) of how LFP schools operate in the greater institutional framework for

private schooling is significant because it puts the focus squarely on examining whether or not their emergence can alter the provision and delivery of education for disadvantaged groups, thus potentially altering the greater institutional framework for education. The analysis will combine concepts from new institutional theory, particularly those branches from NIE and organisational theory influenced by sociology. Thus, the study can be viewed as a response to the calls from Rowan and Miskel (1999) who assert that new educational research should focus on "...levels of the social system well beyond the local school and its immediate environment [...] the relevant unit of analysis is the broader system within which schools are embedded" (p. 378). Furthermore:

...there is a continuing need to study the configuration of institutional environments...and to empirically test the emerging ideas that institutional theorists have developed about the effects of such environments on the management of educational organisations. [...] Studies are needed that map the different institutional environments...and that examine the conditions under which new types of institutional environments develop (Rowan & Miskel, 1999, p. 379).

New institutionalism has emerged across a range of social sciences, particularly economics, sociology, and political science. At the heart of the approach lies an insistence on the now catch phrase in new institutional theory that "institutions matter" in economic, social, organisational, and political processes. However, each discipline incorporates new institutionalism in different ways, and Di Maggio and Powell (1991) point out in their celebrated review that each of these new institutionalisms are "united by little but a common scepticism toward atomistic accounts of social processes and a common conviction that institutional arrangements and social processes matter" (p. 3). The influence of such an acceptance in education is surprisingly lacking, despite its relevance to addressing the school as an organisation operating within an institutional framework heavily

structured through rules and regulations, cultural norms, and societal values—in short institutions.

It is necessary to explain the ‘new’ in new institutionalism. While both old and new institutionalism (particularly in the sociological variant) are sceptical towards rational models and emphasise the relationship between organisations and their environments, each approaches the role of informal institutions or culture and norms differently in shaping organisational structures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991, p. 12). NIE is sometimes portrayed as embracing all tenets of neo-classical theory including assumptions of rationality, although a deeper analysis (Section 3.3.1) will show that this is a misinterpretation. DiMaggio and Powell sketch out the differences between new and old institutionalism, which is reproduced below.

	<i>Old Institutionalism</i>	<i>New Institutionalism</i>
<i>Conflicts of interest</i>	Central	Peripheral
<i>Sources of Inertia</i>	Vested interests	Legitimacy imperative
<i>Structural Emphasis</i>	Informal structure	Symbolic role of formal structure
<i>Organisation Embedded in</i>	Local community	Field, sector, or society
<i>Nature of Embeddedness</i>	Co-optation	Constitutive
<i>Locus of Institutionalisation</i>	Organisation	Field or society
<i>Organisational Dynamics</i>	Change	Persistence
<i>Basis of Critique of Utilitarianism</i>	Theory of interest aggregation	Theory of action
<i>Evidence for Critique of Utilitarianism</i>	Unanticipated consequences	Unreflective activity
<i>Key Forms of Cognition</i>	Values, norms, attitudes	Classifications, routines, scripts, schema
<i>Social Psychology</i>	Socialisation theory	Attribution theory
<i>Cognitive Basis of Order</i>	Commitment	Habit, practical action
<i>Goals</i>	Displaced	Ambiguous
<i>Agenda</i>	Policy relevance	Disciplinary

Table 3.1 The ‘Old’ and the ‘New’ Institutionalism in Organisational Analysis

Note. Reproduced from DiMaggio & Powell, 1991, p. 13

The incorporation of such a view necessitates a reassessment of the previous discussion on privatisation and marketisation, particularly regarding claims supported by its advocates. According to Rowan and Miskel (1999) who were speaking directly of Chubb and Moe, private schooling itself “results from much public institution building. For example [in the US], private schools gain their right to educate students

as a result of important court rulings, and religious schools secure their freedom from institutional constraints as a consequence of the American state's reluctance to heavily regulate 'private affairs'" (p. 372). The implication for the current study is that unlike arguments overlooked by Chubb and Moe, privatisation and private schooling do not operate in an institutional vacuum, in fact they hinge on it. Thus, any analysis of an emerging or existing privatised or marketised system must take, as one of its central aims, an analysis of the institutional framework that scaffolds its operation, because that framework will alter how that market develops, the way it operates, and its incentives; and the interplay between the organisations and institutions operating within that framework will have implications for broader institutional change. North's (1994) assessment on the limitations of simply adopting an institutional framework, specifically privatisation, from one country and instituting it in another regarding its economic system is just as apt for an education system:

...economies that adopt the formal rules of another economy will have very different performance characteristics than the first economy because of different informal norms and enforcement. The implication is that transferring the formal political and economic rules of successful Western market economies to third-world and Eastern European economies is not a sufficient condition for good economic performance. Privatisation is not a panacea for solving poor economic performance (p. 366).

This is not to say that it is not possible for privatisation and marketisation to bring improvements in stagnating economies, or education systems for that matter, but to highlight the importance of assessing the institutional framework within which it operates in order to determine its usefulness and applicability. Therefore, one of the main aims of this study will be to focus on the institutions surrounding LFP schools as well as the micro-institutions operating within them to determine their performance.

The following review will outline concepts from NIE and the sociological variant of new institutionalism in organisational analysis, key to this study.

Incorporating concepts from both these strands is not haphazard. Rather it is a deliberate attempt to combine concepts which are complementary, and which surprisingly have not previously been linked despite the fact that such a combination can lead to a stronger framework for analysis.

3.3.1 *The Economic Variant of New Institutionalism*

NIE is often segregated from researchers employing the sociological variant of new institutionalism despite its potential applicability for a fuller analysis of organisations (for the purposes of this discussion, educational organisations). This may be because NIE is often portrayed as embracing many concepts from traditional economic theory, evidenced from Scott's (2001) assertion (and indicative of many reviews on NIE) that: "neoinstitutional economists seek not to replace orthodox economic theory with the study of multiple and diverse institutional conditions but rather to develop an economic theory of institutions" (p. 28). While this statement as a generalisation in the strictest sense on the origins of NIE is not untrue, the result of such assertions is that they obscure some essential distinctions between NIE and traditional economic theory, especially those concerning assumptions of rationality. A review of NIE, particularly that propagated by Douglass North⁸ revealed just how misrepresentative this can be.

As Vandenberg (2002) notes, "a lingering misperception within the discipline (caused by the association of new institutionalism with neoclassical economics) results in his [North's] work being classified with other neoclassical theorists" (p. 218). However, a fundamental difference is that North himself explicitly rejects the notion of rationality as a basis of making choices. North explains (1992):

...new institutional economics builds on, modifies, and extends neoclassical theory to permit it to come to grips and deal with an entire range of issues beyond its ken. What it retains and builds on is the fundamental

⁸ Douglass C. North shared the 1993 Nobel Prize for Economics for his work in NIE.

assumption of scarcity and hence competition—the basis of choice theoretic approach that underlies microeconomics. *What it abandons is instrumental rationality*—the assumption of neo-classical economics that has made it an institution-free theory. [...] Institutions are unnecessary in a world of instrumental rationality; ideas and ideologies don't matter; and efficient markets—both economic and political—characterise economies (emphasis added) (p. 3).

The break from assumptions of rationality signifies the first major shift from neoclassical constructs. North (1990) adopts a more holistic view of how individual actors make decisions owing to a lack of information (or information asymmetries) and “mental constructs that can result in persistently inefficient paths” (p. 8). These are related to what North (1990) terms as two basic aspects of human behaviour: (1) motivation and (2) deciphering the environment. He takes exception to rational theorists who insist on self-interest and wealth maximisation as the primary determinants of motivation, and points to instances of altruism or self-imposed constraints as other potential sources. With respect to deciphering the environment, North (1990) speaks of “mental models”, which are “pre[-]existing mental constructs through which they [actors] understand the environment and solve the problems they confront” (p. 20).

However, retaining the assumption of scarcity allows him to focus on choices made by organisational and institutional actors in an environment structured by *constraints* (North, 1991), and this is where the role of institutions assumes primary importance. He extends the notion of constraints from the traditional economic supply and demand model to include ideological, social, and political constraints which affect the choices that organisational and institutional actors make. Thus, institutions, as defined by North (1990):

...are the rules of the game in a society or, more formally, *are the humanly devised constraints that shape human interaction*. In consequence *they structure incentives in human exchange*, whether political, social or economic. Institutional change shapes the way societies evolve through time and hence is the key to understanding historical change (emphases added) (p. 1).

More specifically, institutions “consist of formal rules, informal constraints (norms of behaviour, conventions, and self-imposed codes of conduct), and their enforcement characteristics” (North, 1991, p. 4). Organisations, on the other hand, “are groups of individuals bound by some common purpose to achieve objectives. [...] Both what organisations come into existence and how they evolve are fundamentally influenced by the institutional framework. In turn, they influence how the institutional framework evolves” (North, 1990, p. 5). In essence, the key processes for institutional change are the interactions between organisations and institutions which result in influencing and are influenced by the greater institutional framework.

The second major departure from neoclassical theory is regarding assumptions of efficiency. As North (1990) highlights, “If political and economic markets were efficient (i.e. there were zero transaction costs⁹) then the choices made would always be efficient” (p. 8). However, he later explains that “...there is nothing in my argument so far about rules that implies efficiency. As stressed above, rules are, at least in good part, devised in the interests of private well-being rather than social well-being” (North, 1990, p. 48). While North was specifically referring to the formal rules in this instance, he applied the argument to informal rules as well. The issue goes back to motivation and abandoning rationality.

If private wellbeing is favoured over social wellbeing, which is in turn institutionalised in the formal and informal structures governing a society, then efficiency (a minimisation of transaction costs in this model) is not a necessary by-

⁹ North (1990) explains: “The costs of transacting arise because information is costly and asymmetrically held by the parties to exchange and also because of any way that the actors develop institutions...results in some degree of imperfection of the markets...the incentive consequences of institutions provide mixed signals to the participants, so that even in those cases where the institutional framework is conducive to capturing more of the gains from trade...there will still be incentives to cheat, free ride...contribut[ing] to market imperfections (p. 108).

product of that institutional framework¹⁰. In fact, it could give rise to what he terms, “perverse incentives”, which favour inefficient outcomes. North (1990) explains that “...organisations incrementally alter the institutional structure. They are not, however, necessarily socially productive because the institutional framework frequently has perverse incentives. Organisations will be designed to further the objectives of their creators” (p. 73). North gives the example of piracy and states that if the institutional framework rewards such socially unproductive and economically inefficient activities then organisations favouring those will develop.

This leads directly to the final and related departure. Not only can organisations be set up to pursue inefficient ends and actors can make inefficient choices, but the very institutions themselves can be (and according to North frequently are) economically and socially inefficient:

Institutions are not necessarily or even usually created to be *socially efficient* rather they, or at least the formal rules, are created to serve the interests of those with the bargaining power to devise new rules. [...] If economies realise the gains from trade by creating relatively efficient institutions, it is because under certain circumstances the private objectives of those with the bargaining strength to alter institutions produce institutional solutions that turn out to be or evolve into socially efficient ones. The subjective models of the actors, the effectiveness of the institutions at reducing transaction costs, and the degree to which the institutions are *malleable* and respond to changing preferences and relative prices determine those circumstances (emphasis in original) (North, 1990, p. 16).

As a result, it will be crucial to analyse LFP school organisational arrangements, and whether they wield any bargaining power in devising institutions, or whether they are simply a set of disparate organisations that must adhere to the pre-existing institutional framework to survive. The dialectic between institutions and organisations will be essential to understanding the operation of LFP schools in this study as organisations and their influence, if any, on surrounding institutions. However, while North’s theory is a powerful tool to assess the operation of the

¹⁰ An example given by North of inefficient informal rules is the persistence of a caste system.

broader institutional framework and LFP schools' position in it, it does not focus specifically on organisational structures or processes. Another model will be employed for this analysis.

McMeekin's (2003a; 2003b) assessments of schooling in Chile are among the very few that directly employ NIE as a theoretical paradigm for analysis in an empirical study on schooling. The relevance of his analysis to this study is that it provides a way of thinking about micro-institutions at the level of individual school organisations (McMeekin, 2003a) and/or across a set or network (McMeekin, 2003b). McMeekin applied NIE to education by examining institutions at the extreme micro-level within schools to explain differences in performance between different schools or sets of schools. He identified "institutions within school organisations" as comprising: rules and enforcement mechanisms, objectives, and social capital or trust (McMeekin, 2003a).

Rules, in his model, include "the network of legal provisions" around schooling, but also the formal codes of governance and behaviour (such as school schedules, dress code, and other behaviour) within the school. They also include informal rules based on norms and customs that dictate decorum within a school, which McMeekin (2003a) describes as "powerful determinants of the climate inside the school. They have to do with order courtesy, and responsibility. [...] Where informal rules are weak—where classes tend to be chaotic or there is little respect for fellow members of the community—then the environment for learning is damaged" (p. 6). He states that in addition to having clear objectives, it is necessary for a school to successfully manage competing ones and, where this is not possible, to make trade-offs according to clear priorities by consensus. Finally, McMeekin's use of social capital does not imply a Bourdieaurian notion of the concept. Rather it is seen as inculcating a climate of trust between the school and relevant stakeholders and

inducing ‘buy-in’ to the concept that the school is making its best effort to impart instruction. As McMeekin (2003a) states, “high levels of social capital create a context in which community members tend to make their best efforts—whether in teaching, studying or other tasks—toward achieving agreed upon goals” (p. 8).

Since McMeekin’s model was developed to explain school performance in terms of achievement results, an aim out of the purview of this study, the value of his application rests in its theoretical application of NIE to school organisations rather than in its results. In other words, what is essential for the current study is the focus on institutions within schools—those constraints that structure their internal interactions. Incorporating such a concept to the analysis of LFP schools will allow for an explanation of how they function regarding their educational interactions, and also whether there are any commonalities between them, despite the fact that LFP schools are most often operated by independent owners. Coupling this with the focus on higher-order institutions as suggested by North, will allow a more complete analysis of the institutional framework for LFP schools.

3.3.2 The Sociological Variant of New Institutionalism in Organisational Analysis

According to DiMaggio and Powell (1991), the sociological variant of “new institutionalism in organisational analysis takes as a starting point the striking homogeneity of practices and arrangements found in the labour market, in schools, states, and corporations” (p. 9). Studies and analyses from this strand of new institutionalism seek explanations as to why, for example, the basic organisational structure of schools resembles one another across societies. Instead of concentrating on the degree of malleability as articulated by North, new institutionalists from this frame focus on the inelasticity and persistence of certain institutional arrangements. DiMaggio and Powell (1991) stress that: “Institutionalised arrangements are

reproduced because individuals often cannot even conceive of appropriate alternatives (or because they regard as unrealistic the alternatives they can imagine)” (pp. 10-11).

However, it is important to note that NIE, as espoused by North, does not suggest radical change. In fact, North rejects the notion of institutional change as radical (except in extremely rare circumstances, the results of which may not be very long-lasting), and sees it as a process of incremental change which is complicated by “path dependence”. North (1991) explains:

Both the interests of the existing organisations that produce path dependence and the mental models of the actors—the entrepreneurs—that produce ideologies ‘rationalise’ the existing institutional matrix and, therefore, bias the perception of the actors in favour of policies conceived to be in the interests of existing organisations. Altering or reversing paths is a result of external sources of change that weaken the power of existing organisations and strengthen or give rise to organisations with different interests, or it is a result of the unanticipated consequences of the policies of the existing organisations” (p. 6).

So while there is a degree of malleability in the institutional framework allowing for incremental change, it is not so elastic as to promote radical alterations. Hence, despite assertions to the contrary, a deeper analysis of NIE and the sociological variant essentially reveals agreement on that point.

The sociological variant as outlined by Scott (2001) rests on what he calls the “three pillars of institutions”: the regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive. He outlines the three pillars as comprising different indicators, mechanisms, logic, and bases of compliance, order, and legitimacy, which are presented in Table 3.2 below. Scott (2001) explains that by employing such an approach:

...we are reminded that laws do not spring from the head of Zeus nor norms from the collective soul of a people; rules must be interpreted and disputes resolved; incentives and sanctions must be designed and will have unintended effects; surveillance mechanisms are required but will prove to be fallible, not foolproof; and conformity is only one of many possible responses by those subject to regulative institutions (p. 54).

	Regulative	Normative	Cultural-Cognitive
Basis of Compliance	Expedience	Societal Obligation	Taken-for-grantedness Shared understanding
Basis of Order	Regulative rules	Binding expectations	Constitutive Schema
Mechanisms	Coercive	Normative	Mimetic
Logic	Instrumentality	Appropriateness	Orthodoxy
Indicators	Rules Laws Sanctions	Certification Accreditation	Common beliefs Shared logics of action
Basis of Legitimacy	Legally sanctioned	Morally governed	Comprehensible Recognisable Culturally supported

Table 3.2 Scott’s Three Pillars of Institutions

Note. Reproduced from Scott, 2001, p. 52

Once again, it is possible to see that there are certain similarities underlying NIE and sociological approaches. The regulative pillar corresponds to North’s conception of formal rules and the normative and cultural-cognitive to the informal rules. Furthermore, a combination of the “bases of legitimacy” and the “bases of compliance” seem to correspond to what North terms, “enforcement mechanisms”. The issue between the two approaches is one of reconciling different foci. While the NIE approach focuses more directly on the formal rules or the regulative pillar in its analyses, the sociological approach is more concerned with the normative and cultural-cognitive pillars or the informal rules; and both consider enforcement mechanisms. Thus, an analytic approach combining both variants and highlighting the importance of formal rules and their interplay with informal rules can provide a robust framework for interpreting the operation of LFP schools.

The key preoccupation for the sociological variant is the similarity of organisational structures to be found in the institutional environment defined as “including the rules and belief systems as well as the relational networks that arise in the broader societal context” (Scott, 1992, p. 14). The key to institutionalisation from the sociological vantage is legitimisation (Cibulka, 1997; Mawhinney, 1996; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Scott, 2001; Weik, 1976). In their now classic paper, Meyer and Rowan (1977) argue that legitimacy is critical for the survival of organisations, particularly

those with multiple and competing goals or weak technical structures like schools. According to them, the way such organisations achieve legitimacy is through the incorporation of “highly rationalised myths that are binding on particular organisations” (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, p. 343). The duo explains that these myths have two key properties:

First, they are rationalised and impersonal prescriptions that identify various social purposes as technical ones and specify in a rule[-]like way the appropriate means to pursue these technical purposes rationally¹¹. Second, they are highly institutionalised and thus in some measure beyond the discretion of any individual participant or organisation. They must, therefore, be *taken for granted as legitimate, apart from evaluations of their impact on work outcomes* (emphasis added) (Meyer & Rowan, 1977, pp. 343-344).

According to Meyer and Rowan, the effect of these rationalised myths on the institutional environment surrounding a particular set of organisations is that it encourages more organisations to adopt them in order to achieve legitimacy to survive. This in turn results in a more “isomorphic” set of organisational structures regardless of whether or not they are internally efficient, and limits the types and forms of organisational structures available in an institutional environment, producing greater conformity and restricting institutional change. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) adopt the definition of isomorphism as “a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions” (p. 149). They identify three mechanisms of isomorphism: (1) coercive: stemming from political influence and the problem of legitimacy; (2) mimetic: resulting from standard responses to uncertainty; and (3) normative: which is associated with professionalisation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150).

In other words, organisations within a sector face considerable pressure to be alike either from formal rules and laws or a preoccupation with legitimacy, adopting procedures from other organisations deemed successful in reducing uncertainty,

¹¹ This property is credited by the authors to Ellul (1964).

and/or accreditation and standardisation *without regard to any type of efficiency*. It becomes necessary at this point to define a sector. Scott and Meyer (1991) define a “societal sector” as comprising (1) a collection of organisations operating in the same domain which is identified by a similarity of services, products or functions and (2) together with those organisations that critically influence their performance (p. 117). In a similar vein, DiMaggio and Powell (1983) define an “organisational field” as “those organisations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognised area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organisations that produce similar services or products” (p. 148). The current study will adopt the essence of both these definitions but extend it to refer to an education sector as a collection of organisations identified by their similarity of service, product, and function together with their suppliers, consumers, and regulatory agencies *in addition to their governing institutions* (formal and informal and their enforcement mechanisms).

A final consideration for the discussion is that if there is no guarantee of or little connection between rationalised myths and efficiency, how is legitimacy achieved if prospective clients assess organisations not only according to some prescriptive criteria, but performance criteria as well? The concept of “loose coupling” (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Weik, 1976) goes some way to explaining a possible mechanism. Weik (1976), among the first to apply the concept to educational organisations, stated that “By loose coupling, the author intends to convey the image that coupled events are responsive, but that each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical or logical separateness” (p. 3). Weik is referring specifically to the separateness between the technical and authoritative structure of an organisation, specifically in schools:

...in the case of technical couplings, each element is some kind of technology, task, subtask, role, territory and person, and the couplings are task induced. In the case of authority as the coupling mechanism, the elements that include positions, offices, responsibilities, opportunities, rewards, and sanctions and it is the couplings among these elements that presumably hold the organisation together (p. 4).

His central argument is that schools tend to exhibit loose couplings between the two mechanisms. Thus, the incorporation of rationalised myths in a loosely coupled structure acting as a buffer between its work activities and formal structure, helps to maintain legitimacy. Meyer and Rowan explain (1977) that:

...conformity to institutionalised rules often conflicts sharply with efficiency criteria, and conversely, to coordinate and control activity in order to promote efficiency undermines an organisation's ceremonial conformity and sacrifices its support and legitimacy. To maintain ceremonial conformity, organisations that reflect institutional rules tend to buffer their formal structures from the uncertainties of technical activities by becoming loosely coupled, building gaps between their formal structures and actual work activities (pp. 340-341).

Weik argues that the advantages of loosely coupled educational organisations lie in their ability to adapt and respond to changes in their institutional environments quickly and “elegantly”. Loose coupling also shields an organisation from total breakdown in the case of negative external impacts because they are likely to affect only one part of the organisational structure and not its entirety. Nonetheless, Fusarelli (2002) warns against viewing educational organisations or systems as permanently loosely coupled and to recognise the variety of coupling arrangements that are possible, the ignorance of which has “...blinded us both to the nature of couplings in education and to changes in the nature of these couplings over time” (p. 564). The key issue for Fusarelli (2002) is effective policy implementation: “While the concept of loose coupling helps explain the unevenness of policy implementation and the persistence of organisational intransigence, it does not offer policymakers guidance as to how to implement systemic educational reform” (p. 564).

The issue for this study will not be to determine the exact coupling arrangements within the schools themselves, but to identify whether or not the set of schools form part of a larger LFP sector despite the fact that they are independent, and will focus on coupling arrangements with the larger institutional framework governing them. In other words, do LFP schools exhibit loose, tight, or any coupling at all with the institutions that are supposed to govern them? However, the primary aim at the institutional level will remain to outline the nature of the institutional framework that governs LFP schools and whether or not it spans across case study schools. The analysis will undoubtedly rest with the knowledge that they existed as expressions of institutional constraints at a specific point in time—time being a critical factor in NIE.

3.3.3 Applications of New Institutionalism to Education

Despite its attractiveness in explaining the operation of educational organisations in relation to the institutional framework that governs them (both externally and internally), relatively few empirical studies (Cummings, 2003; McMeekin, 2003a; 2003b; Portela Puraño, 2001; 2002; Wößmann, 2002) have directly employed constructs from NIE. The few applications of NIE to education tend to focus on institutions within schools and how schools design their internal institutional frameworks to successfully complete numerous (often competing) tasks (Portela Puraño, 1999; 2001); or how the institutional frameworks governing schools account for varying degrees of school performance related to achievement (McMeekin 2002a; 2002b; Wößmann, 2002).

One deviation is Cummings's (2003) study which identified six core patterns or institutions of "modern education" which "were developed in the core nations¹² of

¹² Cummings (2003) identifies the six core nations as being Prussia, France, England, USA, Japan, and Russia. The periods of genesis span from 1742-1935, with Prussia being the earliest and

the world system and later diffused by their respective colonial and/or ideological systems” (p. 35). His fundamental argument is that each modern pattern “is unified by a core of set ideals [...] which were continually refined but in the six cases under consideration they were never fundamentally altered” (Cummings, 2003, p. 34). Thus, the analysis seeks to explain why the fundamental structure of school organisations and many institutions governing them are similar across a multitude of nations. In this sense, his study adopts a more sociological approach to institutionalism, and the “core set of ideals” can be viewed as the informal institutions that were incorporated as rationalised myths in the education systems over time.

There are relatively more studies using the sociological variant of new institutionalism, though not great in number (Cibulka, 1997; Crowson, Boyd, Mawhinney, 1996¹³; Fusarelli, 1999; 2002; 2003; Oplatka, 2004; Rowan, 1982). The emphasis of these studies is on how schools and policies achieve legitimacy or on the process of reform (such as school choice and marketisation), with the underlying argument that experiences of reforms and policy implementation will be uneven given the largely isomorphic tendencies of organisational structures and institutional environments. The dearth of such institutional applications in educational research is surprising, since much of the seminal work on organisational analysis through new institutionalism in the sociological variant uses education and schooling as theoretical examples and bases for conceptual development (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Meyer & Scott, 1992; Rowan & Miskel, 1999; Weik, 1976).

While this study incorporates certain elements of the sociological variant, the application of new institutionalism is more fundamentally informed by NIE. This is

Russia being the latest. The core patterns identified are across: a national ideal, representative school, scope, school and classroom technology, learning theory, administration, administration style, unit costs and source of finance (Cummings, 2003, p. 35).

¹³ This is an edited volume containing a collection of theoretical and empirical analyses of schooling largely using the sociological variant of new institutionalism.

primarily because NIE views the interaction between organisations and institutions as proactive, whereas the sociological variant (as it has thus far been minimally applied to education) tends to view it as more reactive. The strength of the former approach lies in its recognition that there is a dialectical relationship between institutions and organisations. As such, the threat of obscuring critical interactions between the two as a constantly *inter-related and intertwined process* will be diminished. This is not to deny the strengths of the sociological model regarding organisational structures. It is precisely for this reason that both variants will be employed by combining the complementary strengths of each and resulting in a more robust analysis.

Finally, both approaches will be employed to bridge the gap between the dearth of applications of new institutionalism to empirical studies in education, particularly in areas where there seems to be a natural alliance of the theoretical paradigm to certain educational issues, and where the current predominant models of analysis have not yielded firm results. The oversight of this theoretical approach is particularly surprising because new institutionalism (and particularly NIE) sheds light on human behaviour in relation to making choices (applicable to school choice analyses), the interaction of organisations and institutions in affecting the delivery of a service and educational policy (applicable to debates on school reform), and how markets function and develop questioning assumptions of rationality and efficiency (applicable to private education and specifically emerging models and markets in private schooling).

All three issues are foci of the current inquiry, and as such there seems great value in applying new institutionalism to form a more comprehensive understanding of the emerging LFP sector. Applications in this study will not only take into account the internal institutions of schools and their organisational structures, but will go one step further—to look beyond the school to the formal institutional framework for

education propagated by the State, as is the analytic method proposed by both variants of new institutionalism. The hope is that applying new institutionalism to a current educational issue and extending its current application to education will not only provide a more comprehensive understanding of that phenomenon, but will also add value to the theoretical base of educational studies.

CHAPTER 4 Reconciling the Technical & Social

A Methodological Overview of the Inquiry

This chapter outlines the methodological approach and research methods employed in the collection and analysis of data for the study. Aside from presenting an overview of the technical aspects of the methodological process, the central aim of this discussion is to use the opportunity as a reflexive exercise in order to critically engage with the research process and frame the context from which insights about the data were gained. The impetus is to present an account of the research process as the sometimes winding journey that it was, and problematise issues surrounding multiple and converging identities and the use of multiple languages that have gone relatively amiss in dominant methodological discourse.

It takes its cue from Walford's (1998) assertion that many accounts "...present an idealised conception of how educational research is designed and executed, where research is carefully planned in advance, predetermined methods and procedures followed, and the 'results' are the unavoidable conclusion. *The effect of the researcher is excluded from the process*" (emphasis added) (p. 1). This point is fundamental to the discussion. The view here is that the effect of the researcher is integral to a

more accurate and valid presentation of the research process given that fundamentally the “researcher is the instrument” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) in the qualitative paradigm. This is not to minimise the role or value of the technical aspects of data collection or analysis, rendering the account a purely personal ‘story’, but simply to highlight the social dimension that the inquiry, its data, and the processes of data collection and analysis hinged on. As such, the approach relies on Ball’s (1993) definition of reflexivity as:

...such [an] engagement [that] allows the researcher to connect the processes of data analysis and data collection. It also provides the possibility of technical rigour in the ethnographic process. The basis of this rigour is the conscious and deliberate linking of the social process of engagement in the field with the technical processes of data collection and the decisions that that linking involves” (p. 33).

Therefore, the discussion attempts to reconcile the technical and social processes of data collection and analysis, by highlighting their latent tensions and bringing forward solutions that were implemented. While I do not subscribe to the binary divide between the two, believing instead that the research process and its elements are fundamentally intertwined and dialectic, the division is simply used as a technique to describe the overall approach in the absence of another more adequate manner of presentation. The first half of the chapter presents the research design and data collection methods and process, while the second half is on data analysis. Each section ends with a reflexive account of one aspect of reconciling the technical and social dimensions in the data collection and analysis processes, namely reconciling multiple identities and employing multiple languages.

4.1 Aims and Questions Framing the Inquiry

At the heart of the inquiry lies a concern for the educational opportunities of economically/socially disadvantaged groups. The approach that the inquiry took most closely resembles what Tesch (1990) describes as “educational connoisseurship

and criticism”, a concept attributed to Elliot Eisner¹ which involves “critically describing (disclosing), interpreting and evaluating social phenomena” (p. 50).

Connoisseurship and criticism, Eisner (1985) highlights:

...[is] an understanding of what one has experienced. Such that an awareness provides the basis of judgment. [...] connoisseurship provides criticism with its subject matter. Connoisseurship is private, criticism is public. Connoisseurs simply need to appreciate what they encounter. Critics, however, must render these qualities vivid by the artful use of critical disclosure (pp. 92-93).

At the core of this study is an underlying drive to critique the emergence of LFP schooling as a new model of private schooling for disadvantaged groups and highlight their interaction with it. Given that LFP schooling is a relatively new phenomenon with little previous research, the focus of the study was more descriptive in “...an effort to characterise or render the pervasive and...descriptive aspects of the phenomena” (Eisner, 1985, p. 94) and interpretative in “...an effort to understand the meaning and significance that various forms of action” (Eisner, 1985, p. 97) have for actors at all levels of the inquiry, rather than evaluative “...to make value judgments about it with respect to its educational significance” (Eisner, 1985, p. 98). The third aspect was undoubtedly an element of this inquiry, as interpretation itself involves certain judgments inextricably linked to the researcher. However, it was an outcome of the inquiry rather than its main purpose.

The broad aims of the study were to critically describe and interpret the emerging phenomenon of LFP schooling in Uttar Pradesh, India over three conceptual levels of analysis: (a) individual: to examine school choice processes and household schooling behaviours; (b) organisational: to analyse the organisational structure of LFP schools, their internal operations, and household-school relationships; and (c) institutional: to examine the regulatory framework guiding the

¹ Eisner (1985) used educational connoisseurship and criticism to critically describe, interpret, or evaluate classroom teaching activities. The concept is used here and by Tesch as a broader approach to educational research.

operation of LFP schools and how they interact with it. Table 4.1 presents the typology of research questions framing the study.

Level of Inquiry	Research Questions
Household	<i>What are the school choice processes of households accessing LFP schools?</i> 1) How do parents accessing LFP schools make the choice to send their children to those schools? - What are the household schooling patterns of households accessing LFP schools? - Why do disadvantaged households choose LFP schools over state schools? 2) How do disadvantaged households engage with LFP schools? - What strategies do they use?
School	<i>What is the organisational structure of LFP schools?</i> 1) How do LFP schools operate? - How do LFP schools respond to competition from other LFP or state schools? - How do LFP schools attract and maintain their clientele? 2) How do LFP schools respond to disadvantaged households' needs? - What is the nature of household-school power relations?
State	<i>What is the policy framework guiding the operation of LFP schools and how do they interact with it?</i> 1) What is the formal institutional framework for LFP schools? - Is it implicit or explicit? - How is it applied by institutional actors and interpreted by organisational actors? 2) How do LFP schools interact with/mediate the formal institutional framework? - Do they change it? - Do they bypass it? - How do institutional actors in turn react? 3) How do LFP schools interact with each other? - Do they have a specific set or code of procedures of working? - How is the code structured?

Table 4.1 Typology of Research Questions Framing the Inquiry

The typology of research questions evolved as the processes of data collection and analysis took place. However, the three cornerstone questions in italics at each level of inquiry were identified as the main foci and guiding questions from the outset. Data collection and analysis simply refined the guiding questions by adding precision to the focus of inquiry. As such, the entire process could be seen as one that followed “progressive focusing” by following a dialectic process between the field and the analysis, where the research problem was “...developed or

transformed, and eventually its scope [was] clarified and delimited, and its internal structure explored” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 206).

4.2 Research Design

The inquiry involved a multi-level analysis, given the interest from the outset of focusing on individual, organisational, and institutional levels of conceptual analysis to shed more light on the emerging LFP phenomenon. Hence, the study followed a design informed not only by methodological literature but by conceptual literature as outlined in Chapter 3, particularly through NIE with a clear *a priori* theoretical distinction between organisational and institutional analyses.

Thus, in reconciling the multi-level theoretical levels of analysis with the operational levels of inquiry, the study employed case study as its overall design. Upon reflection, developing or extending current theoretical understandings on emerging models of private schooling, as well as on new applications of institutional analysis were concerns from the beginning. However, rather than for their predictive function, relevant theories were used in line with Eisner’s (1985) claim that “theory does not replace intelligence and perception and action, it provides some of the windows through which intelligence can look out into the world” (p. 92).

Indeed, as Yin (1994) explained, the case study design was particularly well-suited to such an inquiry as the “role of theory development, prior to the conduct of any data collection is one point of difference between case studies and related methods such as ethnography and ‘grounded theory’” (p. 27). The current inquiry did not develop theory to be tested in the field, as a purist interpretation of Yin’s statement may be, but was closer to Eisner’s view of providing a window through which to view the phenomenon. Therefore, structuring the study by drawing on concepts about the differences between organisations and institutions from NIE was

eminent. The resulting design, presented in Table 4.2, consolidated theoretical understandings of the structural difference between the two conceptual levels with points of interest previously highlighted (in Chapter 3) about school choice, marketisation and privatisation, and organisational and institutional arrangements, which were then linked to how the inquiry itself was designed. The selection of the case’s geographic location and specific research design were not established before entering the field, but were based on the results of the exploratory study (discussed in Section 4.2.1).

Case: Phenomenon of LFP schooling for disadvantaged groups in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh, India		
Theoretical/Conceptual Levels of Analysis	Levels of Inquiry (Sub-units of the case)	Major Data Sources
Individual	Household	Parents (Direct) Principals (Indirect)
Organisational	School	Principals (Direct) Parents (Indirect) Government Officials (Indirect)
Institutional	State	Government Officials (Direct) Principals (Indirect)

Table 4.2 Overall Research Design for the Inquiry

Since the study involved more than one unit of analysis, the inquiry employed the *single-case embedded case study design* of the type explained by Yin (1994). The conceptual distinction between the case, theoretical levels of analysis, its sub-units (levels of inquiry), and major data sources was crucial to the design. The study takes exception to the common use of ‘case’ as a term referring to a single person, event, or organisation, which in fact may be a sub-unit or data source within a larger phenomenon or bounded system. As Stake (2000) explains:

The object (target) of a social inquiry is seldom an individual person or enterprise. Unfortunately, it is such single objects that are usually thought of as ‘cases’. [...] The case need not be a person or enterprise. It can be whatever ‘bounded system’...is of interest. What is happening and deemed important within those boundaries (the emic) is considered vital and usually determines what the study is about, as contrasted with other kinds of studies where hypotheses or issues previously targeted by the investigators (the etic) usually determine the content of the study (p. 23).

The case of interest in this study was the *phenomenon of LFP schooling for disadvantaged groups in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh, India*. As such, it should be conceptualised as “...an integrated system. The parts do not have to be working well, the purposes may be irrational, but it is a system” (Stake, 1994, p. 236). Furthermore, the case should be thought of as “instrumental” according to Stake’s (1994) typology, where the dynamics of LFP schooling in Lucknow District will facilitate understanding the phenomenon of LFP schooling from the vantage point of the households, schools, and state.

4.2.1 Selection: Location and Data Sources

This section details the bases of selection at different levels of the inquiry including the location of the case, selecting case study and focus schools, and the selection of household-level participants. As it is hoped that the inquiry will lead to a future programme in research on emerging models of private schooling and LFP schooling in particular, the purpose of the discussion is to reframe validity constructs closer to Goetz and LeCompte’s (1984) more suitable conception of “comparability” for qualitative research, by being explicit about the research processes and the characteristics of the study’s components being “....sufficiently well described and defined that other researchers can use the results of the study as a basis for comparison” (p. 228). “Translatability” (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984) or the concern with describing a theoretical stance, has been described in Chapter 3 as well as in the thinking behind the research design (Section 4.2). Therefore, the concern is not with generalisability but with “fittingness” to aid future inquiries, attributed to Guba and Lincoln and described by Schofield (1993) as, “the degree to which the situation studied matches other situations in which one is interested” (p. 96).

In line with Walford's (2001) assertion that cases should be chosen in accordance with the research objectives and for their inherent value to the study, criteria were established for the selection of the case, particularly regarding its location. Initial information about the LFP phenomenon was obtained by media reports and recent published and unpublished research. Most notably, it was obtained by contacting academic researchers in India, England, and abroad, and policy-makers working for international organisations such as DFID, UNICEF, and the World Bank. Since the prevalence of this phenomenon was noted in India, but empirical evidence on 'how it works' was scarce, I decided to locate the study there. This was coupled with the fact that I had previously conducted research in India and that I believed I had certain cultural insights (Section 4.6) that I believed would allow me to access data more unobtrusively.

Selecting the specific location in India hinged on the following criteria which were of theoretical interest, an application of Strauss and Corbin's (1998) concept of "theoretical sampling" to the initial selection of the case:

- *The case must be in a state where enrolment in the PUA sector is high*
- *The case must be in a state classified as 'educationally backward'*
- *The case must be in a state where there have been reports about the relatively high existence of LFP schools*

Resulting from my interactions with "experienced and knowledgeable experts" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) in research on private schooling in addition to a survey of the literature, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh were the forerunners for the location of the study before entering the field. At this point I decided to conduct an exploratory study to finalise case selection by getting a feel for the field, because as Maykut and Morehouse (1994) state, "The natural setting is the place where the researcher is most likely to discover, or uncover what is to be known about

the phenomenon of interest” (p. 45). Results of the exploratory study revealed that Uttar Pradesh would be more suitable than Andhra Pradesh (Section 4.3). The institutional focus of the inquiry prompted the choice of Lucknow District, the capital district, as it was a dynamic institutionally charged area regarding the schooling of disadvantaged groups and LFP schooling.

Participants formed three distinct sets: 60 (30 urban and 30 rural) parents (or close family members where appropriate) of children at two focus schools; principals (and/or owners where appropriate) from 10 case study schools; and government officials (district, state, and central levels). The selection of case study schools (five urban and five rural) was through purposive sampling resulting from my interactions with key informants in the field and initial contacts from the exploratory study. In addition, there were practical considerations such as schools agreeing to participate in the research for the duration of the study and potentially allowing me to interview parents. Since many LFP schools are unrecognised, selection on the basis of a sampling frame was not possible. Once again, potential schools were initially chosen according to criteria of theoretical interest, and finally through “maximum variation” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1990, p. 57) by criteria presented in Table 4.3.

Initial Criteria for Inclusion	Criteria for Variation
• Schools must be low-fee charging (defined as not exceeding two days’ earnings of a daily wage labourer at the highest level of education offered) • Schools must be part of the PUA sector • Schools must expressly cater for socially and/or economically disadvantaged groups according to their mandate	• Proximity of school to other potential competitors (LFP or state) • School reputation • How long ago the school was established • Perceived quality of school in local area • Total enrolment (also by SES) • Level of reported profit

Table 4.3 Criteria for Selection of Case Study Schools

An additional point should be noted concerning the choice of rural schools. It was apparent that schools from villages in Lucknow District would be selected. I obtained informal information about a school in a village about 25 km from Lucknow City fitting initial criteria, from an urban case study school politically active

for PUA schools through an organisation for them. Through discussions with key informants and parents from rural and lower socio-economic backgrounds, I was also told of the same village and two neighbouring ones with suitable schools. Upon initial field visits, I found that the first village had three LFP schools. All three LFP schools in Siyapur Village² were chosen because in addition to fitting the criteria:

As [name of researcher omitted] said in New Delhi, it is essential to take the village schools as a bounded system because of the fact that they are so remote and have such few schools in the vicinity. In a sense therefore, I would speculate that the schools impact one another to quite a high degree—not only in terms of competition but also in terms of survival and day to day management. This will allow me to build more of a comprehensive insight in terms of the village and school dynamics which I think will be very beneficial in adding depth to the study (FN27-10-02, p. 1).

The two focus schools (one urban and one rural) were chosen from the set of 10 case study schools on the basis that they had the largest enrolments of each group and faced direct competition from other LFP and state schools in their immediate vicinity. The rationale was that focus schools would provide a pool of interviewees at the household level who could best articulate their decisions about private schooling, perceptions of their chosen school, and why it was chosen over competing ones. School-level rationale was that being successful competitors in their local school markets, focus schools could provide depth of data for exploring questions about competitiveness and how they interacted with the institutional framework to secure advantage. The choice of focus schools was carefully deliberated by keeping in mind the delicate balance between the “breadth and depth” (Rossman & Rallis, 1998) of data required for a detailed examination of the phenomenon.

Finally, the initial selection of parents was made in Phase 2 of the study on the basis that parents interviewed should be those who accessed the focus school for the first time that year. The rationale was that it would be best to interview parents who had just made their choice of focus school, since the reasons behind the choice

² The name of the focus school village was changed.

would be fresh in their mind—the focus was on depth. However, after conducting pilot interviews and those for the first round of data collection, the focus was shifted to breadth of experiences, to capture a greater variety of responses regarding their choices and perceptions of focus schools *over time*³. With the help of focus school principals, participants were chosen through purposive sampling to represent a variety of years of accessing the school, number of children enrolled, and number of school-aged children in the household. State-level participants were identified primarily through their responsibility of different departments in the Basic and Secondary Education Departments of Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh State, and Central Government.

4.2.2 Assumptions Prior to Entering the Field and Data Analysis

Upon reflection, it is clear that my initial understanding of the emerging LFP phenomenon was built on certain assumptions I carried before entering the field. These included assumptions about how LFP schools operated and their interactions with parents and the state. The fact that many of the patterns that emerged through fieldwork and data analysis challenged and were contrary to these initial assumptions indicates that there was a concerted effort to keep them constantly in check.

Household-level Assumptions

Household-level assumptions were largely framed by the literature and prior studies (presented in Chapter 2). Therefore, it was expected that the choice to send children to LFP schools would be biased in favour of boys, particularly in rural areas, because of economic constraints faced by lower-income families in addition to reported social barriers for girls' education among this group. Furthermore, due to traditional family dynamics, I also assumed that the choice would be made by elders

³ The element of time is particularly important from the viewpoint of NIE.

in the extended family and would not represent the decision of a nuclear household, i.e. the parents of the children at LFP schools.

Regarding the nature of household-school interactions, it was expected that given the relatively weaker social position that disadvantaged groups traditionally have in Indian society, households would not be in a position to question schools' operations, as they would probably be run by higher-caste, higher-class, and more educated individuals. My leanings towards critical theory also led me to believe that school owners would have the ultimate power in setting school objectives, financially and academically. From such a viewpoint, parents appeared to be powerless and defenceless caricatures that would have to subscribe to all financial and academic conditions laid out by the schools, or risk seeing their children expelled.

School-level Assumptions

As my direct experience with the Indian school sector was minimal, assumptions about the nature of the internal structure of schools were more vague. Given my prior socio-cultural knowledge in addition to knowledge I gained about the overall education system from my master's research, I was not convinced that the schools were actually 'low-fee', i.e. affordable for low-wage earners. I harboured scepticism about the extent to which disadvantaged groups actually accessed these schools. Furthermore, I was most inclined to believe that if they were indeed accessed by disadvantaged groups, then the schools were "teaching shops" (terminology commonly used in Indian education discourse) operated by businesspeople out to dupe parents with little personal experience of the formal school system, and therefore not in a position to judge.

Institutional-level Assumptions

Institutional-level assumptions were concerned with the nature of how LFP schools operated in relation to the broader institutional framework for private education and any educational initiatives for disadvantaged groups. Given the competitive nature of LFP schooling, and that most such schools were owned and operated by independent owners, it was expected that they would represent a fragmented set of schools operating on an individual-basis. As a result, the mediation of the institutional framework was likely to be undertaken by each school arriving at its own mediated institutional arrangement, by finding suitable solutions for its particular operating contexts and situations. In essence, I thought that each organisation would mediate the institutional framework differently to suit its needs. Furthermore, given the perceived fragmented nature of the set of schools, I thought that each LFP school would operate on often incomplete information about institutional requirements on varying degrees of accuracy.

4.3 Outline of Field Activities

Field activities took place over a period of 10 months from July 2002 to April 2003 in four phases and over three distinct periods. As outlined in Table 4.4, the aims of each phase were related to the data collection and analysis needs of that time. The first crucial phase was the exploratory study which, taking its suggestion from Whyte (1984), was designed as “social exploration” in order “...to gain some initial familiarity with the local scene and establish a social base from which we can continue our exploration until we are able to study some parts of that territory systematically” (p. 35). Phases 2 and 3 involved conducting pilot research and initial data collection. Phase 4 centred on completing data collection.

Period 1, July 2002**Phase 1 Exploratory study: To become familiarised with the field and identify the location for the case study**

<i>Research Activity</i>	<i>Research Methods</i>
Initiated contact with key informants in possible case study locations of Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh	Meetings with head of a private school network in Andhra Pradesh and head of non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Uttar Pradesh
Established initial contact with possible case study schools	- Visited a total of 19 schools in Andhra and Uttar Pradesh to ascertain suitability in terms of level of fees and school mandate - Explained possible study objectives and school time commitments and possible period of study - Some school observations
Identified relevant state and central government departments	- Informal interviews with key government official informants - Consultation of documents and policy initiatives for disadvantaged groups
Gauged the general perception of LFP schools by parents	Numerous informal interviews with parents of school-aged children from higher and lower socio-economic groups
- Drafted initial research design and refined objectives - Selection of case locale	Through assessment of exploratory data in and out of the field and time estimates; experience of knowledgeable experts in the field on suitability and practicalities; consultation with research supervisor upon return to England

Period 2, Sept. 2002-Dec. 2002**Phases 2 & 3: To secure participation of participants; conduct pilot study; begin initial data collection**

<i>Research Activity</i>	<i>Research Methods</i>
- Re-established contact with principals of some schools visited in the exploratory study - Initiated contact with parents and state officials to ensure participation in the study - Identified key informants	- Field visits to schools - Numerous visits to state and central education departments - Distribution of research summaries to participants
- Established and refined criteria for the selection of the 10 case study schools - Finalised urban and rural school selection	Collaborated with key informants and built on their tacit knowledge of schools
Gauged validity and appropriateness of questions on interview schedules for different participant groups	Conducted initial interviews and analysed responses
Began initial school, household, and state-level data collection	- Identified and collected key state and school policy documents - Conducted school observations in all schools - Conducted first set of school interviews (10) with all case study principals - Conducted 14 of 60 household interviews - Conducted formal interviews with 4 government officials - Conducted numerous informal interviews with all participant groups
Exit from the field and information of re-entry to participants	Sent thank-you cards and informed participants of likely period of re-entry

Period 3, Jan. 2003-Apr. 2003 Phase 4 Final Visit: To complete data collection	
Research Activity	Research Methods
Completed household-level data collection	• Conducted 45 urban and rural household interviews
Completed school-level data collection	• Conducted two sets of interviews (20) with all case-study principals • Numerous informal interviews • Collection of relevant school-level documentation • School observations
Completed state-level data collection	• Conducted 8 formal interviews with government officials • Opportunistic observations in government education offices • Official policy-related documents and internal grey literature • Informal interviews with state officials
Exit from the field	• Conducted final debriefing meetings • Sent out thank-you cards to school participants

Table 4.4 Outline of Field Activities

There were approximately four weeks between exit from and re-entry to the field between each period. This involved physical exit and re-entry, as each time I returned to England from India. This was to allow time away from the field in order to focus on the data collected, begin some initial analysis, and refine priorities for the next entry to the field. It gave me the psychological clarity to progressively focus and achieve some balance in my initial interpretations of the data by being physically away from the field and receiving guidance from my supervisor.

The four phases were identified before entry to the field. However, as suggested by Rossman and Rallis (1998), they were designed to be flexible in order to take into consideration varying issues that would undoubtedly arise in the field. The timing of the study was designed to coincide with the school year, with the data collection period spanning almost the entire academic year. Initial entry for the exploratory study coincided with the beginning of the year, the second entry covered the initial to mid-year school period, and the final entry extended from post-winter holiday re-openings to the beginning of final exams. It was possible to see, for example, how schools employed certain marketing and fee-collecting strategies

throughout the year, and how principals changed objectives related to the operation of their schools. In addition, certain data collection and analysis targets were set for each phase to give an overall focus in the field. Examples of this included the numbers and types of interviews to be conducted with each participant group, and the level of initial analysis to be done on data collected while in the field and during exit periods in England.

4.3.1 The Impact of Key Insights from the Different Research Phases

The approach to the study followed a flexible design in which critical insights from one phase were incorporated into its overall structure. Key insights from the different phases, particularly from the Exploratory Phase and Phases 2 and 3, informed the design of the study. By the time the study entered Phase 4, insights about the overall design and certain techniques, such as mediating my identity and gaining and maintaining access which were gained from the preceding phases, had been well incorporated. As such, while Phase 4 was also flexible in its approach, it did not affect the general methods or techniques employed. Key insights from Phases 1 through 3 are summarised below.

Key Insights of the Exploratory Phase (Phase 1)

Through previously established contacts, I met with the head of a network of private schools in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh and also contacted a large NGO providing access to schooling for underprivileged children in Uttar Pradesh. The network included approximately 400 schools, of which, according to the network head, 80-90% catered to lower income groups, charging fees in the range of Rs. 50 to Rs. 250 per month. The attraction of using the network from which to select schools, was based on the assumption that since they were part of a group they would have some common school policies, management techniques, and mandates to

serve disadvantaged children. In other words, by selecting schools from the network, some of the variability in management styles would be reduced by virtue of the schools being part of a bounded group. It would then be easier to extract schools for the case study based on the method of maximum variation.

On the other hand, preliminary discussions with researchers in India and international policy specialists revealed that a study in Uttar Pradesh would be more useful because it was considered to be very problematic, with low literacy and high truancy rates. In addition, a perceived problem associated with conducting the study in Andhra Pradesh was language when interviewing parents, as the regional language is Telugu and I am only fluent in Hindi. As a result, I approached the NGO based in Lucknow, whose mission was to support the education of underprivileged children through schools and educational programmes established for this target group. I was keen to investigate the NGO's programmes and the Lucknow area with the objective of initiating contact with schools for underprivileged children by tapping into the tacit knowledge of its project managers. At this stage my sampling was purposive and largely a result of snowballing.

All of the schools visited in both states claimed to be serving low-income families and ranged in fees from Rs. 50 to Rs. 200 per month. Attendance varied from the smallest school with an enrolment of 60 children, to the largest boasting an enrolment of 1000. There was also a great deal of variance in building type. Although all schools had *pakka*⁴ buildings, their size, number of classrooms, condition, and proprietorship (rented or owned) varied greatly. In addition, while some schools reportedly made a good profit, others claimed to make a loss where the owners invested their own money to meet operating costs.

⁴ *Pakka* literally means 'solid'. In this context *pakka* buildings are used to denote those with solid structures made of brick or wood as opposed to *kachcha* buildings made for example, of straw.

The only difference between the schools in both states was that those in Hyderabad were part of a common network, while those in Lucknow were completely independent of one another. This was to determine whether the network had any impact on the schools in Hyderabad. However, I found that there was a similar level of variation among all 19 schools visited in both cities. In fact, the Hyderabad network was no more than a loose collection of private schools. Schools gained membership to it by completing a form and paying a nominal fee of Rs. 1200/year. There were no common policy documents, quality standards, or internal inspection schemes for network schools. Furthermore, there was no common curriculum or board that recognised schools were encouraged to follow. In effect, network schools in Hyderabad were no different than the independent schools in Lucknow. Therefore, given the similar types of variation across schools, a choice had to be made between Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

This was primarily resolved by recently launched state policy initiatives, particularly the SCA Campaign (Section 2.6). The SCA's prevalence was apparent in all the newspapers, and seemed to be a hot topic of debate among politicians and laypeople. The rationale behind framing the study in such a policy backdrop was that it would add insight to the issue of competition, as LFP schools were now directly competing (in principle) with a state-sponsored campaign for the same target group.

Key Insights of Phases 2 and 3

Key insights from Phase 2 indicated that the researcher's role could have a crucial impact on data collected because of the rapport I would have with participants. I was often inaccurately placed and mistaken as Indian, despite being overt about coming from Canada. This resulted in a simultaneous advantage and disadvantage through the blurring of lines between "the insider and the outsider"

(Merton, 1972). It seemed that my 'outsiderness' helped some principals to be quite frank about their business aims, and confide sensitive financial information from initial informal interviews, because it was going 'a safe distance' away. The disadvantage was that initially approaching schools and state officials was complicated in many cases, since they were sometimes reluctant to allow an 'Indian' access to sensitive information. This alerted me to the need to mediate my perceived identity (Section 4.6).

The second insight was that the sample of parents had to be widened. After preliminary analyses of pilot and initial interview data, I found that a breadth of responses about school choice and schooling decisions was lacking. In particular, factors affecting school choice in the context of the number of school-aged children in a household, changing perceptions about chosen schools, and strategies to engage with them over time, were not captured. Thirdly, the interview site was changed from parents' homes in the pilot phase to the school for initial data collection (Phase 3). Initially, I thought that it would be favourable to conduct interviews at parents' homes to increase rapport and make them (especially rural mothers) more comfortable. However, this posed the following dilemma:

...to go with the principal or not. It was necessary to go to parents' houses with the principal in the first instance because otherwise people would not entertain me in their homes—to get an "in". It was also necessary for security reasons—it is not safe for me to go out into the village alone. [...]

The problem with having the principal present...is that there were many questions especially those in Part B: School Responsiveness and Parents' Participation [of the interview schedule] that I omitted because I felt that parents would hesitate in answering them in front of the principal. At the same time, I didn't want the principal to feel threatened by any line of questioning that I would enter into about the school. As a result, I was only able to ask about the number of children in the house and the grade levels and schools that they were attending. I also asked the question about why they chose to send their children to [the focus school] as opposed to any other government or private school in the village...[and] what their opinion about government schools in general was (FN12-11-02, p.1).

I was aware that answers to questions about choosing focus schools over competing ones may also be heavily biased in favour of the former, with the principal present. As a result, I decided to conduct a few interviews at the school and see which strategy to adopt. In fact, I found that conducting interviews at the school did not deter female participants, which was a particular concern in the village. This was because interviews were conducted in the middle of the day when many of the men were busy working, and because I was a woman as well. I secured a private area to conduct the interviews, on the outside veranda in the rural focus school and an unused classroom in the urban focus school.

The final insight was on the approach used for accessing state-level participants, an important consideration when involving elite participants in educational research (Walford, 1994b). Interestingly, the “gatekeepers” or those “...actors with control over key sources and avenues of opportunity” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 34), were in fact the personal assistants to high-level participants. Despite the fact that a letter of introduction was faxed to elite participants from a senior government official in New Delhi outlining the study’s objectives and suggesting their cooperation, initial contact with state and district officials was quite difficult. As a result, I spent much of Phases 2 and 3 establishing contact. Once contact was established with the officials in question, they were all generally keen to participate and provide me with assistance. While I made some headway, much of Phase 3 resulted in frustration about establishing contact and gaining access to elite participants, until a breakthrough in Phase 4. After an interview, a senior state-level official decided to phone another officer who I needed to contact, requesting his cooperation and arranging a tour of some state schools:

The best thing he told me was that [name of official omitted] was the man to contact with reference to private schools and recognition because he sits on the Council that grants recognition! Better than that he actually contacted [him] on the phone and told him about me and

asked him to show me around with a car and a lady officer. He said that he should organise a tour for me and he also said that he should meet with me in the office [...]. He got [the officer] to see me on Friday which is wonderful. He also gave me the mobile, residence, and office numbers [for all the officers]. This was the best breakthrough meeting of all time... I think I've finally found an in! (FN 26-02-03, p. 10).

By using my 'in' and establishing more 'ins' with field officers, data collection at the institutional level progressed smoothly. I was readily able to access many documents, events, and individuals which added depth to the institutional level of inquiry. In addition, I learned to take time out in Phase 4 to frequent the offices of government officials to maintain access by "being there" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This proved to be a highly beneficial technique as it resulted in obtaining "unsolicited accounts" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 126) (often from personal assistants and officers) about how the institutional framework 'really works' in practice as opposed to formal information in interviews or documents. I also witnessed interactions between LFP principals and government officials, providing data on how LFP schools mediated the institutional framework first hand.

4.4 Data Collection Methods

As noted by Robson (1993), the strength of the case study lies in the ability to incorporate various research methods for inquiry. The study used four main methods of data collection: interviews, observations, documents, and field notes. The primary method was interviewing through a combination of formal semi-structured and informal interviews at all levels of inquiry. Field notes were kept to track on-going reflections and as preliminary analysis tools at all inquiry levels. Combinations of the other two methods were used selectively in response to the different data needs.

4.4.1 Use of the Interview Method

While interviewing was the primary method employed at all levels of inquiry, different types of interviews were used for each sub-unit, reflecting the different data collection objectives and research questions. Nonetheless, in keeping with the structure of the case study design, the overall aim of the data collection remained the same: to gather converging evidence explaining the phenomenon of LFP schooling at the individual, organisational, and institutional levels of analysis. A total of 100 formal interviews and numerous informal interviews were conducted.

According to Rubin and Rubin's (1995) typology, the interviewing type in this study most closely resembled "topical" (p. 30), as it was used mainly to uncover different household, school, and state level processes related to LFP schooling, and results were largely based on researcher interpretations. The authors explain that: "topical interviews seek out explanations of events and descriptions of processes. In topical interviews, the interviewer typically plays a more active role in directing the questioning and in keeping the conversation on a specific topic" (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p. 29). As such, probes were frequently used to redirect or further explore interviewees' comments in formal and informal interviews.

Informal interviews were often conducted throughout the study with principals and some state officials to reduce the "artificiality" of formal interview settings (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 140). They provided the opportunity to follow-up certain observation events or formal interviews in an atmosphere where participants were more comfortable in giving details on certain privileged or sensitive information, or as a forum for elaboration on their thoughts. It also allowed me the opportunity to maintain contact with schools outside of formal data collection times to get more of a 'feel' of natural activities. For example:

There seemed to be a general feeling of chaos even at the end of the break. First of all I noticed that there were only 2 teachers [...] in

addition to the principal...who seemed to me, did not teach. When I arrived it was about 11:00 and [the principal] said that the break lasts until 11:25. At this time the two teachers and [the principal] were sitting around the rectangular table in the middle of the veranda and reading the *Hindustan Times* [...] Also there were a stack of spelling notebooks (Hindi) for small children—it looked liked second grade on the table which [he] was flipping through from time to time. Some of the children were in the classes but most were outside playing in the dusty *maidaan* [field].

Before I could even start the conversation about conducting the interview [arranging a time for a formal interview], [...] He launched into what he thought were some of the most important challenges facing the [low-fee] private schools—and I took the split second decision to let him continue talking and lead the conversation. This led to an unscheduled interview of almost an hour which I taped (FN 26-02-03, pp. 1-2).

Formal interviews predominantly followed the in-depth semi-structured style, with some structured elements to the household and one set of school interviews. This was to gain background data on the family and school. Table 4.5 outlines the interview styles and objectives for formal interviews by each sub-unit of the case.

Sub-unit	Interview Objective: To gather data on...	Interview style
Household	• Background of the households Average household income; number of children; number and gender of children attending school; number and gender of children in private school; which private schools attended; income devoted to education per month per child; occupation & income of mother and father; education of mother and father; caste • Parental decision making processes about private education How households decide to make the extra expenditure to educate even one child in the private sector given their constrained resources; which children are sent to the private school and why; the effect of diverting family resources to private schooling on the household's ability to meet basic needs • Parents' perceptions about their chosen private school Their definitions of what is meant by 'good quality' schooling; perceptions of the quality of schooling being received at the private school; how they rate their school in comparison with other private and government schools • Parents' level of voice and choice in the schools Level of parental involvement in the school; what activities they participate in; how parents voice opinions on curriculum or extra-curricular activities in the school; do parents think the school responds to their needs (why and how); how do parents in turn respond if their children's needs are not being met	Combination of structured & semi-structured Structured (face to face administration of short questionnaire): Background of households Semi-structured: Parental decision making processes; parents' perceptions; parents' level of voice and choice Total: 60 (30 rural and 30 urban)
School	Interview 1: Background Information on the School Date of establishment; recognition status; total enrolment; type of building; number, salary, and qualifications of teachers; fee structure; grade levels and medium of	Interview 1: Structured Interviews 2 & 3:

	instruction; curriculum followed; management structure; motives and philosophy behind opening the school Interview 2: School Responsiveness & Parental Involvement • School responsiveness to parents’ needs Assessment of parents’ and children’s needs; educational challenges for this group; action taken by school to address any parental concerns (access in terms of proximity or time of shifts, fees, gender, language of instruction); specific action taken to attract children to school and maintain interest; fee waivers; any relevant school policies geared toward disadvantaged families • Perception of parents’ level of voice and choice in the schools Level of parental involvement in school activities; formal structures in place for voicing concerns (e.g. school committee; regular meetings with principals or teachers); informal structures (newsletters, staff-parent gatherings); level of satisfaction with degree of parental involvement Interview 3: Institutional Context • Internal Institutional Context Registration status; recognition status; internal management structure; perceived benefits and barriers to recognition; choice of curriculum; school policies; effects of competition with other schools • Interaction with Formal Institutional Framework Level and nature of contact with state and district departments/officials; perception of role and level of state interference for LFP schools; nature of mediation if any with state policies; nature of engagement and/or compliance with state regulations	Semi-structured Total: 30 (3 interviews per school)
State	Interview: Formal Institutional Framework for LFP Schools • Policy context for private schools Existing state and central level policies in place for private schools and specifically for PUAs; specific norms and procedures for recognition in Uttar Pradesh; rationale behind the norms • Perception of PUA schools and particularly LFPs in addressing schooling needs of disadvantaged groups Perceptions about quality of schooling in LFPs (e.g. teacher qualifications, curriculum, facilities); role of LFPs in meeting demand of schooling for disadvantaged children; LFPs’ potential in meeting increased demand and alleviation of state financial burden in schooling; state initiatives addressing schooling needs for disadvantaged children (e.g. <i>School Chalo Abhiyan!</i>); public-private collaboration for such state initiatives	Semi-structured Total: 10

Table 4.5 Interview Objectives and Styles by Case Sub-Unit

Each interview schedule was piloted in Phase 2 before it was used as a collection instrument and was designed keeping in mind Kvale’s (1996) “thematic and dynamic dimensions”. According to Kvale (1996), the interview should be

organised “...thematically with regard to its relevance for the research theme, and dynamically with regard to the interpersonal relationship in the interview” (p. 129). The thematic structure evolved as a result of the research questions and the pilot work where, for example, it was decided to conduct three interviews with principals rather than one for two main reasons.

The first consideration was thematic so as to permit contact with schools over the duration of the study and the school year, in order to follow up on insights gained during collection and initial analysis and chart the school’s experiences with parents and the institutional framework over time. The second consideration was dynamic, in order to establish a closer rapport between myself and school principals. Naturally, some principals offered the most sensitive data nearer the end of the study. The thematic consideration was also evident in the research schedule used for state officials, which was slightly altered for each interviewee. This was to keep in mind the nature of their expertise and duties, to emphasise certain parts of the schedule and permit more detailed data collection with those most ‘in the know’ on a certain topic.

A further consideration was Rubin and Rubin’s (1995) assertion that successful interviewers “...are not neutral actors, but *participants* in an interviewing relationship. Their emotions and *cultural understandings have an impact* in the interview” (emphases added) (p. 19). This last point was of particular relevance, given my perceived identity (Section 4.6). Interviewees’ perceptions of my cultural understanding had as much to do with my role as participant in the interview, as with my own cultural knowledge. An example of this was the observation of certain *purdah* customs in the rural setting by the focus school principal and the impact that it had on accessing interviewees at home. Additionally, participant groups differed in each sub-unit according to their ascribed status/role in relation to mine as a researcher. When interviewing disadvantaged parents I was ascribed higher status by participants;

with school principals, my age and gender played more of a complex role, and with elite state officials, I was ascribed lower status. In all instances, this aspect of the dynamic dimension of my positionality as a researcher played a key role in the study and caused me to mediate my identity.

Finally, and in relation to the last point, there was the issue of language (discussed in Section 4.7), which is often overlooked in methodological literature (Temple & Young, 2004). Keeping in mind not only the practicalities of using Hindi with disadvantaged parents who could not speak English, a conscious decision was made to selectively use English and Hindi with other interviewees. My level of fluency in spoken Hindi is relatively high without a discernable Canadian accent, and on many occasions, I was mistaken for a native speaker.

Interviews with parents were done exclusively in Hindi. However, it must be said that my use of the language gave away a class difference as they (even urban parents) used rural dialects. After the first few instances in which I interviewed parents without a tape-recorder, too worried about the added distance it may put between myself and interviewees, I quickly realised that this was ineffective due to my lack of familiarity with the dialect: “I will definitely have to tape the interviews to capture the true comments. Also, in ‘*dehaati*’ [rural] speak it is difficult to simultaneously translate into English while taking notes” (FN 12-11-02, p. 3). However, after a few interviews I became more familiar with the dialect and was able to pick up more of the nuances.

Interviews with case study principals were also conducted in Hindi. This was a combination of a selective and practical strategy. While some principals had a relatively good command of English, many were not that comfortable expressing themselves in it. Secondly, I thought it would help minimise some of the potential distance between myself, a researcher coming from what is considered an elite British

university, and themselves if we used Hindi. Interviews with government officials were done in English. This was to achieve legitimacy as a researcher with high-ranking officials and for practical reasons. While my Hindi is fluent enough for many interactions, it is not of high academic or Hindi ‘officialese’⁵ fluency required to follow-up on important policy points.

4.4.2 Use of the Observation Method

Use of observation in the inquiry was primarily to provide additional contextual data about schools, and proved to be a valuable asset in accessing direct data on household-school interactions. As previously mentioned, observation was also used to gather additional but critical data about the actions of institutional actors regarding their application of the formal institutional framework (FIF) to LFP schools. As such, it was utilised for the explicit purpose of relying on its major advantage of “directness” according to Robson (1993). He explains that through observation, “You do not ask people about their views, feelings or attitudes; you watch what they do and listen to what they say” (Robson, 1993, p. 191). Keeping in mind its two uses mentioned above, it was particularly useful as the “...pre-eminently...appropriate technique for getting at ‘real life’ in the ‘real world’” (Robson, 1993, p. 191).

Getting at “real life in the real world” in the context of this study meant observing how principals actually interacted with parents as opposed to what they said; and how the FIF was actually applied to LFP schools in practice as opposed to how it should have been in principle (as articulated in formal interviews and documents). Observations were unstructured accounts of events as they happened, and assumed what Simpson and Tuson (1995) call the “naturalistic” style. Most

⁵ A term I coined which will be discussed in Section 4.8.

observation events were opportunistic, though many were scheduled according to school routines. School observations on household-school interactions were conducted primarily at focus schools at the principal's office during the break between shifts in the urban school, and near the end of the school day in the veranda at the rural school. These were the times when and "social places" where (Simpson & Tuson, 1995, p. 23) parents with queries were most likely to approach the school. I also wanted to observe parent-teacher meetings. However, none of the schools held any during my field-work periods. Additional household-school interactions at case study schools were opportunistic.

State-level observations were most often conducted in field offices at the district and municipal levels. Many of these were opportunistic, due to the nature of activities and schedules of the officers themselves. Since the majority of their work revolved around visiting or attending meetings concerning state schools, and mostly during times that I was at schools or with parents, it was difficult to select appropriate times and events. Nonetheless, I made it a point to visit offices during the hours that they handled queries, identified as times when "critical incidents" (Simpson & Tuson, 1995, p. 25) were most likely to occur. In addition, many observations were obtained by frequently "being there" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) and "hanging around" (Rossman & Rallis, 1998). Observations allowed me to consider the positions of power that institutional actors occupied vis-à-vis organisational actors and the nature of their interactions. For example, during one observation event near the completion of fieldwork:

Just as we were talking, surprises of surprises, [a case study principal] came in! He said *namaste* [greetings] to both of us and [the officer] also smiled. [...] It was a bit odd seeing him at this office, where he was clearly at the lower end of the bargaining table. As he...always had people coming in to see him, it was hard to see [the principal] in such a different power position... (FN 04-04-03, p. 6).

I was continually struck by the level of frankness with which organisational and institutional actors conducted themselves, despite the fact that they were aware of my presence as an observer. This did not, for example, deter institutional actors from making accusations of corruption about senior officials, admissions of ‘bending the rules’ for certain LFP schools on certain institutional requirements, or principals acting in sometimes disrespectful ways towards parents. Upon further reflection, it seems possible that this was not only because of the relationship that I cultivated with certain participants, but perhaps because of my ability to “become invisible” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 70) or blend in to the research setting. This may have been because of certain outwardly characteristics (i.e. young and unthreatening) and mediating my appearance (e.g. Indian dress), in addition to being able to understand the informal interactions taking place because of my linguistic ability.

Some naturalistic observations were also incorporated about the general goings-on at case study schools. These were done explicitly to complement my understanding of the schools, although since teacher-student interactions or school routines were not part of my research questions, they did not constitute a focus of observation. Structured observations were conducted about school sites to provide details on school facilities, since this would be relevant in assessing their compliance with institutional norms for recognition. Finally, visits to neighbouring state schools were made for contextual understanding of the local pool of schools that households would have chosen from.

4.4.3 Use of Documents

The use of documents was most overwhelmingly made at the state-level to map out the extent and nature of the FIF governing LFP schools. “Formal documents” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) were most extensively used to

determine how the FIF was supposed to operate in principle. Examples of formal documents were government orders, education law manuals, and government circulars. Data were supplemented by interviews. “Informal” (Hammersely & Atkinson, 1995) or grey documents, in addition to interviews and observations, were used to determine how the FIF was applied and how it operated in practice. Examples included school inspection sheets with comments from relevant inspectors/officers, departmental school lists, and government literature on certain projects. Thus, for certain objectives at the institutional level, documents constituted the primary data source.

Documents were accessed through the most relevant institutional actors. Certain documents were private and so the only sources were institutional actors themselves. Others were public, either available through government or public bookshops or the internet. In addition, certain school documents were accessed as “personal documents in the researcher’s search for meaning” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 111). At the school level, personal documents were conceptualised as those internal to the organisation’s functioning. In the case of the 10 schools, they included attendance and enrolment records, letters or notices to parents, and school diaries.

4.4.4 Use of Field Notes

In essence, field notes were the life history of the fieldwork noting the: technical aspects of data collection (i.e. how data were collected and descriptive details on the event); social aspects of data collection (i.e. interactions of participants with each other and with the researcher); and critical or reflexive accounts of the process (i.e. where to proceed from here and ‘how to do it better’; how to maintain relations; the role of the researcher). As such, not only were field notes “concrete descriptions of social processes and their contexts” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995,

p. 175), they were also descriptions of the technical and critical aspects of the inquiry in their context as well.

Two types of field notes were kept throughout the data collection period. The first were 'observation notes', used to directly record notes and points during interview or observation events. These were essential to recording events as they happened and for keeping a running record of field activities. They were expanded on the same day into field notes with expansive points and some initial reflections on the data. Field notes were also used to reflect on the impact of data collected on the study's emergent design in view of research objectives and data collection targets, and to refine collection methods. They also provided a reflective source of logging my thinking about field relations in terms of initial access, maintaining relations, reactions to how I was perceived by participants, and how I mediated my identity. As such, they provided not only a technical outlet, but as suggested by Kleinman (1991), an emotional outlet as well, to record the experiences of fieldwork on a social and personal level. Given their indispensable role to the research process, excerpts have been included throughout the chapter to recapture for the reader how specific decisions were taken *at that point of time*.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

The study followed the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) most recent ethical guidelines for educational researchers at the time⁶ (BERA, 1992). In particular, all participants were included in the study after informed consent. They were informed about their right to withdraw or not answer questions they found intrusive. In addition, summaries outlining the research aims and expected nature and length of school involvement were distributed to all principals and owners. Similar

⁶ BERA adopted a revised version of the guidelines in 2004. However, this was upon completion of data collection for this study.

summaries regarding the role of government officials were distributed to them prior to conducting interviews. Since many parents could not read, verbal summaries were given before interviews. Maintaining an explicit protocol of anonymity was especially important in interactions with principals and government officials, who often asked which schools were participating and what their responses were to the FIF's requirements. Given the sensitive nature of such data and the potential effects they could have on participating schools neither government nor school participants were informed of names or field sites. While all three schools in Siyapur Village must have been aware of each other's participation, as in the other cases, I maintained anonymity of all school views and strictly refused to answer any such questions.

4.6 *Using Currencies of Identity to Mediate Positionality in Flux*

As has been referenced throughout this section, the issue of identity cropped up many times during the field experience and affected, in the very least, the way that data were accessed. Coffey (1999) argues that:

Fieldwork involves the enactment of social roles and relationships, which places the self at the heart of the enterprise. A field, a people and a self are crafted through personal engagements and interactions among and between researcher and researched. This negotiation or crafting of ethnographic selfhood in the process of fieldwork can be thought of as the establishment of a field identity or field role (p. 23).

Debates on the role and identity of the researcher influenced by traditional sociological and anthropological ethnography have focused on the insider/outsider or self/other dimensions (Joshi, 2002; Merton, 1972; McLaren, 1991; Paerregaard, 2002; Peshkin, 1984; Zinn, 1979). Recently, however, methodological literature influenced by feminist and critical perspectives has discussed the potential impact of constructions of gender, race, sexuality, and ethnicity in the field and the multiplicity of researcher positionalities (Coffey, 1999; Dossa, 1997; Gupta, 2002; Henry, 2003; Mullings, 1999; Narayan, 1993). "Positionality" is used here as the "perspective

shaped by his/her [the researcher's] unique mix of race, class, gender, nationality, sexuality and other identifiers" (Mullings, 1999, p. 337).

I argue that as researcher 'real-life' identities become more complex and as geographic field locations become more accessible, mediating these real-life identities for fieldwork becomes even more problematic. My field experience leads me to agree with Coffey's view that the traditional dichotomy between field representations and real-life identity is an insufficient paradigm from which to view the complex social relations that researchers must manage and through which data are accessed. Thus, field guides offering 'advice' on how to 'manage field representation' through dress and creating the 'right' first impressions (Delamont, 2002, p. 101; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 83) or creating a 'persona' (Peshkin, 1984) seem to be superficial in their treatment, not only of the multiple aspects of identity that must be managed, but also the selectivity that participants exert in accepting or rejecting certain aspects of real-life identity in field roles.

The analysis here emerges mainly from a Derridian viewpoint, in its rejection of simple binaries upon which identity is often thought to be constructed. In my personal example the most obvious (but not necessarily exhaustive) real-life identity binaries⁷ which may have impacted my field identity could be listed as the following: female/male, Eastern/Western, married/unmarried, old/young, brown/white, Indian/Canadian, Hindi-speaking/English-speaking, poor/rich, low caste/high caste, uneducated/educated. In such a distilled form these are rendered, of course, nothing more than caricatures of complex, complimentary, and conflicting "socially ascribed and attained" (Merton, 1972) characteristics. They ignore the variations and combinations among them, *the shades of grey*, and the social positioning within which

⁷ I realise of course that given my rejection of binaries, there seems to be an illogical distinction between 'real-life' and 'field identity'. This is done in want of a more philosophically coherent way of expression in view of this rejection. I do believe that 'field-identity' is also part of my 'real-life' identity and vice-versa. Both draw on and from each other to exist.

the dichotomies themselves are constructed. In essence, they *ignore hybridity and multiplicity and assume that such characteristics and resulting positionalities are fixed across time and space.*

In a similar vein, Narayan (1993) asserts that: “The loci along which we are aligned with or set apart from those whom we study are multiple and in flux” (p. 671). Similar to Narayan’s (1993) project, in this discussion “I invoke these threads of a culturally tangled identity to demonstrate that a persona may have many strands of identification available, strands that may be tugged into the open or snuffed out of sight” (p. 673). It is important to note, that as the real-life identity is in flux, so too is the field-identity. From such a perspective, it is simplistic to assume that the creation or crafting of a field identity is a one-time occurrence during the field—it can change multiple times in relation to different participant groups and even during a single field event. This is only logical since the argument here is that the creation of the field-identity is itself largely dependent on the real-life identity of the researcher. As that real-life identity is constantly defined and redefined in relation to others’ real-life identities (social positioning in time and space), so too will the field-identity have to change, adapt, and be mediated.

Thus, it can be argued that field identities are multiple and continually mediated constructs in response to the anticipated or experienced perceptions of how participants receive, accept, or reject the researcher’s positionality vis-à-vis themselves over the course of a research study or even during a single research event. As noted in previous sections, my field identities and positionalities were constantly in flux according to the different levels of inquiry in the study. For example, my perceived social positioning vis-à-vis rural, illiterate, mothers was quite different to that regarding senior, elite, government officials. My positionality changed because of the research design itself and a combination of personal attributes.

The challenge for fieldwork became how to mediate my field-identity in order to increase or decrease perceived/ascribed power differentials in my positionality as a researcher. The limitations and ease with which this was possible undoubtedly hinged on my real-life identity. Certain aspects of my identity were fixed: i.e. female, 'brown', caste, age, educated (inferred by virtue of research activities). This is not to imply that they were unproblematic, rather that they were relatively immutable compared with other attributes that were more 'grey': eastern/western, poor/rich, Indian/Canadian, unmarried/married, Hindi-speaking/English-speaking.

Merton (1972) explains that: "The array of status sets in a population means that aggregates of individuals share some statuses and not others; or to put this in context, that they typically confront one another simultaneously as Insiders and Outsiders" (p. 22). The significance of this for fieldwork was to mediate those relatively fixed attributes that caused a gulf between my positionality as a researcher vis-à-vis the participants to achieve a more desirable balance during data collection. In order to do this, I relied on the 'grey attributes' and mediated my positionality through what I call *currencies*, defined here as *that which is a medium of exchange to achieve temporary shared positionalities*. More tangibly, these were social identifiers (language, cultural background, and other outward 'props' such as dress and vehicle type), essentially those tools that would allow me to accentuate the malleable aspects of my real-life identity to appropriate shared positionalities to some degree with participants.

Different aspects of malleable attributes were used as currencies at various points in the data collection process and for different purposes. For example, to initially gain access to schools I dressed in Western clothes to increase my legitimacy as a researcher from abroad, and so that the study would be received in seriousness. This was because I thought that my age, the fact that I looked unmarried (because I

do not adorn myself with the traditional Indian symbols of marriage), and my sex may jeopardise that initial 'first impression'. Nonetheless, I spoke in Hindi even in the early stages of access in an effort to reduce the cultural gap, given my cultural background and that I was affiliated to an 'elite' British university. During interviews with parents and principals, I wore Indian clothes and spoke exclusively in Hindi, not only due to practical considerations since in most cases, English was not spoken by them, but also to reduce the power differential in my positionality, especially vis-à-vis rural parents and principals:

The fact that I conducted the interview in Hindi as well as [the fact that I] have only ever spoken to him in Hindi, he never even took me to be a foreigner. Actually today when he was talking to me, he asked where I was from and when I said Canada he was under the impression that I said Calcutta for a really long time. I think my [visible] 'insider'...status has helped immeasurably. Even though at first to gain access I dressed in western clothes, I dressed for the interview in a *chudidhaar* [Indian pants suit] in order to mentally help the interviewee identify with me and so that there is less of a [perceived] cultural gap (FN 25-09-02, p. 4).

As highlighted above, there was often confusion about my real-life identity. Certain participants did not fully understand or accept my 'Canadian-ness' and others did not wholly accept my 'Indian-ness' other than as cultural appropriation. This seems to fall in line with the experiences of other diasporic or mixed-background researchers (Dossa, 1997; Henry, 2003; Mullings, 1999; Narayan, 1993). For example, one time while I was waiting in the office of a senior official:

They [the clerks] asked what my name was and where I came from. I told them that I came from Oxford University, England, at which from the expression from their faces I could tell they were surprised. They asked me if I had an identification card so I showed them my Oxford ID. They called up and asked if I was to be let in. After having spoken to the office upstairs they asked me if I had come to study. I replied that I was doing a doctoral study here in India. [One clerk] said that I looked Indian and I told him it's because my parents are.

They then began talking among themselves and said, "Oh, you can't tell... she speaks Hindi and all." (FN 26-02-03, pp. 5-6).

Props, such as a vehicle, were also currency. For example, in India official government cars are generally white Ambassadors with short curtains in the side and

rear windows. Since I rented a car to get around all necessary field sites in a day, I started asking for a similar vehicle after a curtained-car was sent to me accidentally one day:

The issue of access was an interesting one in terms of physical access to the building. As I had such a problem getting the [official visitor's] pass last time, I was discussing it with my driver. He said, "*Aap fikar nahin kariye memsaab. Jahan aapko jaane hai, hum aapko vahan ponhoncha denge.*" [Don't worry about it, Madam. I'll take you where you want to go.] He circled the Secretariat once with the car and when we approached Gate 7, he said, "*Ek ye hi gate hai, jahan se hum aapko andar leja sakte hain.*" [This is the one gate through which I can take you in]. And with that he drove the car straight into the gates and the armed guards at the door ushered it in without even looking to see who entered. One of the main reasons was because the car...was an Ambassador with curtains at the windows—looks just like the politicians' and official cars (FN 16-11-02, p. 1).

The use of such visible props and conducting all official government interviews in English, made it possible to establish "visible control" and increase the power differential in my positionality vis-à-vis elite participants as suggested here: "I have found it important for the interviewer to establish some visible control of the situation at the very beginning, even if the elite subject is momentarily set off balance" (Ostrander, qtd. in Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995, p. 142). My positionality was also in flux within single events. For example, after one urban mother commented on 'our' social position as 'Indian' women prior to an interview regarding her daughter's schooling, she immediately ascribed a higher social position to me in socio-economic terms during the interview when talking about her job⁸:

1. I go to people's houses in the housing colony to wash clothes. I go to the homes of like... like people of your status... [chuckles] (PR128-1, p. 3).

Therefore, the challenge was to be constantly aware that my positionality was in flux even within single field events in addition to the various participant groups at different inquiry levels, and to be alert to the possible uses of currency (where possible) to mediate this dynamism. The impetus behind reducing or increasing

⁸ The original quote in Hindi is presented in Appendix 1.

power differentials in my positionality was not only to access data, but in cases where I was perceived or ascribed higher differential, to minimise it in order to put the interviewee at ease. At no time was my cultural background as a Canadian of parents from the Indian diaspora of the 1960s, or my academic affiliation with a British university concealed to create a persona. Rather, through the use of currencies, my real-life identity was extensively drawn upon to refine my field identity and try to find "...a shared positional space [that] should not be viewed as simply a process of 'racial and gender matching' [but incorporating] the dynamism of individual identities" (Mullings, 1999, p. 341).

4.7 The Process of Data Analysis

The process of data analysis was complex and intertwined with that of the research design and data collection. As such, it was in line with Hammersley and Atkinson's description (1995) that "...it begins in the pre-fieldwork phase, in the formulation and clarification of research problems, and continues through the process of writing [...] And in these ways, to one degree or another, the analysis of data feeds into the research design and data collection" (p. 205). Keeping in mind that it was hard to dichotomise between some aspects of data collection and data analysis, the discussion will centre primarily on the formal analysis conducted post-exit from the field.

4.7.1 The Analytic Strategy: Overall Approach

The "analytic strategy" (Yin, 1994, p. 102) for the formal analysis of case study data involved two elements: (1) the *overall approach* managing the different case sub-units and structuring the analysis for the case as a whole and (2) an *analytic framework* guiding the analysis of data from sources at each case sub-unit. The overall

approach for data analysis was framed by the research design itself. In that sense, it followed the general structure of the study as it was research-question driven, and was intended to follow a process similar to that described by Miles and Huberman (1994) which “...gravitated to more fully codified research questions, more standardised data collection procedures, and more systematic devices for data analysis” (p. 8).

The overall approach followed the multi-level research design and focused on structuring the analysis in such a way so as to follow the sub-units of household, school, and state. Its guiding principle was to emphasise the nature of case sub-units as entities that were at once discrete and interconnected, i.e. certain data from a particular sub-unit would not only inform it but would also provide insight (at varying degrees of directness regarding particular research sub-questions) on another sub-unit. This is diagrammatically represented in Figure 4.1.

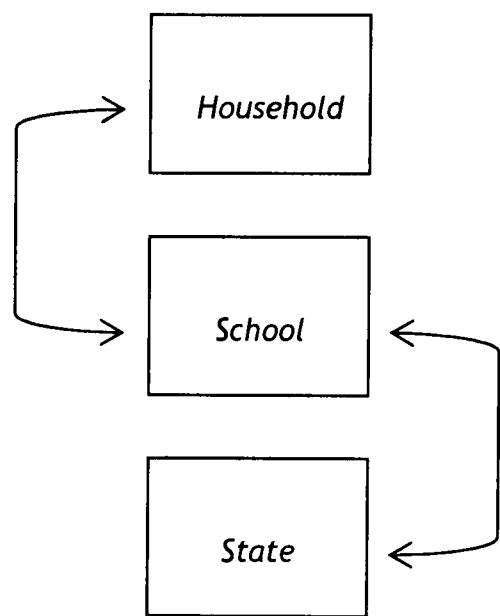


Figure 4.1 *The Relationship of Data from Each Sub-Unit in Informing Levels of Inquiry*

The analysis began with data from the household sub-unit, since it not only corresponded to the first level of inquiry, but was also found to be the most discrete. Thus, patterns emerging from household data sources were most likely to provide the greatest degree of insight on household-level questions without turning to sources from other sub-units. Focusing on a relatively more discrete sub-unit at the beginning

of analysis allowed potential patterns for relevance at the connected sub-unit (i.e. those concerning household-school in this case) to be more easily managed when ‘tacit knowledge’ (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 195) of the data was not as well developed as further along the analytic process. The school level was the second one to be analysed, ending with the state level.

As mentioned earlier, the most direct data obtained about each sub-unit was from the sub-unit in question. Thus, the analysis on each sub-unit in the first instance was conducted by analysing discrete data from that sub-unit and then analysing cross-data from connected sub-units. The overall approach, therefore, was slightly more complex than “cross-case analysis” described by Miles and Huberman (1994), which essentially examines *data from different data sources* of a case or case sub-unit. While this was the method used to analyse data within each sub-unit, the overall approach allowed complementary data from the other connected sub-units to be incorporated into the analysis, resulting in a more robust approach, and ultimately strengthening the insights gained to provide a clearer understanding of the case as a whole.

4.7.2 The Analytic Strategy: Data Analysis Framework

The second element of the analytic strategy was an analytic framework employed to guide conceptual thinking about the different data primarily within each sub-unit. It was also used to highlight areas that would require further corroboration or insight from data across connected sub-units. The framework was applied to all sub-units and across all data sources, regardless of the types of data (interview, observation, or document). It was used to sharpen focus during the process of analysis and develop a set of on-going theoretical propositions that were continually made explicit, refined, and challenged, in line with Yin’s (1994) recommendation to

“rely on theoretical propositions” (p. 103) in the development of insight on the case.

The framework for analysis consisted of the following three questions:

- *Q1: What are the data telling me?*
- *Q2: What is it I want to know? (according to research objectives, questions, and theoretical points of interest)*
- *Q3: What is the dialectical relationship between what the data are telling me and what I want to know? (refining the focus and linking back to research questions)*

The nature of connectedness between different sub-units and the relationship between the first two analytic concerns (Q1 and Q2), are highlighted in the third question, which in turn continually refined insights and sharpened analysis objectives. It produced, to borrow a term from Lincoln and Guba (1985), a series of low-level temporary “working hypotheses” (p. 122), which were continually checked against emerging data patterns and ultimately directed analysis. The framework allowed the identification of gaps in insight that needed to be filled either by other data sources within the sub-unit or through cross-data from connected sub-units. In essence, each question fed into the other and into the potential applications of data from connected sub-units. This provided a further check on ascertaining the degree of confidence and internal validity or (more appropriately) “credibility” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 324), with which insights and claims about the case could be made.

4.7.3 General Analysis Procedure

The general analysis procedure could best be described as “pattern matching” (Yin, 1994, p. 106), or what Miles and Huberman (1994) term, the “variable oriented strategy” of “pattern clarification” (p. 175). Pattern matching was done primarily from an “inductive” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 202) stance, with a caveat. A balance between inductive and deductive elements was struck. Certain approaches from Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) construction of “grounded theory” were borrowed but

not in purist form. This was apparent from the fact that the analytic strategy was driven by the research questions and the research design, which were both influenced by certain theoretical leanings. However, it was also not a deductive approach, as it did not set out to test or prove macro-theoretical claims. As such, the degree of induction varied according to points of interest in each sub-unit, further discussed below.

Fundamentally, the general procedure built on the analytic strategy by incorporating pattern matching, and approached Strauss and Corbin’s (1998) suggestion that “...*by asking theoretical questions about this case and by thinking comparatively* according to properties and dimensions of categories, we are opening our minds up to the range of possibilities which in turn might apply to, and become evident, when we sample other cases [i.e. sub-units or data sources]” (emphases in original) (pp. 88-89). The general procedure drew on several advocated methods of analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) which best seemed to fit the specific task at hand and resembled the approach outlined below.

Analysis Steps	Description & Relationship with Analysis Framework
Unitising	Identifying ‘chunks’ of data in interview transcripts, documents, or field notes with meaning and defining them as data units with boundaries. <i>Q1 of the analysis framework assumed importance (though obviously this would be latently influenced by Q2)</i>
Categorising	Assembling units of data into categories through ‘look/feel-alike’ criteria (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process involved grouping together those data units that seemed similar in comparison to others into a specific category. If a data unit did not seem to fit then another category was formed. Single data units could be categorised into multiple categories if appropriate. <i>Q1 assumed importance</i>
Writing Rules for Inclusion	After a few data units had been placed into a category, a process of reflection on each one ensued. The goal was to distil the meaning of the category by identifying the properties or characteristics of data units grouped together and writing a propositional statement (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p. 139). <i>Q1 of the data analysis framework assumed key importance in this step: ‘What are the data telling me?’</i>
Refining Categories	An examination of the rules for inclusion for each category to verify whether there were duplications or inconsistencies regarding the description of properties. Each data unit was checked against the rule for inclusion to ensure that it was placed in the correct category and whether or not it should be

	duplicated in another according to refined rules of inclusion. <i>Reliance on Q1 was crucial here as well.</i>
<i>Thematicising</i>	This entailed grouping those categories together that seemed to have relationships across them based on their propositions. This went hand in hand with identifying those propositions that were ‘umbrella’ propositions, i.e. propositions that stood alone, and ‘component’ propositions, i.e. those that defined, described, or could be subsumed under the umbrella proposition. <i>Isolating umbrella and component propositions relied on the dialectic between, Q2 ‘What is it I want to know’ (based on theoretical points of interest and research questions) and Q1.</i>
<i>Generating Working Hypotheses</i>	Generating mini-explanations as to ‘how it works’ based on the thematic groups. These were carried forward into future rounds which picked up on the three previous steps at higher levels of abstraction. This and the previous step often involved making ‘operational or integrative diagrams’ (Strauss, 1987). <i>Q3 assumed importance here and alerted me to which other data within the sub-unit would be required to fill the gaps and which areas of the analysis required data from connected sub-units to flesh out the analysis.</i>
<i>Identifying Discrete and Cross-Categories</i>	After sufficient rounds were conducted within the sub-unit, cross-categories were identified, i.e. those that could be potentially useful and relevant in analysing the next sub-unit of the case. Areas in the sub-unit requiring cross-category data from another sub-unit were highlighted. This was the final step within a sub-unit before proceeding to the next level of inquiry. <i>Q3 assumed importance.</i>
<i>Preparation for Analysis of the Next Sub-Unit</i>	Potential cross-categories were carried over to the next sub-unit and put aside. These were incorporated into the analysis of the next sub-unit after/during the first round of thematicisation therein. Analysis of the next sub-unit followed the procedure as outlined above.

Table 4.6 General Procedure for Data Analysis

Thus, the general data analysis procedure incorporated not only relevant insights from data sources within a particular sub-unit, but integrated relevant data from connected sub-units as well. In addition, analytic notes were kept to record key ‘sparks’ of insight within and across sub-units. While the procedure is presented as a linear process, some steps were intertwined, particularly after the first round of analysis within each sub-unit. The strength of the procedure lay in its ability to manage and draw insights within and across sub-units by having the analytic strategy act as a scaffold around it. The following section presents nuances made to the analysis procedure in each sub-unit.

4.7.4 Nuances in the Data Analysis Procedure by Sub-Unit

The analytic strategy and the general analysis procedure outlined above provided the basis for data analysis in the case. Nonetheless, there were certain

modifications to the procedure in line with the specific types of direct data collected for each sub-unit, as well as the degree to which categories were either inductively or deductively derived. While the analytic strategy and general procedure remained relatively constant, the subtle nuances in the procedure resulted primarily from a shift in balance on the degree of reliance on Q1, Q2, and Q3 of the analysis framework within each sub-unit.

Household Level

Recall direct data for this sub-unit were collected through 60 household interviews and the many school observations on parent-principal/management interactions. Household interviews were mainly semi-structured with a small structured component. The structured component, designed to examine the socio-economic and educational status of each household and schooling patterns of its children, was analysed quantitatively. The aim of the quantitative analysis however, was purely qualitative. That is, to provide a richer context on the households to understand ‘where they are coming from’ and the immediate personal context framing their school choice processes. Results were not intended to provide the basis for generalisations to the whole population of LFP schools in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh, or even the sample of case study schools. However, that being said, there is no reason to believe that interviewees were atypical of the types of parents who chose the LFP sector. Given the nature and size of the sample, and aim of the analysis, the quantitative analysis relied on descriptive statistical measures.

The second and main part of the household sub-unit analysis consisted of data from the semi-structured portions of interviews. The procedure closely approximated the one outlined in Table 4.6 above. The difference was that the two groups of interviews, rural and urban, were first separately analysed as discrete groups

(a total of six rounds). The final two rounds of analysis sought to integrate insights from each group, noting not only similarities and differences, but complementary areas as well. Analysis at this sub-unit relied most heavily on integrative diagrams compared to analysis at the others, perhaps partly because of the number of interviews involved, and partly because the resulting categories were the most inductively derived.

As suggested by Strauss (1987), the development of integrative diagrams was done with critical feedback from my supervisor and a data analysis group at the Department. Categories were most inductively derived at this sub-unit because I felt that Q2: 'What is it I want to know (about school choice processes)?', could only be adequately informed by Q1: 'What are the data telling me?', given the relative lack of theoretical points of interest or theoretical development about school choice processes of disadvantaged households in developing country contexts. Results from the quantitative analysis highlighting certain schooling patterns (e.g. numbers of children in state and LFP schools, school-type by gender, etc.) were used as sparks to guide the analysis of semi-structured interview portions as well.

Finally, household-school interactions from observations were used to provide a check on how parents said they engaged with the school with how they 'actually' engaged, and how the school claimed it reacted or responded with what 'actually' happened. These were provided as descriptive insights and checks to validate or challenge working hypotheses generated mainly through semi-structured interview data. As observation data were collected as a form of validation or check and not the main data collection method used to generate working hypotheses, their analysis (for the most part) was concentrated on unitising and categorising.

School Level

Direct data at the school-level were from 30 school interviews (three interviews each with 10 principals/owners), informal interviews, school observations, and school documents. The first set of interviews was structured in order to collect data on the overall picture of case study schools regarding enrolment, number of grades, etc. As with data from structured portions of household-interviews, data from structured school interviews were also analysed using descriptive statistics to provide contextual information on how case study schools 'looked', in order to better situate later data on organisational practices, fee structures, and other points of interest.

The two sets of semi-structured interviews were analysed much like the data analysis procedure outlined above. However, given the relatively low number of schools in each group (urban and rural), interview transcripts were not divided into sub-groups to facilitate the emergence of clearer patterns. Nonetheless, during each round of analysis, I 'took stock' and noted any emerging similarities or differences between the rural and urban groups to provide a more nuanced account. The analysis began with *Interview 2: School Responsiveness & Parental Involvement*. The analysis here was more deductive in the thematicisation step than household-level interviews, but less than *Interview 3: Institutional Context*. This was because the lens through which I engaged with Q2 at this stage was more directed by certain theoretical concepts that seemed relevant, such as 'competition' and 'internal institutions', which influenced the way Q1 was answered in the analytic process.

It was at this point that the emergence of cross-categories became apparent, not just for the household-school sub-unit connection, but also ones that may be relevant for the school-state sub-unit connection. The former were integrated or rejected into the analysis of the school sub-unit as indicated after the second round. Upon completion of all four rounds of analysis at the school level, school-household

cross-categories were carried down to the household-level and integrated or rejected as deemed appropriate. State-school cross-categories were carried forward to the state level and put aside for further consideration at the suitable time.

Data from Interview 3 were unitised and roughly categorised. However, it was found that they would be more appropriate in answering Q2 at the state level, given the nature of the research questions and emerging theoretical points of interest concerning the mediation of the institutional framework. These were put aside to be carried forward for analysis at the state level. Data from informal interviews were incorporated into the analysis of formal Interview 2 after the second analytic round. A difference in coding reflected that data units came from informal interviews.

The treatment of observation data was similar to that at the household level and used primarily for the same purposes, i.e. to gauge school responses to parents. They were also used as descriptive tools to elaborate on schools' physical environment and general school routines/activities. Finally, the range of school documents collected varied greatly by case study school, reflecting their availability. Where school documents such as diaries, notes or letters to parents, or internal memos were available, these were used primarily as a check against principals' comments or as another descriptive tool.

State Level

Direct data at the state level came from 10 formal interviews with government officials at the central, state, and district levels; informal interviews; opportunistic observations; formal and grey documents; and principal interviews (particularly Interview 3). Formal interviews from officials and school Interview 3 were analysed according to the general procedure. Officials' interviews were analysed first, and after a couple of rounds, principals' interviews were incorporated. School-

state cross-categories were also incorporated similar to the above procedure. Some of the categories that were derived and resulting thematicisation were more deductive than at the other two sub-units. This was because theoretical concepts from new institutionalism such as ‘institutional framework’ and ‘sanctions-enforcement’ informed certain aspects of Q2 and acted as analysis categories as well. While this was not the case for most categories or themes derived, it must be noted that Q1 and the research questions themselves were directed by theoretical interest in new institutionalism, making a purely inductive analysis at this level impossible.

Documents assumed the most prominent role in relation to the first research question, ‘What is the formal institutional framework for LFP schools?’ As such, Q2 assumed the greatest importance. Analysis for this question was not interpretative, but assumed a factual role of reporting and assessing how the FIF would be applicable to a new set of schools, an exercise which had not previously been done in the academic literature. As a result, the role of formal documents such as acts, formal rules and regulations, and government notices and circulars was crucial. The method of analysis was a modified approach to content analysis as described by Robson (1993) and relied on the steps below.

<i>Steps for Content Analysis</i>	<i>Description and Relationship with Analysis Framework</i>
<i>Started with the Research Question</i>	Focused on the first research question <i>Reliance on Q2 of the framework</i>
<i>Identified Points of Analytic Interest</i>	This step was added to Robson’s suggested method. Points of analytic interest were initially extracted from themes and categories found to be areas of particular relevance for case study schools through interviews (formal and informal) e.g. recognition, fees, registration, employment, etc. <i>Q2 informing Q1</i>
<i>Decided on the Order of Document Sampling</i>	This was essentially to make the over 1000-pages of relevant documents manageable. The first step was to locate those documents that referred to private schooling. Once that was done they were divided into two groups: ‘basic education’ and ‘secondary education’. This was a natural division given that laws and acts were formed and applied for these two levels of education separately. Sampling within each group then relied on starting with the most fundamental act. The next sampling step was to analyse documents chronologically by points of interest.
<i>Defined the Recording Unit</i>	As most documents were made up of individual numbered clauses, sub-sections, rules, or parts, these were found to be the most

	natural recording units.
Constructed Categories	This entailed placing individual recording units into categories. The nature of the categories were not interpretative or emerging from documentary data, but in essence ‘tags’ to catalogue recording units by analytic points of interest. At this point a few further analytic points emerged that were not mentioned by interviewees and categories were constructed to accommodate them. The placement rule was relatively straight-forward: does this recording unit say something about this category? Q2 informing Q1
Document and Category Review	After completing the first round of categorisation of recording units from a document, the document was reviewed to ensure that no recording units of relevance to the points of interest were left out of any corresponding category.
Proceed to Next Document	The next document was chosen according to the sampling strategy. All previous steps were repeated.
Category Assessment	Once all the documents in the group were analysed, each category was assessed and an analytic memo (Strauss, 1987) was prepared noting the following points: • Summary of the main institutions governing the specific point of interest • Any apparent inconsistencies • Any apparent connection with institutions in other points of interest • Further points of clarification required • Potential sources of clarification
Clarification and Verification	Further clarifications and verifications on my understanding of the FIF were made by referring to interview data, other documents, or contacting state-level participants where possible.

Table 4.7 Analytic Steps Taken for Content Analysis

Unlike most content analysis, the interest here was not to extract from or examine “symbolic meaning” in the text (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 338). In fact, it was almost the opposite, in that it was a process of cataloguing to identify the formal institutions governing LFP schooling in basic and secondary education. The interest was not to decipher the contextual development of the institutions or map out their evolution, but simply to understand what the formal rules governing LFP case study schools were at the moment of data collection *in principle*. How they were applied to and mediated by the schools *in practice* was the focus of the other two research questions at this sub-unit.

Principals’ Interview 3, informal principals’ interviews, and school observations provided direct data on the actions of organisational actors regarding this point. Opportunistic observation data, informal interviews, grey documents, and formal interviews gave direct data on the actions of institutional actors. It is

important to note that on the whole, the first three types of data seemed to be more reliable with regard to how institutions were applied in practice. Formal interviews were often used by some government officials to 'tow the official line' or state how the FIF should be applied in principle. Grey documents were compared with formal documents to look for inconsistencies (if any) on, for example, what basis/criteria schools were given recognition compared with the criteria that should have been fulfilled. Furthermore, informal interviews were compared with formal interviews and formal documents in much the same way.

Observation data were often taken as cues for further analysis in other data sources and, especially at this level of inquiry, served to uncover additional insight by revealing "unwitting evidence" (Robson, 1993, p. 273). Unwitting evidence, used by Robson to indicate what the author of a document did not necessarily intend to impart, was equally applicable to observation events I witnessed with institutional actors. They were especially useful, not only in triangulating data, but sometimes redirecting the focus of analysis as they were the only data available for certain occurrences.

A final point is that the analysis of this sub-unit is a good example of the impact of the constant dialectic between Q1 and Q2 of the framework as encapsulated in Q3. The final research question at the state-level, 'How do LFP schools interact with each other?', resulted from asking what the analytic relationship (and consequences) were of the interaction between what the data were telling me about the nature of the FIF and its application to LFP schools by institutional actors (Q1), and what I wanted to know about how organisational actors (case study school owners) mediated the FIF and its application (Q2). This led to the explicit articulation of the final research question, which I realised through the analytic process was a latent point of interest throughout the research process, but that

required the redirection of focus during the inquiry to manifest itself. The usefulness of the analytic framework became even more apparent as it helped to uncover a fundamental facet of the phenomenon of LFP schooling that could not be pinpointed from the beginning.

4.8 The Dynamics of Language and Translation

Temple and Young (2004) note that "...the issue of translation is often not identified, let alone discussed, in research with people who do not speak English" (p. 162). In an effort to draw attention to this in methodological literature on educational research, this chapter will end with a discussion on the dynamics of language and translation that had a critical impact on the data collection and analysis processes in this study. The discussion thus far focused on the technical aspects of the overall approach and specific techniques used in analysing data. However, the added social element of language and its technical impact in terms of translation must be assessed to fully appreciate the nature of the analysis process in this study. The elements of language and translation were encountered at three stages of the study: data collection, interpretation/analysis, and presentation. These represent the stages at which decisions about language and translation had to be taken.

The use of language as currency during data collection (particularly for interviews) was addressed in Section 4.4.1. The aspect of language that assumes importance here was the distinction between what I call the '*language I use to think in*', as opposed to the '*language of the data*.' The language of many of the data (most formal and informal interviews, some documents, many observation excerpts) was Hindi. The language I use to think in, particularly academically/analytically, is English. This made the analytic process more complex than for someone whose mother-tongue and the language they use to think in is the same (or is used to the same extent) as the

language in which data were collected (whether or not this is English). Furthermore, the divide between the two analytic language types was not as stark as stated above, and many times there was a blurring of the line between them, when I would “slip between the two languages”⁹ (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 161) during analysis. After an extended period of time in the field and engaging with certain concepts that emerged from data in Hindi, the language of the data sometimes became the language I used to think in about those concepts, which made it a more complex task in translating excerpts for presentation in English.

The process of data collection and analysis often involved simultaneous translation of words, concepts, and sometimes entire events. For example, if I was observing a parent-principal interaction at a school, then the corresponding quotes of the relevant actors were often recorded in English through a process of automatic simultaneous translation, i.e. the ‘language I use to think in’ became the ‘language of the data’. Certain words or phrases, which in that split-second I could not simultaneously translate (a point I will momentarily come back to), were recorded in Roman Hindi¹⁰ (i.e. the script was recorded in Roman characters as opposed to traditional *Devangiri* Hindi script). The reason I resorted to Roman Hindi was to deal with a technical handicap. While I can read and write in Hindi, my level of writing and reading fluency (most importantly in this context, speed) is not as high as my spoken and comprehension levels. It is additionally important to note that this slip

⁹ Rossman and Rallis use the concept of ‘slipping in between languages’ when conducting interviews where both the interviewer and the interviewee are ‘fully and fluently bilingual’ in the language of the research (usually English) and the language of the local setting. I am using the term slightly differently to distinguish my own use of the two analytic languages the ‘language I use to think in’ and the ‘language of the data’—as such the concepts may be used by researchers conducting research in any other language, the two analytic languages need not be English and Hindi.

¹⁰ The principle behind Roman Hindi is a phonetic representation of Hindi words in Roman script. It is used even in India, for example, in advertising campaigns. I have also seen certain academic reports, e.g. the PROBE report, which is written in English for an English-speaking audience, but which uses Roman Hindi to present parents’ interview quotes.

between the two languages was more automatic (and quicker) than recording the entire event in Roman Hindi.

The issue of analytic relevance is that some preliminary analysis was occurring at a tacit level during the specific data collection event itself. Words or phrases that were not simultaneously translated and instead recorded in Roman Hindi were often the result of two intertwined issues in that split-second: (1) a realisation that those specific sets of words or phrases were particularly important or relevant and should therefore be recorded in their 'original' form (2) a decision that the full essence of what was being said could not be captured in English, which may undesirably nuance the formal analysis if not recorded in Roman Hindi. In these instances, the 'language of the data' became the 'language I use to think in' because on some tacit level I felt that translating those brief quotes in English would inadequately represent the actors' experiences (Overing, 1987).

Slipping between languages was not restricted to the process of data collection. It also occurred during formal analysis when data from interview transcripts were being unitised. All transcripts were recorded in Roman Hindi. Therefore, I was essentially working with Hindi text. As "Translation/interpretation is inseparable from the application of a theoretical perspective. [And] Both provide accounts which assume a position that has been constructed using a different language" (Temple, 1997, p. 607), the decision not to translate transcripts before formal analysis was a conscious one. This was to minimise the application of an external theoretical *linguistic* perspective (that of English) on to a set of data and keep them in their 'authentic' form, before the application of other external theoretical perspectives (i.e. methodological, conceptual, and empirical) that would undoubtedly be applied during the analytic process.

While the raw data were in Hindi, much of the initial unitising and category naming was done in English, the ‘language I use to think in’. Nonetheless, certain codes or category names were generated “in vivo” “...from the words of the respondents themselves” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 105). As patterns across the data emerged further along the analysis, they were largely written about in English analytic memos. However, there were instances when I slipped into using certain words or phrases in Hindi much for the same reasons as above.

Up until now, my role of “researcher/translator” (Temple & Young, 2004; Vulliamy, 1990) was rather unique with the ‘translator’ aspect expressed largely on the basis of an immersed and automatic cultural, linguistic, and contextual field understanding. The most overt expression of the translator role emerged during the initial formal presentation of the analysis. These formal presentations (i.e. written descriptions of data in report, paper, or chapter form) were done in English. The private presentation (rough drafts for my eyes only) consisted of extensive discussion about the data in English (the language I think in) around original interview quotes in Hindi. In the shared presentation for critique (by my supervisor and other colleagues), original quotes were translated into English, but the Hindi quotes remained directly above them. This was to provide me (and any other readers familiar with Hindi) with a continual check on the translations. The final presentations in the thesis are the numbered translated quotes¹¹, the originals of which are presented in appendices (in the interest of space) for that purpose.

However, it was at the point of producing shared presentations that I realised to what extent the original ‘language of the data’ also became the ‘language I use to think’ in during analysis. I often received feedback that translated quotes were not

¹¹ All translated quotes and other data excerpts are presented in this font which is different from the main text and quoted bibliographic material. All interview quotes are indented and preceded by a number.

always fully comprehensible to a reader unfamiliar with Hindi. This reflected an anxiety on my part of adequate representation described by Overing (1987) in the following argument: “It is not the ‘word’ about which we should be anxious; we should be concerned instead about an ‘alien’ framework of thought which is based upon an ‘alien’ set of universal principles about the world” (p. 76).

My anxiety of misrepresentation and my fluency in Hindi led me in the first instance to adopt a literal translating style, “(i.e. translating word-by-word) which could perhaps be seen as doing more justice to what participants have said” (Birbili, 2000). However, like Birbili’s (2000) observation, it seemed to reduce readability and obscured the understanding of readers unfamiliar with Hindi to discern ‘what’s going on’. Many times, it was only through feedback comments by monolingual¹² English speakers that I, a native English speaker as well, saw parts in translated texts that were unclear despite many previous revisions of those translated passages. It is interesting to note that feedback from bilingual (English-Hindi) speakers did not pick up on many of the minor critiques on sentence construction, phrasing, or flow. This highlighted the extent to which the language of the data actually became the language in which I began to think about them at a tacit level through incorporation of cultural, linguistic, and field understandings.

After receiving feedback, I adopted a translation style of “conceptual equivalence” (Birbili, 2000; Temple, 1997; Temple & Young, 2004) in those instances when the two languages “...did not offer direct lexical equivalence” (Birbili, 2000). In most instances, I felt I was equipped to do this, because as Birbili (2000) notes, “the process of gaining comparability of meanings is greatly facilitated by the researcher (or the translator) having not only a ‘proficient understanding of a language’ but

¹² Monolingual in this context is being referred to those speakers who only spoke one of the two analytic languages (English) and do not speak Hindi, regardless of their knowledge of another language.

also...an 'intimate' knowledge of the culture". I would add, that a deep tacit knowledge of the data and the field context in which they were framed are also crucial to increasing the validity of translation of data through a strategy of conceptual equivalence. Revisions of translated passages were given to monolingual and bilingual speakers with knowledge of the research area and topic for further feedback before final presentation.

Finally, my role as researcher/translator took on yet another form when it came to analysing official documents that were in Hindi. On the whole, official legal translations of acts, rules, and government orders were available in English. These were used for the formal analysis, but were also checked alongside Hindi versions to note any discrepancies (none were found). However, there were a few official state documents that were produced only in Hindi since it is the official language of Uttar Pradesh. These documents, though few in number, posed a special challenge for analysis. As previously mentioned, my spoken level and comprehension of Hindi is fluent. However, the speed with which I read is rather slow. The challenge was not only one of speed, but conceptual understanding of specific official administrative, bureaucratic, and legal terminology, which I term *officialese*, and that I (like most anyone who works outside of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), allied services, or legal professions) was unfamiliar with. After a few initial attempts at analysing these documents, it quickly became clear that another translator would be required. The choice of translator was not made lightly. As Temple (1997) stresses:

The use of translators and interpreters is not merely a technical matter that has little bearing on the outcome. It is of epistemological consequence as *it influences what is 'found'*. Translators are active in the process of constructing accounts and an examination of their intellectual autobiographies, that is an analytic engagement with how they come to know what to do, is an important component in understanding the nature and status of the findings. When the translator and the researcher are different people the process of knowledge construction involves another layer (emphasis added) (p. 614).

Having first tried two translators, native Hindi speakers but unfamiliar with officialese, the importance of finding a translator with the appropriate “intellectual biography” (Temple, 1997, p. 608) became clear. Since the analytic task was to identify the formal institutions that governed LFP schools through these documents, it was of utmost importance that the translation provided was what was actually documented in the law or official rules, and not an interpretation of what may be written due to uncertainty caused by a lack of officialese fluency. The problem was solved when a former Indian government employee volunteered to act as translator.

The translator provided a literal oral translation of the relevant documents as I simultaneously recorded them in English. Specific words and terms in officialese were often explained using a combination of Hindi and English (slipping into both languages, closer to Rossman and Rallis’s conception in interviews) to capture their essence. Additionally, given that the translator had personal experience in the area, a debriefing session on interpretation of the formal institutions was conducted at the end of the translation session, which I recorded in note-form. At the end of each session I referred back to the original documents in Hindi, read, and took additional notes on them to check for any discrepancies in translation and in my new understanding of the documents.

As the discussion in the chapter highlights, reconciling the technical and the social regarding the methodological process in such an inquiry is an intertwined task. The social dimensions of research, e.g. the research context, power relations in the field, identity of the researcher, and language issues, are compounded in cross-cultural and/or international research and must be made explicit, mediated in the technical design, and reflected upon during the processes of data collection, analysis, and presentation. This was the central aim of the discussion in this chapter with a view to bringing the reader a little closer to the ‘life of the research’ and to the ‘inner-

world of the researcher', to provide a rich contextual methodological background to the inquiry and its results. The following chapters present the findings at each level of analysis.

CHAPTER 5 A Matter of Choice

Individual-Level Data Presentation and Analysis

The main focus of this chapter is an examination of the school choice processes of households accessing LFP case study schools. In particular, individual-level data examine household schooling patterns; why and how disadvantaged households chose LFP focus schools over other competing state and LFP schools; perceptions of chosen schools; and the strategies they employed to engage with case study schools. Quantitative data from the structured section of household interviews contextualise the qualitative data by providing an overview of the interviewees, their particular circumstances, and resulting household schooling patterns. The results present households in the study as active choosers and participants in their children's education who made considered choices about their children's schooling.

The aim of the discussion is to put the focus squarely on school choice among this group as deliberate and systematic. The results suggest what is termed here, an 'active choice' model for disadvantaged households. Active choice is seen as the deliberated and free actions of households in making a choice about their children's schooling by following a complex and inter-related process that was guided by their values, beliefs, and mental models about education and competing school

sectors, and an analysis of particular household circumstances and local schools.

The bulk of the discussion focuses on the empirically derived model explaining school choice processes of households in the study regarding the LFP sector. Results suggested that the school choice process was multi-faceted and affected by macro-level attitudinal and micro-level contextual factors (Section 5.4). The process of choosing an LFP school was complex, and not an automatic result of choosing between available state and LFP schools. It was deeply considered and in some cases vehemently advocated by family members. Choosing LFP schools was particularly significant in light of their lack of gender selectivity, in addition to financial constraints, low educational status, and relative personal inexperience with formal schooling. Firstly, household profiles and schooling patterns are presented to contextualise the qualitative results.

5.1 Household Profiles

The group of households in the study were mainly from a sector of Indian society traditionally conceptualised and officially categorised as being socially and economically disadvantaged. Their socio-economic characteristics are presented in Table 5.1, in an attempt to understand where they placed in relation to different forms of (dis)advantage: caste, income level, occupation, and educational status.

Socio-economic Indicator	Evidence from the data
Caste	55% belonged to OBC or SC groups (ranked as the lowest official caste groups in India)
Household Income	74% earned below the minimum annual taxable income of Rs. 50,000; Mean rural income: Rs. 29,018.04; Mean urban income: Rs. 41,768
Parents' Occupation	84% fathers: manual labour, small farming, or low skilled jobs 83% mothers: housewives (of those who worked all but 3 engaged in domestic or manual labour)
Parents' Educational Level	59% of parents either had no formal education or only some primary schooling

Table 5.1 Overall Socio-Economic Characteristics of Household Sample

Note. Data are from 60 households, 30 urban and 30 rural

It is evident that the majority of households fell under at least one (but generally multiple) forms of disadvantage, as well as within the focus schools’ intended target group. While the sample of households was not intended to be representative of the focus schools, it represented 10% of the combined total number of households accessing both schools¹. The following sections examine each socio-economic indicator as expressed in the household sample in some detail.

5.1.1 Caste Characteristics

Table 5.2 presents households according to caste. As indicated, 55% of all households in the study reported themselves as belonging to the OBC or SC groups (officially ranked as the lowest caste groups), indicating that focus schools were able to attract at least some clients from their intended target group. The category ‘not applicable’ refers to households that reported themselves as belonging to a religion other than Hindu, in which the official caste system does not apply. Three interviewees did not disclose their caste and denied reporting their last name (from which caste could be inferred). The assumption is that since caste could be discerned by surname in many instances, they probably belonged to lower caste groups.

Caste	Urban	Urban %	Rural	Rural (%)	TOTAL	TOTAL (%)
High Caste	12	40	5	17	17	28
Backward Caste	9	30	10	33	19	32
Scheduled Caste	2	7	12	40	14	23
Not Applicable	4	13	3	10	7	11
Did Not Disclose	3	10	--	--	3	5
Total	30	100	30	100	60	99

Table 5.2 Household Caste Characteristics

If we only examine households in which caste applied and remove those that did not disclose their caste, we see that the percentage of SC and OBC households increases to 66% of the sample (33 out of 50). It was surprising to find that the

¹ The breakdown is 28% for the rural focus school and 6% for the urban focus school.

sample consisted of twice as many higher caste households among urban interviewees than rural ones, given that the assumption was that access would be more polarised and caste differences more pronounced in the rural school. One further possible explanation was that higher caste households in urban areas may not have been willing to send their children to a school explicitly catering to lower socio-economic groups. As there were more schools in the city they could access others instead.

5.1.2 Household Income Characteristics

As indicated in Table 5.3, 74% of all households reported incomes less than the minimum taxable annual amount of Rs. 50,000, indicating that they were indeed from low income groups. Perhaps the most striking figure was that 93% of the rural households were in the lowest income group, yet they still chose the LFP sector, whereas the mix of urban households on income was greater for the urban group. Note that at least one member in all households worked and none were reported as homeless. Thus, while the majority of households belonged to low income groups, they had at least some minimum means of employment and bare assets.

Income Tax Bracket	Urban	Urban %	Rural	Rural (%)	TOTAL	TOTAL (%)
Below Rs. 50,000	17	55	28	93	45	74
50,000-60,000	4	13	1	3	5	8
60,000-150,000	4	13	1	3	5	8
Above 150,000	--	--	--	--	--	--
Did Not Disclose	4	13	--	--	4	7
Did Not Know	2	6	--		2	3
Total	31	100	30	99	61	100

Table 5.3 Combined Household Income by Income Tax Bracket

Note. One urban interviewee provided data on two household units of the same family increasing the sample size for Tables 5.3 through 5.5

The table presents reported incomes in terms of the four income tax brackets. The mean income for rural households was sufficiently below the first bracket at Rs. 29,018.04 (Rs. 26,708.28 excluding outlier), whereas the mean income for urban households was comparatively higher at Rs. 41,768.18 yet still below Rs.

50,000. The discrepancy in rural and urban incomes may be reflective of the general discrepancy in wages in both areas even for similar employment. This may also be coupled with the fact that while most earners engaged in low paid work, there was more diversity in the types of such jobs available in urban areas, whereas opportunities in the villages were largely reliant on agriculture.

5.1.3 Parents’ Occupational Profile

The occupational profiles of parents reflected their low salaries and are presented in Table 5.4. The range of jobs for parents was concentrated in lower paid jobs such as farming, domestic and manual labour, and government or private class IV² employment.

Occupation	Urban				Rural				Total	
	Mother	%	Father	%	Mother	%	Father	%		%
Domestic Labour	3	10	1	3	--	--	--	--	4	3
Housewife	24	77	--	--	26	90	--	--	50	41
Farming	--	--	1	3	--	--	15	50	16	13
Farming + Manual Labour	--	--	--	--	--	--	4	13	4	3
Farming + Small business	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	3	1	1
Government Class IV	--	--	6	19	--	--	1	3	7	6
Manual Labour	3	10	4	13	1	3	--	--	8	7
Private (Class IV)	--	--	7	23	--	--	3	10	10	8
Private Other	--	--	7	23	--	--	1	3	8	7
Pre-primary/ Primary Teacher	--	--	--	--	2	7	--	--	2	2
Professional	--	--	2	6	--	--	1	3	3	2
Small Business	1	3	3	10	--	--	4	13	8	7
Total	31	100	31	100	29	100	30	98	121	100

Table 5.4 Parents’ Occupations

Surprisingly, 83% of all mothers were housewives and had no employment outside the home. This was contrary to initial assumptions that mothers would also

² Class IV employment is an official category used in the public sector to denote jobs in the lowest rank of employment such as driver, sweeper, peon, etc.

be engaged in paid employment (most likely domestic or manual labour), in order to supplement the family income which was already quite low. However, some rural interviewees stated that there were not many such employment opportunities in their own or surrounding villages. Some urban and rural interviewees stated that since their husbands worked they believed it was their responsibility to look after the children, which may be indicative of social and cultural convention.

Jobs for mothers who worked were limited to traditionally female-oriented occupations. The only exception was one urban mother who was involved in managing the family business. Surprisingly, while two rural mothers engaged in some form of teaching, none of the urban mothers were involved in any higher skilled work. As expected, most rural fathers (67%) were involved in some farming, out of which five have had to supplement their incomes by combining it with manual labour or a small business. According to interviewees, this was because generations of partitions left them with farmland too small for yielding much crop.

5.1.4 Parents' Educational Profiles

The prevalence of low-paying jobs among interviewees was probably due to their low levels of education. Most parents either had no formal education or some primary education (not necessarily a complete cycle), as presented in Table 5.5.

Education	Urban				Rural				Total	
	Mother	%	Father	%	Mother	%	Father	%		%
None	18	58	9	29	16	55	10	33	53	44
Some Primary (Grades 1-5)	3	10	1	3	5	17	7	23	16	13
Junior (Grades 6-8)	1	3	3	10	2	7	4	13	10	8
High School (Grades 9-10)	4	13	5	16	3	10	3	10	15	12
Intermediate (Grades 11-12)	4	13	2	6	1	3	4	13	11	9
Graduate	--	--	6	19	--	--	1	3	7	6
Post-graduate	--	--	1	3	--	--	--	--	1	1
Technical	--	--	2	6	--	--	1	3	3	2
Don't know	1	3	2	6	2	7	--	--	5	4
Total	31	100	31	98	29	99	30	98	121	99

Table 5.5 Parents' Educational Profiles

Thus, most parents (57%) had either no formal or some primary education. This was true of rural and urban parents, indicating that for many of these households, the children were first generation learners. There was a greater educational range among urban fathers compared with any other group. Perhaps surprisingly, nine urban and two rural fathers were educated beyond the intermediate level, some with graduate and post-graduate qualifications. Mothers at both focus schools were generally less educated than fathers, but there was no great difference in education levels between urban and rural mothers. The fact that 57% of all mothers (34 of 60) had no education at all, contradicts generally accepted wisdom in development literature that households that educate their children (especially in rural areas) are usually those where the mother's education level influences the decision. These results indicate that the focus school principals' claim that their schools attracted parents of low educational status seem to hold for households in the study.

The decision of these households to choose the LFP sector over the essentially free state sector, despite the fact that most of them fell under multiple forms of disadvantage, directly challenges many commonly accepted tenets in development literature that portrays such households as disinterested in schooling and unable or unwilling to send their children to school, let alone fee-charging schools. The fact that these households made the choice to send their children to the LFP focus schools, despite financial constraints and their lack of personal experience with formal schooling, highlights that they must have made a concerted choice.

5.2 Household Schooling Patterns

It was important to discern how or whether schooling decisions varied for different children, and to examine household expenditure on fees. According to household data, official tuition fees (combining all schools being accessed)

represented on average a monthly expense of Rs. 107.19 for rural and Rs. 193.95 (Rs. 171.23 excluding outlier) for urban households. This represented 4.4% (4.8% excluding income outlier) of the rural group's monthly income and 5.6% (4.9% excluding fees outlier) of the urban group's. Even though the percentage figures for both groups are similar, the average cost of schooling would have had a bigger impact on rural households if they paid the total fees due per month, in real terms given the discrepancy in income between the two groups. Note that these figures are the maximum possible amount that households would spend on fees if they did not employ the engagement strategies of 'fee-bargaining' or 'fee-jumping' (Section 5.5) or without the school fee mechanisms of 'flexi-fees' and 'fee concessions' (Section 6.6).

Given that most households had constrained financial resources, little formal education, and low educational profiles, the assumption (consistent with literature such as the PROBE Report) was that the decision to access LFP schooling would be biased in favour of older children, particularly boys. Results revealed a very different and complex set of patterns. Household schooling patterns were determined by analysing interviewee data on children in households in the study: the total number of children and school-aged children, sex, age, schooling status, grade level, and school type. Data were gathered on a total of 221 children, of which 113 were from rural households and 108 from urban households. The mean number of children in rural households was 3.6 and in urban households 3.5. The total number of school-aged children was 181 with a rural-urban breakdown of 92 to 89. Since the number of school-aged children and means for both groups were relatively similar, it was possible to make some comparisons about schooling patterns in the rural and urban households. Data on the gender distribution of total school-aged children by school type is presented in Table 5.6.

School Type	Urban		Rural		TOTAL
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
*LFP Focus School	33	40	49	29	151
Private Other	2	2	3	1	8
State	1	3	4	6	14
Religious	1	1	0	0	2
School-aged Children Out of School	3	3	0	0	6
Sub-total	40	49	56	36	
Total	89		92		181
School-aged Children Household Mean	2.87		3.06		

Table 5.6 Distribution of School-Aged Children by Gender and School Type

Note: The number of children in the sample represented 7% of the urban focus school’s and 30% of the rural focus school’s total enrolment.

It is apparent that the most popular choice for households in the study were LFP focus schools, which is undoubtedly related to the fact that all interviewees were from the focus schools themselves. However, what was surprising was the extent to which focus schools were accessed. Given their limited financial resources and low educational status, expectations were that households would be selective and perhaps only access the private sector for one child. However, the combined figure for children sent to focus and other private schools was 88%. Results indicate that households chose focus schools for almost all of their school-aged children (83% of total sample) despite their limited financial resources. On average each urban household sent 2.35 and each rural household sent 2.60 children to the focus schools (children in private sector combined: urban= 2.48 and rural= 2.73).

The second most popular choice was state schooling for both groups combined. This still holds for rural households when disaggregated, but is tied for second place with other private schools for urban households. Another surprising result was that the only instances of school-aged children out of school were in the urban group. This was surprising on two counts: (1) that there were any out of school children at all given these households’ assumed elevated educational awareness indicated by their deliberated choice processes in accessing schooling (Sections 5.3 and 5.4) and (2) that these instances were exclusive to the urban group given their higher socio-economic and educational status relative to the rural group.

Returning to selectivity, an examination of school type patterns by gender reveals that focus schools represented households' first choice for girls and boys in both groups. Furthermore, comparing the ratios of girls to boys in the total sample of school-aged children (0.64 rural and 1.25 urban) to the ratio of girls to boys in the sample at focus schools (0.59 rural and 1.21 urban) suggests that urban and rural households in the study were *not selective by gender* in accessing LFP focus schools for their children. This finding is contrary to initial assumptions and commonly accepted tenets in the literature (De et al., 2001; De et al., 2002; PROBE, 1999) on the schooling patterns of disadvantaged groups. While the findings cannot be generalised to the total sample of case study schools, they indicate a very interesting trend for households in the study and background from which to examine their school choice processes and schooling decisions in the qualitative data.

5.3 Prerequisites for School Choice

Examining school choice in the LFP sector for disadvantaged parents had a very different starting point than described in the traditional school choice literature. As discussed in Chapter 3, much of the current understanding on school choice stems from research carried out in more economically advantaged countries. The few studies based in developing country contexts (Alderman et al., 2001; Glewwe & Jacoby, 1994; Kim et al., 1999) focus on outcomes of school choice rather than *processes*, ignoring the different starting point that disadvantaged households in particular have when making schooling decisions.

Data indicate that the starting point for an analysis of school choice in this context must stem from its prerequisites, or those necessary conditions that must exist for a disadvantaged household to make the initial choice to send its children to school at all (particularly relevant for girls' education), the choice between available

sectors (state or LFP), and the choice of a particular LFP school (in this case focus schools). While this account may seem linear (for want of a more adequate manner of presentation), all levels of choice were in fact inter-related and constantly re-examined, with the ‘final’ choice of LFP school being ephemeral.

In effect, the prerequisites for school choice pointed to systemic barriers that may have traditionally prevented disadvantaged households from accessing schooling. These factors, taken for granted in more economically advantaged countries and by middle/upper-class households in India, must be made explicit in any attempt to understand disadvantaged parents’ school choice processes and behaviour. Results revealed that these distinct prerequisites could be broadly categorised as relating to: (a) infrastructure and (b) prioritising education. Figure 5.1 provides a descriptive analysis before considering each in turn.

Infrastructure		Prioritisation of Education	
School Pool	Availability of a pool of schools with a mix of state and LFP schools in close proximity to where disadvantaged groups live.	Ability to Prioritise	Having taken stock of other needs (e.g. housing, food, medical) households felt they were able to devote some resources to education even if the others were only partially met. This was related partially to decreased family size and increased financial resources even among those engaged in low-paying activities such as farming or manual labour.
Safe & Secure Access to Schools	Road access and appropriate conveyance to schools particularly for girls and in rural areas.	Changing Mental Models	The pervasive belief among households that their children must attend school and there is an inherent value to education. The realisation that as traditional economic activities were no longer sustainable children must engage in employment activities for which education is crucial. The mental shift was prompted mainly by changing social and economic factors and peer influence.

Figure 5.1 Prerequisites for School Choice for Households Accessing the LFP Sector

5.3.1 Infrastructure

Infrastructure was a major concern expressed by interviewees but was defined in slightly different terms than in existing literature on school access in

developing countries. Initially, households were less concerned with the availability and condition of physical buildings, and more with a pool of state and LFP schools from which to choose. This was coupled with a concern for appropriate road access and conveyance to those schools, particularly for girls and in rural areas.

5.3.1a School Pool

It seems a given that in order for households to make a choice of school at all, there must be schools in their proximity. Traditional economic analyses focus on physical barriers to schooling such as the lack of schools particularly in rural areas. In response to this, government officials explained that there was an international and national drive in India to build primary schools, with the official target of one primary state school within a 1 km radius of every village. However, when regarding LFP schooling the issue of physical access was more complex.

Interviewees stated that an essential prerequisite for school choice was the availability of a pool of schools with a mix of state and LFP schools in their neighbourhoods. Interviewees expressed that the emergence of LFP schools in rural and urban areas filled a void in the pool of schools that children from lower socio-economic backgrounds could attend. In such a context, disadvantaged households were better able to make an active choice by critically assessing the pros and cons of choosing the state or LFP sector, and between the different schools available to them. This was most strongly felt by households that migrated from rural to urban areas, or where there were two 'generations' of children (i.e. groups of children in the same household 10 or more years apart).

The increase in the number of schools over a relatively short period of time was noted as a marked change and, according to interviewees, enabled disadvantaged or remote parents not only to send their children to school, but also to make a

distinct choice about the schools they accessed. Most parents claimed that the mass expansion of state and LFP schools was apparent in rural and urban areas³:

1. Yeah, there are lots of schools, lots of school like this [LFP schools], I mean there are just so many of them (PR114, UPre-req, p. 4).

While interviewees stressed the larger pool of schools available to them than even a decade ago, there was a concern among rural parents that it was not large enough to accommodate all of their needs. In these cases, they felt they had to settle for a choice among the best of what was available to them. Such interviewees felt that state schools did not provide an adequate quality of schooling and while LFP schools 'were better', sometimes only marginally so. Nonetheless, they insisted that this marginal increase was better than the quality of state schools:

2. It's not that it's good... but where else should we enrol them? All the schools are like that in the village. In the village, all the schools are like that, I mean there aren't any schools that are particularly good. [...]

[Muffled words omitted] we don't have money, what else can we do? And there aren't that many good schools for us to enrol them there, give that much in fees, and pick up all that expense so this is the best.

This is the best?

Yeah. Given our economic condition, this is the best (PR24, RPre-req, p.1).

5.3.1b Safe and Secure Access to Schools

Interviewees, particularly from rural backgrounds, claimed that in addition to a mixed school pool it was necessary for them to be nearby and to have safe and secure access. This was a potentially mitigating factor for girls' schooling. The main issue of concern was for the school to be well connected by road with adequate conveyance arrangements. One mother, whose family had recently migrated from a village to Lucknow, reflected on the issue regarding her daughter:

³ Original quotes in Hindi are presented in Appendix 2.

3. It's just that in the villages people think more about the fact that she's a girl so how is she going to go that far by herself... there are such problems.

But there are lots of problems [in the village]. That's the main problem [of safe conveyance to the school]. And each school... hmm... is so far apart. Schools are so far away. Now here [in the city] we [women] can go too [to drop off or pick up children]... in the village there is still *pardah* so we can't go out that much... to get them. Now here, the men go to their jobs so we can come and go (PR104, UPre-Req, pp. 3-4).

The issue of safe access to school was more a concern for rural parents. This may have been because there was a higher concentration of available LFP schools in local neighbourhoods in the city than in villages, coupled with the fact pointed out above, that mothers could escort their children to and from school because they were free from the custom of *pardah*.

5.3.2 Prioritisation of Education

The prioritisation of education in the context of constrained financial resources, and over other household needs, was paramount to enabling school choice. The prioritisation of education had two components: (a) the ability to prioritise i.e. some financial resources to devote to education (however, few and in most cases not adequate to cover all school fees) and (b) changing mental models considering education as necessary for children's future and being prepared to forego certain wants in favour of investing in education as a priority. This mental shift contradicts commonly held assumptions about this socio-economic group not valuing education or not prepared to prioritise it.

5.3.2a Ability to Prioritise

Data suggest that the ability to prioritise education was expressed as households having taken stock of their needs and feeling that they were either in the financial position to devote some of their resources to education, or that they must do so even if some other needs were not met. The ability to prioritise was partially

related to having increased financial resources despite many households (particularly rural ones) engaging in traditional family trades. This was especially discernable in households engaging in traditional trades with two generations of children, where there was marked change in schooling patterns of the second generation. It was not uncommon to find that while LFP schools were accessed for the second generation, the first was not schooled at all. This was partially related to the ability of those same parents to devote some resources to schooling despite engaging in the same low-paid jobs (such as manual labour), as when their older children were in school.

It seemed to indicate that even in rural areas, there was an increase in the monetary standard of living, even though 80% of total households⁴ still fell below the minimum taxable amount. As in the experience of one household:

4. My son, this boy's father, he's not educated either.

I see, he's not educated?

He's not even educated.

Why?

Oh, we're poor people, how can we send them to school? In those days it was 50 paise to Rs. 1 for a day's labour.

Then?

It wasn't more than that in those days. Rs. 1, Rs. 1.50. It wasn't more than that and we had to feed them two girls, two boys... money for four people.

Yes, the daily wage was very low.

And how can you make ends meet with Rs. 1-1.50? (PR27, RPre-req, p. 2)

The change in the standard of living and schooling patterns of a disadvantaged family in just one generation is noteworthy. The current daily rates for manual labour were reported as Rs. 50-70 in rural areas and Rs. 70-100 in urban areas. Thus, while the interviewee claimed that it was impossible to educate and feed

⁴ This figure excludes households that did not disclose or claimed not to know their household incomes (45 out of 56).

his family on his meagre salary of Rs. 1 to Rs. 1.50 as a daily wage labourer, it was possible for his son to feed and educate both of his children in a rural LFP school while engaging in the same type of employment.

This changing pattern was not only partially attributable to the ability to devote increased financial resources to education, but also to decreased family size. As one interviewee, the paternal grandmother of a student at the rural focus school claimed:

5. He's not educated either [referring to the children's father].

He's not educated either.

Oh, in those days the situation in the rural areas was either we feed them or educate them.

I see. Now? Have times changed a little?

Hmm. Now times have changed a lot. Do you think they've changed only a little? Times... people don't have that many children. Times have changed so much.

Nowadays after three children people have an operation so that they can educate and clothe them. In the old days, no matter how many children people had, no one used to have an operation (PR20, RPre-req, pp. 1-2).

For urban parents, balancing nutritional and educational needs with shelter assumed importance. Whereas the majority of rural households (21 of 30) lived in their ancestral homes, urban households (especially migrants) often had the added expense of rent. As a result, some called on other family members to help meet school expenses rather than exiting the LFP sector, which may have been the expected response of a household (like the one below) with very with limited resources, many children, and no prior history of education:

6. Oh, we feel a lot of shortages, like we're paying rent... it's Rs. 600 [per month] for the room. Now, because we have kids we have to buy milk too so there are problems at home.

So what do you do?

Now, what can we do? We make do from here or there. Like my sister-in-law, she has a job so she helps a little bit. She has a job, so theirs is fixed [income] right? But when we can't make do then we get money

for the fees from them, we'll return the money later on (PR111, UFM, p. 2).

Securing a permanent place to live for urban parents who were recent migrants to Lucknow from surrounding villages inculcated a feeling of stability. Some parents expressed that this feeling prompted them to seriously consider schooling their children as it signified some continuity:

7. We got a house so now we're going to stay here. Then we thought that we should also put the children in school, I mean now we have a house so we should educate the children as well. [...]

...otherwise sometimes we were here, sometimes there... that's why we didn't educate them. Then we came here and we thought, 'OK, let's educate them.' We're not educated so the children should be (PR109, UPre-Req, p. 1).

Having taken care of their housing need and feeling a bit more stable, this family felt it was in a position to send its children to school. Additionally, it seemed that moving to the city might have led to a change in mental models about schooling, conceiving it important for their children to be educated. This was captured by the same parent who later said:

8. Oh, we used to live in the village before, and we didn't have that awareness. We're from the village, you see. We didn't have that understanding. Then he got older and I saw that everyone's sending their children to school, they're all going to school. We thought, 'OK we should educate them a little bit too.' We're not educated so we should educate our children (PR109, UPre-req, p. 1).

5.3.2b Changing Mental Models

Data indicated that the prioritisation of education, taken for granted regarding higher socio-economic groups and in school choice literature, seems significantly related to a mental shift resulting in changed mental models, or the "mental constructs" North (1990) terms as "subjective models of the players [actors]" (p. 8) through which they understand the environment and make resulting choices. This mental model can be described as encompassing the pervasive belief among parents that they must send their children to school and that there is

something inherently valuable about education. Before turning to how the mental model was expressed and its effects, the prompts of the mental shift behind it are explained below.

Prompts to the Mental Shift

Data suggest that the mental shift behind changing mental models to prioritise education had two sets of prompts: '*peer and family influence*' and '*social changes*'. Each set appeared differentially across rural and urban groups. Peer and family influence seemed to be particularly acute among households that migrated to the city from rural areas. Similar to PR109's experiences above, other interviewees also claimed that upon moving to Lucknow and interacting with neighbours of similar social standing, they too were prompted to think of sending their children to school. As explained by one mother who advocated for her daughter to be sent to the focus school, this led to a change in thinking about education:

9. It's very important to educate them. My husband, in actual fact, is of a different temperament. He thinks, 'What's the use in educating girls?' But I think that his times were... my sister's daughter[s] are studying. Someone's doing a BA, someone's doing something, so one sees [and understands]... now, in our extended family we're the weakest in educating our children. My sisters ask, 'Why is that? You can fill your stomach even by eating chutney but educating your children is the most important thing' (PR111, UMent, p.1).

This interviewee's comments highlighted the possible influence that the schooling behaviours of extended families may have exerted on some households, prompting them to send their children to school. However, it did not automatically affect everyone. There were cases where only one household unit of an extended family accessed focus schools or any schooling at all, despite the fact that all household units lived together in the traditional extended family system. In such cases, it could be extrapolated that family influence had little effect and that subjective mental models about schooling for each unit were different, as expressed

in their schooling choices. It also suggested that contrary to expectations, while family influences may have had a role in the school choices of households, such decisions and choices were independently taken by nuclear household units about their children, and not by the traditional family head. This was confirmed by interviewees.

Data also uncovered a tension between changing mental models to access schooling and traditional ways of life. This tension resulted from changing social factors reflecting a concern over dying traditional economic activities and most parents' realisations that they were no longer sustainable, leading children to engage in other forms of employment. For some members of the older generation (e.g. grandparents), the mental shift was conceived as 'giving in' to new ways rather than a whole-hearted acceptance of the value and increasing role of education:

10. It's not better. They're studying so we're working. They'll get something somewhere, like they're studying, so they'll get a job somewhere. At least we're here [to look after the farm]. Now there isn't even that much farming left (PR20, UMent, p.1).

As reflected above, some interviewees felt that schooling ultimately led children away from traditional farming activities, placing a greater burden and responsibility on the family to carry out the work for their already withering farms to survive. Thus, a minority of interviewees were reluctant to embrace the 'virtues' of education whole-heartedly, even if they realised that traditional occupations were no longer sustainable. The majority took stock of the changing labour market and expressed the need for their children to be educated and move away from traditional trades:

11. *So what do you think about your children's future?*

If they study, then they'll have a good life. I'm a farmer. And if they don't study then whatever's written in their fate will happen.

So there isn't a wish that farming... you don't think that my children should also go into farming?

No. [...]

Then what do you want?

I say that they should study, and go live in Lucknow. And if they can't study then it isn't forced, if they can't study.

Then there's farming...

Yeah. But there isn't really farming. It'll go in 10 years.

I see.

[...] [it] will go in 15 years. Farming will be finished in front of my eyes.

I see... so they have to do something...

Yes (PR22, RMent, p. 9).

According to interviewees, the profound social change of the non-productivity of family-run farms was due to land partitions. It sparked the realisation that education was not just as a desired social good, but a *necessity* and the first step for their children's future. As one interviewee expressed:

12. We have to educate them. [...] If they get a job, they'll get one otherwise they can do some business. It's very important that they study... after that we'll see what happens (PR6, RMent, p. 10).

Another relevant social change prompt was expressed as the need for girls' education. Interviewees claimed that there were two reasons for this: changing economic conditions as above, and the changing 'marriage market'. Essentially, interviewees saw education as a key to 'buying' their families out of lower social classes by receiving better marriage proposals. They explained that changing economic conditions meant that even in rural areas households were differentiated between those whose mental models about girls' education had changed and those who subscribed to more conservative views. One interviewee commented that the prevailing view in many rural families was still that girls' education was a wasted investment once they were married. However, most interviewees felt that households that chose the LFP sector had mental models which expressed themselves as:

13. If she is educated then she can do anything (PR8, RMent, p. 5).

Most interviewees realised that changing economic conditions necessitated investment in all their children's education, regardless of gender, as a priority since it could help increase the socio-economic status of the household. This was exemplified by one rural interviewee, a poorly educated father of five girls and two boys, all except one of whom were sent to the rural focus school:

14. I'm not very well educated, I mean not very well educated at all. My children have gone up to inter. They did inter from here [rural focus school]. In fact, my daughter got 88% in high school [grade 10 final board exam marks].

I see. Those are very good marks. Now what will she do?

After this she's applied for the post of *Shiksha Mitra*⁵ through the open call in the campaign. I've educated my boys and girls so I have been negotiating over why has my daughter's application has been rejected, the one who just finished [inter] [...]

I'm a watchman in a guest house. So that's why I educated my children because we don't have a farm.

You don't have a farm?

No [...] I thought that my daughter, the one that's finished inter, could become a *Shiksha Mitra*. So it would help us out right? I have to look after my children and make sure...
[...]

It's just that there are some... [pause] actually there are some problems because the family is very large and my income is low (PR30, RMent pp. 12-13).

The interviewee further explained that he was actively engaging with community members to help recruit his daughter for the post to overcome difficulties she faced as a candidate against others with political connections. He felt it was his duty to ensure that his daughter's future was secured, and that her potential economic contribution to the family could be substantial since there were 'many mouths to feed' on his low salary. While this interviewee was one of the most active in following through on the investment in his daughter's education, it clearly

⁵ As mentioned in Chapter 2, due to the increase in demand for schooling coupled with a freeze of hiring new teachers in Uttar Pradesh, a '*Shiksha Mitra*' or para-teacher recruitment campaign was launched. This was meant to recruit recent intermediate level or university graduates from villages to support schooling in their local state schools, effectively taking on teaching responsibilities for one or two classes.

demonstrates the ideal mental shift undergone by rural parents described in Quote 13 above. In effect, it exemplifies the realisation that girls could also be potential economic contributors, and investing in their education is an investment in the family's overall socio-economic status.

The other prompt for mental models around girls' education was an increased demand for educated brides in the marriage market. The majority of marriages in India still materialise through the arranged marriage system with a careful selection of the bride and groom based on a number of attributes. Many interviewees claimed that there was a shift in the demand for more educated brides even among lower-income and lower-caste groups. Some parents claimed that their daughters would find a more suitable match if they were educated, thus raising their socio-economic status by marrying a husband who was also educated. Education of girls in this sense can be viewed as currency for social mobility even among groups who were not traditionally highly educated (perhaps not from low income to middle class but within a higher earning low-income group or to lower middle-class status):

15. We thought that we would have to make some sacrifices for the children... that if our elder daughter studies then she will become educated.

Yes, people are educating girls also these days... in the villages too?

Now people are educating them everywhere.

[...]

Yeah, right? So what is this change that has come about in people?

There has been a change in people... now everyone is searching for educated matches for their daughters, the kind that educated families find for theirs. For girls... otherwise there are many problems surrounding children's marriages. These days the difference between girls and boys... now girls are matching men in every job, everywhere. Girls have started becoming educated according to the times (PR104, Ument, p. 19).

The Nature of the Mental Model

Data indicating that the mental shift stemming from ‘peer influence’ and ‘social changes’ prompts, also suggested that the resulting mental model encompassing a propensity to intrinsically valuing education, realising its socio-economic benefits, and accepting its benefits for girls, manifested itself among participants as, ‘*sacrifice mentality*’. It was termed ‘sacrifice mentality’ because while most households had limited financial resources, they felt that devoting part of them to LFP schooling was essential to their children’s future at the expense of other needs. In addition to simply devoting resources, it was expressed as the mind-set that:

16. If you want to educate your children then you have to undergo hardship. We either undergo hardship or we don’t educate our children (PR112, UMent, p. 13).

Prioritising LFP schooling and thinking of it as a necessary expense led some households displaying sacrifice mentality to consciously make the decision to live a frugal lifestyle or compromise on some other basic needs, for example by eating mainly staple foods. As one interviewee claimed:

17. *Do you ever feel that your expenses are too high because of education?*

We don’t think about these things. We make do on very little. But... if we have one kilo of flour, then we’ll make do only on that. It’s not like we’re big spenders.

I see, I see. So you think that education....

Hmm... it should be done properly. It’s a necessity (PR26, RMent, p. 8).

Most participants felt that they must do whatever was necessary, regardless of the immediate financial cost. This was coupled with the belief that there was a certainty in sacrificing some desires, compromising on other needs, and a short-term negative impact on their lifestyle. Households’ acceptance that choosing LFP schools meant undergoing hardship should not be dismissed, as the reality expressed by most participants was that sacrifice was intrinsic to accessing the LFP sector:

18. Oh, there are always shortages. Sometimes we have less, sometimes more. Everyone feels like they have some shortages. [Muffled.] Shortages are always there but...

Then what do you do? I mean what do you think? How do you make ends meet?

Things will keep going on. Somehow we make ends meet. We have to educate our children, no matter what somehow. If we have to undergo hardship or whatever, we have to educate our children no matter what (PR109, UMENT, p. 13).

Additionally, some households undertook considerable 'family-life' costs by sacrificing aspects of conventional family life such as living together. Some participants reported sending their older children to live with extended family members in another village or city so that they could access even 'better' LFP schools. This was similar to the "strategising" (Butler, 2004) by middle-class parents in the UK who move to areas closer to the school of choice, but entailed even greater family life costs as the family was split up. This is best illustrated in the lifestyle choice of one family, although they were not alone in the sample:

19. Yes, we must educate them.

Is that why you sent your younger daughter here?

Yes, we sent her here [to Lucknow] but we have no intention of living here because we are renting. So now we're thinking that she can study here [at the focus school] this year. My sister-in-law lives here in the PSC [Police Colony], she started a job...

I see...

Then we'll get our daughter enrolled there. She'll study there.

So where will you go then?

We'll go back to our village.

You'll go back. And your daughter, you'll leave her with her aunt?

Yes.

So, why do you have to go back to the village?

Oh, our elder daughter, she's thinking that 'I should study'... she's thinking that she should also study something. [...] So now we're thinking that we should go back home, and then it's necessary to educate her as well (PR111, UMENT, p. 16-17).

Such complex family arrangements for the purposes of schooling were reported by other rural and urban households. In other instances, families opted out of complex family arrangements by moving closer to Lucknow and were prepared instead to undergo financial hardship, even though staying in their villages meant lower living costs. For these households, sacrificing family life was a greater price to pay than financial costs:

20. Our elder daughter used to study there [in the village], but when we came here [to Lucknow] we brought her as well. We felt that we would like to keep our children with us wherever we live, even if we eat less, have less to wear, but that feels right. Everyone living together is what feels good. We can accept our sorrows and joys when we're together.

Otherwise, our elder daughter was in the village. Even now everyone was saying that we should leave her because it's difficult there [in the city]. But my heart can't accept leaving her (PR104, RMent, p. 14).

However, there were some inconsistencies in the mental models expressed by some interviewees. Some parents who prioritised education and displayed aspects of sacrifice mentality also engaged in schooling behaviours that were inconsistent or contradictory to this. While a minority, some households did not enforce schooling for all of their children, or allowed certain school-aged children to quit while simultaneously accessing LFP schools for others (four households). Others enrolled children late. For example, one interviewee displayed a certain laxness:

21. Why isn't the eldest son going to school?

He studied for some time in a state school but then quit.

He quit?

Yes.

Why?

He used to register his name [on the attendance roll] but then would roam around (PR124, UMent, pp. 9-10).

As above, some parents did not stress schooling beyond a certain minimum level for children deemed uninterested, and instead encouraged them to work. In the case above, the child began work as a mechanic's assistant at the age of 10. Other

interviewees were not properly informed of what year their children should be in according to their age, and enrolled them late. Some parents stated that they acquiesced to some of their school-aged children's decisions of discontinuing with school, reminiscent of British studies in which working-class schooling decisions allowed a greater degree of children's choice. While a minority of cases, these behaviours and lax attitude toward the schooling of some children demonstrated a disjoint in some parents' mental models, even though they fundamentally believed that education was a necessity, expressed by the fact that they still accessed focus schools for other children. Thus, one could speculate that this disjoint might have been more an indication of households' economic realities. Nonetheless, since households generally had a propensity to favour schooling over not schooling their children, and because the prerequisites for school choice were met (to different degrees), the data led to the development of an empirical model for school choice regarding the LFP sector.

5.4 *An Empirical Model for School Choice in the LFP Sector*

Data revealed that school choice in the LFP sector for participants was a multi-faceted process affected by a number of factors. The model presents parents as active choosers, highlighting the process of choosing an LFP school as complex and not the automatic result of choosing between available state and LFP schools, but deeply considered and in some cases vehemently advocated for by family members. Choosing LFP schools was particularly significant given most households' financial constraints, in addition to their low educational status indicating their relative inexperience with the formal school sector. In examining choice, the focus is on the systemic set of values, beliefs, and mental models (reminiscent of Apple's (2004)

claims) which guided these disadvantaged households in enacting their school choices and engaging with their chosen schools.

Having made the prerequisite choice to send their children to school, there were two main levels of choice for the study's purposes, conceptualised as two inter-related levels of school choice: (1) a macro-level choice of school type: the choice between state and LFP schools in general and (2) a micro-level choice of specific school: the choice between competing local schools in the local schooling market. While there was some degree of causality between the two levels (beyond the scope or aims of this study to ascertain statistically), choosing one sector over the other at a macro-level did not necessarily exclude selecting a school from the latter, given micro-level assessments of their local school pool or other constraints. Thus, as previously stated, the process was neither linear nor step-wise (though it may seem so within the limits of presentation), but inter-related and highly ephemeral.

The macro-level acted almost as an umbrella through which households took stock of their specific situations and contexts, and consequently made their choice. These choices were not necessarily consistent for all children (although they tended to be so) and were not seen as final. They were often re-evaluated within a single school year. Both levels of choice had specific factors which were applied by households in the process. The model depicted in Figure 5.2 below, outlines the process employed by households in the study when selecting the focus school, and not any previous or subsequent choices.

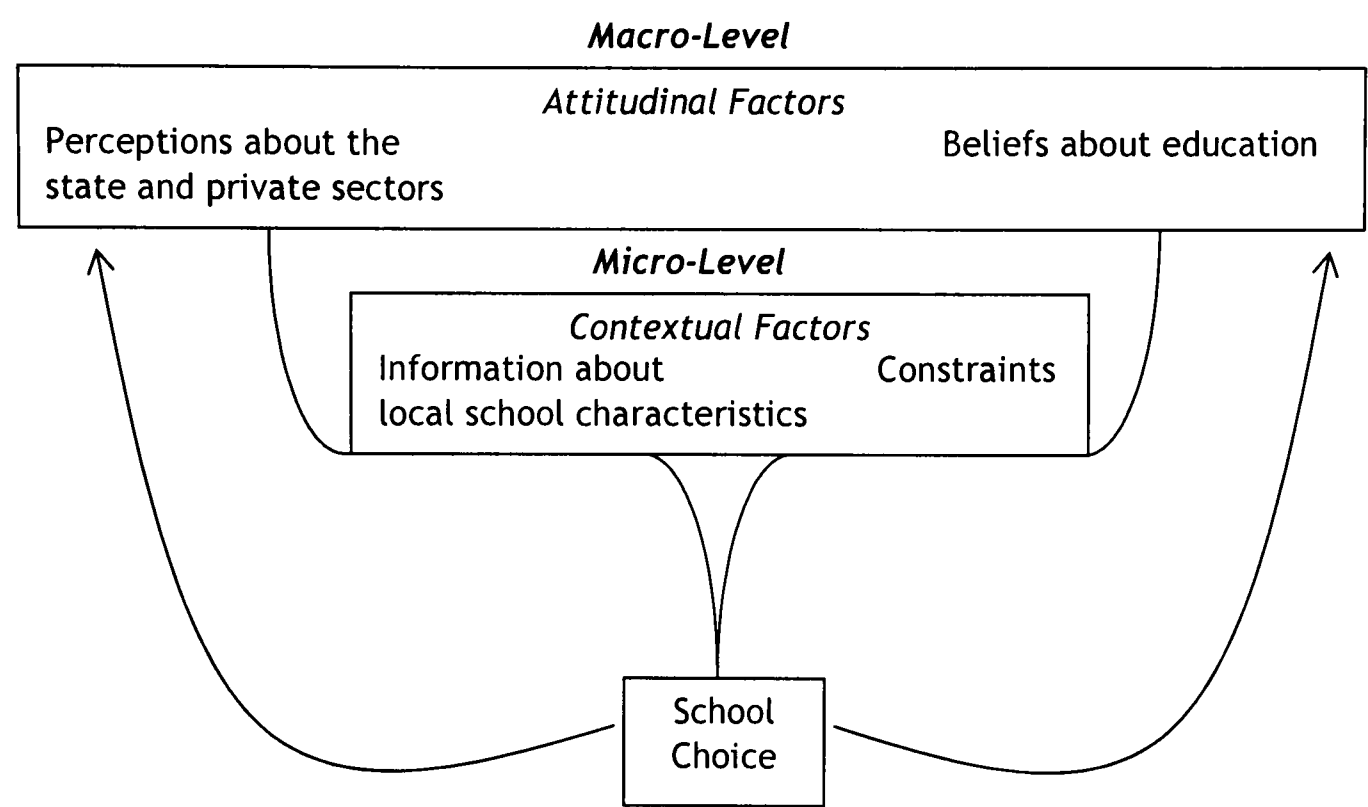


Figure 5.2 Macro- and Micro-levels of LFP School Choice and Related Factors for Households in the Study

5.4.1 Macro-Level Attitudinal Factors

The macro-level factors, ‘*perceptions about state and private sectors*’ and ‘*beliefs about education*’ were conceptualised as *attitudinal factors* for school choice and the micro-level factors, ‘*information about local schools*’ and ‘*constraints*’, as *contextual factors*. The interplay between the attitudinal and contextual factors resulted in households choosing LFP schools for all or most of their children. The tentative nature of the resulting choice must be stressed. While some households reported occasional shifting of children between LFP and state sectors, the choice of which specific LFP school to access was continually revisited by most. This was further evidenced through the strategies households employed to engage with LFP schools (Section 5.5). An in-depth discussion about each factor follows.

5.4.1a Perceptions about the State and Private Sectors

Households held firm macro-level perceptions about the state and private sectors which were applied to their local contexts in choosing a school for their

children. Interviewees generally viewed the state and private sectors as independent and binary opposites, with all private sectors offering a better quality of education (however defined). In fact, many interviewees asserted that there was ‘something’ inherently different about the private sectors which the state sector simply could not match. Echoing the sentiments of many, one interviewee stressed:

22. In a state school, it’s just not the same thing (PR114, UGvP, p. 12).

Interviewees often claimed that this ‘thing’, this somewhat intangible set of qualities that was different in all private sectors, was a combination of a positive educational climate for schooling and concentrated educational activities taking place in private schools. Describing the difference between the two sectors, one parent exclaimed:

23. The difference between here [the private sector] and there [the state sector] is like that between the ground and the sky (PR22, RGvP, p. 10).

Interviewees perceived differences between the state and private sectors as deficiencies in the former, but related their comments specifically regarding the LFP and state sector. Deficiencies in the state sector were conceived either through direct personal experience of both sectors or through the general discourse surrounding schooling in their local communities. They were attributed to a number of school-related factors: lack of adequate school facilities; short-staffing of teachers; unsanctioned school closures and irregular school staff attendance; inadequate and infrequent monitoring or school inspections; lack of strict disciplinary procedures for children; an unsupportive and non-responsive school environment for parents; and unreliable teachers and unsatisfactory teaching practices. Undoubtedly, household perceptions about differences between the two sectors were most deeply ascribed to the attitudes and work practices of teachers, which were largely conceived as negligent and dubious. Many interviewees viewed state teachers and their teaching

practices with disdain and contrasted them with the LFP sector. Capturing the perceptions of many, one interviewee illustrated:

24. ...in state schools, see... you can't trust teachers in the way you should. It's like now it's not lunchtime, now the children pick up their schoolbags and leave, now there's teaching, now they sit around... this is what happens in state schools. They get the children to sit and untangle their balls of yarn for them. In my village, children go and they'll sit and untangle balls of yarn for the teacher. They'll get them to fix the yarn for a sweater. I mean they'll get the children to do their chores but they won't be in any mood to teach. And here it's not like that. Here everything's done on time. Children will come to school right on time. And if they're late then their guardians will bring them (PR126, UGvP, p. 5).

In more extreme cases, a small number of interviewees expressed a heightened lack of confidence in the state sector, dismissing it as being gravely malfunctioning and rampant of corruption. Among this group, allegations made by parents and principals that state inspection officials either did not make regular inspections or accepted *ghoos* (bribes) to pass malfunctioning schools were not uncommon. However, teachers were again blamed as the main culprits, seen as manipulating the state sector by engaging in questionable practices such as transferring from remote postings for personal needs:

25. There is nothing but deceit and disloyalty in state schools. People sit at home and accumulate their pensions. They don't want to teach.

Even in the urban schools?

Even in the urban schools. [...]

Teachers get their postings transferred locally. They do their household work... farming and agriculture or business, they do everything. They have no interest in teaching. So two or four children from the local area go just to hang out, they're not the studying type. They go there and play. They go and play at school, what difference does it make? Instead of playing at home they go and play at school.

And here in the city, what's the situation in the state schools?

The state schools in the city... I have never seen them. Nor do I have any power to go and visit them. I have no reason to go there.
[...]

I think that it will be approximately the same type of environment here as well (PR110, UWNG, p. 2).

Perceptions such as these about the state sector were deep-rooted and, as for this parent, held true even if they had not validated them in their local contexts. Rural perceptions were validated to a greater extent as most households had experiences of local state schools, either by having previously accessed them, built personal relationships with staff, or in the very small minority of cases, as students themselves. In such cases, interviewees felt that the quality of state schools had generally declined over time. In contrast, the LFP sector was generally perceived as being efficient and successful in delivering a satisfactory standard of schooling, mainly because for some, fee charging was seen as a prerequisite to 'good' schooling:

26. Nowadays schooling is only good where there are fees. This [LFP schooling] is better than the state (PR7, RGvP, p. 7).

On the whole, household perceptions about private sectors generally, and the LFP sector specifically, were: better school facilities; strict adherence to school calendars and daily timetables; higher class of clientele; higher levels of school responsiveness to specific needs; interested and capable teachers; an environment more conducive to learning; better quality of schooling; and effective school management. Positive perceptions about the LFP sector largely had to do with a guarantee on the quality of schooling delivered, simply because households paid a fee (no matter how low) which contributed to the very existence of an LFP school. Some interviewees expressed that the act of paying for schooling gave them some right to test the claims made by their chosen school, which in turn upheld that guarantee:

27. ...because in a state school how much schooling do they really give? Here if they don't provide schooling then that school will shut down.

Yes, that's true.

So that's the situation. Here they [teachers and school management] are going to attend regularly and if they don't we can test it, I mean we can say something about it (PR26, RGvP, p. 6).

Additionally, households generally felt that children attending LFP schools were brighter:

28. Children are bright here [at the focus school]. And there, it's not like children really study at the state school (PR22, RGvP, p. 4).

In some instances, as in the case above, this perception was an extension of the belief that private schools were inherently better than state schools. For others it was due to observed differences in their children's achievement and results on various tasks and exams:

29. They used to study at a state school before this.

So why did you change schools from a state school to this one?

We started sending them here because they studied [there] for two years and didn't learn anything.

They didn't learn anything?

[...] Their father said the children are going to school but they aren't learning anything. Go and find some good [muffled]. So we started them at this school two years ago and little by little they started to learn. So that's why we enrolled them in a private and not a state school (PR120, UGvP, pp. 6).

Whatever the impetus behind perceptions of children's relative achievement at both school types, it is important to stress that they were based on school exams or tests and not on comparable or standardised measures⁶. Nonetheless, this perception about LFP schools resulted in the majority of households conceptualising them as the only viable tools for social mobility. In effect, for most interviewees LFP schools represented the most tangible opportunity for them to have a better life:

30. ...I myself said that it's been two years since they've been studying at the state school and they're not learning anything and their life is being ruined. Big deal they're going [to school] they're not learning anything... [...]

It's been two years. It's the third year now that they're at the private (focus) school. And now however well they do they're going to study in private school. At least they'll learn **something**, they'll be able to make something of their life. Otherwise, they're going to the state school and not learning anything. They don't even tell them much in state school. So we enrolled them here (PR120, UGvP, pp. 6-7).

⁶ The only such measure would be the UP High School and Intermediate Board exams which are usually taken in grade 10 and grade 12. In most households, children attending LFP schools were too young to have previously taken these exams in the schools they attended.

Having elaborated on the perceived virtues of the LFP sector, there was a realisation that the private sector was highly differentiated not only by the variable quality of schooling offered in different private school types, but also along lines of social class and various forms of advantage. Households made acute distinctions of the schooling market according to the target group that different school types focused on attracting. As compiled in Table 5.7, interviewees identified three types of private schools (in the shaded boxes) and distinguished them primarily along perceived school characteristics (medium of instruction and location) and perceived social status of clientele (level of parents’ educational awareness, educational status, caste group, class group, and income level).

School Type	State	Lowest Fee Charging	Low to Moderate Fee Charging	High Fee Charging
Rural Interviewees' Distinctions				
Perceived School Characteristics	Hindi medium Rural or urban	Hindi medium English taught as a subject Rural	English medium Urban	English medium Urban
Perceived Social Status of Clientele	Less educationally aware Uneducated Some mixing of caste groups with a predominance of lowest caste groups	Educationally aware Lower classes	Educationally aware Somewhat educated Better off lower classes and some middle class	Educated Wealthy High caste Upper middle classes and elites
Urban Interviewees' Distinctions				
Perceived School Characteristics	Hindi medium Rural and few urban	Hindi medium Urban and some rural	English or Hindi medium Urban	English medium Urban
Perceived Social Status of Clientele	Not at all educationally aware Uneducated Poorest of society Lowest caste groups	Educationally aware lower classes	Educationally aware Somewhat educated Middle classes	Educated Wealthy High caste Upper middle classes and elites

Table 5.7 Household-Constructed Typologies of the Schooling Market

For most interviewees, the typology of the schooling market was related to its perceived clientele and linked to the ability of different groups to pay for varying

ranges of perceived school quality and their perceived level of educational awareness. Thus the state sector, largely thought to offer the least satisfactory quality of schooling, was relegated to groups from the lowest social status (as defined by respondents regarding educational awareness, economic class, and caste). Interviewees felt this was because the state sector would only be accessed by those who had no means to pay even the most minimal of fees:

31. In state schools it's like those who have absolutely no money, who are down and out, only they can send their children there. Not everyone can send them there.

Do you mean that schooling doesn't take place there?

No, no, no... no schooling takes place at all. What schooling takes place? They go there and just come back like [muffled]. Now only those who can't give fees anywhere, I mean in the private [schools] only they'll enrol their children there (PR114, UWNG, p. 5).

Some interviewees claimed that the quality of schooling in state schools had deteriorated in the last 10-20 years, and unlike now, many middle-class families accessed them. While some households claimed that there were a few recent improvements in the state sector, the majority believed that it was still an inadequate option for their children. As a result, interviewees asserted that their choice of the LFP sector was reflected by the fact that it was targeted to people of their social status. Despite the fact that most households belonged to lower socio-economic and caste groups themselves, some felt that:

32. Children from low castes go to state schools and then schooling doesn't take place (PR1, RWNG, p. 1).

Rural interviewees particularly saw the LFP sector as targeting relatively higher caste groups (even though the actual caste mix at the focus school was comprised largely of SC and OBC groups) and private schools in Lucknow City for wealthier villagers. Nonetheless, given most interviewees' relatively new history of experience with the formal school system, their sophistication in distinguishing between school types within the private sector and their relative perceptions about

competing sectors should not go amiss, particularly since the heterogeneity of the private sector has only recently been addressed by research.

5.4.1b Beliefs about Education

The second attitudinal factor displayed by participants concerned their general beliefs about education, particularly regarding the role it would play in their children's futures. As noted in Section 5.3.1b, households marked the relevance of education to their children's lives as a necessity, and for many it was an impetus to educate their children at all. In terms of choosing the LFP sector, these beliefs were articulated most expressly as the ability of only LFP schools to provide the type of education required in the context of the widespread social and economic changes that have taken place in India since the 1990s. Education and schooling were seen as commodities essential for their children to acquire a place in the labour market. However, there was a realisation that although education was necessary, it would not guarantee a job. Some attributed that to fate:

33. Children have to study, they'll get a job if it's in their fate (PR9, RHHEd, p. 5).

Others felt that there were factors such as nepotism or institutionalised corruption that stood in the way of educated youth obtaining jobs:

34. There's no guarantee at all [that they'll find a job]... even those who've passed intermediate roam around empty-handed. But having been educated they can start their own business or trade. It's common practice to give a Rs. 150,000 bribe to get a job somewhere... even as a bank manager or teacher (PR7, RHHEd, p. 4).

As a result, many interviewees believed that while there was a strong relationship between education and employment, the correlation was not direct. Furthermore, for some interviewees, the perceived benefits of education were curbed after a certain level (junior or high school), and the decision to send their children to secondary or post-secondary education was pre-empted from the outset in favour of

setting up small trades. For these households, accessing the LFP sector had a very specific purpose: to educate their children to an adequate standard in the 3 R's so that they may be self-sufficient in the future.

Beliefs about education contributing to self-sufficiency were not uncommon. Households claimed that since they were uneducated, it underscored the importance of educating their children. They conceptualised education as promoting self-sufficiency, not only in terms of raising their children's economic condition, but also allowing them to negotiate barriers in everyday life and fostering independence, particularly for their daughters. One interviewee claimed that she realised the importance of educating her daughters as a result of the hardship she underwent in her daily life:

35. I'm not educated. I educated all of my children, I mean my mother and father didn't... in the old days there it wasn't that easy and then people didn't really educate their girls. Now everyone thinks that it's necessary to educate girls. Now I think that it's very important too.

Why?

Because I don't want my children to undergo what I went through.

What did you go through?

I went through a lot. Like, I don't know what you've written. And say that I want to see that. But I can't understand it, Ma'am. So I'm going to feel that. If someone's increased the amount of money that I owe and I say, 'Let's see', I ask how much I should withdraw they say 'This much', I don't understand that.

So that's why you educated all of your children.

Hmm, I educated them. I educated all my three daughters too (PR125, RGE, pp. 7-8).

For some, the belief was so strong that they vehemently advocated for their daughters' schooling despite opposition in the family:

36. I'm the one who... there's a lot of fighting about this in our house but I say, 'No, it's most important to educate them [the girls]'.

Between you and your husband...

Who else... we fight about this a lot...

About schooling...

What else, it's very important to educate them [our daughters]

So now that you're sending them to school, what does he think?

He says, 'Fine educate them.' What else? (PR111, UGE, p. 3)

As outlined above, beliefs about education and its relationship with employment opportunities, the labour market, and self sufficiency, led to a disposition favouring the LFP sector for these households. This attitudinal factor acted in combination with 'perceptions of the state and private sectors', and both were applied by households in combination with micro-level contextual factors to choose local LFP schools.

5.4.2 Micro-Level Contextual Factors

The micro-level contextual factors were concerned with households' specific choice of LFP focus schools for most of their children. Macro-level factors were applied to households' specific contexts and were mediated by the micro-level contextual factors, 'local school characteristics' and 'constraints', eventually leading them to choose rural or urban focus schools. These were constantly linked to the attitudinal factors in a dialectical relationship. The process was not linear and the choice was continuously re-evaluated.

5.4.2a Information about Local School Characteristics

The choice of focus school for participants was not automatic. In both instances, there was an adequately sized pool⁷ of potentially accessible state and LFP schools. In fact, anecdotal evidence indicates that rural households were fortunate as the number of LFP and state schools was high for a small village. Households guided by attitudinal factors to favour the LFP sector did not choose rural and urban focus

⁷ Rural households had a total of six schools (three state and three LFP) they could choose from. The size of the urban school pool is indeterminate. However, as an indication there were three other LFP schools and one state school on the same block as the urban focus school.

schools by default due to a limited market of local LFP schools, but through a process of selection that partly relied on gathering information about potential schools and deliberating to varying degrees about their potential choice before making a decision. As one parent claimed:

37. I investigated, found out which school provided good schooling. So I went to the state school but didn't get it there. I thought, 'It'll cost some money but children will get good schooling [at the focus school]' (PR19, RWTS, p. 3).

Households gathered information about focus schools on different characteristics, such as: fee structure, fee management practices, teachers' attendance rate, school facilities, school environment, children's results, and medium of instruction. Data indicate that households gathered information on those characteristics so that they could make a judgement on the relative quality of different local schools by their own indicators and through their own mental models. The primary and overwhelming sources of information for households were other parents in their neighbourhood or village, family members, and close friends who were considered trusted and reasonably informed. The type of information was largely comprised of their sources' experiences of and general perceptions about focus schools compared with other local schools. Except for a small minority of households that visited focus schools prior to enrolling their children, or who had some previous direct knowledge by having previously accessed it, most gained something similar to Ball's (2003) "hot knowledge" by speaking to other parents already accessing focus schools:

38. Everyone asked each other that schooling was good here, there's good schooling here, good schooling... so that's why..." (PR107, UWTS, p.3)

Surprisingly, even though the context and socio-economic status of households in this study was vastly different to that in traditional school choice research, households seemed to engage in behaviour similar to that reported (about

middle-class parents in England) as “chattering” about schools (Ball, 2003). Data indicate these disadvantaged households engaged in dynamic conversation about local schools, actively sought information about them, and called on each other for insider knowledge when admitting their children to focus schools. Once the information was collected, it was matched against similar information about other local state and LFP schools and linked back to attitudinal factors.

In light of the information, households conducted a sort of cost-benefit analysis on local schools on those characteristics and their perceived relationship to ‘quality’ of schooling. For example, even though state schools were rated lowest regarding tuition fees, and despite the incentives they offered (such as free textbooks, 3 kg of wheat per month per child, and scholarships), households felt that these benefits did not outweigh the costs of what was thought to be an inferior quality of schooling due to certain deficiencies in state schools (described in Section 5.4.1a):

39. There is no benefit to be gained by state schooling. If you want to educate your children then send them to a good school so that they don’t have any problems in the future (PR112, UGood, p. 7).

Household conceptions of what constituted a ‘good school’ and ‘good schooling’ at the macro-level held for the micro-level. Generally, the different school types (identified by households in Table 5.7) were perceived to have an increasing level of ‘goodness’ as fee levels and English instruction increased. For example, Hindi-medium LFP schools were perceived to be better than state schools, medium-fee English private schools better than Hindi-medium LFP schools, and high-fee English private schools were thought to be the best.

While some urban households claimed that there were moderately priced English private schools in their vicinity perceived to be ‘better’ than the focus school, they could not access them because they fell outside their budget. For rural households, medium-fee schools simply proved too expensive in proportion to their

income. Since they did not exist in the village, and accessing them would mean added transportation costs, they were seen as those that only richer villagers could access even though they were perceived to be 'better'. Thus, households felt that given their budget and information available to them on the quality of schooling (in accordance to their own conception of 'good schooling'), focus schools were the best 'value for money' in their local contexts.

This relative 'goodness' of focus schools was related to certain household-articulated indicators of a 'good school' such as: the popularity of the school as indicated by large class sizes and high instances of enrolment from local families; children's views on their degree of happiness; the practice of fee-charging; English instruction (as a subject even if not English-medium); high promotion rates; good pass rates on school tests and Board exams; regular teachers' attendance; teachers paying attention to children in class; strict discipline practices; and local parents' opinions. Of these indicators, popularity through large class sizes and high student promotion rates were most contrary to researcher expectations. One urban mother explained that large class size was an important indicator when they initially chose the urban focus school over a competing LFP school because:

40. I mean there were two, four, eight children in each grade [at the other LFP school]. Very few children used to go there. Hmm. In each grade there were about five children... all the way until grade 8. In some grades there were five children, in some grades there were six children, in some eight children used to go... so then I thought that, 'The schooling isn't very good that's why children don't come' (PR104, UGood, p. 4).

In fact, since most LFP schools reportedly operated only one section per grade because of space constraints and to minimise teachers' salary costs, higher enrolment would necessarily result in larger class sizes. Since higher enrolment indicated greater popularity to parents, and greater popularity meant better schooling, it follows from this perspective that larger class sizes indicated a 'good school'.

Smaller class sizes, on the other hand, indicated that a sufficient number of clients were not buying into the school because it was probably not offering good quality schooling, instead of the commonly accepted tenet in educational research that it indicated better schooling since teachers could devote more time per student. In fact, considering the didactic pedagogical practices of case study schools, it is not entirely clear whether teachers would do so anyway.

Large class sizes may partially explain why the urban focus school's reputation grew as a good school despite the fact that until 2001, when the school's facilities were extended, average class sizes were 60-70 children in cramped conditions (approximately 8' X 8'). In fact, the principal explained that the school was only able to expand due to increased income from a jump in enrolment because of increased popularity. Therefore, the urban focus school's experience was that despite cramped and stifling conditions, large class sizes prompted even more parents to access it. One interviewee, the eldest child of a family accessing the school and a former student remembered:

41. When I went to school here the rooms were extremely small. We were so young and on top of that there were so many children in a class that it was so stifling that they would want to leave. That's how it used to feel here. I mean it didn't even look like a place for teaching children. It just felt like you'd want to get up and go (PR126, USCh, p. 15).

High student promotion rates were also articulated by households as critical indicators that focus schools were good. Interviewees explained that they imparted this information to new parents thinking of accessing focus schools. It was also used to maintain their choice:

42. ...we... are sending them [the younger children] here because this is where my children, where we like the schooling. My children never once failed, they all kept passing, all of my daughters. Both my daughters passed, one until the 8th grade, one until inter. And she never failed even once all the way until inter. All of mine passed through. And that's why I sent these children [the younger ones] here. It's good for us here, well-suited... (PR16, RWTS, p. 4).

In fact, some households reported that high promotion rates were the only check they had on the schooling delivered. However, other than students who took board exams, all other assessment was school-based. In other words, there were no external criterion-based assessments that could confirm students’ performance to parents. Nonetheless, households did not question whether high promotion rates resulted from student mastery of key concepts or lenient grading criteria. In fact, some principals stated that it was in their interest to adopt a lenient promotion policy since they felt that lower promotion rates would indicate low learning levels, which would be interpreted by current and potential clients as low quality schooling and adversely affect popularity (detailed in Chapter 6).

In addition to matching household indicators of a ‘good’ school, participants stressed that focus schools had certain specific school characteristics (presented in Table 5.8) which prompted them to be chosen over competing LFP schools.

Focus School Characteristic	Participant Articulations
Fee Concessions	School practices making concessions to households with more than two children studying at the school making focus schools more affordable. Further in Section 6.6.2.
Flexible Fee Collection Practices	Flexibility in the timing as well in the amount of fees to be paid. Further in Section 6.6.1.
Convenience	Location of the school in the centre of the village or neighbourhood and proximity to homes. The ability of children to go to school in groups without adult escorts with other children in the neighbourhood or family attending the same school. This was seen as a factor addressing issues of safety for children, <i>purdah</i> for mothers in the village, and would cause limited disruption to parents’ daily work schedules.
‘Home Grown’ School (rural group only)	Personal connection with the school because unlike the other two LFP schools, it was owned and run by a villager.
Higher Status Clientele (perceived)	Socio-economic status and educational awareness of parents at the focus school thought to be higher than state schools. As there was no way for households to check this comparatively and as data indicate that there was a large proportion of lower caste children at both schools, this is presented as a perceived characteristic.

Table 5.8 Focus School Characteristics Articulated by Households

Finally, household opinions of focus schools were generally favourable. Their opinions were formed largely through children’s anecdotes and reports and through some limited but direct contact with principals and teachers. Most interviewees were generally satisfied with teachers’ practices (although mainly

unobserved), trusted the school management, felt the school was approachable, and re-iterated that their initial assessment of the school as ‘good’ was not challenged by their experiences of it. However, there was some variability in these assessments. Certain respondents claimed they were dissatisfied with their children’s preliminary results and would probably exit to another LFP school the following year. This minority response was usually among those households that felt they had no option but to choose focus schools given their constraints, and thus picked ‘the best from the bunch’ that were available.

5.4.2b Constraints

Unsurprisingly, data showed that practical constraints affected households’ choice of school. Given that households in the study had limited financial resources, according to interviewees, this was the primary constraint affecting school choice and often a determining factor in deciding which local school to access. Households reported that they tried finding a local school that matched as many desired school characteristics as possible within their limited budget:

43. According to us this school seemed the right one because the other schools are very expensive. So one should enrol one’s children according to their means. It’s not like you should enrol them in a big school [meaning: ‘good’, reputable, and expensive] if you can’t even pay the fees, what’s the benefit in that? One should do it according to one’s means.

So did you also ask people whether this school had good schooling?

It’s fine according to us. It’s fine for us. People will enrol their children where they see fit and according to their means. For us it made sense for us to go where the fees were affordable that’s where...
(PR127, USCh, p. 19)

Note the hint to class references of school types (as in Table 5.7). While financial constraints may have been the most acute and pervasive for these households, there were also others determining their choice as the focus schools as presented in Table 5.9.

Constraint	Participant Articulations
<i>Financial</i>	Household income inadequate to meet high schooling costs given low income levels, family size, and competing needs
<i>Location of School</i>	Certain 'ideal' schools too far which would add to daily transport costs; distance of school too great to be deemed as a safe choice for children to navigate alone (more acute in rural group)
<i>Personal Relationship with Principal</i>	A sense of obligation to choose a school because of personal relationships with the principal and school management
<i>Additional School Expenses</i>	'Hidden' costs of schooling: registration fees, exam fees, books and school supplies, school activity fees, uniforms, private tuition all which added increase financial input of schooling
<i>Child's Choice</i>	Household compliance with child's wish not to attend a particular school
<i>Fee Amounts and Collection Practices</i>	Higher fees and less concessions at 'ideal choice' and inflexible fee collection practices

Table 5.9 Determining Constraints for School Choice

For most households, focus schools represented a viable option with many desirable school characteristics, while allowing them to manage their constraints. While most parents were satisfied having chosen focus schools, some were concerned that a combination of the constraints conspired together to restrict their choice to the focus school from some 'ideal' school. For them, even though certain desirable school characteristics were not present in focus schools to the degree that they would have ideally liked, the combination of individual constraints outweighed that concern, leading them to choose focus schools nonetheless.

As previously mentioned, a common example was choosing focus schools over medium-fee English-medium private schools. Data indicate that given adequate funds, all households considered this their ideal choice regardless of their level of satisfaction with focus schools. Articulating the concern of households that felt that their ideal choice was elusive, and had to choose the best from the affordable school pool, one rural father said:

44. Given our economic condition this is the best. If we had money then we could send them to Lucknow, in a good school. But then there would be rent, fees, and the cost of a riksha. There would be all those costs. How can anyone give that much? So that's why [we enrolled them] here... it's close by and it doesn't cost that much. They take Rs. 40-50. They don't take that much (PR24, RSCh, p. 7).

Most of the 13 households that simultaneously accessed LFP schools in combination with others, claimed it was because of financial constraints and not competing values (e.g. importance of education relative to gender). In such cases, some households opted for state schools based on the presumed aptitude of their children. Others, particularly Muslim families, chose lower fee religious schools (*madarsas*) where religious instruction was also considered to be suitable. It is important to stress that as presented in Section 5.2, there was no clear evidence indicating that the selectivity was gendered.

In summary, having been guided by macro-level attitudinal factors to favour the LFP sector, households applied them to their specific contexts through contextual factors and chose the focus schools for most of their children. However, this choice was continually re-evaluated, and for most, did not represent a final or permanent choice. The ephemeral nature of the choice and certain institutional properties of the LFP sector itself (Chapter 7), resulted in households employing specific strategies to engage with focus schools and the LFP sector.

5.5 Household Strategies to Engage with the LFP Sector

It was necessary to examine household engagement strategies to determine how households interacted with their chosen school and the LFP sector. Data revealed that households in the study employed strategies quite different from Hirschman's traditionally accepted model of exit, voice, and loyalty applied to school choice. Data indicated that households used four strategies to engage with the system: *stay*, *fee-bargaining*, *exit*, and *fee-jumping*. These four strategies can be conceptualised as occupying a spectrum of strategies employed by households accessing the LFP sector. Each strategy indicates varying degrees of decreasing *nesting* at a particular LFP school, where nesting refers to the likelihood of staying at a

particular school for a significant length of time. In light of the analysis, this was set at a minimum of beyond one school year. Figure 5.3 depicts the spectrum of household engagement strategies by decreasing degrees of nesting.

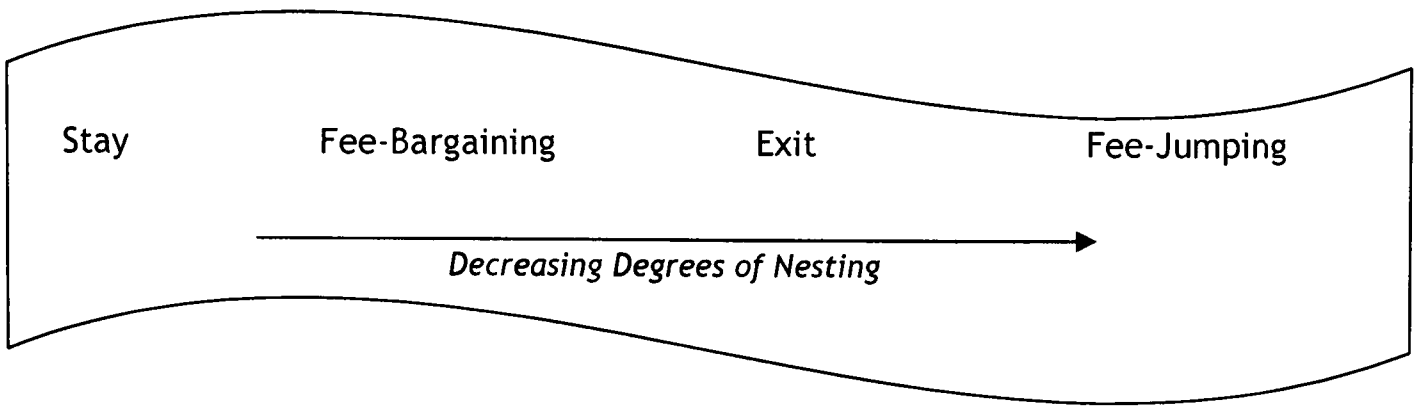


Figure 5.3 Spectrum of Household Engagement Strategies

As in Hirschman’s model, while households exited and were quality sensitive (according to their own indicators), strategies with greater degrees of nesting (such as stay) were not related to the “political mechanism of voice” or to loyalty expressed as a commitment to stay. In fact, voice was neither employed nor sought in the traditional sense, and the concept of loyalty inculcating converging ideologies was non-existent. As the discussion will show, data suggest that the strategies were established around the “economic mechanism of exit” to an even greater degree than in Hirschman’s analysis.

5.5.1 The Strategy to Stay

The strategy with the highest degree of nesting was termed, *stay*. This strategy was employed by parents who decided to access focus schools for at least one year, or who envisioned their children to continue at their chosen school in the immediate future. It is essential to note that the strategy to stay did not preclude the option of exiting at a later time if children’s results did not match desired outcomes in a particular year. This was true even in cases where focus schools were accessed for a number of years. Although the strategy to stay had the highest degree of nesting among all of those in the spectrum, it was not final.

Much of the rationale for staying at a school rested on a positive assessment and experience of it. Once they found a reasonable school within their price bracket, households who practised the strategy to stay for any length of time did not continue ‘shopping around’, at least temporarily:

45. No, I didn’t go anywhere else. Just at [a previous LFP school] and here, that’s it. Nowhere else. We liked it here, we didn’t go anywhere else. The children tell us, ‘No, the schooling is good’. We ask the children how the schooling is (PR19, RStay, p. 4).

There were a number of rationales behind the strategy to stay as expressed by interviewees. These are presented in Table 5.10 below.

Rationale	Explanation
Curricular	• Satisfied with children’s results • Housed all grades in the same school (KG through to grade 12)
Cost	• Affordable fees • Flexi-fees (Section 6.6.1): School was flexible on the timing and amount of fee payment
Experience	• Have had enough experience of the school to assess its claims of “good schooling” • Believe that school earned its reputation • Feel obliged to stay at the school because of long association with the school and not to disrupt children’s schooling
School Administration	• High level of school responsiveness • Enforcement of school calendar and timings • Strict with children
Other School Related	• Proximity • Satisfactory facilities
Household Related	• Family tradition • Children wanted to continue attending

Table 5.10 Set of Rationales behind Employing the Strategy to Stay

While much of the rationales for staying were related to positive assessments, there were certain instances where the strategy seemed less the result of positive factors. In particular, it was sometimes due to a feeling of obligation to a school because of personal relationships with the principal or out of tradition to access a certain school. The feeling of obligation was stronger in the rural case. For example, one rural interviewee stressed:

46. ...I mean that you send them here [to the rural focus school] and the children that studied here and failed high school are the ones teaching. So when they themselves don’t have any knowledge, then how are they going to teach? That’s why we can see that our children can’t even speak proper Hindi. But because it’s not good to keep

changing schools... that's why we're sending them to school here (PR29, RMent, p. 1).

The interviewee's reference "it's not good to keep changing schools" was in relation to the perceived strain that his personal relationship with the principal may face if they exited. While this degree of obligation was reported by only one interviewee, it seemed an important theoretical distinction as it points to the possibility that staying at a particular school may not automatically mean that it is related to a high level of satisfaction. This is contrary to traditional market analyses (Chub & Moe, 1990; Tooley, 2000) and Hirschman's model that continually accessing a school either indicates satisfaction or is prompted by loyalty or voice. Theoretically then, even though there may have been reservations about the chosen school and despite the rather high degree of fluidity in the LFP sector, the strategy to stay may partly have been the result of other barriers in certain instances.

Data indicated that the barriers were three-fold: (1) the belief (though uncommon) that moving children from school to school was undesirable as it could disrupt their schooling; (2) exhaustion of the local school pool having previously accessed other available LFP schools (more acute in rural group); and (3) a sense of personal obligation to the principal. The sense of personal obligation is not akin to the concept of loyalty in Hirschman's model, as it carries a sense of coercion or unwillingness rather than a deep commitment to the school out of the parents' own will without such pressure.

Finally, for some participants, staying at focus schools was partly the result of a tradition that became established. In certain cases, it was an automatic habit which became ingrained as part of the schooling pattern of the family rather than the result of an on-going critical evaluation of alternative schools. Therefore, the possibility that family tradition as an ingrained habitual schooling pattern in choosing or staying

at a school is relevant, as it heralds the need to be cautious in evaluating the on-going engagement strategies of households in the LFP sector. Fundamentally, it highlights the fact that the strategy to stay was not the result of the reliance on any one particular rationale, but on a mix of rationales at varying intensities, and it points to the apparent unsuitability of the rational model of '*homo economicus*' in this analysis.

5.5.2 Fee-Bargaining

The next strategy in the spectrum is *fee-bargaining*. Observation and interview data revealed that it was not uncommon for parents to bargain over the amount of tuition fees due. The interaction was not unlike the common practice of bargaining employed by Indian consumers for any good in the market. According to observed practice in case study schools, parents or guardians would approach the principal and claim that they could not afford the fees due that month because of other financial commitments or lack of earnings. Instead, they presented an amount they could afford, and after some haggling, made a final offer. This offer was slightly higher than the initial amount but always less than the amount due. Nonetheless, principals accepted it, claiming they had no other choice.

Principals explained that they allowed parents to employ the fee-bargaining strategy for two main reasons: (1) even in instances where they felt parents could afford to pay the total amount due, they believed it was unfair to deny their students an education on account of their parents' actions and (2) they felt pressured to retain their student enrolment, as there were competing LFP schools in the vicinity that parents could easily exit to. In such a context, schools did not resort to expelling students on account of unpaid fees, and instead conceded to parents' bargaining.

Households employing the fee-bargaining strategy did so with the intention of staying, but they threatened to withdraw their children if the reduced fee amount

was not accepted. Superficially, fee-bargaining can be seen as a sort of voicing strategy. However, on further analysis, it is apparent that it is of quite a different nature. Voice in the traditional model implies that households take action to voice their concerns with the aim of improving school quality for the educational benefit of their children. However, households voiced their financial concerns only through fee-bargaining with the aim of reducing their financial commitment. It constitutes a fundamental difference between the conceptualisation of voice in Hirschman's model as a recuperation mechanism for quality improvement, and here, where it is seemingly concerned with crude efficiency only.

As we move further along the spectrum of strategies towards even lower degrees of nesting, we approach exiting and *fee-jumping*. Their analysis will make it even clearer that Hirschman's traditional model, employed to describe household engagement strategies in general, was not applicable to the LFP context. Further data indicate that this may be due to the specific organisational structures of LFP schools (Chapter 6), the specific nature of the schooling market (Chapters 6 and 7), and resulting institutional arrangements (Chapter 7).

5.5.3 Exit

Households accessing the LFP sector frequently and uninhibitedly employed the strategy to exit LFP schools. This was remarkable because what is seen as an extreme strategy in traditional school choice literature was reportedly used by nearly all households in the study. This was also confirmed by case study principals. Enabling exit was *fluidity* in the LFP sector due to the specific institutional arrangements that case study schools (like other LFP schools) entered into as a result of being part of that sector (detailed in Chapter 7). More tangibly, the schooling

pattern of the household in the following example is indicative of the frequency and ease with which this strategy was employed.

In the span of three years, one urban household accessed three LFP schools: first a rural LFP school, then an LFP school in another part of the city, and finally the urban focus school. The family did not wait for the end of an academic year to exit a school. In fact, the exits corresponded to the family's relocation plans rather than the school schedule which interrupted the child's schooling in the first instance. At no point did the interviewee state that she encountered any difficulty in enrolling her child at any LFP school accessed, even if it was a mid-year enrolment and despite the fact that this practice was against the formal rules governing school's interactions. Thus, this household's schooling behaviour demonstrated the great deal of fluidity in the LFP sector.

The majority of households reported that the focus schools were not the first or only schools they accessed. In fact, 13 households accessed the focus schools for some children while simultaneously accessing others. This concurrent choice of schools seemed to indicate that fluidity was not only expressed as frequent entries to and exits from schools, but for some households, between state and LFP sectors. It highlights the ephemeral nature of the choice made, as for many of these households, the focus school choice was continually re-evaluated in comparison with other schools among the set simultaneously accessed.

In fact, although the focus school choice had a higher a degree of permanence for most households than previously accessed schools, the decision to exit it in favour of another school was not improbable. For example, regardless of the fact that all six children in one family were enrolled in the urban focus school which had been accessed for eight consecutive years, the option to exit it were they not satisfied with the results in a particular year was mentioned as the next immediate

step. This signified a lack of loyalty to the school despite their long history with it. Conversely, this was not an uncommon route taken by households who had previously exited other LFP schools and entered focus schools.

Apart from ‘*chronic exiters*’ who employed fee-jumping (Section 5.5.4), in which the prime and perhaps only concern was to access LFP schooling without paying, the rationales presented by households that had previously exited LFP schools and could potentially employ it for the focus schools were categorised as presented in Table 5.11. Data indicate that exiting was not purely a quality sensitive decision, as in Hirschman’s model, but was related to certain contextual constraints as well as households’ continual assessments of schools in their local market.

Rationale	Elaboration
Cost	• Fees too high • Frequent demands for additional school activity fees • Quality of schooling is not comparable to fees charged (i.e. not getting ‘value for money’)
Popularity	• Notion that the school was not popular • Assumption that small class sizes indicated that the school was ‘not good’ because it was not bought into by many clients
Facilities	• Inadequate school facilities
Curricular	• Not satisfied with children’s results • Perception that not much schooling took place • Medium of instruction (English or Hindi)
School Management Techniques & School Administration	• Low level of school responsiveness • Lack of trust in the school management • Not much flexibility in fee payments
Household Related	• Relocated from rural to urban areas or neighbourhoods within the city • Child did not want to attend

Table 5.11 Rationales for Employing the Strategy to Exit

5.5.4. Fee-Jumping

School-level data suggested that LFP users displaying an extreme lack of likelihood to nest could be termed *chronic exiters* who employed the *fee-jumping* strategy. All principals reported accounts of clients frequently exiting their schools at the end of any given school year without paying a large proportion of fees due. Principals claimed that parents “jumped on the fees” at their school and enrolled their children in another LFP school. Central to this strategy is a certain degree of premeditation.

Principals stated that parents would have determined from the outset that they would only pay fees for a few initial months and would exit the school at the end of the year. This would be repeated at another LFP school the following year.

The success of this strategy hinged on the admission practices of most LFP schools relying on the *shadow institutional framework* (presented in Chapter 7) rather than following the formal rules of admission. The proper course of new enrolments is for the new student to submit a valid TC to admitting schools at admission. However, in practice many LFP schools admitted students without it. Principals asserted that there was a definite advantage for an admitting LFP school to do so. Not only would the school's enrolment increase, it would also recoup admission fees (usually double or triple the monthly tuition fee) and a few initial months' fees. The advantage for chronic exiters was that they saved the overdue fee amount at the old school and on the cost of a full year's fees in the new school they accessed.

Principals stressed their powerlessness in dealing with chronic exiters as they did not have much bargaining power in claiming overdue fees or curbing fee-jumping because: (1) the threat of withholding TCs in non-board examined years was futile, having little or no effect on admissions to other LFP schools and (2) they were against expelling students hoping that as long as parents accessed their school, they may receive some of the overdue fees. It is clear that concepts of loyalty and voice were non-existent in fee-jumping. Furthermore, fee-jumping or chronic exiting was not used as a quality recuperation mechanism, but for financial gain and, in effect, helped maintain part of the LFP sector's shadow institutional framework (detailed in Chapter 7). While this strategy was the most extreme in the spectrum, it was not uncommonly used according to principals. They felt that households employing this strategy calculatedly viewed LFP schools as serving a very clear and limited focus: as "teaching shops" for the '3 R's' to be bought.

5.6 *Factors Contributing to Strategy Success*

The success of the four household engagement strategies, particularly those with low degrees of nesting, lay with the specific nature of the schooling market for disadvantaged groups and its institutional arrangements (Chapter 7). Firstly, the explosion of LFP schools in urban areas and their emergence in rural areas (although fewer in number) changed the landscape of school choice for households traditionally relegated to one sector of the schooling market—the state sector. The relative widespread emergence of LFP schools provided disadvantaged households with a viable alternative to the perceived (and perhaps actual) deterioration of quality in the state sector for the first time. This landmark development allowed them to actively engage in school choice by employing specific strategies that would benefit their interests.

Secondly, in addition to the increased school pool (both in the number and types of accessible schools), the specific institutional arrangements of the LFP sector (Chapter 7) allowed households to employ these strategies uninhibitedly, and with little immediate cost to their children's education. For example, if the formal rule for admitting schools requiring TCs was not over-ridden by shadow rules allowing admissions without them, then households could not employ fee-jumping with a high degree of success. In such a scenario, exiting a school would not result in immediate entry to another school, and therefore would have a negative cost to their children's schooling acting as a possible deterrent to chronic exiters.

Finally, the mental barrier that exists for most middle-class parents in the traditional school choice literature that moving children between schools could adversely impact their schooling, did not exist to a high degree among most households in the study, even among those who employed the strategy to stay. It seemed that while some households saw this as a barrier to employing strategies with

low degrees of nesting, many did not incorporate it into their mental models. This facilitated their employment of strategies with lesser degrees of nesting. Furthermore, it seemed to have partly contributed to ignoring loyalty and voice in engaging with the LFP sector. The three factors above contributed to households' success in employing their engagement strategies. Furthermore, the same households that were otherwise marginalised wielded considerable power over the LFP schools they chose (discussed in Chapter 6) because of the possible threat of withdrawal resulting in a potential loss of income.

In conclusion, while it can be said that active school choice behaviour is expected in a group that directly invested in schooling and chose the LFP sector, it nonetheless contradicts many assumptions made by research on the schooling practices of disadvantaged households in India. The complexities of the school choice processes and the resulting empirically derived model point to a systemic set of values, beliefs, and mental models which guided these disadvantaged households in enacting their school choices and engaging with their chosen schools. However, certain unexpected overlaps, such as “strategising” or gathering “hot knowledge” with parents of higher social strata in more economically advantaged countries, challenge traditional school choice literature that sometimes suggests exclusivity of certain school choice behaviour only to them. At the very least, the results point to the complexities of school choice processes and behaviour among this group. The next chapter focuses on a descriptive analysis of the organisational structures of LFP case study schools, their interactions with parents, and their market strategies.

CHAPTER 6 A Window to LFP Schools

Organisational-Level Data Presentation and Analysis

The focus of this chapter is to examine organisational-level data on the internal operation of case study schools, particularly regarding their organisational structures, how they operated within an increasingly marketised school sector, and how they interacted with their client group. Given that little is known about LFP schools much of the analysis is descriptive in order to provide the reader with an idea of ‘how the schools worked on the inside’. The analysis aims to examine the catalysts behind why case study schools were launched, the major challenges they faced, changing household-school relationships, and mechanisms and strategies instituted to deal with competition and market forces.

6.1 Case Study School Profiles

Individual schools varied considerably on a number of school-related attributes such as: amount and types of fees charged, recognition status, building type (*pakka* or *kachcha*), size and number of classrooms, available facilities (e.g. library, playground, toilets, drinking water), enrolment, and number and qualifications of teachers. There was variance on all these attributes in rural and urban schools. The

only exception was regarding building type in which all urban schools were *pakka* whereas there was a mix of *pakka* and *kachcha* buildings in rural schools. There were a few attributes on which all schools in the study were similar: all were Hindi medium, recognised or seeking recognition with local Uttar Pradesh boards, and family-run. Unlike some high-fee schools, case study schools were run as single operations rather than part of a chain.

Certain areas of variance and similarity were surprising. While some level of heterogeneity was expected, given that six of the 10 schools were recognised through the state boards and others were actively seeking recognition, the assumption was that they would adhere closely to state norms. This would fall in line with assumptions of isomorphism to achieve legitimacy (Di Maggio & Powell, 1990). The expectation was that the degree of variance on those attributes formally sanctioned by the State would be lower than if the schools were unrecognised or not seeking recognition. Therefore, it was surprising that recognised case study schools operated from premises ranging from a three-room open brick structure with a corrugated tin roof and no toilet facilities, to a large multi-storied modern building with separate girls' and boys' toilets on every floor. This variance was in line with institutional-level findings (Chapter 7) that certain 'perverse incentives' mitigated the application of the formal institutional framework by institutional actors in granting recognition, which could account for some of the heterogeneity.

Finally, the fact that all schools were Hindi-medium also challenged intuitive assumptions and simplistic claims in some literature that the private sector was increasingly accessed because it is largely English-medium. Such assumptions do not take into account the highly differentiated schooling market as identified by households themselves (Table 5.6). Parents explained that the LFP sector provided a greater degree of English-language instruction than state schools, but were aware that

it did not provide full English-medium instruction given the level of fees. As explained in Chapter 5, the degree of English instruction depended on the specific type of private schooling accessed and fee level. Case study school owners targeted their schools to a specific niche in the schooling market. They frankly explained that their schools could not be English-medium as that would mean paying higher teachers’ salaries, hence charging higher fees, ultimately forcing them out of the LFP market niche to enter one for which they did not have required start-up capital. Overall case study school profiles are presented in Table 6.1.

	Rural Schools					Urban Schools				
	A	B	C	D	Siya- pur	E	F	G	H	Taj Nagar
Year First Established	1994	1995	1998	1994	1984	2000	1993	1977	1987	1991
Recognition Status	Regis- tered	Regis- tered	Regis- tered	Primary	Junior	Inter	Regis- tered	Junior	Junior	Inter
Official Enrolment	55	89	19	261	236	590	205	318	262	1089
Actual Enrolment	69	120	45	392	258	137	347	318	276	1089
Highest Official Level	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Junior	Inter	Primary	Junior	Junior	Inter
Highest Actual Level	High School	High School	High School	High School	Inter	Inter	High School	Junior	High School	Inter
Status of Building	Donated by villager	Rent	Own	Own	Own	Own	Own	Own	Own	Own
Number of Classrooms	4	4	3	5	5	5	6	8	6	10
Toilets	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Drinking Water	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Table 6.1 Overall Case Study School Profiles

Note. Siyapur and Taj Nagar are the pseudonyms for the rural and urban focus schools respectively. ‘Year first established’ refers to the first year that the school was operational and not the year in which it became an ‘official’ school, i.e. registration or recognition. ‘Official’ and ‘actual’ enrolments refer to enrolments on the books versus those children that were actually taught at the school. ‘Official’ and ‘actual’ levels of instruction refer to the highest level of instruction the school is officially supposed to provide and those that were actually provided.

Note the recurring categories of ‘official’ and ‘actual’ for enrolments and the highest levels of instruction. These are directly related to how case study schools operated as LFP schools and mediated the formal institutional framework (FIF) through the ‘shadow institutional framework’ (SIF) (detailed in Chapter 7). Typical of

schools in the LFP sector, case study schools operated to maximise their interests regarding profit maximisation and client retention, as well as institutional arrangements in relation to recognition status. Thus, 'official' data were what schools presented in line with their recognition status, and 'actual' data were reflective of how they operated to mediate the FIF.

Actual school enrolment varied from 45 for the smallest school to 1089 for the largest. Except for School E, G, and Taj Nagar, all actual enrolments exceeded official enrolments. This is because official enrolments only counted students falling within the highest official level of instruction. School E was recognised and followed the common LFP school practice of affiliation (Section 7.6.2a), which entailed enrolling students in key high school and intermediate years from other unrecognised LFP schools for a fee enabling them to take board exams. Taj Nagar did not follow this practice and School G strictly operated until junior level.

Schools had an increasing fee structure either by grade or by instruction level (primary, junior, secondary, and intermediate). Official monthly tuition fees ranged from Rs. 25 to 130 at the elementary level ($x_{\text{rural}} = \text{Rs. } 40$, $x_{\text{urban}} = \text{Rs. } 99$) and Rs. 30 to 145 at the junior level ($x_{\text{rural}} = \text{Rs. } 57$, $x_{\text{urban}} = 106$). Fee increments varied and were set by individual school owners. As expected, rural case study schools charged less on average than urban schools. However, the lowest urban school fees and highest rural school fees were roughly the same amounts for corresponding instruction levels. Official tuition fee amounts effectively acted as guide prices and represented the *maximum* amount that a school could charge. As indicated by the fee-bargaining strategy, many parents did not pay full tuition fee amounts. Furthermore, fee concessions (Section 6.6.2) for families with multiple children enrolled or those that could not afford the set fee were internally institutionalised in most case study schools as 'fee mechanisms' (Section 6.6).

Only 5 of the total 87 case study school teachers were trained. Teachers' qualifications ranged from intermediate pass to post-graduate, with most teachers as university graduates (extended teachers' profiles Section 6.4.2a). Reported monthly teacher salaries ranged between Rs. 300 and 2000, less than even the basic government scale for primary teachers at Rs. 4500 to 7000 (Govt doc, 1650/10-2001-53/2001). A brief introduction of focus school contexts follows before returning to the broader emergent organisational-level themes.

6.2 Focus Schools: Contexts and Profiles

6.2.1 Siyapur's Schooling Context

Siyapur Village¹ had a total of six schools serving its children. This was a relatively high number even for a peri-urban village. Five of the schools were in Siyapur itself while the sixth, a state primary school was on the periphery of the village (approximately 0.5 km from the village centre). While it technically fell in the neighbouring village's boundary, it attracted children from Siyapur. Its principal, villagers, and case study school principals considered this school as one serving Siyapur and included it in their analysis of local schooling.

Of the remaining five schools three were LFP (Siyapur School, School B, and School C), and as explained in Section 4.2.1, they were all included in the study. While officially they were elementary schools, they all reportedly provided instruction up to intermediate for any child who wished to enrol. The other two schools were state-run, one primary and one junior. There were no official secondary schools (high schools or intermediate colleges) in Siyapur or in its vicinity. Those wishing to continue their education beyond junior school had two options: state or official LFP secondary schools in Lucknow City or neighbouring Barabanki District, or any of the

¹ The names of the village and urban locality have been changed.

three LFP schools in Siyapur which would unofficially provide instruction at those levels by employing the SIF (detailed in Chapter 7).

Out of the six schools in Siyapur Village, Siyapur School had the highest total enrolment at 258 students. This figure includes the enrolment of official elementary classes and students attending ad-hoc instruction in grades 9 through 12 (a total of 22 students). Enrolment figures for all Siyapur Village schools by school type and level are presented in Table 6.2.

School	Type	Highest Actual Schooling Level	Total Actual Reported Enrolment
1	State	Junior	143
2	State	Primary	201
3	State	Primary	231
B	LFP	Intermediate	120
C	LFP	Intermediate	45
Siyapur School	LFP	Intermediate	258

Table 6.2 Reported Enrolment Figures at Siyapur Village Schools

A closer examination of the enrolment figures reveals that while total enrolment is highest at Siyapur School, disaggregated figures tell another story. It is important to keep in mind that state schools 1, 2, and 3 have fewer grades. Schools 2 and 3 are only primary schools, whereas School 1 is only a junior school. Analysing enrolment figures by level reveals that 140 students were enrolled at the primary level in Siyapur School, 96 at junior level, and 22 at high school and intermediate levels combined. Thus, more children were actually enrolled at both state-run schools at the primary and junior levels.

However, as principals of the state schools themselves claimed, enrolment figures in the state sector were not accurate indicators of how many children actually attended regularly. It was common knowledge in Siyapur Village (similar to reports in literature) that attendance rates at state schools were often much less than reported figures. This was confirmed by observations at Schools 1, 2, and 3. Furthermore, there were reported cases of double enrolments at state schools, where children were

enrolled to benefit from government incentives but actually attended LFP schools. Case study principals reported that since parents paid fees at their schools, regular attendance rates were closer to enrolment figures (about 90-95%).

6.2.2 Description of Siyapur School

Siyapur School was located in a clearing in the middle of crop fields in the south side of the village. The school was past the village centre, on a *kachchi* gully. It had a spacious playing field in the front with a large banyan tree on the right hand side which was often used as a teaching area for older children who sat under the shade. A hand pump was installed near the tree for fresh drinking water. There was no electricity and no toilet facilities. Teachers reported that the latter was problematic for them and the girls, who had to resort to finding a secure spot in the fields.

Siyapur School had two buildings which were used for instruction. The Old Building was made of exposed brick and comprised four classrooms. Each classroom had one wooden door and no windows. The two classrooms on the either end of the building had gaps in the brick wall in a chequered formation of about 1' X 2' for light. Each classroom was furnished with long wooden benches and desks where children sat in rows. There was a blackboard in each classroom and two others were built into the outside front wall of the building. One blackboard was built in the exterior wall of the classroom on the furthest right facing a tree. This space was often used as an outdoor teaching space for children in the third grade. The following is a typical instructional scene at Siyapur School:

When I arrived I noticed that he [the principal] was sitting on a chair in the school courtyard facing two girl students (who seemed to be of 9th or 10th grade) who were also sitting on chairs with books in their lap. He was busy with giving a lesson on Hindi literature [...] a lesson was being given on the side lawn with a blackboard painted on the side wall. Six children of about 1st or 2nd grade were sitting on the ground with books and pencils in hand as a young, female teacher of about 20 or 21 was giving a lesson on elementary Hindi spelling. She sat on a stool. Facing the teacher was also a banyan tree under which five or six children [sat]... 'teacher-less' but 'book-handed'. It was hard to tell

whether they were part of the same class or whether they were studying on their own. They seemed to be completing some sort of exercises in a workbook (FN, 18-11-02, p. 2).

The New Building was only two years old and was donated by a local politician who gave Rs. 100,000 for its construction. This was the only donation that Siyapur School's owner claimed to accept. Other case study principals/owners claimed not to accept donations as a matter of policy. The New Building was a *pakka* construction of brick with exterior walls plastered in white. It consisted of one classroom with two doors (one at each front end), three windows at the back, and high ceilings. Like the other classrooms, it was furnished with long benches and desks arranged in rows. There was no blackboard attached to the wall in this room and no other furniture in the school. The principal stated that books registered to the school library were stored at his house due to insufficient funds to buy cabinets for storage. The New Building had an exterior covered veranda where the principal often placed a small desk and some garden chairs when parents came to visit him and where he did his administrative paperwork.

6.2.3 Taj Nagar's Schooling Context

Taj Nagar's schooling context was not unlike most urban localities in Lucknow. There was a mix of a few state and many private schools (LFP, medium, and high-fee) in the block. As many schools were not recognised with the state, it was not possible to determine the exact number of schools in the locality. However, the number of schools in Taj Nagar Inter-College's immediate vicinity was easier to determine. The six most relevant were the ones with which it faced the most direct competition: an LFP junior school across the street, an English medium-fee primary school three houses down, two other LFP elementary schools around the corner, and two state schools down the street (one primary and one junior). Advertising for other

private schools in the locality was highly visible on street corners and banners at major intersections.

6.2.4 Description of Taj Nagar Inter-College

Taj Nagar Inter-College was located on a busy road through one of the main blocks, with a temple and some convenience shops as its immediate neighbours. The school had permanent recognition through to intermediate level with the Uttar Pradesh Board of High School and Intermediate Education (UPBHSIE). It operated in two shifts with the high school and intermediate grades in the morning and primary and junior grades in the afternoon. The school also had two buildings. The Old Building was the site of the original school where instruction used to take place. The entrance was framed by a metal gate immediately leading to the principal's office on the right. Once inside the school, there were four classrooms (two on either side) along a cobble-stoned corridor. Similar to Siyapur School, classrooms were constructed of brick with corrugated tin roofs. Each room was furnished with wooden benches in rows, a blackboard, and a ceiling fan. They were no longer used for regular instruction but for extra classes and as workspace for teachers. Annexed to the school was a three-storied house, the owners' and principal's home (a husband-wife team). It was not uncommon for family-run schools to be situated on owners' plots.

The New Building's entrance was across the gulley that opened out from the side of the Old Building. The construction began in 2000 and work was being completed during the data collected period. The owners explained that the school expanded to accommodate its steadily increasing enrolment and to fulfil the remaining recognition criteria within the two-year grace period given to them. The New Building was multi-storied with a large covered veranda on the ground floor

(used for kindergarten instruction and play), a large principal's office, and three other classrooms. Each floor had three to four classrooms, separate girls' and boys' toilets, and drinking water facilities. All rooms had electricity, a ceiling fan, a blackboard, and rows of two-seater desks. Near the end of the data collection period, the owners installed a classroom monitoring device (similar to CCTV) for every classroom from the school's earnings. Its controls were set up in the principal's office and each classroom had a small camera and speaker system installed. Owners explained that it was used to pass messages from the principal to the teachers in every class and to monitor teaching.

6.3 Catalysts for Launching Case Study Schools

Owners claimed that the impetus to start their schools emerged from their philosophies on the need to improve educational opportunity for disadvantaged groups in their communities (although some data (Sections 6.7.2 and 6.7.3) seem to challenge this). These catalysts were related to their overall beliefs about the educational needs of disadvantaged groups, and that²:

1. ...education is most important, it's a must. If we want to help the raise the standard of poor children then at least our country will improve. It will become educated. This is very important anyway (PL8-2, Needs, p. 3).

Interviewees stressed that their main objective was to advance the education of disadvantaged children through their schools. Specifically, the catalysts to launching their LFP schools were related to their analysis of: the nature of education provided in the state and private sectors; conceptions of 'good schooling'; the specificity of educational needs in rural contexts (for rural owners/principals); and changing social needs.

² Original quotes in Hindi are presented in Appendix 3.

6.3.1 Differences in State and Private Education Provision

Like household interviewees, school interviewees viewed the LFP sector and particularly their own schools, as direct responses to the perceived inferior quality of schooling provided in state schools. Their perceptions of the state sector echoed many issues raised by household interviewees, but unsurprisingly focused largely on issues surrounding provision and school management. Like household interviewees, owners/principals viewed the state and private sectors as distinct and mutually exclusive. They felt the state sector simply did not provide an adequate standard of schooling because of: inadequate facilities; deteriorating buildings; frequent teacher absenteeism; irregular school closings; inadequate teacher staffing; teachers overloaded with other state duties; low teacher and school management accountability; infrequent or corrupt inspections; large student-teacher ratios; and inadequate numbers of state schools in rural areas.

Owners/principals felt that deficiencies in provision in rural areas were partly due to the insufficient numbers of state schools and barriers to physical access for existing schools, but were exacerbated by an even greater degree of teacher absenteeism and even more infrequent or corrupt inspection practices than in urban areas. Given such a backdrop, the growth of the LFP sector in rural areas was understood as a logical outcome rather than a surprising phenomenon. In fact, owners/principals felt that their schools were the only reasonable alternative for disadvantaged children. The perceived ineffective and inefficient provision of state schooling created what one interviewee alluded to as, ‘an environment conducive to opening LFP schools’, particularly for individuals with independent financial means:

2. That’s why there’s almost a flooding of private schools. People who have money want to open a school. Those who don’t have money, it’s their wish to educate [their children] in their village or in a nearby locality. But it’s not possible to do anything without money (PL5-2, GvP, p. 2).

As indicated above, all case study school owners had independent financial resources either from small businesses, large farms or inherited land, or personal savings which provided initial start-up capital. Owners stressed that their resources enabled them to establish an LFP school in response to perceived inadequate provision by harnessing a feeling of civic duty towards disadvantaged children. They claimed that in doing so they could improve access to better quality schooling for those children who were otherwise destined to the state sector:

3. ...we saw that there is great indifference towards education in society. They're not providing good educational facilities to children in state schools.

So we thought, we raised our awareness and thought that we should educate children and provide them with good facilities which will give them greater benefit. That was the main aim with which we opened this school. To provide children with a good education and good facilities at low cost...

And the same aim continues today. Our aim was never to earn...schools of this type are [charging] at the most Rs. 100. They charge fees under Rs. 150. [...] So that's how we want to provide a good education at low cost, we want to educate the country's children.

We'll make the arrangements for that. We'll make fee concessions, we'll do that, but we won't refuse to teach like, 'You have to be expelled'. *We have to educate* them even if... if they're poor we'll educate them and if they can pay fees we'll educate them too (PL12-2, Phil, p. 11-12).

6.3.2 *Conceptions of Good Schooling*

Interviewees' perceived differences between the two sectors were intertwined with a conception of 'good schooling' which they felt the LFP sector was better able to meet. It was also linked to their belief that it was not possible to receive a 'good' education without paying for it:

4. Our main aim in opening the school was that poor children cannot pay fees. Good schools charge fees. So at least there should be a good organisation where poor children can also get an education. That was it, nothing else (PL8-2, Phil, p. 10).

Inevitably, the concept of relative quality entered their analyses, however, defining what constituted 'good schooling' was quite problematic for respondents.

Similar to household participants, school interviewees drew sharp (and seemingly bipolar) distinctions between the state and private sectors and claimed that ‘good schooling’ was essentially the opposite of everything provided in the former. For most, the perceived lower quality was mostly related to problems of teacher absenteeism and the lack of accountability of state school staff. Therefore, most owners/principals felt that attending state schools was almost equivalent to being unschooled, especially in rural areas:

5. If they can’t get to the city then they can’t study at a private school. And if they’re not able to study at a private school then they aren’t being educated.

Because even if there are schools, they’re state schools. And then if there aren’t any teachers or even if teachers come then they don’t teach. No one enforces anything on them. That’s why we started all this [referring to his LFP school] taking it all into consideration. And we’re advancing education through it [the school] (PL10-2, Phil, p. 11).

Thus, owners/principals’ conceptions of good schooling were antithetical to the state sector and quite similar to household conceptions (Section 5.4.1a and 5.4.2a) on many accounts. School participants thought of ‘good schools’ as those that: were fee-charging (the higher the fees, the better the school); had good pass rates and results on board exams; kept well-maintained buildings and facilities; followed strict discipline practices; employed hard-working, motivated, and fair teachers (not necessarily qualified); had strict management staff; and provided some English-medium instruction. While certain characteristics were similar to those outlined by households, owners/principals felt that there was a mismatch on the degree of importance attributed to them by parents and themselves. They felt that households should put more importance on the quality of instruction delivered at a school rather than on what they felt were ‘superficial criteria’ (e.g. buildings and facilities), which they perceived were given greater weighting by households.

This was more often stressed by owners/principals who felt that their schools did not possess some of these superficial characteristics of a 'good' school. For example, participants whose schools did not have well-maintained, modern buildings claimed that it was not possible to judge a school by its facilities:

6. Like, we're sitting under a corrugated tin roof, so does that mean that this private school should be considered bad? If we constructed a building right now on these premises, would this be considered good? No. I don't accept that.

But already what happens is that when it doesn't appear to look nice, there's tin, then the same people will say that this isn't a good school. That a good school is one with a proper building (PL10-2, Good, p. 4).

For criteria that were not considered superficial, but which their school lacked, some respondents resorted to blame as a mechanism of justifying the 'goodness' of their schools. For example, if a school was not experiencing much academic success, principals commonly claimed that it was impossible to teach disadvantaged students because they did not want to study, despite their schools' 'goodness':

7. To make such a big commitment that, 'We'll educate your child, he'll pass', it's a bit difficult. What's the point of saying something that's not true? Like my father really likes the 10th grade. That we'll teach them well, they'll pass... you can only educate them when the child studies. You tell me.

When hardly two out of 15 children are the studious type, then no matter how you teach them, how will they pass? (PL1-2, EdBel, p. 1)

As one of the prime catalysts for the existence of these schools was justified on the grounds of 'good' schooling, the quality argument presented by school interviewees assumed critical importance. However, data indicated that it was selectively used by owners/principals either to justify areas in which they felt their schools lacked, or exalt the virtues of being an LFP school in areas they felt they were better than state schools.

6.3.3 Contextual Catalysts

In addition to physical barriers of access, owners/principals felt that rural areas suffered from a general disinterest among most parents to educate their children. They felt that the educational climate in rural areas would improve if village councils put political pressure on state teachers and school managers for increased accountability with threats of reporting them to the DEO or the DIOS. Most school interviewees stressed that the absence of active political mobilisation left a vacuum in the educational climate of rural areas which was exacerbated by state officials who conducted 'fieldwork as seatwork':

8. They inspect but they inspect sat from their seats. If they went on the ground, and that too in the interior areas [...] to make rounds to see their schools and what the situation is like for our schools, then they would understand the situation and where weak points actually are (PL5-2, State, p. 2).

Additionally, many school interviewees felt that officials engaged in questionable inspection practices. One principal claimed that an active LFP sector in rural areas was even more important than in urban ones because there was partisanship between local village heads and state school officials:

9. In the village... the village council... no one takes any interest. I mean they should exert some pressure like, 'Let's go meet people in all the schools that are running, meet with the principal, and how or whether schooling is occurring, are teachers coming.' There is no pressure on the state ones. [...]

If the village council, its head, [...] if he became aware then everything, the standard of schooling... [...] The government is acting irresponsibly. So these people can exert pressure but no one is active. Either that or all these people are in cahoots with each other.

Meaning?

The village council head and they [state school administrators and teachers] are fraternising, they don't speak up. Otherwise if they spoke up then they [state school administrators and teachers] would be transferred. Isn't it true? If I'm not going to teach, and if someone speaks out against me, then won't some action be taken? Here there's no one to... to even put forward an application that children are coming and there are four teachers but they didn't come. They just think that no one came so the school is closed. But that committee should do something, that why didn't they come? (PL9-3, R&U, pp. 9-10)

The situation was not deemed as dire for urban areas. While urban participants agreed with the perceptions that disadvantaged parents were generally less active in sending their children to school, the ineffectiveness of the state sector, and (what they termed) a corrupt or disinterested state inspection machinery, they also felt that there were enough LFP schools to cater for households they judged to be genuinely interested in their children's education. Some principals asserted that since the school pool was greater in urban areas, any potential partisanship between state officials and state school administrators did not have such a direct effect on disadvantaged children's schooling. Urban owners/principals stressed that their schools also met the civic duty of advancing Uttar Pradesh and India's EFA missions.

6.3.4 Changing Social Context for Education

Most school interviewees stressed the need for schools to provide a different type of schooling to meet the changing socio-economic demands of education in the new Indian context. Some principals felt that the state sector was outdated in promoting a type of education that was valid in post-independent India up to about the 1980s, but had since lost its relevance. Given a presumed increase in education levels across India over the past 20 years, and the changing nature of skills required to successfully compete in the workplace, many principals stated that the very discourse surrounding education had changed:

10. ...traditional education was running...until now because at that time there were not many educated people. So when new populations were also educated then all those [positions] got filled up. Now all the positions are full. Now the importance of education... like our Prime Minister Atal [Behari Vajpayee]³ also gave a statement that, 'Now all those who don't have computer skills will be called illiterate'. So the discourse of education has changed so much (PL7-2, EdBel, p. 6).

As a result, many principals felt that the LFP sector was the modern response to a 'traditional education' for disadvantaged children despite the fact that they all

³ Following the May 2004 Indian general elections, Mr. Vajpayee was succeeded by Mr. Manmohan Singh as Prime Minister.

followed the 'traditional' state curriculum. Nonetheless, they asserted that their LFP schools were established to equip those children with the skills necessary to succeed in the new economic market. These essential skills were identified as English language, computer, and technical/vocational. Out of the 10 case study schools, all claimed to provide English instruction, and four explicitly stated that they offered or were in the process of designing computer and/or technical/vocational programmes, in addition to basic skills in the state curriculum. While there was some evidence of English language teaching at all schools, the quality of this instruction was questionable in all but three (largely attributed to the low level of teachers' English fluency). Similarly, evidence of technical/vocational and computer skills instruction was only seen in one school.

Nonetheless, case study principals maintained that at the very least LFP schools provided disadvantaged children with the opportunity to gain basic literacy and numeracy skills and confidence, allowing them to set up a trade so that they could be economically self-sufficient in the already saturated job-market. As one owner/principal stated:

11. These children are not as worried. They at least have one such skill that, 'We can make something of our lives'. We try and instil the type of mentality that you may start with something small, but you can take it way forward (PL7-2, EdBel, p. 3).

Therefore, the catalysts behind starting case study schools were strongly couched in terms linking their beliefs about education for disadvantaged children and inadequacies in state provision. While participants did not outwardly express strong market ideologies guiding them, the following discussion on the organisational structure of case study schools and their strategies for maintaining and attracting clients indicate that it was a prime contributor.

6.4 The Inner Workings of Case Study Schools

Data revealed that the internal structure of case study schools reflected quite a hierarchical structure with the locus of control resting entirely in the hands of the de-facto school owners. The term, 'de-facto school owners' points to the operation of the SIF. In principle, according to State regulations any PUA school should be established and managed through a registered society and, in the case of secondary schools, through a 'Committee of Management' (Section 7.5.3). While in principle case study school ownership and management rested with their respective societies, in practice schools ran as the private operations of individuals or teams of family members who were the de-facto owners. In nine schools, the principal was also the sole or part de-facto owner. In the remaining case, the principal was a very close family friend. In the six schools where de-facto school ownership was in family teams, the most common arrangements were husband-wife or father-son.

6.4.1 Internal Management Structure and Duties

The operational management structure in all schools reflected a top-down approach with the de-facto owners carrying out functions necessary to the establishment and daily running of the school. Of interest here were those related to devising '*school-specific and common internal institutions*' (building on McMeekin, 2003a further discussed in Section 7.6) such as: setting internal school policy (and establishing latent philosophies); defining school visions (in the few schools that had one other than increasing school enrolment); devising school timetables; choosing curricula⁴ and teaching materials; setting the pedagogical framework; hiring and firing teachers and support staff; establishing fee structures and fee collection procedures;

⁴ Interviewees reported that they followed state board curriculum guidelines quite rigidly from junior level upwards. The most flexibility was during nursery to grade 1 where they used many privately developed materials used in English-medium schools to support more English instruction.

setting parent-teacher meetings (and sometimes conducting them); organising school functions; establishing staff salary scales and teachers; and overseeing salary payment.

De-facto owners also exclusively interacted with district officials and other recognised LFP schools regarding the '*external institutions*' (Section 7.6.2) to mediate or fulfil requirements of the FIF, such as: applying for registration; seeking information about the recognition process; negotiating affiliation with recognised schools for high school and intermediate students (for unrecognised schools or those that were not recognised beyond primary or junior level); following through with the recognition process; and making the necessary arrangements for ensuring their students' eligibility in State Board exams.

The dominant view in all schools was that a top-down management structure with the locus of control in the hands of the owners was necessary for their smooth functioning. In effect, this strict structure promoted maximum control for owners, enabling them to establish a "loosely coupled" (Weik, 1976) structure that provided a solid buffer between management and technical activities vis-à-vis clients, government officials, *and* school staff. Only two schools had middle-managers acting as principals' assistants. Their authority did not extend to setting any institutional focus for schools. Rather, their roles served as checks to maintain previously established school-specific institutions and alert management to the use of "enforcement mechanisms" (North, 1990) for their maintenance when necessary. Their tasks included: reporting teachers' punctuality; ensuring school timetables were followed; reporting student attendance figures; ensuring school records were updated; and distributing school notices.

Furthermore, interviewees felt that by "keeping a tight control on them" (PL8-2, Mgt, p. 7), teachers performed according to set expectations. One exception was a school where the owner no longer wanted the responsibility of supervising

teachers because of internal conflicts with the staff and the other co-owner. However, this did not encourage a more participatory structure but an additional management layer responsible for daily teacher supervision over which he would have direct control. There were no observed or reported instances of joint staff meetings for school target-setting. Furthermore, the registered societies critical to the initial existence of case study schools, remained muted entities in their subsequent functioning, with all institutional actions and decisions taken by de-facto owners.

6.4.2 Challenges Faced by Case Study Schools

Participants identified three main challenges to the performance of their schools which they claimed were typical to LFP schools: teacher staffing issues, fee collection problems, and low parental participation and interest.

6.4.2a Teacher Staffing Issues

Interviewees noted that, like other LFP schools, they were unable to offer salaries higher than or consistent with the government scale. As a result they experienced high staff turnover, difficulty in recruiting motivated teachers, and some had problems compelling teachers to perform duties outside of class time. One interviewee expressed that this was particular to the LFP sector because:

12. They [high-fee schools] give their staff a higher salary so they take a lot more work from them too. They call teachers on Sunday too. And here if you ask them for 10 o'clock [in the morning] then it's demanding. That's how it is. This year we have a lot of problems.

Because of staff?

Because of staff. It's like the staff don't liking staying here at all. Right now you would have seen that as soon as it's quitting time they all come here and stand as say, 'Sir, can we go?' What is this? (PL1-2, Staff, p. 1)

Interviewees claimed that their inability to raise salaries was related to fee collection problems, as parents did not pay the required fees either on time or in full. They insisted that they had insufficient funds to pay higher salaries consistent with

government guidelines, which was a condition placed on recognised schools.

Nonetheless, recognised case study schools used the SIF to mediate the FIF in this regard (Section 7.6.1d). Teachers’ profiles⁵ are presented in Table 6.3.

	Rural Schools					Urban Schools				
	A	B	C	D*	Siya- pur*	E*	F	G*	H*	Taj- Nagar*
Number of teachers	4*	4*	4*	6	9*	5	10*	13	10	22*
Number of classes	6	11	7	11	11	12	12	10	12	16
Overall school student-teacher ratio	17:1	30:1	11:1	65:1	29:1	27:1	35:1	24:1	28:1	50:1
Number of trained teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
Qualifications Range	Inter BA MA	Inter BA	BA BSc	Inter BA	Inter BA BSc	Inter BA	BA BEd MA	BA	BA	BA BSc BEd
Salary Structure (Rs. per month)	Inter: 500 BA: 600 MA: owner does not take a salary	Inter: 300 BA: 400	BA: 600 BSc: 1000	Inter: 650 BA: 1100 to 1150	Inter: 950 BA: 1050-1150 BSc: 1150 Owner: 3694	Inter: 500 BA: 600	900+ 100/ year exper- ience at school Max. 1900	800 to 2000 by exper- ience at school	700 to 1500 by exper- ience at school + cash incen- tives	BA: 500 BEd: 800 BSc: 1000 + 100/ year exper- ience at school Max. 2000 Owners jointly: 7250

Table 6.3 Teacher Profiles in Case Study Schools

Note. * Denotes a recognised school. School E and Taj Nagar were recognised until intermediate; School D until primary; and Schools G, H, and Siyapur until junior.

* Denotes that that at least one owner undertook teaching responsibilities.

⁵ A methodological note about teacher profile data. These data were collected at several points during the research process at each case study school: during formal interviews, through a staff questionnaire for principals and teachers, and through informal and formal conversations with principals. Since the information was considered sensitive, this was done in order to match respondents’ replies over the course of the research process. Some participants presented conflicting information. These were questioned. None of the principals allowed teachers to reveal their salary or qualification data on the questionnaire. Principals’ questionnaire responses were typically inflated compared to verbal structured interview responses to the same questionnaire. When asked why, principals commented that this was to make sure their paperwork was consistent but that they did not mind telling me the ‘actual’ results verbally. What is presented here are the ‘actual’ data as reported by principals.

Several points must be noted about the reported teachers' salaries. Firstly, no school reported increasing salary by instruction level even though they all operated beyond primary regardless of recognition status. The two factors contributing to salary increases were qualifications and years of experience at the current school. Prior teaching experience did not affect salary levels. Salaries reflected a ranking of qualifications, with intermediate-pass teachers earning the least and those with a B.Sc. earning the most. Secondly, although six schools were recognised, only one (Taj Nagar) had trained teachers. School F had a trained teacher but was unrecognised. Furthermore, only a very small minority of teachers at those two schools were trained. This is especially significant for recognised case study schools, as according to recognition rules, teachers at recognised schools should have been trained (Section 7.6.1d). Thirdly, at Rs. 300 to 2000/month, all schools reported monthly teachers' salaries far below the recommended salary scale.

When interviewees (particularly from recognised schools) were asked why they did not hire more trained teachers, they responded that the supply of qualified teachers to hire from was inadequate:

13. It's hard to find many trained teachers these days.

It's hard to find them?

They can't even find them at the Education Department, that's why they're employing *shiksha mitra* [para-teachers]⁶. So when they can't find them then how can we... (PL12-2, Staff, p. 6).

Interviewees explained that trained teachers preferred to work in the state or high-fee sectors because of higher salaries. Rural interviewees replied that they had difficulty finding qualified candidates willing to travel daily. Interviewees felt that these factors caused mid-year teacher attrition in some schools and frequent turnover, but the problem was deemed more acute in rural areas:

⁶ Para-teachers earned Rs. 2250 per month and were employed on 10-month contracts.

14. Now what is lacking is that in the rural areas it's hard to get well-educated candidates. Whose standard is...

You mean for teaching...

Yes, teaching. They either... no one wants to come here from the city. And if they want to come then we can't give the salary they want. [...]

We give around 600, 500, or 400 [Rs./month], like that. So that's why we can't get many teachers in the rural areas. So there's a really negative effect on education (PL5-2, Staff, pp. 4-5).

While this interviewee thought the situation had an adverse impact on children's schooling, most principals were not similarly concerned. They justified employing untrained teachers by claiming that B.Ed. or Basic Teacher's Certificate (B.T.C.) qualifications were not good predictors of how well a teacher would teach, so they relied on their own judgment.

Owners/principals managed the low number of teachers at their schools by combining grade-level classes or by operating a double shift. This is clearly visible in all schools except School G and Taj Nagar, where the total number of classes exceeded the total number of teachers. While the highest overall school student-teacher ratio was 65:1 at School D, the largest class size at any school was 46 at Taj Nagar compared to the State's class-size indicator of 40:1. Similarly, while the smallest school student-teacher ratio was 11:1 at School C, the smallest actual class size was eight at the same school. Finally, while some schools employed teachers subject-wise others employed them grade-wise. School G and Taj Nagar employed teachers subject-wise, explaining why the number of teachers exceeded the number of classes to be taught.

Finally, all but one school interviewee had positive views about their teachers. Nonetheless, they all felt it was important to strictly control teaching activities to prevent teachers: going off task; recruiting students as clients for private tuition thereby not delivering full lessons in class (similar to alleged behaviour of state teachers); or frequent absenteeism. Participants believed the above would adversely

affect their school, whose reputation partly depended on teacher behaviour, causing parents to exit. However, they maintained that they had leverage over their staff through the threat of immediate dismissal unlike state principals.

For example, many principals banned teachers from providing private tuition to students of their own school. While they were aware that most teachers supplemented their meagre wages through private tuition (in many instances salaries were even less than the parents accessing the school), they did not want it to adversely affect teaching activities. One owner/principal even banned parent-teacher meetings, meeting with parents himself:

15. ...we do have parents' [meetings] but I don't keep teachers-parents' [meetings] with the teachers. Because they want to buy education here too. Parents from the slum areas who come here they want, 'OK, we'll pay a little bit of the fees here and then we'll keep the teacher privately so our child will pass easily.' Because he'll find out the [exam] question, he'll find out everything. So I restrict that (PL 7-2, Percepts, p. 7).

As mentioned in Section 6.2.3, Taj Nagar installed a remote monitoring device. The co-owner informally explained that:

Because the building was so big they had to keep running up and down the three flights of stairs to check on the teachers. He said that before they had the system installed the teachers used to "hang around the stairs in the halls and chatter" and would run back to their classrooms when they heard the principal approach. [He said] It was really hard to keep track of who was doing what. Now at least they can stay on top of things. He feels that there has been a real difference (FN 04-04-03).

Despite generally positive opinions of their teachers, it seemed that certain owners/principals projected negative perceptions of state teachers on their own staff. In some instances this led to 'ultra' monitoring as above, but in some limited cases it led to disrespect for teaching staff. As all owners saw themselves as education experts, whether or not they had prior experience in education, none of them reported involving teachers in discussing pedagogical approaches, teaching strategies, or course agendas. This raises fundamental questions about how schools could expect commitment from teachers when they were not offered adequate salaries,

involved in the school's teaching ethos, and in one case were held in blatant contempt:

16. You see, we live in very bad times. To be nice and get work out of people... that's how it should be...But what's it to the teacher? [...] They can work for two days and leave. They can go back to the village and start begging again. What's it to them? A person who has no standard, no point... how can I say it, they should feel some responsibility [...] But teachers don't co-operate like that (PL1-2, Staff, pp. 2-3).

6.4.2b Fee Collection Issues

All participants claimed that many of their problems were associated with fee collection. Because of the negative effects of the fee-bargaining and fee-jumping strategies, schools claimed that approximately 10-15% of tuition fees were left unpaid at the end of every academic year. Given most of their clientele's limited financial resources, owners/principals were not surprised by this outcome but they all stressed its negative consequences on the running of their schools:

17. We get them [fees] but they are irregular. Fees are irregular. It's not regular. That's why we're not able to pay teachers' salaries regularly. It's like... they might get 500, 600, or 300. But they're always in the hope that at the end of the month they will get this money. But we only give their money through fees. Fees aren't regular. So their money is held up here (PL5-2, Fees, p. 5).

Some principals felt that fee collection problems were indicative of parents' social context and lack of education. Principals made a sharp distinction between parents who valued education and were educated to some level, and those who were not. They concluded that this difference was displayed in their fee-paying behaviour:

18. Some guardians are regular... those who understand the importance of education, or those whose families are already educated, they give their fees regularly. Those who are illiterate, who don't understand the meaning or value of education, they are irregular. Because their whole home environment is irregular. So they are irregular in their fees too (PL5-2, Fees, p. 5).

A further distinction was made regarding fee-paying behaviour. Some interviewees felt that of those parents who were irregular some were genuinely poor

and faced shortages, while others only claimed to have financial constraints but actually wanted a 'free ride':

19. ...a few, one or two people more than educating their children, they want to grab hold of their money. Like, they shouldn't have to give fees and the child should learn everything [and should keep on coming]. It's like that too (PL9-2, Fees, p. 16).

Particularly in rural areas, interviewees suspected that this minority of parents would send their children to medium or even high-fee schools, if there was access to them and pay the fees in order to access a 'truly' good school. Some owners/principals' felt that financial constraint was not the issue, rather the parents' evaluation of the worth of the schooling offered at LFP schools. Effectively, they felt that this minority of parents withheld payment because they felt that the value of schooling at LFP schools was not worth the fee charged.

Given that fee collection was presented as a major challenge in running their schools, participants were asked why students with outstanding fee payments were not expelled. Interviewees claimed this was for two reasons: (1) a business perspective: as long as students were enrolled and attended, the school could hope to recover at least part of the outstanding fees and (2) a philanthropic perspective: principals claimed it was unfair to expel students because parents refused or were unable to pay. This was similar to the rationale presented in Section 5.5.2 regarding fee-bargaining. While most participants unofficially subscribed to the business perspective, it was officially cloaked as the philanthropic perspective. Some further claimed that students were not expelled because it would not affect their cost-benefit analysis as the number of teachers would remain the same unless there was a substantial increase in enrolment:

20. These children are poor, for them... the truth is that it's like for us even if they don't give fees then they can keep on studying, 'OK, keep on studying dear. If you don't give my fees, even then it doesn't matter.' Ten kids are giving and if four are not the giving type, then keep studying. Suppose I'm strict like, 'If you don't bring the fees then I won't let you sit'. If I don't let them sit in class it's not like there's

any extra benefit for me. For me those same 10 kids' whose fees I'm getting, those are the fees that will continue to come. When there's no extra benefit and that teacher is teaching those 10 kids, he'll teach those four too. So what's the problem? Let them study with them. [...]

I feel like, those kids who... like if I didn't give his daughter's admit card [for Board exams] saying that, 'You have outstanding fees, I won't give it,' then what would happen? He'd either have to take out a loan and, 'Here take it. Take the money.' And they don't have any other arrangements so his daughter wouldn't be able to give the exam. And if she couldn't give the exam it's not like I would get the money. This way I have the hope that, OK the Rs. 600 that they owe me, maybe he'll give it, if not today then tomorrow (PL4-3, Fees, pp. 17-18).

6.4.2c Low Parental Interest and Participation

Another commonly articulated challenge was low parental participation and interest in case study schools. Again this was attributed to low parental education levels and inexperience with schooling. Most participants stressed that parents only approached the school if they had a concern regarding fees:

21. They come to say things like, 'Brother, we have outstanding fees. Don't expel my child, keep on teaching him. We'll give them sooner or later.' That's the only time they come, that's it.

So mostly people come to discuss fees...

They **only** come to discuss fees, yes, that we'll give them next time, not this time (PL3b-1, HHReIns, p. 5).

This was consistent with many household interviewees' assessment that they either felt ill-equipped to contact the school about educational concerns because of their own inexperience, or did not see the need for parental involvement unless they had a fee-related query or a specific complaint. Owners/principals claimed that this lack of involvement did not contribute to a dynamic school environment. Nevertheless, none of them instituted platforms for participation such as parents' school committees or parent-teacher groups. They were limited to infrequent parent-teacher meetings and a few school events (e.g. school annual days, Republic and Independence Day events). Therefore, it is hardly surprising that some school

interviewees claimed turnout was low at special functions and events to encourage parental involvement:

22. They take very little interest. Like I said, out of 350 guardians only 100 guardians came. That was when we made arrangements for all their snacks, drinks, eating, drinking. I mean we would take their suggestions, we wouldn't feel bad about it. But even then they don't want to tell us the truth. Most them... the 100 that did come, out of those at least 50 of them are hesitant in speaking up. That's the situation (PL12-2, HHReIns, pp. 19-20).

School interviewees felt that parents' lack of education and inability (or sometimes presumed unwillingness) to pay fees, led to hesitation in approaching the school about difficulties. At the same time, however, they did not welcome interference in any aspects of the school. This was consistent with the hierarchical management structure which limited parents' roles to end-users, in line with their desire to keep schools loosely coupled. Ironically, having set up such a client-provider structure, owners/principals claimed that parents acted in ways suggesting that schooling was entirely the school's responsibility, particularly since it was part of the private sector:

23. They give Rs. 60 or Rs. 80 and think that the entire liability is that of the teacher's. That's how they feel. This is where the problem arises. And it's very difficult to explain to them that according to the money you owe these are the fees and sometimes they even say that it's all our responsibility (PL1-2, Responsib, p. 1).

Thus, owners/principals felt that parents simply procured a service for their children without assuming any responsibility beyond paying (or attempting to pay) fees and sending their children to school (which they felt was because households did not want their money to go to waste). Data revealed that both parties continually shifted responsibility: owners/principals claimed that parents needed to provide a home environment conducive to learning and more parental involvement at school; and parents claimed the school should provide all instruction and attention. From the schools' perspective it seemed that this shifting of responsibility was related to their wish to maintain some power in the household-school relationship. As the following

data indicate, this relationship was rapidly changing due to the increasingly marketised schooling arena and households' increasing bargaining power.

6.5 Changing Household-School Power Dynamics

Data suggest that the increasingly marketised nature of schooling prompted a shift in household-school power dynamics. In this study, this was related to principals' and parents' awareness that the very existence of case study schools depended on disadvantaged communities accessing them, as fees were their only funding. The key for schools was to attract new clients and maintain their existing client base as much as possible, given expected attrition due to household schooling patterns and engagement strategies. Therefore, the funding structure of case study schools (as other LFP schools) attributed power to a group that was traditionally excluded from formal education, or who otherwise accessed the state sector which was highly dismissive of them. In this sense, marketisation through the LFP sector seemed to prompt a shift in household-school relationships favouring clients.

Changing household-school dynamics were significant in a broader sense because clients belonged to the same groups who, given their lower socio-economic and educational status, were subordinate to principals in every other social sphere. In some instances, washerwomen or *riksha*-pullers who served school owners accessed their schools. In such cases, owners/principals claimed that school interactions with these clients were on very different terms than traditional circumstances.

It seemed that the act of paying fees empowered disadvantaged parents in some ways. As household interviewees claimed, paying fees signified the right to question principals about schooling practices. Furthermore, it entered them into a contract with the school, which indicated that in line with other market behaviour in India, allowed them to negotiate prices. Thus, observed household-school

interactions revealed unexpected results in a level of banter and humour (sometimes bordering on chiding) indicating a realignment in the relationship.

Similarly, most school interviewees felt a shift in household-school dynamics. They explained that it was not uncommon for them to defend their actions to parents who questioned the school's behaviour towards their children. One principal illustrated this in an informal conversation with me and a parent accessing his school:

24. Principal (PL): [...] Guardians don't give that much respect to teachers.

Parent (PR): That's true, that's true.

They used to before?

PL: Yes. Suppose if some teacher hits a child, then they immediately yank the child's hand and come to the school right away saying, 'Why did you hit him/her?' So it wasn't like this before, right?

I see. So it's acceptable to hit? I mean...

PL: No... I mean we do hit. But say by chance if they get injured a bit more...

PR: Yes, if by chance they hit. No, they don't really hit, that's true. They don't hit here.

PL: [muffled] ...but suppose they get hurt a bit. So then that guardian's dragging him here straight away? This didn't used to happen before. Now like when we used study, we used to get hit a lot [muffled], we used to go [home] and our family used to say, 'That's fine. It's good. It's good that you got hit.' [...]

But now it's like they grab hold of his hand and bring him here straight away. So guardians should give some respect (PR114, p. 14-15).

Most principals felt that this assertive action by parents was a change in traditional household-school relationships, even compared with parents from higher socio-economic backgrounds. Many school interviewees felt that parents were too demanding or did not show 'proper respect' for teaching staff. They contrasted this to a perceived golden era when parents did not question school practices, with the understanding that power rested with the school. Many owners/principals claimed that they were unnerved by this change in parents' attitudes and behaviour, and that

it hindered their work rendering the school powerless. The following excerpt from field observations exemplifies this:

...a woman, a mother, who judging by the way she was dressed, looked like a *mazdoorni* [a manual labourer] came to the office. She was wearing a bright orange sari with specks of mud, had a rather large nose ring, with the sari tied between her legs, and spoke with a *dehaati* [rural] accent. She had with her, her son of about six from the school (he was wearing the uniform). She said she was there because her son came home yesterday after class and complained to her about his treatment at school. She said that he was told to stand up in the middle of class and then the teachers humiliated him by saying that his parents still didn't pay any fees. He said that the teacher said to bring the fees the next day otherwise he would have to stop coming to class. She said that this is the reason she came to the school. She said that she would rather be directly informed than have her child go through that and that she came to clear this up and find out what she owed.

The principal said that he doesn't think that this would have happened. He said that he doesn't think that her son would have been singled out in front of the class. He believes that it would have been a general announcement in the class to all children who still haven't submitted fees that they should do so soon (FN 21-02-03, p. 5-6).

However, in the interest of maintaining and expanding their client base, schools at the very least, had to *be seen to be responsive* to parents' concerns. Therefore, the crux of the issue was to examine whether schools responded to parents' concerns or whether they only seemed to. It can be argued from the school's perspective that in order for it to be truly responsive it should receive complete information about parents' concerns. This would require schools to actively seek out such information, and for parents to clearly articulate it. However, none of the case study schools reportedly did so. Thus, analytically, data suggested that responsiveness could only be judged by how clearly and strongly (both in number and gravitas) parents articulated their concerns on their own. Data indicated three areas of parental concern: treatment of children by school staff, educational issues, and financial concerns (discussed in Section 6.6).

According to owners/principals, only a few parents voiced concerns regarding children's treatment at school. Interviews and observations revealed that most schools responded defensively, staunchly maintaining their positions and

actions. Household and school interviewees claimed that educational concerns were voiced the least. Therefore, owners/principals claimed that it was more difficult to address issues regarding special educational needs, attainment, or pedagogical concerns. Nonetheless, most claimed that if parents presented specific educational concerns they would make further inquiries with teachers. However, one principal insisted that his school's first step was always to assuage parents by convincing them of the school's practice:

25. A lot of parents say that, 'My child has been coming to school for two years and he can't even recognise the letter 'A'.' So you should just forget about that. The more you think that he can't recognise 'A', or he can't recognise '1, 2, 3' in mathematics, it will have no effect on his education. A routine is being created for him. That's more important. That he comes here, studies, and about the things that he doesn't understand—if you tell him instead that he has a lot more to learn right now, then he'll get much better results. Rather than saying in front of him or coming and telling me that he's not learning anything, he's been coming for two years, or for five years, this won't lead to any improvement in the child.[...]

So they should take care that... however much he understands and whatever marks he gets, he should never be forced to bring very high marks. It's more important to create an interest in schooling (PL7-2, Responsib, p. 10).

The same principal stressed that specific pedagogical instructions or suggestions by parents would not be accepted, since that would undermine the school's position and its educational practices:

26. I never say anything to the teachers. Whatever complaints our parents have, I try to convince them, I try to convince parents to what extent we are right in what we are teaching, and to what extent we are wrong, where they are wrong in their thinking, and how our thinking is different. We try and explain that to them more than anything. If we get any instructions [from parents] like that [about schooling practices], then we never pass them on [to the teachers]. That just means that we don't have any ability left if parents come here and guide us and we go tell the teacher, meaning that I'm just sitting here on this chair for nothing (PL7-2, PWR, p. 8).

Hence, despite claims to the contrary, it seemed that certain schools responded only half-heartedly to parents' educational concerns (as they did not actively seek these out), exerting their power by ignoring or dismissing them. Additionally, others claimed that it was also difficult for schools to be responsive to

educational needs that were not clearly articulated or brought up at all. Therefore, responsiveness in case study schools was best analysed by focusing on concerns most frequently and clearly articulated—financial.

6.6 Instituting Fee Mechanisms and Responsiveness

Data suggested that schools responded most directly to changing power dynamics resulting from households’ use of engagement strategies. Where households attempted to exert bargaining power by employing certain engagement strategies, schools attempted to maintain it by instituting corresponding fee mechanisms. Some fee mechanisms were instituted in response to parents’ leverage in bargaining power, while others were instituted pre-emptively by anticipating the effect of certain engagement strategies. Table 6.4 presents the fee mechanisms instituted by case study schools and corresponding household engagement strategies.

Fee Mechanism	Corresponding Engagement Strategy	Leverage
Flexi-fees	Fee-bargaining	Parents
Fee Concessions	Fee-bargaining	
Fee-setting	Fee-bargaining	Schools
Withholding Documentation	Fee-jumping	
Extra Fees	Fee-bargaining & fee-jumping	

Table 6.4 Fee Mechanisms and Corresponding Engagement Strategies

6.6.1 Flexi-Fees

The flexi-fees mechanism emerged because owners acquiesced to the fee-bargaining strategy and repeated parental pressure to adopt a more flexible fee collection approach without late fines. Owners/principals claimed that even though this led to decreased profit margins, they did it to maintain their client base. Additionally, household interviewees stated (Section 5.4.2a) that it was an important mechanism to attract new ones as well. One owner/principal explained:

27. If they are very adamant and the amount is Rs. 100 or 200 then we adjust the amount of fees owed because if we argue with them then they won’t send their children to school here the next year. If the

child studies here then it's our benefit. That's how it is. We think of the business point a little bit here. That's how it is (PL1-2, Fees, p. 1).

While fees should have been paid on the first of every month (or on 'Fees Days' instituted in some schools), in practice all schools experienced that most parents paid in their own time. The flexi-fee mechanism enabled schools to cope with fee-bargaining by making arrangements for households to pay late without fines and usually with a 10-15% discount. Flexi-fees was appropriate for LFP schools since it was impossible to institute a payment scheme for advance payment of a full year's fees (as in high-fee schools), or successfully institute late payment fines (as in medium-fee schools). In practice, the following excerpt typifies what that mechanism looked like:

...the mother pulled out some money in her hands and said that she had Rs. 60 for fees and that she would like to submit them today. He [the owner] said that she owes fees for two months: January and February. Then she asked how much she owed. The principal took out his register and said that she has deposited Rs. 100 [a discounted amount] already and owes Rs. 220. She said that she only has Rs. 60 now: '*Makaan abhi khareedein hain... pareshaan hain*' [We've just bought a house... we're very troubled]. She said it with a rather firm yet defensive tone.

At this point he proceeded to calculate how much she will owe for the whole year...[which was] Rs. 320 for the whole year because four months are left. He said that he will take the Rs. 60 and that will leave only Rs. 320 for the whole year. In effect he has forgiven the previous fees of Rs. 220 that were owed [as she still owed Rs. 160 for the previous balance] (FN 21-02-03, p. 6).

6.6.2 Fee Concessions

Superficially, fee concessions may appear to be quite similar to flexi-fees. However, there was one main difference. Fee concessions were not the direct result of fee-bargaining. In fact, fee concessions were established by the school in advance, and in most cases were expressly used as a marketing tactic when attracting clients. Furthermore, while flexi-fee discounts ranged in amount and applied only for those households that voiced financial concerns, fee concessions were instituted with definite and fixed amounts and as a matter of overt school policy. They were

available to all applicable clients however a few urban schools were selective on household income. Reported fee concessions are presented in Table 6.5.

	Rural Schools					Urban Schools				Taj-Nagar
	A	B	C	D	Siya-pur	E	F	G	H	
Concession	3 for 2	2 for 1 +1/2	3+ = 1 child free	3 for 2	3+ = 1 child free	3+ = Rs. 20 off per child	3 for 2 +1/2 4 for 3	2 for 1 +1/2 3 = 2	N-5: Rs. 25 off per sibling Junior: 50 off per sibling	Rs. 20 off per sibling
Tuition Fee Structure	N&KG: 25 + Rs.5 per grade	N-5: 50 6-8: 70	N-5: 50 6-8: 80 9&10: 75	N-5: 25 6-8: 30	N-5: 40 6-8:50	N-8: 80	N-8: 95 9&10: 250	N-5: 130 6-8: 140 9&10 : 175	N-5: 100 6-8: 145	N-5: 55 6-8: 80 9&10: 150 11&12: 160

Table 6.5 Fee Concessions and Official Tuition Rates at Case Study Schools

Fee concessions applied to households that sent multiple children to the same school. Owners maintained that fee concessions were instituted to make it more affordable for parents to access their schools. They explained that while some potential revenue was lost, this was necessary to off-set some fee-bargaining. Furthermore, they felt that the likelihood of households accessing the school for longer increased if all children were enrolled in the same school.

6.6.3 Fee-Setting

In anticipation of fee-bargaining and to recoup some money lost through flexi-fees and fee concessions, many schools instituted the fee-setting mechanism. This involved marking up tuition fees slightly higher than the amount they would like to receive, knowing that they would later offer a 10-15% discount to those that fee-bargained. As such, schools appeared to respond to parents’ financial concerns, while actually maintaining their interest and power. Since not all parents demanded flexi-fees or were eligible for fee concessions, the school effectively expanded its revenue

base. In this sense, fee-setting can be seen as a mechanism to maintain the *appearance* of responsiveness. Leverage in bargaining power and in the relationship remained with schools while parents felt that they exerted some power over them.

Most owners justified the fee-setting mechanism in terms of household engagement strategies, claiming that it was a way to recoup fees that would otherwise be lost. They further asserted that increasing fee margins each year was necessary to meet recurrent expenses. Fee-setting allowed schools to partly offset the cost of unpaid fees by charging a higher amount that would be automatically paid by parents who did not fee-bargain or were not eligible for fee concessions. The following excerpt outlines how Taj Nagar considered fee-setting:

She [the principal] took the example of the woman that just paid the fees [after an outstanding balance for three months] and said that when parents do pay fees, they drop off some Rs. 5 or 10 per month: '*Agle saal se kuch karna hoga taki round number mei dein*' [Next year we'll have to do something so that we can get the fees in round numbers]. She said that parents don't realise how much loss this puts the school through because so many of the parents do this. [...]

The [principal's] assistant said that, '*Agle saal aap round number mei aise lijiye ki fees ko 85 per bachcha kar dejiye to round figure mei guardian kahega ki 80 de rahein hain aur aapko phir bhi utne hi paise milenge jitne milne chahiye... jaise dukaaandaar paise badha ke chhoot deta hai, vaise hi kariye.*' [Next year you should set fees at a round number, like make it 85 per child so the guardian will say that he'll pay it at a round figure of 80, and then you'll still get the amount of money that you should get... like a store-owner increases prices and then gives a discount, that's exactly what you should do]. The principal laughed and said, '*Bachchon ki dukaan... ye hi hai ab*' [A children's store... that's what it is now]. She went on to say that that's how it really feels sometimes because parents bargain for how much they are going to pay in the way of fees. They say that they have only brought a certain amount of money and that's all they're going to pay for that session (FN 12-03-03, p. 8-9).

Proposed fee increases were not substantial because schools were aware that there was a market cap prohibiting them from setting fees beyond a certain threshold. Therefore, schools had to balance recouping fees through fee-setting with ensuring that the newly set fees were below the threshold of the LFP market niche. Otherwise, this could alienate potential clients and prompt existing ones to exit.

Thus, fee-setting required knowledge honed into the local market and the school's existing and potential client base. This was well illustrated by one owner who, in his attempt to raise revenue margins for the following year, was in the midst of setting the fee:

28. And you're also thinking of increasing the fees a little bit?

10. Rs. 10.

That's it, Rs. 10.

That's it. Not more than that. Even if my school becomes 10 times more popular, even then we can't just jump straight to a Rs. 20 increase. Understand this. It's important for you to understand this. Even if tomorrow I get 5000 children, even then I can't increase the fees more than Rs. 10 from nursery to grade 10. I can't increase the fees from nursery to grade 10.

Why?

Because, the situation is that there's a school right next door that's offering schooling at low cost. Everyone will run to that school. Because my building isn't that that big, there's no way that I can ask for more fees. And you can say that if we increase it little by little, then we'll also reap the benefits for a longer time (PL1-2, Fees, p. 2).

Given competition in the local school market and the school's constraints regarding facilities, this principal was aware of the maximum amount that he could set for the following year to maintain his existing client base and attract new clients. Similarly, most case study schools took stock of the minimum revenue required to pay school staff, building maintenance and facilities and other school-related expenses before setting a fee. They also took into account a 10-15% loss from fee-bargaining and fee-jumping. While parents could employ fee-bargaining on the new fees, the fee-setting mechanism ultimately mediated the power shift meaning schools maintained leverage.

6.6.4 Withholding Documentation

Withholding official documentation was discriminately used for students in key years and was the mechanism by which case study schools had the greatest

degree of leverage. As previously discussed (Section 5.5.4), the LFP sector was truly open as it admitted students in years that were not board-examined or at the end of an instruction cycle without TCs. It most readily applied to students in grades 5, 8, 10, or 12 requiring TCs or other official documents such as admit cards permitting students to take board exams. This mechanism was only used with those parents who principals thought were going to fee-jump at the end of the year, as they neither paid fees for three months or more nor approached the school and fee-bargained. It was exercised by schools as a last resort, and sometimes with varying levels of success.

The dynamics are demonstrated in the following excerpt:

The mother was saying that she can only give Rs. 800. The principal, as she was flipping through the fees register, asked, how much [of the fee balance] is left. She said that she had to pay another Rs. 700. At this point the principal said, '*Hum kuch nahin jaante... pravesch patra nahin mil sakta*' [I don't know anything about that... you can't get the admit card]. The mother began pleading her case by saying that she was really *majboor* [helpless] these days and that she can't afford to give the full fees. The principal said that they have established a '*neeyam*' [procedure] and it is [the same] for all. She said that if she breaks it for one she will have to break it for everyone. The mother said again that it's not possible for her to pay the full fees. The mother said that they have brought the Rs. 50 for the admit card in addition to the Rs. 800: '*Jab hum apne bachche ko padha rahe hain to kissi bhi tarah se hum fees denge aur poori denge. Koi chhipayenge nahin paisa... aap humaara vishvaas kariye*' [When we are educating our child then we will pay the full fees one way or another. We're not going to hide our money... trust me]. The principal said that she is not involved in this matter at all—she has left it all to the teachers in charge to deal with the exams and with the admit cards. She [the mother] said that she had already spoken to 'Sir' [referring to the co-owner] about it. The principal said that she didn't know anything about it and that then she should go and speak to the co-owner about it directly.

The daughter at this point went out to find the co-owner while the mother stayed back [...] The principal said that because of all of th[is]...expenses of the school are also stopped: '*Hum kya karein majboori sab ki hoti hain aur school ke sab kharch ruk jaatein hain—teacheron ke payment nahin hote hain aur bhi kitne kharch hain*' [What can we do, everyone is in a bind, and all of the school expenses can't be met as a result—we can't make teachers' payments or anything else]. At this point the co-owner came in and said, '*Ye kya ho raha hai?*' [What is going on here?], in a raised and annoyed tone. He had been called out of class to attend to this. The principal explained what the situation was with the parent and the mother again explained her case. The co-owner said hurriedly, '*Acchha, theek hai, theek hai de do. Jitna bhi de rahi hain utne mei de do aur chutti karo*' [OK, fine, fine give it. Take whatever she's giving and get it over with']. With that he left the room (FN12-03-03, p. 2-5).

In the example above the parent owed Rs. 1500 in tuition fees and Rs. 50 for the admit card, but eventually paid Rs. 850. Even here, the parent fee-bargained and relied on the flexi-fees mechanism, while the school attempted to exert the mechanism of withholding documentation. While the threat of withholding documentation did not automatically guarantee recouping fees because of other competing mechanisms in place, it was the only way the school could recoup part of the fees by exerting maximum pressure and power over households who knew that taking exams hinged on these documents. As Taj Nagar had high intermediate and high school enrolment, withholding documentation was most often used here compared to other case study schools.

6.6.5 Extra Fees

Instituting extra fees, in addition to monthly tuition fees, was another way that schools attempted to exert bargaining power. Extra fees were claimed at different points in the year. Most school interviewees stressed that they were unable to charge as many different types of extra fees as higher-fee counterparts because of their market niche. They explained that high-fee schools charged extra fees for: sports, different activities, and extra tuition. Case study participants carefully assessed their niche and instituted the following extra fees as presented in Table 6.6 below.

	Rural Schools					Urban Schools				
	A	B	C	D	Siya- pur	E	F	G	H	Taj Nagar
Admission/ Registration Fees (Rs.)	10	50	10	40	50	150	250	150	200	1 month fees + 150
Exam Fees (Rs.)	N& KG: 5 Grades 1-8: 10 Grades 9&10: 15	30	25	10	30	30	20	15	25	50
*Period of Collection	H Y	Q H Y	H Y	H Y	H Y	Q H Y	Q H Y	H Y	H Y	H Y
Total Exam fees Per Child (Rs.)	N-5: 10: Grades 1-8: 20 Grades 9&10: 30	90	50	20	60	90	60	30	100	100
Other Fees (Rs.)	N/A	N/ A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	High school computer course: 70	Games fees: 20 Electric fees: 20	High School: 50 for short technical- vocationa l courses	N/A

Table 6.6 Extra Fees at Case Study Schools

Note. *: Period of collection is abbreviated as follows: Q= Quarterly, H= Half-yearly, Y= Yearly

Unlike tuition fees extra fees were non-negotiable and not subject to concession. Once again, principals asserted that full collection of these fees was crucial to offset fee-bargaining and fee-jumping costs. While admission fees in rural schools were lower than those of urban schools in absolute terms, they still represented one or two months’ tuition fees per child at the highest level of education offered at the school, except for in Schools A and C. For urban schools, admission fees represented on average between one-and-a-half to nearly three times the tuition fees at the highest level. Owners/principals explained that the high amount acted as an insurance against new admissions that may engage in fee-jumping later on.

Furthermore, they felt that initial admission and exam times were when they had the most bargaining power, since this was when households were most sensitive to negative the consequences of withholding payment. As a result, they would pay a

premium (within a limit) for their children's schooling. Participants thought that households would make necessary financial arrangements by saving, using reserve money, or borrowing. One owner felt:

29. Oh, they give it all for exa... they won't give us [tuition] fees but they'll give everything in the name of examinations. Because that has to be deposited otherwise their child can't take the exam. If we put pressure on them [for tuition fees] then they won't give me anything, no matter what.

But they say that they don't have money so how do they...

They're able to get all that money. These people always have some money but they don't want to spend for education. Now if you think about it, the going rate [in Siyapur] is Rs. 50/day for a labourer. Even if they only do manual labour for 30 days, they'll make 1500. And in rural areas, women and men, they all work. Say women don't make 1500, at least they'll make 500, 700 or 800 for sure. They'll make something. Then they also have some farming so [muffled] they're able to do something with that too.

They'll do something?

They'll do something. And here they'll find that we're only taking Rs. 40 per month for fees at the primary level. So someone who's earning Rs. 50 per day, will they really have difficulty paying Rs. 40 per month? It's not so. But they don't want to give money in the name of education. They don't take this seriously, like it's a must (PL4-3, Fees, p. 19).

Similarly, many interviewees claimed that parents placed hierarchical value on the importance of different fees. Owners/principals felt that parents saw tuition fees as peripheral, whereas fees that were considered 'official' or 'necessary' were not bargained or forfeited. For example, just as school and board exam fees and those for necessary documentation were seen as serving a specific purpose with immediate negative consequences to their children's schooling if left unpaid, so were admission fees without which they could not access their desired school. Thus, owners could adopt a staunch collection policy and felt that parents would make the necessary financial arrangements to make payments.

As referred to above, most owners/principals felt that many parents did not see the relevance of paying tuition fees because they did not understand their importance in meeting school expenses. Instead they thought that parents saw tuition

fees as directly contributing to school owners' coffers, hence a peripheral cost. In fact, one parent-principal interaction revealed that certain parents felt just that:

30. Parent (PR): What problems, I don't have any problems at all.

Principal (PL): No problems? You never give fees on time... [Laughter]

PR: That's what you're saying. When we don't have the fee money, then we give it on time [referring to the negotiated time through the flexi-fee mechanism]

PL: We have difficulties then, don't we? We have to bring books, there are difficulties with the books, we have to buy the school uniform, there are difficulties with that...

PR: Whether or not we have difficulties, if I want to get something then I **have** to, even if that means that I have to ask someone for the money.

[...] And my outstanding balance... oh, Rs. 2000 or 3000 is not such a big deal and shouldn't cause any great difficulties. I'll bring it in later... that's how it is. [Laughter]

[Joking] Maybe it doesn't cause difficulties for you, but it might for him. [Laughter]

PR: Not for him... what difficulty will it cause him? If they don't claim Rs. 10,000-20,000 then what difficulty will it really cause?

PL: [Rhetorically] It's no problem for us... there's the staff, there's my family, how can we make ends meet? There are difficulties.

[Background laughter]

PR: Oh, if he doesn't get Rs. 2000-4000 then what's the big deal?

PL: And what if 10 candidates do the same, then how will it work...? [Laughter]

PR: Where are they, there aren't any. That's not an issue.

PL: Yeah, so forget about 20-25 children just like that. [Laughter]

PR: So what's the big deal? The school gets Rs. 500,000 to 600,000 so if there's a shortfall of Rs. 30,000-40,000 then what's the problem? [...]

Just think of it like... just think that because of you everyone's children are going to school. Poor people's children, whoever they are (PR114-1, PWR/Pr, p. 13-14).

The first striking element is the level of candour and humour engaged in the discussion about fees. Given the subordinate social position of this parent, the nature of the relationship was surprising, although not uncommon in many schools, and

indicative of changing household-school relationships. Also noteworthy was that paying tuition fees on time and in full seemed advisable to some rather than obligatory. It must be reiterated that this was only the case for parents who engaged in fee-bargaining and relied on the flexi-fee mechanism to continue accessing the school. In contrast, all observed interactions about the extra fees mechanism indicated that it did not hold for fees considered absolutely essential by parents, even if admission and extra fees were little more than administrative add-ons instituted to cover part of the shortfall in tuition fee collection.

Hence, while some fee mechanisms (flexi-fees and fee concessions) resulted from a greater degree of household bargaining power in an open and fluid LFP market, others (fee-setting, withholding certificates, and extra fees) were expressly instituted to exert schools' power in response to household fee-bargaining and fee-jumping engagement strategies. Furthermore, data suggested that responsiveness to and the power dynamics surrounding the most clearly and actively voiced parental concerns were connected to a host of factors such as: principals' perceptions of their clients' ability to pay fees; schools' self-interest in maintaining and attracting clients; schools' interests in meeting expenses and increasing revenue; parents' assessment of the relative importance of different fees regarding their perceived immediate effect on their children's education; a certain degree of entitlement to negotiate the timing and amount of fee payments; and parents' financial constraints.

Even though there was some evidence of change in household-school relationships, it did not imply that parents were on higher or even equal footing with principals. Nonetheless, given the recent emergence of the LFP sector and its effect of opening up the school market to traditionally excluded or subordinate groups, any alteration of the household-school relationship was significant. Furthermore, the subtle nuances in analysing household-school power dynamics indicate the

complexities and dynamism of those relationships. In fact, many interactions between both parties resembled a game of ‘tug of war’ due to the intensification of market forces. The LFP sector and the new schooling market is the focus of the concluding discussion below.

6.7 The LFP Sector and the Schooling Market

The significance of the LFP sector in altering the landscape for the delivery of schooling for disadvantaged groups is the final point to be highlighted. Data suggest that the LFP sector’s rapid and pervasive expansion intensified existing market forces regarding the school market for disadvantaged groups. Individual and organisational level data indicated that in addition to the emergence of the LFP sector, a possible explanation for the intensification of these forces was inherent to the LFP sector’s fluidity in providing an immediacy in schooling that was previously non-existent. This immediacy was reflected in households’ ability to gain information about prospective schools and the manner in which they enacted school choice, as well as how quickly LFP schools granted clients access and were (at least seemingly) responsive to household concerns. The intensification of market forces due to the LFP sector’s expansion was clearly manifested in case study schools. The three most dominant areas in the data are considered in the following discussion: perceptions of their client group, case study school and LFP self-concepts, and school market strategies.

6.7.1 Perceptions of the Client Group

Owners/principals viewed parents accessing their schools as a distinct client group to whom their schools were targeted. They perceived their client group as illiterate or semi-literate, belonging to low socio-economic groups, and having very limited buying power regarding schooling. While owners/principals felt that their

client group was similar in educational and socio-economic status to that accessing the state sector, they felt the key distinction was the group's desire to access 'good schooling' and their ability/willingness to pay for it. This was also tied to assessments of this group's slightly higher economic resources, although the bases for these judgements were neither typically nor clearly articulated. Similar to household interviewees (Table 5.7), school interviewees stratified the school market for disadvantaged groups in accordance with the target group's perceived distinctiveness:

31. The guardian's mentality is that my children will have to sit on the floor over there [in state schools].

Now, those who are well and truly poor, their children will go to the state sector. Those that are even a little... suppose even if they're making Rs. 2000-2500 a month, he thinks, 'OK, we'll enrol them in a school that's a little bit better. Where fees are low and the schooling is good too' (PL8-2, Mrkt, p. 4).

This perception of the client group was remarkably similar to household interviewees' own conceptions of themselves regarding the school market (Section 5.4.1). In essence, household and school interviewees generalised the client group accessing LFP schools as unwilling to access the state sector but unable to access medium or high-fee private sectors.

Owners/principals also had distinct conceptions of household roles and responsibilities regarding schooling, closely linked to their perceptions about parental views on education. They claimed that they witnessed a general change in disadvantaged groups' mental models regarding the importance of education over the last decade, and that the recent trend of accessing LFP schools was a crucial indicator of this change. It was counted as significant, since many children were first generation learners. However, they articulated limits to the change in mental models:

32. The change is that before they [parents] didn't even know to send them [children] to school, they didn't want to. And that too then they would them to a state school because of the three or four kilos of wheat [incentives] that they would get. Moving away from that, they

are now sending them to the new convent schools⁷ that are opening up. There has surely been a bit of change in them that's why they're doing this. Otherwise the three or four kilos that they're getting, they would take that, no? Because fees are higher in convent schools and in the state schools they get wheat. [...]

At the moment the only change in them is that, 'I should educate my child in a convent school'. They go the city and see that children are going to school so they also feel that my child should have a uniform. I mean they don't yet have an interest...to go to the school and meet with the teacher to ask what the child is learning, or that he/she isn't studying, or that I should monitor that at home (PL9-2, Percepts, pp. 12-13).

School interviewees felt that parents' mental models would gradually develop over time, with persistence from schools and the state through active campaigns on the benefits of schooling and on enabling parental roles and responsibilities. It was not unusual for principals to report that they campaigned door-to-door, feeling that in so doing:

33. ...something will surely stick over time (PL9-2, Percepts, p. 13).

The element of time was crucial. Owners/principals felt that the longer parents accessed LFP schools, the greater the mental shift. This is partly related to the assessment that parents' familiarity with school operations and how they should support their child, would increase over time. This support was articulated by owners/principals as ensuring that children attended regularly and on time, and monitoring them at home to make sure that assigned tasks were completed. Only one principal differentiated household roles by gender. He explained that the responsibility for schooling should rest with both parents, but felt that in rural areas mothers were generally less educated than fathers, so the latter should assume primary responsibility:

34. If the mother is unaware, if she doesn't know much about schooling, if she's illiterate then it's the father's duty to take the responsibility to impress the importance of education. They should send the child to school on time, and after that pay some attention to him/her, and after that the father should [mumbled]. Like if the mother doesn't know then the father should come and for half an hour or an hour

⁷ 'Convent school' is being used to denote private schools in general (typically LFP schools in this context), and not traditional missionary or convent schools set up in colonial times.

should explain to the child that, 'Dear, what did you learn, what didn't you understand'. He should tell him/her. The mother definitely has a role. But if the mother is illiterate, then her role is only to send the child to school. She can get the child ready. If the child is wandering on the way to school then the father or mother should find out where the child went midway. The mother's responsibility is just to get the breakfast ready, prepare the child's lunchbox, give the schoolbag, get the child dressed, and say, 'It's time to go, dear.' (PL9-2, Responsib, pp. 5-6).

Principals also claimed that it was the parents' responsibility to bring any concerns about their children's schooling or related problems to the school's attention. However, as discussed in Section 6.4.2c, many stated that parents failed to do so due to a lack of education, inexperience with formal schooling, and perceived lack of interest. Furthermore, most owners/principals stressed that children's difficulties were only mentioned near the end of the school year, particularly if they had outstanding fees. They maintained that this was a tactic used by parents to justify not paying full fee amounts by detracting focus from their outstanding balance:

35. Now those parents whose fees are irregular, they have only one complaint. And that too, at the end of the year. They won't come for the entire year. They'll come at the end of the year and say, 'My child didn't learn anything. And we've been giving money all along.' When in fact they didn't give money. They gave it irregularly. They gave money after five or six months. Even then, they'll lie. So coming at the end of the year, we're also not able to do anything. It's not like we only have one student. There are 20 or 15 children in one class at school, so we teach all the same way. It's not like they're taught individually. That guardian says that at the end of the year and says that my child didn't learn anything at all.

So what do you do then?

So I say, no you didn't come in the middle, otherwise we would tell you that the child was lacking. Because there were certain things that you lacked as well... sometimes they didn't have books, no exercise books, we used to write everything and send it to you at home. You didn't come because you thought that if you come to school then we'll ask you for money. But we weren't calling you for money. We were calling you so that we could tell you where your child was lacking (PL5-2, HHReIns, pp. 6-7).

Owners/principals stressed that their characterisations of parents were specific to those accessing their and other LFP schools. A market differentiation of clientele may seem like an obvious distinction within any paradigm analysing markets in schooling, particularly given increased market forces in India. However, the

congruence of certain household and school conceptions of LFP clientele is particularly noteworthy, as within dominant educational discourse in India the state sector is presented as the only alternative for disadvantaged groups (Chapter 2). It remains further unchallenged by the international discourse prevalent in various EFA targets and programmes, with profound effects on state policies but which conceptualised disadvantaged groups as homogeneous needing to be mobilised, either disinterested in schooling or who must access the state sector with no other option. From this backdrop, household and school conceptions of the distinctiveness of LFP clientele were sophisticated and representative of what was happening in the schooling market, rather than what is thought to happen in principle.

6.7.2 Self-Concepts of Case Study Schools and the LFP Sector

School participants conceptualised the LFP sector as a distinct sector within the school market. They not only distanced their schools from state schools but distinguished them from high-fee schools, simultaneously conceptualising their LFP schools in two distinct ways. Firstly, owners/principals expressly distanced their schools from the state sector and from what they perceived as lower quality schooling, questionable teaching practices, and alleged casteism. Secondly, regarding high-fee schools, principals distanced their schools from what they described as extortionist fee practices which they claimed did not lead to better quality schooling compared with LFP schools in most cases. This contrasting self-concept was best articulated by a rural principal, keen to convey what set the LFP sector apart:

36. There is progress [regarding the state of education] in private schools, they are paying attention to that. First of all, they are concerned with fees. [So] There is no casteism. Everyone, I mean all the kids sit in one class and it's not like he's from this caste and he's from that caste. And in some state schools it's like...they [teachers] feel that those from backward castes remain backward, so those state school teachers have this feeling. Because 90% of villagers are poor and backward. And who are the teachers? 90[%] are forward [meaning from higher socio-economic groups].

They're from the city?

They're from the city. Their mentality is, 'Regardless of whether or not they [students] study, I'm comfortable.'
So, it's not like that in private schools?

Yes. It's not like that in the private sector. The policy of private schools is to give admission to anyone. The government doesn't have enough money to open schools anywhere today. [...]

That's why they [the government] gave them [private schools] so much leeway and encouragement. And the private schools are looting.

What do you mean by looting?

I mean fees, fees according to their whimsy. You can charge whatever you like. Look in the cities. A kid is going to nursery school and it takes Rs. 3000-4000 for his admission. And he'll study the same thing, 'aa' to 'gya' [the Hindi alphabet] and 'A' to 'Z', or how to behave... how much can you teach a child in nursery? How much can you impart to a three-year-old child? (PL9-2, GvP, pp. 6-7)

The practice of charging "fees according to their whimsy" was attributed by this principal and others to high-fee schools, particularly in urban areas. This was even though most LFP schools, as previously demonstrated, set their own fee structures and fee amounts, and charged various extra fees despite state regulations to the contrary (detailed in Chapter 7). In the minds of owners/principals, what set LFP schools apart from high-fee schools was that the fees charged by the latter were unfounded and based solely from a business standpoint with the intention of maximising revenue margins without any increasing educational return. As one principal stated:

37. Some have made it into a money-making business (PL4-3, Mrkt, p. 14).

Most owners/principals sharply contrasted this to their schools, which they saw as performing 'social service':

38. It's just that you can consider that the school is running for the improvement of society, that's the work that we're doing (PL3b-2, Slf Cncpt, p. 2).

Therefore, from the interviewees' perspective, the distinction between high-fee and low-fee sectors was the former's 'aim to earn' versus 'social service' for the latter. The following is an excerpt from one owner stressing that distinction:

39. We took that aim and opened this school: to educate children at low cost and give them a good education with good facilities...

And we maintain that aim to this day. We never had an aim to earn. Because lots of schools they... but I'll give you our example.
[...]

...we want to educate the nation's children at low cost. [...]

This [running an LFP school] is very good work. I don't think there is any occupation more honourable in society than education. Education is a temple that educates all the children of the state or nation...There is no temple bigger than this (PL12-2, Slf Cncpt, p. 1).

Likening education in the context of LFP schools to 'a temple' is particularly noteworthy, and perhaps deliberately extended from their self-propagated concept of social service, as there is an ancient historical tradition in India considering education to be noble and holy. Particularly significant is the fact that traditional notions of nobility and holiness were restricted by owners/principals to LFP schools. It seemed that respondents' perceived lack of quality provision in the state sector and 'exorbitant' fee practices in the high-fee sector overrode their eligibility to some conceived pedestal of nobility.

Nonetheless, there were several inconsistencies in their self-concept as noble and geared to social service, particularly since case study schools were essentially run as businesses. Firstly, this may have been related to the fact that while all owners/owner teams comprised at least one individual who previously worked in the education sector (either as a teacher or manager), four also had one partner who currently or previously managed a small business. Furthermore, four were expressly opened for the gainful employment of their owners who could not find suitable employment elsewhere. Hence, at least seven case study schools had strong incentives to engage in business-like practices and four had the background knowledge to do so.

Secondly, while all principals claimed to clients and outsiders that their schools did not make enough to meet school expenses and volunteered their own

services, all except one confided that they actually earned sufficient revenue for expenses, and particularly in the urban group, to supplement or constitute their main income. While some owners invested this revenue into the school for maintaining existing facilities, building or buying new facilities, and installing new equipment, others seemed to use it primarily to fund their lifestyles. Therefore, the revenue could be constituted as profit, which although not distributed to all board members (i.e. members of the managing society), was similar to the profit held by owners of family-run businesses.

Finally, in contrast to their reported social service ideal, some owners/principals confided that they wished they could charge higher fees and even become part of the high-fee sector. However, they were wary of losing their target group and did not have the resources to open a high-fee school that could compete with more established ones in that sector. Nonetheless, one owner contemplated experimentally rebranding his school as a medium-fee school in coming years. To this end, some expansion and redecoration work was underway at the end of the data collection period with a view to marginally increasing fees for the 2003-2004 year. The business-like mindset of case study school owners was highlighted in the market strategies that they actively employed.

6.7.3 Market Strategies

Market strategies adopted by case study schools were governed by the overarching concern to maintain and expand their client base. This was the prime impetus behind why schools instituted certain mechanisms and institutions (e.g. fee mechanisms and those of the SIF in Chapter 7) to actively compete with other local LFP schools. The importance of adopting market strategies to compete for clients

was captured by the oldest case study school, whose target group changed over its 26-year history from high-income to disadvantaged groups:

40. Yeah, we mostly have children from lower or middle classes. At the beginning when we first opened we even got children from IAS [Indian Administrative Service], IPS [Indian Police Service], engineers, and those from good backgrounds. We opened the school keeping their admission in mind. At that time we even got IAS and IPS children, and children from high-class families used to study here. But now lots of big 'hi-fi' [meaning: high fee, elite private schools] have opened up so those families have money and everything so they're diverted there. [...]

There also weren't that many schools before. Like in [name of locality omitted] there weren't that many schools, there wasn't a single one when our school first opened.

I see.

Yeah, there wasn't a single English medium [meaning private] school. At elementary level there was one junior school [state]... So IAS and IPS families would go there and come here for the younger children because we were also nearby. Now we don't have a single child from IAS, IPS, or engineering backgrounds (PL12-2, Mrkt, pp. 10-11).

As demonstrated by the above experience, the change in the nature of the schooling market, due mainly to the emergence of large numbers of all types of private schools, had a significant impact on the place that some schools occupied in the expanded schooling market. In effect, it altered this school's focus to a client group that was not previously accounted for in the market, as private schools were traditionally frequented by elite and upper middle classes. Thus, a school that felt able to effectively compete in the high-fee sector 26 years ago no longer felt able to do so, and redirected its strategy rebranding itself as an LFP school to capitalise in a market niche where it could effectively compete.

Rebranding was more complex than explained by some (Tooley, 1999), implying that schools at lower positions in the schooling market adopted strategies to elevate their place. In fact, data indicate that the rebranding strategy was bidirectional: from LFP to high-fee (as expected) and from high-fee to LFP (as above). The more typical aspiration to rebrand as a high-fee school to increase revenues (via a few years

of medium-fee rebranding) is presented below. It seemed that this owner felt that rebranding and cream-skimming were the easiest avenues to success:

41. Principal (PL): Like I said, these days it's total show in colleges [referring to LFP schools of any level but especially those with intermediate sections].

Yes.

PL: It's totally about 'show' in colleges. Of course, some schooling is going on but secondary to that. But show is number one. Everything comes under 'show': the building should be impressive, teachers should be good [meaning: compliant], and there should be strict procedures. So when all of these things are strong, people will think the college is good even if not that much teaching goes on.

So what does he [the co-owner] say?

PL: He doesn't say much about that. He says just teach, teach, teach. That's what he says to me. So then we tell the teachers but... [...]

The easiest thing to do here is to arrange the funds and to expand. That's the easiest. To decorate this a little bit is the easiest. We have to teach, that's a given. But we can only teach when we have good clientele and teachers. Or are we going to do that from the outset [rhetorically]? The first thing to pay attention to is our decoration and all other things. When we pay attention to these things then we'll start getting good clientele. Then our starting point to attain a good level for schooling will also be good.

Principal's brother: Yeah, what you're saying is absolutely correct that when you start a school first you have to make sure that everything is proper. The staff is a secondary thing. You'll only employ the staff later on.

PL: [...] you know what they say, 'The first impression is the last impression'.

So similarly, my own thinking is that if we have a good beginning, tighten up on the facilities, have them well-maintained, then we'll get a good response. Like this was my suggestion [pointing to the construction work being carried out in the neighbouring classroom]... (PL1-3, Comp, pp. 18-19).

The prime motivation behind rebranding was to increase the school's competitiveness by developing its reputation as 'good', thus increasing its popularity. It had little to do with internal pedagogical or administrative changes regarding the delivery of schooling but with raising the school's profile to attract more or different types of clients. "Mimetic isomorphism" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) by mimicking higher fee schools seemed to be the rebranding strategy of choice to justify higher

fees and allow the school to cream-skim by altering its intake, primarily regarding social class. Owners assumed this would have a positive effect on achievement results, confirming its status as a 'good school'. Most schools subscribed to mimetic isomorphism by constructing buildings and facilities (or aspiring to) (e.g. play areas and modern buildings) and naming schools (e.g. in English or with the words 'public school' or 'Saint'), so as to distance them from the state sector and externally indicating to parents that the school was 'good'. Some also considered mimicking some of the highest fee schools in Lucknow by opening multiple branches in different areas.

However, one owner claimed that he contemplated rebranding as a high-fee school but decided against it because his:

42. ...conscience would not allow to raise fees (PL4-3, Comp, p. 26).

He further explained that:

43. Those that are working with the sole aim that, 'I have to run a high school and teach children', can neither build a proper building nor operate the school properly. Because you need money for all of that. Now if I looked at this very school from the perspective of revenue and if I started charging Rs. 100-150 instead of Rs. 40, then this same school would become good. And people would pay that much too.

It will become good?

By good I mean we can put up a good building and pay all the teachers' back payments.

And the schooling?

The schooling would stay the same as it is now. There would be no difference in the schooling. But it's just that these days people think, 'Oh they've maintained this place well' (PL4-3, Comp, p. 26).

Reported case study school experiences revealed that failure to rebrand by mimicking the external look could lead to a loss of clientele even if the school produced good results in board exams. One owner described his school's experience:

44. We had approximately 14-15 children. Right? [...] So we taught them really well from grades 1 to 8. We gave them a really solid grounding, that, 'OK they're going to bring us results in grades 9 and 10' [referring to state board exams]. However, what happened when they all passed with first division [highest rank] in grade 8 was they

immediately came asking for their TC that, 'Sir, give me my TC. Sir, give me my TC.' I said, 'What's going on?' So they said, 'We want to study in grade 9. They're going to put us in a good school. They'll put us anywhere else.'

So I called all of their guardians and I said, 'We pinned all our hopes on these children, and we put a lot of hard work into teaching them. [...] Why are you doing this? Are we not good?'

[They said] 'The thing is we would like to put them in a good school.'

Then I said, 'Mate, what's a good school and what's a bad school?'

So what did parents mean by a 'good school'?

According to parents a good school is one that looks good, that's all. That's what I think. That's what I think. Yeah, what else? [...]

So did they all leave?

Yeah, they all left. All of them.
[...]

No, there were others and they stayed. The good ones left.
[...]

There were 14, seven left, seven stayed...so I said, 'Wow! That means that it's not good to teach them too well. If we teach them too well then they'll leave us behind' (PL10-2, Good, p. 5).

Nonetheless, this owner, like most others, still believed that in order to expand their client base, schools needed to provide a minimum standard of education in tandem with the external look of the school. Owners also felt that schools focusing solely on the external package would quickly reach a threshold point of competitiveness:

45. Schools based on show will rise for a few days, one may rise but at one time it will fall. Because if there's only show and no schooling, then what will come of it?

They say that we'll start off by building up the show of the school, then they'll get more children studying there so they'll be able to make it better.

Oh, then how will they be able to make it better? [Laughter] It's like [laughter] you have to build a house but the foundation is weak. They're going on with the top and installing the staircase only to find that it collapses [laughter].
[...]

I've also seen cases where there's high enrolment in some schools, but no teaching goes on there. So they go down slowly, slowly (PL8-2, Comp, pp. 7-8).

Data suggest that perhaps the biggest strategic distinction between schools in the market niche for disadvantaged groups (state and LFP) was to follow through contractual obligations to parents. Household interviewees asserted that state schools did not honour their obligation to deliver a reasonable standard of schooling because there was little accountability of school management and teaching staff to clients. LFP schools, on the other hand, were perceived as upholding certain contractual obligations. Most owners/principals claimed that since parents procured their service through a fee, they felt a sense of contractual obligation to provide a reasonable standard of schooling. Schools interpreted this as establishing internal institutions (detailed in Chapter 7) that contributed to the regular and timely provision of schooling such as strict discipline procedures, fixed daily timetables, minimal school closures, and regular teacher attendance. Owners felt that honouring that obligation was the best way to satisfy their clients, build a solid reputation in local market, and attract new clients:

46. All of our guardians are definitely satisfied. Why? Because of our schooling...If we take fees from our guardians, even if we take Rs. 10 then we try that we must give them some education everyday. So that's our aim. That's how we're advancing education here.

And the [number] of guardians has continued to grow. Because the reason they send their children is so that their children progress and... I mean, that they get them a good education (PL10-2, Mrkt, pp. 4-5).

Most interviewees claimed that they felt intense competition from other LFP schools in their immediate vicinity, particularly from older ones. However, none felt any competition from the state sector, mainly due to the perceived inferior quality of schooling offered there. The degree of competition was reduced to two main factors: the number of LFP schools in their immediate vicinity (more pronounced for urban schools) and the fluidity of the LFP sector (owing to certain practices in the SIF and the uninhibited use of household engagement strategies with low degrees of nesting). Participants stressed that three strategies enabled effective competition in the LFP

sector: maintaining low fees, providing good teaching, and upgrading the external package of facilities:

47. Yeah, there is definitely competition...when there are lots of schools nearby then there will definitely be competition. Now in terms of competition, one is in terms of the schooling. Another competition is that of the building. But in my point of view, the [quality of] schooling is a must. Because what I experienced is that when I first opened my school with a tin roof, even then we had good enrolment.

It was good then too?

It was good. Now of course, the building's been completed.

Yes now it's really nice.

Yes, and now the attendance is really good too. So the schooling is a must. [...]

Schooling. Schooling and fees, you have to pay attention to that too. That the fees stay low. If you increase the fees then it becomes hi-fi [meaning: high fee] and the poor people won't [muffled] [come]... (PL8-2, Comp, pp. 6-7).

Some case study schools offered even lower fees or more concessions than older established schools in a bid to attract their clients. One school operating next to an established medium-fee school capitalised on the latter's existing reputation by arranging to use its playground facilities in exchange for a fee. Thus, the case study school compensated for a lack in its external package, and recruited clients who could not afford to send their children to the medium-fee school, by riding on the coat-tails of its reputation. Others opened their schools in their own communities to play up the characteristic of a 'home grown' school to win the confidence of community members and encourage enrolment. Finally, most schools reported adopting aggressive marketing and recruitment techniques by door-to-door canvassing and inviting potential clients to school events. However, door-to-door canvassing was carefully balanced with playing up school owners' higher socio-economic positions to maintain some power in the relationship. Most owners adopted a paternalistic tone, convincing potential clients to access their schools to improve household economic returns:

48. I say that the first step is to spend money on your children.
[...]

So I explain it to them as, 'As he's your child, you have to spend something on him. Only then can you get some return from him. When you're not even going to educate him, then what will he give you? First spend something on him. Then he'll become educated and progress, then he can give you something [...].' So that's what I explain to them (PL9-2, Needs, p. 3).

Other principals claimed that strategies such as door-to-door canvassing were conducted only in areas outside the school's immediate locale, so as not to weaken the school's position in the local community by highlighting its dependence. One school actively used existing clients from outside the local neighbourhood to recruit new clients:

49. ...the first thing is that whichever students are already enrolled, we pamphlet in their surrounding areas. Whatever points we want to make, we tell them this way. Secondly, our students are our biggest advertisements. Once students start studying here...then the changes that other parents see in them, we get more [publicity] that way. The actual advertising doesn't bring us that big an effect as the publicity of the effectiveness of our work. [...]

...we also go to them and meet with them once. Sometimes we call them here as well, parents whose children aren't our students to ask, 'Are you interested?'

How? I mean how do you contact them?

Like in other localities where our students are from, we go and meet with them individually in four or five homes. Sometimes when we have a cultural programme or art competition, we call them here as well so that other people come here too. They can bring others with them (PL7-2, Mrkt, p. 7).

In conclusion, this chapter outlined the organisational structure of case study schools as LFP school organisations, the changing nature of their interactions with households, and how they employed strategies specific to their market niche to effectively compete, and maintain and expand their client base. Thus, as exemplified by the fee mechanisms, not only were case study schools adept at instituting internal mechanisms to mediate household-school relationships, they were also acute analysts of their market niche, identifying strategies from which to capitalise. As was evident throughout the discussion, inherent to the operation of case study schools were the

institutional arrangements they established enabling them to perform in the LFP sector. Hence, results at the organisational level presented here must be seen in tandem with those presented from the final level of inquiry in Chapter 7.

The specific points of interest from the organisational level to be kept in mind for the institutional-level analysis are the internal and external institutions, operation of the shadow institutional framework, and the interplay between the organisational structure of case study schools as LFP schools and the institutional framework. Together, with the largely descriptive analysis at this level, the analytic interpretation of the inquiry at the following level will help characterise the operation of the lived markets of case study schools as part of the greater LFP sector.

CHAPTER 7 *Playing by the Shadow Rules*

Institutional-Level Data Presentation & Analysis

As the study was structured through a new institutional lens explicitly used as the framework to analyse results at the institutional-level, the essential task of this chapter is to reconcile findings to highlight the institutional frameworks and processes that structured the functioning of case study schools as LFP school organisations operating within a distinct LFP sector. Specifically, the results: (1) identify the formal institutional framework for private provision of schooling in Uttar Pradesh and analyse its interpretation by organisational actors and application by institutional actors; (2) outline the institutions specific to and common across case study schools comprising the *shadow institutional framework* for LFP schools; and (3) examine how the LFP sector's shadow institutional framework interacted with and mediated the formal institutional framework (FIF).

7.1 *Reconciling New Institutionalism and the Operation of the LFP Sector*

From a new institutional perspective (particularly Northian) the interaction between organisations and institutions results in broader institutional change. The primary task of organisations is to “win the game”, as structured by the rules or

institutions. Data suggest that in line with new institutionalism, the primary objective of case study schools was to mediate the FIF in such a way as to maximise their interests. To this end, results build on new institutionalism (particularly NIE) through the identification of what is termed here, the '*shadow institutional framework*' (SIF), a set of *common internal institutions* and *external institutions* that structured the interaction of case study schools as LFP school organisations with other LFP schools and the State, allowing them to mediate the FIF and increase their institutional performance to try and 'win the game'.

The analysis reconciled different concepts within the new institutional paradigm, such as McMeekin's concept of "within school institutions", to identify common internal institutions in addition to external institutions influenced by a Northian perspective. Common internal institutions allowed case study schools to reduce "information asymmetries" on formal properties of the FIF and the informal arrangements of the SIF; external institutions allowed them to minimise "transaction costs" of interacting with the State. In addition, the application of the sociological variant showed that case study schools were isomorphic to the SIF and not the FIF (as was initially expected) to garner legitimacy and enable effective performance. The isomorphism was partly "mimetic" and partly "coercive" (Di Maggio & Powell, 1983). The success of the SIF's mediation relied partly on "perverse incentives" (North, 1990), which were embedded in the FIF itself and explained its uneven application across LFP schools by institutional actors. The analysis draws on NIE's distinction between the formal rules to determine the formal framework *in principle* (Section 7.5.); informal rules to identify informal arrangements instituted by case study schools to mediate the FIF *in practice*; and enforcement mechanisms to explain why the SIF was more binding than the FIF. In effect, the sum of results permitted

the examination of “the formal properties and informal arrangements” of the lived market (Lauder & Hughes, 1999) of the LFP sector.

7.2 Main Features of the FIF

Data indicate that the FIF applicable to case study schools largely fell within that outlining the provision and delivery of basic and secondary education¹ and for ‘recognised schools’². The analysis revealed three key features of the FIF. Firstly, the main acts and rules³ governing basic and secondary education were largely drafted either prior to India’s independence in 1947 or approximately 20 to 30 years ago. The most recent applicable rules were devised in 1998 to regulate the selection of secondary school teaching staff in recognised schools. Another recent act was devised and passed that year to govern the conduct of public examinations and prevent the leakage of question papers. Both of these reflect two issues of pressing concern in the current education context. This is not to say that the other rules and acts of the FIF remained static. At the time of data collection, the main act governing basic education, the *Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Act, 1972*, was most recently amended in 2000, and that governing secondary education, the *Uttar Pradesh Intermediate Education Act, 1921*, in 1987.

The second feature was that the FIF’s dynamism was particularly prevalent in those areas where it seemed the State sought greater control of recognised schools. These areas were identified as: employment conditions and functions of teaching staff, recognition, and exam conduct. This was prevalent through the most recently drafted set of rules, and by examining the areas in which existing acts and rules were

¹ Basic education is defined in the acts as comprising primary (grades 1 through 5) and junior (grades 6 through 8) schools and secondary education as high school (grades 9 and 10) and higher secondary or intermediate/inter-college (grades 11 and 12).

² The definition of ‘recognised schools’ according to applicable acts will be discussed in Section 7.5.1.

³ The complete list of official acts and rules analysed for LFP schools are in Appendix 5.

most recently and frequently amended. The rules for recognition of high schools and inter-colleges outlined in the *Regulations under the Intermediate Education Act* and published in the *Uttar Pradesh Education Manual* (Jain, 2001), were amended in 2000. Data collection revealed that these were amended again in September 2002. Similarly, the latest amendments to the regulations were regarding exam conduct and administration (a series of amendments in 2000) and the evaluation of teachers (2001). In addition, the *Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education [Services Selection Board] Act, 1982*, was also amended in 2001 to expand its scope and application to the service conditions of secondary teachers. This dynamism was documented in official documents published in the *Education Manual* and in grey documents outlining the recognition procedures for basic and secondary schools.

The third feature of the FIF for LFP schools was that the degree of regulation was greater for secondary than basic private schools. This was apparent through the fact that the instances of acts and rules drafted specifically to regulate secondary education in recognised schools were far higher and more explicit than in basic education. In fact, recognition of basic schools was largely governed through government orders and circulars rather than the passing of an act. The Basic Education Act did not include a single mention of recognised schools. Fee caps for basic schools and procedures for withdrawing recognition were subsumed in *The Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers and Other Conditions) Rules, 1975*, one of three sets of rules governing the employment and service conditions of teaching and other school staff in recognised schools.

For basic schools, the institutional focus (at least in principle) seemed to be on employment conditions rather than recognition. However, in practice, there were many amendments to the rules governing the recognition of basic schools included in government orders and circulars provided by officials. At the time of data collection,

these were not fully incorporated into the acts governing basic education, unlike those for their secondary counterparts⁴. This could intimate the State's greater concern for regulating the secondary sector, which could be due to the historic concern for mass expansion of basic education (evident from the 1919 and 1926 Uttar Pradesh Primary Education Acts) and the current focus in the NPE 1992 and EFA campaigns, compared to the focus on tighter control of higher levels of education.

7.3 The FIF and the State's Struggle for Power

Private schools in Uttar Pradesh could choose the board through which they wished to be affiliated. Officials explained that in addition to Uttar Pradesh's state education boards, the boards of other states, and the Central Government boards (Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and the Indian Central School Education Board (ICSE)), were also given license to operate schools in Uttar Pradesh. Schools wishing to follow a pattern other than Uttar Pradesh's must have obtained a "certificate of no objection" certifying agreement from the State (GO2-1, FIF/St, p. 4), in addition to fulfilling the affiliation requirements of the board in question. Thus, according to the FIF, a board was essentially an affiliating body used primarily to conduct and regulate exams and design the syllabus. Any recognised school was obliged to deliver the course for basic and secondary education according to the guidelines of its respective board, and its students were to take the corresponding board exams. However, regardless of having obtained a certificate of no objection, a school was still obliged to follow State Government policies such as those regarding teachers' salaries and reservation quotas (GO2-1, FIF/St, p. 4).

⁴ In addition to the Intermediate Education Act and its corresponding set of regulations, recognised schools were the primary focus of *The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education [Services Selection Board] Act, 1982*, *The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Services Selection Board Rules, 1998*, and the *U.P. Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 1998*.

The FIF applicable to case study schools was that entirely devised by the State. This is because all 10 schools were either already recognised or seeking recognition through the state boards of education, the Uttar Pradesh Board of Basic Education (UPBBE) or the UPBHSIE. According to officials and principals, case study schools were typical of other LFP schools in choosing state boards, for two reasons. The first was that being local with historically good reputations (particularly UPBHSIE), they were traditionally popular choices. However, high-fee schools tended to seek recognition through the ICSE or the CBSE because the language of instruction was primarily English, whereas in the two state boards it was Hindi. According to owners, this had a direct influence on the amount of fees that schools charged. Thus, LFP schools tended to seek recognition through state boards, in keeping with their market niche. The UPBBE was established in 1972 under the Basic Education Act, and the UPBHSIE in 1921 under the Intermediate Education Act. The main functions of both boards are outlined in Table 7.1.

Functions of the UPBBE as outlined in the Basic Education Act, 1972	Functions of the UPBHSIE as outlined in the Intermediate Education Act, 1921
“Section 4. Function of the Board.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act it shall be the function of the Board to organise, co-ordinate and control the imparting of basic education and teacher’s training therefor in the State, to raise its standard and to correlate it with the system of education as a whole in the State” (Jain, 2001, pp. 551-552). Section 4 (2) outlines the specific functions to: (a) prescribe courses of instruction and books for basic education and teacher training (b) conduct junior high school and basic training certificate exams and any other such exams the State Government may assign; and to grant diplomas and certificates to successful candidates of those exams (c) lay down by general or special orders, norms relating to the establishment of schools by the Village Education Committees (VEC) or Municipalities, and to superintend VECs, Gram Panchayats⁵ and Municipalities in instruction and the preparation of candidates for admission to	“Section 7. Power of the Board.—Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board shall have the following powers, namely” (Jain, 2001, p. 10) to: (1) prescribe courses of instructions, text books, other books and instructional material, if any, for the High School and Intermediate classes in such branches of education as it thinks fit (1-A) publish or manufacture all or any of such text books, other books or instructional material (2) grant diplomas or certificates to persons who: (a) have pursued a course of study in an institution admitted to the privileges of recognition (b) are teachers (c) have studied privately under conditions laid down in the regulations and have passed Board exams in like conditions (3) conduct exams at the end of high school and intermediate courses (4) recognise institutions for the purpose of

⁵ Gram and Zila Panchayats refer to bodies of local governance at the village and district levels.

Board exams (cc) take over the management of all basic schools which belonged to any local body (d) exercise supervision and control over basic schools, the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET), basic training certificate units, and the State Institute of Education (e) grant approval to schemes prepared by the VEC, Zila Panchayats or Municipalities for the development, expansion, improvement of, and research in basic education (f) acquire, hold, dispose of any property whether movable or immovable (g) receive grants, subventions, and loans from the State Government (g-1) subject to the general control of the State Government to issue directions not inconsistent with the Act to VECs, Gram Panchayats, Zila Panchayats or Municipalities (h) take steps necessary, convenient, or incidental to the exercise of any power or the discharge of any function or duty conferred or imposed on it by this Act	examinations (5) admit candidates to exams (6) demand and receive such fees as may be prescribed in the regulations (7) publish or withhold the publication of exam results wholly or in part (8) co-operate with other authorities in such manner and for such purposes as determined by the Board (9) call for reports from the Director⁶ on the conditions of recognised schools or of schools applying for recognition (10) submit its views on any matter with which it is concerned to the State Government (11) see the schedules of new demands proposed to be included in the budget relating to schools recognised by it and submit its views for the consideration of the State Government (12) do all such acts and things as may be requisite in order to further the objects of the Board as a body constituted for regulating and supervising high school and intermediate education

Table 7.1 Functions of the UPBBE and UPHSBIE as Delineated in the Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Act, 1972 and the Uttar Pradesh Intermediate Education Act, 1921

The differences in the functions and powers of both boards are noteworthy. While the functions of the UPBBE encompassed teacher training, control over basic educational matters in local governance bodies, and the syllabus for basic education, the UPBHSIE was more focused on matters relating to the conduct and regulation of examinations, recognition, and syllabus. Employment matters of teaching staff were not included in the purview of either board. In fact, a separate board was established for the selection of secondary teachers (including heads of inter-colleges) at recognised schools, largely through the involvement of government officials (discussed in Section 7.5.3).

There is a further caveat regarding the powers of the boards in principle, as outlined above and in practice, which can be extrapolated from subsequent sections of both acts and through interactions with officials. Despite the list of varied functions and powers of both boards, the ultimate power over institutional control

⁶ Director is defined in this Act as the Director of Education, Uttar Pradesh (Jain, 2001, p. 5).

rested with the State. The State was empowered to make new rules for the enactment of existing acts and rules, and through which both boards were required to seek prior approval for a variety of functions such as the hiring and service conditions of teaching staff, and for secondary schools, even the establishment of their internal governing bodies. This is explicit in Section 9 of the Intermediate Act conferring the right and near absolute power of the State Government regarding the establishment of rules and carrying out the provisions of the Act:

9. Power of State Government.—(1) The State Government *shall have the right to address the Board* with reference to any of the works conducted or done by the Board and to communicate to the Board its views on any matter with which the Board is concerned.
[...]

(3) If the Board does not, within a reasonable time, *take action to the satisfaction of the State Government*, the State Government may, after considering any explanation furnished or representation made by the Board, *issue such directions consistent with this Act as it may think fit, and the Board shall comply with such directions.*

(4) Whenever, in the opinion of the State Government, it is necessary or expedient to take immediate action, it may, *without making any reference to the Board* under the foregoing provisions, pass such order or to take such other action consistent with the provisions of this Act as it deems necessary, and in particular, may by such order *modify or rescind or make any regulation in respect of any matter and shall forthwith inform the Board accordingly.*

(5) *No action taken by the State Government under sub-section (4), shall be called into question* (emphases added) (Jain, 2001, pp. 18-19).

The role of the State with power over-riding the UPBHSIE's is starkly clear through Section 9. Sections 9 (4) and 9 (5) necessarily placed the Board at a subordinate position in relation to the State, despite other sections of the Act that conferred it power to carry out key duties (Section 7) and to make regulations on key administrative functions (Section 15). While the Basic Education Act was less explicit about the State's force over the UPBBE, nonetheless it exerted the State Government's control through Section 13 of the Act which states:

13. Control by the State Government.—(1) The Board shall carry out such directions as may be issued to it from time to time by the State Government for the efficient administration of this Act.

(2) If in, or in connection with, the exercise of any of its powers and discharge of any of the functions by the Board under this Act, any dispute arises between the Board and the State Government, or between the Board and any local body, *the decision of the State Government on such dispute shall be final and binding on the Board or the local body*, as the case may be.

(3) The Board or any local body *shall furnish to the State Government such reports, returns and other information*, as the State Government may from time to time require for the purposes of this Act (emphases added) (Jain, 2001, p. 560).

Placing the UPBBE in a reporting position to the authority of the State in Section 13 (3) and maintaining the State Government's decision as final and binding through Section 13 (2) in the case of dispute, highlights again that ultimate institutional control rested with the State. In effect, in such an institutional environment, the boards assumed the position of executors on behalf of the State with limited authority, while the State claimed and retained institutional control. Institutional control of basic education becomes even more blatant when examining Section 19, "Power to make rules", of the Basic Education Act which conferred power to the State Government to make rules for any of the following: (a) recruitment and conditions of service of staff; (b) tenure of service and remuneration of staff; (c) recruitment and conditions of service of *staff in recognised basic schools*; (d) any other matter for which insufficient provision exists; and (e) *any other matter which is to be or may be prescribed* (emphases added) (Jain, 2001, p. 563).

Similarly, while Section 15 of the Intermediate Act conferred power to make regulations regarding secondary schools to the UPBHSIE, the areas to which these powers extended were restricted to recognition conditions, conduct of examinations, the courses of study, and conferment of diplomas and certificates (Jain, 2001, pp. 28-29). Furthermore, as explained above, Section 9 of the Act assured that the State Government could intervene at any time and overturn the regulations if it was dissatisfied, giving it ultimate control over the institutional framework. However, the State's intent to maintain control and jurisdiction over educational matters went

hand-in-hand with offering the boards protection as its execution arms vis-à-vis third parties (presumably non-state, private individuals or organisations). This was enshrined in Section 15 of the Basic Education and Section 21 of the Intermediate Education Acts (with slight linguistic differences in the use of prepositions):

No suit, prosecution or other legal proceeding shall lie against the State Government or the Board or any of its Committees or any member of the Board or of a Committee or any other person in respect of anything which is in good faith⁷ done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rule⁸, order or direction made thereunder (Jain, 2001, p. 169).

This is further stressed in Sections 16 and 22, the ‘Bar of jurisdiction of courts’, of the Basic and Intermediate Education Acts respectively where it states: “No order or decision made by the Board or any of its Committees in exercise of the powers conferred by or made under this Act shall be called in question⁹ in any Court” (Jain, 2001, p. 169). The protection of both boards from private third parties and the State’s intent to retain power over the FIF in principle are overtly highlighted in the FIF. However, as further data will show, in practice case study schools (and the LFP sector) claimed some institutional control through a combination of the SIF and perverse incentives embedded within the FIF (detailed in Section 7.7), despite the State’s outward intent to control the institutional framework for private schools.

7.4 LFP Schools, the SIF, and Institutional Performance

Before detailing the FIF applicable to case study and other LFP schools, it is important to outline where the subsequent analysis of the SIF fits in relation to the

⁷ The Intermediate Education Act defines ‘good faith’ from Section 52 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 as: “Nothing is said to be done or believed in ‘good faith’ which is done or believed without due care and attention.” And further from Section 3 (22) of the General Clauses Act, 1897 as: “A thing shall be deemed to be done in ‘good faith’ whether it is done, in fact, honestly, whether it is done negligently or not” (Jain, 2001, p. 169). The Intermediate Act states that the essential ingredient for ‘good faith’ is honesty of purpose.

⁸ The word ‘rule’ has been omitted in Section 15 of the Basic Education Act. This is probably because a set of rules corresponding to this Act did not exist. Government orders assume importance in carrying out provisions of the Act.

⁹ The words ‘in question’ have been omitted in Section 16 of the Basic Education Act.

notion of 'performance'. The institutional-level analysis was concerned with institutional control, in particular the minimisation of transaction costs and reduction of information asymmetries, both related to NIE. Thus, the inquiry ascertained how the FIF was mediated and interpreted by organisational actors (i.e. case study school owners/principals), whether it was evenly applied to LFP and case study schools by institutional actors, and how case study schools operated to extract maximum institutional benefit for 'good performance'.

In most educational analyses, performance is equated to school rankings on standardised testing measures (e.g. league table rankings in the UK; *No Child Left Behind* initiatives in the USA). Thus, one of the prime objectives for schools operating in such an institutional climate, particularly if funding is related to rankings (as in *No Child Left Behind*), is to increase their performance in high-stakes testing systems. In fact, McMeekin's (2003a; 2003b) analysis of what constitutes a 'good' institutional environment is on which "within-school" institutions enable better performance in such a result-oriented conception. However, results indicate that the notion of performance for LFP schools is different.

To analyse LFP schools' performance, the conception of 'good performance' must be reassessed from their perspective and from the new institutional paradigm. 'Good performance' from the perspective of LFP case study schools' was tied more closely to their ability to manoeuvre the FIF for smooth functioning and institutional benefit, rather than to obtain high results. While the concept may be jarring at first, since most educational theories propose a different notion of school performance, it provides a foundational concept to understanding how case study and other LFP schools, despite being owned by independent owners, formed part of a distinct sub-sector within the greater private sector rather than as a set of fragmented schools. It

build's on NIE's notion of operating around the incentives that are rewarded in the institutional framework for gaining legitimacy.

This shift in the notion of performance itself lies in the greater institutional environment surrounding the positioning of LFP schools in the educational arena. LFP schools (like other PUA schools) are entirely independent of state funding. In addition, their focus was on a clientele generally more concerned with financial matters rather than results attainment (beyond a certain level deemed 'satisfactory'). Thus, in the absence of any central results-based monitoring system or financial ties to the State, there were no external incentives for these schools to conceive of 'performance' in terms of very high results achievement.

Secondly, perhaps the more compelling reason to reassess notions of performance regarding LFP schools is the nature of their rival competitors or state schools. As individual and organisational-level data stressed (Chapters 5 and 6), due to certain perceived malfunctions and negative household experiences of the state sector, it was generally thought to be a lower quality provider than the LFP sector. As a simple example from the data, an LFP school where teachers were present and required to teach everyday as opposed to a state school where, in practice, there was no such requirement, was bound to be perceived of higher quality. Therefore, as long as the state sector is comparatively perceived to be of inferior quality, the LFP sector has an in-built institutional advantage over its main competitor regarding results-based notions of performance. Thus, the current institutional environment favours LFP schools in practice—from a Northian view, they are more likely to thrive.

This is not to say that results-based performance was of no concern to case study schools. Their reputations were partly assessed on such indicators (i.e. board exam results and pass rates) by parents. The issue however, was one of balance. Case study owners/principals had to show that their school produced a certain proportion

of children who obtained satisfactory results in order to raise their competitiveness in local school markets and attract and maintain clients. But given the extremely vested personal interests that owners/principals had in their LFP schools, they had to more fundamentally, ensure that their schools could function in and around the FIF for their very existence.

Linking back to a new institutional analysis, the primary task of LFP school organisations was to maximise their interest in gaining institutional benefit in order to ‘win the game’, as structured by the formal rules or institutions. From the perspective of case study schools, ‘good institutional performance’—their chief concern with ‘how to win the game’—*was their ability to function within or around the FIF to ensure their maximum benefit, i.e. their maximum potential to survive, profit, attract, and maintain clients and, minimise transaction costs.* This was critical, as the discussion on the intent to control the FIF indicated and the detailed nature of the SIF will show, transaction costs were otherwise very high. Results show that case study schools, in line with other LFP schools, relied on the SIF, which bound them together as a distinct sector within the greater private sector and allowed them to pursue good institutional performance.

7.5 The FIF in Key Areas

Analysis revealed the key areas for case study schools’ institutional performance as: recognition, examination, and employment conditions. The FIF applicable to LFP (hence, case study schools) in each area is examined below.

7.5.1 FIF for Recognition

The FIF for recognition applicable to LFP schools was that devised for ‘recognised schools’, the various definitions of which are summarised in Table 7.2. While ‘recognised schools’ was defined for basic and secondary schools, ‘recognition’

was only defined for high schools and inter-colleges. Section 2 of the Intermediate Education Act defined recognition as: “recognition for the purpose of preparing candidates for admission to the [UPBHSIE] Board’s Examinations” (Jain, 2001, p. 5).

Definition of Recognised Schools	Relevant Act or Rules	Comments
...any Junior Basic School, not being an institution ¹⁰ belonging to or wholly maintained by the Board or any local body, recognised by the Board before the commencement of these rules imparting education from Classes I to V (Jain, 2001, p. 583)	<i>The Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers and other Conditions) Rules, 1975</i>	Local body is defined in the Basic Education Act as the “Zila Panchayat or Municipality or Notified Area Committee” all of which are local forms of governance Reference to the Board: UPBBE
...any Junior High School not being an institution belonging to or wholly maintained by the Board or any local body recognised by the Board as such (Jain, 2001, p. 587)	<i>The Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Junior High Schools) (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers) Rules, 1978</i>	Junior High Schools is defined in the same set of rules as “an institution other than High school or Intermediate College imparting education to boys or girls or both, from Classes VI to VIII (inclusive) Reference to the Board: UPBBE
“Institution” means a recognised Intermediate College, Higher Secondary School or High School, and includes where the context so requires, a part of an institution (Jain, 2001, p. 5)	<i>The Uttar Pradesh Intermediate Education Act, 1921</i>	

Table 7.2 Definitions of ‘Recognised Schools’ as Defined in Relevant Acts or Rules

There was a difference in terminology for the definitions of recognised basic schools and recognised high schools and inter-colleges. While the focus on the former was recognition to impart formal instruction at the elementary levels, the focus on the latter was on a school’s ability to prepare students for the UPBHSIE exams. This fundamental difference in the purpose of recognition at both levels seems to reflect the State’s view of the aim of schooling at basic and secondary levels related to the prime function of each board. As explained in Synopsis 2, Section 15 of the Intermediate Education Act: “The object of the [UPBHSIE] Board is described as regulating and supervising High School and Intermediate Examination. Object of the [Intermediate Education] Act is for maintaining [the] purity of examination and

¹⁰ ‘Institution’ throughout the Acts refer different school types which would be considered organisations in the NIE theoretical framework used for analysis and throughout the thesis. Due to an inability to change the official wording presented in the table it has merely been reproduced here.

preserving the standard of examination...” (Jain, 2001, pp. 29-30). On the other hand, the UPBBE was designed to regulate compulsory basic education (building on the Primary Education Acts of 1919 and 1926), with the inherent aim of mass schooling, which has intensified in the context of UEE and EFA goals. Therefore, the focus on tighter regulation around the recognition of secondary schools and the preservation or attempt to guarantee some level of schooling and examination standards assumes prime importance in secondary education.

Before a school could apply for recognition, it had to be registered and operated through a registered society consistent with the *Societies Registration Act, 1860* and the *U.P. Societies Registration Rules, 1976*. The Registration Act states that the society must be formed through “any seven or more persons associated for any literary, scientific, or charitable purpose, or for any such purpose as is described in Section 20 of this Act¹¹” (Section 1, Jain, 2001, p. 1519). The rationale behind this was to stop private schools from being operated by an individual owner as a profit-making enterprise. Once the society was registered it was to function in accordance with its by-laws and the Societies Registration Act and Rules. The registration, once granted, was renewable every five years, at which point a ‘renewal certificate of registration’ was granted, required at the time that a school sought recognition.

Four types of recognition could be sought (one for each instruction level), thus there were four sets of institutions for recognition. Any school seeking recognition was to complete the corresponding application form reporting on all the particulars regarding the norms for the category of recognition sought. The form had to be submitted for inspection either to the DEO for basic schools or the DIOS for secondary schools, which was to be followed by an on-site enquiry. Upon completion

¹¹ Section 20 elaborates on the types of activities that can be taken up by a society including: “the diffusion of useful knowledge”, maintenance of libraries and museums, and art galleries among others (Jain, pp. 1529-1530).

of the enquiry, the DEO or DIOS were to make initial recommendations to respective recognition committees, which either accepted or rejected the application for recognition to the UPBBE or UPBSHIE boards. Recognition for basic and secondary schools was supposed to be granted through their respective recognition committees, which included members entirely composed of officials at various state and district departments. The only exception was for high school and inter-colleges where teachers from some state or non-state maintained colleges and schools and certain “persons connected with education” were included, indicating the State’s concern with maintaining its control over private education.

While in principle, the time-frame for conducting the primary school inspections was 15 days, in practice inspecting officers revealed that this was often impossible given workload. Despite the requisite two month period for junior school inspections, the latest government order at the time of data collection stated that a school fulfilling all requirements would be granted recognition within a month. While the timeframe for granting recognition to secondary schools was not specified in official documents, officers claimed that it could take between four to six months. In principle, each school type should have fulfilled the set of recognition conditions prior to getting recognition from either board. Table 7.3 presents a compilation of the recognition conditions for primary and junior schools.

Conditions for Recognition	Primary School	Junior School
Minimum Enrolment	75	45
Minimum Financial Resources	Security fund: Rs. 1000 Endowment fund: Rs. 5000	Security fund: Rs. 2000 Endowment fund: Rs. 10,000
Tuition Fee	Maximum of Rs. 15 and no other tuition, administration, or other fee allowed	As prescribed by the government: At the time of data collection government officials and principals claimed that it was the same as primary schools (Rs. 15)
Minimum Qualifications of Teaching Staff	Trained teacher with a B.T.C. or other valid training certificate	UPBHSIE pass with teacher’s training such as a Junior Teaching Certificate (J.T.C), B.T.C. or other valid teachers’ training certificate
Salary	Consistent with state teachers and (or the Minimum Wages Act) (for Support staff)	Consistent with state teachers and (or the Minimum Wages Act) (for Support staff)

Number of Required Teachers	5 (including Head Master/Mistress)	4 + 1 Head Master/Mistress
Support Staff	N/A	2
Appointment of Teachers	With the previous approval through the DEO in writing. Consistent with the advertisement, application, and selection procedures in 1975 Act	Through the appropriate Selection Committee formed in the 1978 Rules with representatives of the DEO and consistent with the advertisement, application, and selection procedures. No one who is related to any member of the management shall be appointed as teacher or head.
Language of Instruction	Hindi	Hindi
Number of Classrooms	Minimum classrooms 5 + 1 Office for the head	Minimum number of classrooms: 3 + 1 office for the head <i>Category A:</i> every room should be 25 X 20 feet <i>Category B:</i> Minimum of one <i>pakka</i> room which to be used as the science room
Other Facilities	Prayer area; playground; toilets; drinking water; library	Playground; toilets; storage room; teachers' room; science room; prayer area; drinking water; library
Equipment	Adequate seating; equipment for toys and recreation; books; teaching materials	Seating as per enrolment; books worth Rs. 5000; science equipment worth Rs. 5000; an acre land for agriculture and Rs. 500 worth books and equipment for agriculture
Registration	Through a registered society (with a valid certificate of renewal if applicable)	Through a registered society (with a valid certificate of renewal if applicable)
Building Ownership	Owned by the society and registered to the school; if rented an affidavit confirming a minimum 10-year lease	Land or building owned by the society and registered to the school
Textbooks	Prescribed by UPBBE	Prescribed by UPBBE

Table 7.3 UPBBE Recognition Conditions for Primary and Junior Schools

Note. Sources for data are from DO-1/LkoDis; DO-2/LkoDis; DO-6/UP; DO-7/Lko; DO-10/UP; and the 1975 and 1978 Rules for Recognised Schools (Jain, 2001, pp. 583-605).

A provision for temporary recognition of primary and junior schools existed if they did not fulfil all conditions at the time of initial application. In fact, officials explained that most schools were not in a position to apply for permanent recognition, so temporary recognition was granted to them as a matter of practice in the first instance. Primary schools could be granted temporary recognition for three years, extendable for a further two, during which time the school was to fulfil remaining conditions. State officials claimed that primary schools were generally given the following allowances: three trained teachers instead of five; a rented instead of owned building; three classrooms instead of five; and flexibility on the provision

of facilities such as a library, toilets, and staff and/or head's room. Even though some recognised case study schools did not fulfil even temporary conditions. Additionally, junior schools seeking recognition had to establish need in the area. Need was established by demonstrating that there was no state junior school for a population of 1000, or that the existing one was over-subscribed (i.e. more than 100 students). However, given the large number of LFP schools in small concentrations (especially in the city) indicated that this was often overlooked.

Junior schools could submit their application for one of two categories: permanent (previously known as Category A) and temporary (previously known as Category B) if they fulfilled the conditions presented above. Unlike the limited temporary recognition period for primary schools, temporary recognition for junior schools was valid until all the conditions for permanent recognition were met. In principle, temporary and permanent recognition conditions for junior schools differed only in the numbers and dimensions of classrooms. In practice, however, temporary and permanent recognition were given to schools that did not fulfil all required conditions (evidenced also in case study school data in Chapter 6). Basic schools applying for either category also had to comply with restrictions on establishing new sections, and stopping existing classes or sections without permission from the DEO, although in practice officials and principals explained that new sections and classes were established as need arose.

Some conditions for secondary schools were amended during the data collection period in September 2002 (DO-11/UP). However, since the FIF applicable to case study schools was outlined the previous school year (2001-2002) or earlier, the rules and norms prescribed in the *Regulations Under the Intermediate Education Act* (latest amendments of 2000) and the Intermediate Education Act form the basis of the analysis presented. The “grant of recognition” for high schools and inter-

colleges was “...for the purposes of [the UPBHSIE] Board’s Examination for the first time or for grant of recognition subsequently in any additional group or subject of such examination” (Jain, 2001, p. 404). Section 3 of the Intermediate Education Act stated that a high school or inter-college could apply for the three recognition types¹² in Table 7.4.

Recognition Types for High Schools and Inter-colleges	Application Fee
First-time recognition for the High School or Intermediate Examination	Rs. 1500
Recognition for any additional group of subjects for the High School or Intermediate Examination The group of subjects stated are for the intermediate exams, e.g.: literary, science (2 groups), commerce (3 groups), creative, fine arts, and agriculture	Rs. 1000
Recognition for any additional subject for the High School or Intermediate Examination	Rs. 200 per subject, minimum of Rs. 500

Table 7.4 Recognition Types for High Schools and Inter-Colleges

Note. Source: Chapter VII (last applicable amendment of 2000) of the *Regulations under the Intermediate Education Act* (Jain, 2001, p. 407)

A high school or inter-college applying for recognition for the first time should have done so under the first recognition type. It could subsequently apply for the remaining two types. Unlike basic schools, there was no temporary provision for high schools or inter-colleges. Nonetheless, in practice some principals and officials revealed that given the school particulars and the extent to which conditions were fulfilled, they could be offered a grace period of around two years (as in the case of Taj Nagar) in which time the school had to fulfil remaining conditions through “recognition under special circumstances” (GO5-1, Recog/St, pp. 16-17) through the State Government. Prescribed recognition norms for high schools and inter-colleges are summarised in Table 7.5 below.

¹² These were changed in the 2002 amended rules to four types of recognition: (1) recognition for high school or intermediate exams for the first time (Rs. 10,000); (2) recognition for an additional group of subjects for the intermediate exam (Rs. 5000); (3) one-time recognition for the intermediate exam (Rs. 10,000 per group); and (4) recognition for any additional subject for the intermediate exam (Rs. 2500 per subject with a minimum of Rs. 5000) (DO-11/UP, p. 2).

Prescribed Norms for Recognition	Details
<i>Building: all rooms should be pakka and per specifications</i>	8 X 6 m or 48 sq. m.
	Special circumstances: (a) 41 sq. m. for areas in hilly or under-developed areas; girls' schools (b) 36 sq. m. for schools with 50% SC/ST population
	Minimum required space is 36 sq. m. for schools in (a) conditions and 32 sq. m. for schools in (b)
	High schools: 1 room for optional subjects (6 X 3 m)
	2 administrative rooms: (4 X 3 m)
	Lab for each subject where required for High School Science or Home Science One for each practical Intermediate subject and for Home Science a lab (9 X 6 m)
	One common room for Music, Dance, and Art (6 X 5 m)
<i>Playground: all schools for new recognition must have proper arrangements for physical exercise and sports at the school or nearby</i>	
<i>Requirements Specific to New High Schools Seeking Recognition</i>	(1) No relaxations to be made in the 'administrative plan' or pledged reserve fund
	Endowment fund: Rs. 15,000 Security fund: Rs. 3000
	(2) Proper arrangements for the following: (a) Wooden equipments (b) Library comprising books supporting text books (c) Necessary teaching materials (d) Necessary equipments for the teaching of Commerce, Agriculture, and Stitching
<i>Requirements Specific to New Inter-colleges Seeking Recognition</i>	(3) Number of students: The required number of students from nearby junior schools should be made available for admission in Class 9
	(1) Terms of the 'administrative plan' and pledged reserve fund should be complied with Endowment fund: Rs. 5000 in addition to the amount for high school Security fund: Rs. Rs. 2000 in addition to the amount for high school
	(2) The required number of students should be considered (3) The average result of the last two years' of high school exams cannot be less than 40% and the total average result of the school including all categories (bases on all admitted students and the proportion of successful students among them) cannot

	be less than 40%.
	(4) Proper arrangements for the following: (a) Wooden equipment (b) Library comprising books supporting text books (c) Necessary teaching materials (d) Means and equipment for subjects of practical work
	<i>Intermediate Science Group</i> (i) In addition to the high school lab separate and full arrangements for practical subjects (ii) Required mechanical instruments in addition to those for high school
	<i>Intermediate Craft Group</i> The minimum teaching instruments for each lab
	<i>Intermediate Home Science</i> A lab of 9 X 6 m (in special circumstances 9 X 5 m)
	<i>Intermediate Agriculture</i> 1. Labs of 9 X 6 m (if there is no recognition of the following subjects under the Science Group): Physics; Chemistry; Biology 2. Agriculture class room (7.2 X 6 m) 3. Agricultural equipment, scientific material, and mechanical appliances 4. Wooden equipment 5. Animal House 6. At least 1 acre of fertile, cultivable land with irrigation facilities

Table 7.5 UPBHSIE Norms for Recognition of High Schools and Inter-Colleges

Note. Source: Chapter VII (last applicable amendment of 2000) of the *Regulations under the Intermediate Education Act* (Jain, 2001, pp. 412-414).

In addition to the conditions above, high schools and inter-colleges were to comply with teacher qualifications, salary, and recruitment procedures as stated in Appendix A of the Intermediate Education Act Regulations, the *Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education [Services Selection Board] Act, 1982*, the *Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Services Selection Board Rules, 1998*, and any government orders. Finally, the required compliance of recognised private schools to the FIF was clearly stated in the Basic Education Act, the 1975 Rules, and the Intermediate Education Act and Regulations with provisions outlining procedures for withdrawing recognition. While Rule 13 of the 1975 Rules stressed the duty of recognised basic schools to comply with recognition conditions, Section 12 of the Basic Education Act stated:

(3) If the management of a basic school fails to comply with any direction made under sub-section (2)¹³ the Director may, after considering the explanation or representation, if any, given or made by the management, refer the case to the Board for withdrawal of recognition of such school

(4) On receipt of a recommendation under sub-section (3) in respect of any basic school, the Board may withdraw the recognition of that school (Jain, 2001, pp. 560).

Similarly, for high schools and inter-colleges Section 16-D of the Intermediate Education Act empowered the Director of Education to refer a school to the UPBHSIE for withdrawal, and provided 30 days in which the management was to show why a withdrawal order should not be made. Grounds for a recommendation of withdrawal included, but were not limited to: failure to obey the directions of the Act or Regulations; failure to appoint appropriately trained teaching staff; failure to adequately equip, furnish, and provide required buildings; misappropriation of property; and failure to supply an adequate 'Scheme of Administration' (see Section 7.5.3) within the required timeframe. Upon direction of a withdrawal order, Section 12 of the Act states:

No order made by the Board withdrawing recognition...and no order made or direction given under this section by the Director or the State Government shall be called in question in any court, and no injunctions shall be granted by any court in respect of any action taken or to be taken in pursuance of any power conferred by or under this section (Jain, 2001, p. 95).

Therefore, the rules governing withdrawal assumed finality, particularly for secondary schools, and ultimate power rested with the Board and the State. Case study owners/principals reported instances of LFP schools whose recognition had been withdrawn, in addition to incidents in local newspapers. However, one owner claimed that LFP schools and an association for private schools lobbied for some cases to be overturned, despite what is stated in Section 16-D of the Act above.

¹³ Referring to the inspection process led by the Director of Education and the duty of all basic schools to 'remove any defect or deficiency found on inspection or otherwise' (Jain, 2001, p. 559).

7.5.2 Examinations

Interestingly, the acts and regulations governing basic education did not comprise the conduct of examinations. Principals and officials explained that basic school examinations for recognised schools were to be conducted as ‘home exams’, a system whereby each school devised and administered its own exam. The school then submitted exam results indicating the number of students enrolled, the number that appeared, percentage of passes, and average class results to the DEO Office. An officer of a private schools’ association claimed that it lobbied the government to allow private schools to conduct home exams after numerous cases of leaked state question papers and the use of unfair means. He further claimed that the association was granted permission to devise question papers, conduct exams, and provide on-site inspection to all schools of its membership (GO3-1, FIF/St, pp. 10-11). While this was confirmed by some case study schools that were members of the association, it was not possible to obtain confirmation by state officials.

On the other hand, one of the UPBHSIE’s main purposes for secondary education was to conduct and regulate the delivery of the High School and Intermediate Examinations. Traditionally the High School Board Exam was conducted at the end of Grade 10 and the Intermediate Board Exam at the end of Grade 12. Grade 9 high school and Grade 11 intermediate exams were conducted as home exams. However, in the past they were centrally administered and conducted. The Board was empowered to set regulations for: conditions under which candidates would be admitted to the Board and eligible for diplomas and certificates; exam admission fees; conduct of exams; and appointment of examiners (Jain, 2001, p. 28).

Additionally, teachers and individual management members at recognised private schools were compelled to provide assistance as invigilators or other related capacities, if directed by the Board or the State. Non-compliance could result in the

requisitioning of a school's facilities by the Director for the purposes of carrying out administrative functions related to the evaluation or conduct of Board Exams (Jain, 2001, p. 137). An elected Examinations Committee of the UPHSBIE was to oversee exam-related matters such as: dates for holding exams, the recommendation of policy regarding exam centres, recommendations for punishments to examiners found guilty of misconduct, and the awarding of grace marks (Jain, 2001, pp. 387-389). Thus, even recognised PUA schools were obliged to act as administering arms of the State concerning Board exams (as Taj Nagar and School E reportedly did).

Given unrecognised case study schools' concern with enabling their students to take Board exams (to increase their legitimacy and competitiveness), the eligibility of candidates assumes importance. In order for students to appear in the High School and Intermediate Examinations as "regular students", they must have registered for the exams during admission to grades 9 and 11 at their school, with a fee of Rs. 10 (to be deposited in a government account by the head). Completed registration forms were to be forwarded to the DIOS, who was to submit them to the Board for scrutiny. The student must have been present for 75% of the lectures (Jain, 2001, p. 443), and students who twice failed as regular candidates were not to be allowed admission in another secondary school (Jain, 2001, p. 442), which was clearly not followed by case study schools. In principle, a student could only take the High School or Intermediate Exam through this process:

Those regular candidates should be considered eligible to appear in the Examination for Classes 10 and 12 who have obtained their registration in Classes 9 and 11, as far as possible, in the related institution. The *forms of non-registered candidates should not be forwarded at any cost by the Head of the Institution* (emphasis added) (Jain, 2001, p. 441).

The emphasis on permitting only candidates who were registered the previous year is clear in the regulation above, however, data indicated (Section 7.6.2c) that this prompted case study schools to devise institutions in the SIF to enable their

students to take exams. Their focus was the rule for eligibility as a “private candidate” or “private examinee”: “a person who wants to appear in an examination without required attendance for which regular attendance in a recognised institution has been fixed” (Jain, 2001, p. 372), or “persons intending to be admitted to examinations without the required and decided attendance in an institution recognised by the Board” (Jain, 2001, p. 445).

Private candidates were to obtain a form from the DIOS Office and forward it to the Board Secretary through a school declared a “registering centre” for exams. In addition, they were to forward the appropriate exam fees (see Table 7.6), a copy of evidence of success in the High School Board Exams (for private intermediate candidates) or other eligible examinations, and an original copy of the students’ register at the last school attended. The Board offered a ‘reward’ of Rs. 5/examinee to forwarding officers for their timeliness and scrutiny and, foreshadowing what some of the data actually revealed, warned that the: “Forwarding officer shall not take any kind of forwarding fees in cash from the examinee. No fees, subscription or gift other than the fees prescribed by the Board will be taken from the examinees” (Jain, 2001, p. 447). How case study schools mediated the FIF for exams in practice through the SIF is presented in Section 7.6.2c.

<i>Prescribed Fee</i>	<i>Amount in Rs.</i>	
	<i>Regular Candidate</i>	<i>Private Candidate</i>
High School Examination	150	500
Intermediate Examination	300	600
For duplicate copy of Admit Card ¹⁴	2	2
For issuance of the Migration Certificate ¹⁵	N/A	20
For forwarding applications of private candidates	N/A	5
Late fees: if submits application to registration centre after the due date but by the latest date of August 31	N/A	25

Table 7.6 Prescribed Exam Fees Applicable to Case Study Schools

¹⁴ An identification card for allowing students to enter the exam centre and appear for the exam.

¹⁵ Is given only to private candidates certifying that they passed the High School or Intermediate Examination. The Board states no objection admission to any recognised inter-college or university. Regular candidates are issued TCs from the school in which the examinee studied, counter-signed by the DIOS.

Furthermore, the *U.P. Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 1998*, was drafted to “prevent the leakage of question papers and the use of unfair means at public examinations” (Jain, 2001, p. 1609). The prevention of leakage of papers applied to students as well as those entrusted with the exam conduct, pointing to the existence of perverse incentives within the examinations system itself. In fact, the leakage penalty for those responsible with overseeing the conduct of examinations as stated in Section 10 of the 1998 Act was quite severe: “imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine which may extend to five thousand rupees or...both” (Jain, 2001, p. 1612). The punishment for examinees committing the same offence was imprisonment for a term up to three months and a fine up to Rs. 2000 or both (Jain, 2001, p. 1611).

The existence of perverse incentives regarding examinations was made further clear by the extremely detailed accounts of “bungling” in the examination process, which are expressly outlined and forewarned in Regs. 52-54 of Ch. III of the Intermediate Regulations stating that action would be taken if an employee (including teacher or head):

...has published (disclosed), directly or indirectly, before the time fixed of the question paper in public examination or assisted, directly or indirectly, the examinee/examinees in copying in the Board's examinations or destroys the related illegal means of the issues-in-question for use of unfair means or has suppressed the issues-in-question or has caused hindrance in the inspection work...of the Education [D]epartment and district administration...or has intentionally caused the disappearance of answer books from the evaluation/compilation centre or has committed any type of bungling in the answer books or has been found guilty of committing irregularities or carelessness in the conduct of examinations, etc. (Jain, 2001, pp. 350-351).

In fact, during and immediately following the data collection period there were numerous press reports of alleged misconduct by those in charge of conducting the exam process and of DIOS enquiries into the matter. The existence of perverse incentives seemed embedded or at least over-riding the FIF (Section 7.7), which

provided a plausible explanation behind these occurrences. In fact, one case study principal confided in partaking in some ‘bungling’ to test whether or not perverse incentives existed regarding exam ranks and school results¹⁶:

1. I want to tell you something... you may laugh a little bit... we did something wrong too. [...] So we got our teachers to sit here all night and write the answers [to the exams posing as students]. And then we sent those answer books to the Board. But those individuals [school-owners] with power/influence, those who give money to get their work done... [pause] Our teachers sat here all night and wrote...but their answers were ranked last. This is wrong. I mean we shouldn't have done that, but what could we do, we were helpless so we did it.

You did that to see what would happen?

Yeah, let's see what's going to happen. So what happened was that our kids passed with First Division, but that's all they got. They didn't pass with merit (GO3-1, Exams, Sch, p.4).

7.5.3 Employment and Management

The State's attempt at exacting control (either directly or through boards) over recognised schools becomes more apparent in the rules for the appointment of their teaching staff and internal management committees. In principle, the appointment of teaching staff at recognised basic schools was governed by the *Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers and Other Conditions) Rules, 1975* and the *Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Junior High Schools) (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers) Rules, 1978*. The appointment and conditions of service rules for teachers provided relatively more freedom to the management of primary schools compared to junior schools. This is not to say that, in principle, the choice of teaching staff was completely the school's to make. Rules 9 through 12 governed their appointment, salary, and dismissal procedures. Highlighting the role of the State in appointments, Rule 9 makes clear that:

No person shall be appointed as teacher or other employee in any recognised school unless he possesses such qualifications as are specified in this behalf by the Board and for whose appointment the

¹⁶ Original Hindi quotes are presented in Appendix 4.

previous approval of the Basic Shiksha Adhikari [DEO] has been obtained in writing (Jain, 2001, p. 584).

Officials clarified that the appropriate qualification for a primary teacher was a B.T.C., or in certain cases a B.Ed. Rule 9 further underlined that untrained teachers should not be appointed. Furthermore, it laid out the recruitment procedure by stating that a vacancy notice should be given in at least two newspapers giving potential applicants at least 30 days for submitting an application. Rule 11 maintained that any order to dismiss or remove a teacher could only be passed with the DEO's prior approval in writing. In such cases, any teacher aggrieved with the DEO's decision could appeal to the Board, whose decision would be final. While under the 1975 Rules private managements of primary schools were permitted to interview and select appropriate candidates, the fact that the DEO had the final authority in approving the appointment or acting on dismissal ensured State control in principle.

The 1978 Rules regarding junior schools were more explicit and covered many more areas than those for primary schools, signifying a greater degree of State control sought at this level. In addition to the expected rules regarding recruitment procedures, appointment, termination, and leave, they also included: timelines for advertising and filling vacancies; a detailed list of minimum qualifications; conditions for the eligibility of appointment and disqualification; minimum age requirements; and the constitution of a Selection Committee for appointment of teachers and heads. While some of the conditions were patterned on state teachers' service rules, perhaps the most surprising differences were in the required qualifications for teachers and heads.

Whereas the minimum qualifications for a teacher at a recognised junior school were the UPHSBIE Intermediate Examination and a recognised teacher-training course (such as the B.T.C.), state junior school teachers required a bachelor's

degree in addition to the teacher-training qualification. There was no mention of required previous experience for recognised school teachers, while the amount was three years for their state counterparts. Additionally, while the head's post in state junior schools was on promotion with a minimum of five years' teaching experience in addition to the above qualifications, minimum qualifications in recognised schools were equivalent only to the teachers' qualifications in a state school.

This is unexpected because it was assumed that hiring conditions for recognised schools would be at least equivalent to state schools if not tougher. It could be seen as an attempt to relax norms for recognised schools to allow the sector to thrive and relieve the burden of the state; or it could be seen cynically as a way to promote lower quality in private schooling by maintaining higher teacher standards in the state sector (GO3-1, unofficial interview).

While in principle Rule 6 on disqualification in junior schools stated that no one related to any member of the management could be appointed as a head or teacher¹⁷, in practice (evident from data in Chapter 6) case study schools similar to other LFP schools openly flouted this. Rule 28 of the *Uttar Pradesh Basic Education (Teachers) Service Rules, 1981*, was similar in spirit with its intent to prevent 'canvassing' of applications, perhaps again pointing to the existence of perverse incentives in the FIF governing appointments:

No recommendation, either written or oral, other than those required under these rules shall be taken into consideration. Any attempt on the part of a candidate to enlist support directly or indirectly for his candidature shall disqualify him from appointment (Jain, 2001, p. 582).

The prevalence of the State's desire to maintain control in private schooling was also apparent on the insistence on constituting a selection committee (see Table 7.7) for appointing heads and teachers. This in itself is not enough to show

¹⁷ There was a long list of relatives from parents, children, and in-laws, to cousins and spouses of close kin (Jain, 2001, p. 589).

intended control of the State as members from the school constituted a majority. Intended control becomes more apparent when the selection committee is taken in tandem with Rule 10 giving the DEO final approval of the committee’s recommendations to validate appointments.

Selection Committee for Heads	Selection Committee for Teachers
Manager of the School	Manager of the School
Nominee of the DEO	Head of the School
Nominee of the Management	Nominee of the DEO

Table 7.7 Constitution of the Selection Committees for Appointment

Note. Source: Rule 9 of the 1978 Rules (Jain, 2001, p. 590)

The citation of a case in 1999 between a junior school and a DEO showed that the DEO “has no power to reject the recommendation of the Selection Committee. He [or she] can [simply] return the papers for reconsideration” (Jain, 2001, p. 592), but the intent to exert some control was nonetheless there. In fact, in principle, the management or governing body of the school had little say in the selection procedure. It was limited to committee representation, reducing its role to forwarding the committee’s recommendations to the DEO and merely offering appointment to approved candidates. Therefore, the issue of State control may not be one resulting in absolute control regarding the recruitment and appointment practices of junior schools, but of intent (discussed further below).

The recruitment of high school and intermediate teachers and heads at recognised schools was previously governed by the Intermediate Act. However, the state’s Secondary Education Services Selection Board (SES) was established in 1982 through *The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education [Services Selection Board] Act, 1982*, and the selection of all teaching staff at recognised secondary schools should have been conducted under the 1982 Act and its corresponding 1998 Rules. Once again, it appears that the intended effect of the SES Board was to reclaim State control by

centralising selection at the state level for principals and heads, and at the regional level for teachers (Jain, 2001, p. 674).

The intent to reclaim control was indicated in the composition of the SES Board's 10 members and one chair, all of whom were appointed by the State Government for a four-year term. The State Government had considerable leeway in appointing members who "in its opinion" met certain inexplicit criteria. Furthermore, teachers at recognised schools were the least represented. The role of the recognised school's management was non-existent in the actual selection of a candidate. Thus, in principle, most recruitment processes for recognised private schools were to be undertaken by the SES Board and not the concerned school.

The Board was responsible for advertising vacancies and selecting suitable candidates. In principle, the powers accorded to the SES Board confined the management of recognised schools to determining and notifying the Board of the likely number of vacancies and simply offering positions to candidates selected by the SES Board. Even a post to be filled by promotion, was supposed to go through a regional-level selection committee constituted by the Board. In principle, the only provision for management to fill vacancies was on an *ad hoc* basis by promoting the senior-most candidate if a position was vacant for more than two months.

Even though case study secondary schools reported that they took hiring decisions themselves, the SES Act stated that any appointment made in contravention to it shall be void (Jain, 2001, p. 684). The State could have imposed a maximum sentence of three years' imprisonment, a Rs. 5000 fine, or both, to the school's society for the open practice of on-site hiring. In principle, such sections of the SES Act were intended to seek compliance from private managements in hiring teaching staff and restricting their accountability, in order to maximise 'fairness' in recruiting teachers according to the objectives of the Act. However, as the data

indicate, case study schools employed the SIF and took advantage of perverse incentives within the FIF to hire teaching staff as they wished.

The concept of intent (falling under socially normative or cognitive structures in institutional analysis) when considering State control may be useful when considering the FIF governing recognised schools, given that organisational and institutional-level data show that what happened in practice was quite different to the formal rules. In line with other LFP schools, case study schools' interactions with the FIF were governed by the SIF and *with the knowledge of state actors* (see Section 7.7). One could make the argument that if the FIF was set out to claim absolute control by the State, the SIF would not be allowed to operate. Or alternatively, the FIF would be restructured in response to the SIF granting the State even greater powers.

Of course, the existence of perverse incentives may explain why the SIF continued to operate. Perverse incentives notwithstanding, if the intent to control the private sector was related to the State's general mistrust of private management in addition to gaining legitimacy by seeming to uphold certain standards, then framing the FIF that way seems sensible. From this perspective, the State's interference was instituted in the FIF with the *outward* intent to oversee educational matters too important to trust private management with. The degree of this outward intent increased along the spectrum from primary schools to inter-colleges, according to the perceived increase in importance of related educational matters. In other words, it could be that greater degrees of control were outwardly sought at higher levels of schooling because the focus on mass expansion decreased (e.g. a focus on UEE only, in line with international agendas), and that of increased achievement targets increased (e.g. stricter standards; competition in the international labour market).

The issue of increasing control and mistrust assumes prime importance when institutions governing recruitment and internal management structures for high

schools and inter-colleges are examined. “Management” for junior schools was defined as “the managing committee or other body managing the affairs of that school and is recognised as such by the Board” (Rule 2, 1978 Rules, Jain, 2001, p. 586). Procedures for obtaining recognition of the managing committee were not delineated in official documents. In practice, government officials explained, that the individuals described in the administrative plan of the society under which the school was registered (most often the school’s de-facto owners, close family members, or associates) were deemed to be the management of basic schools.

The management of high schools and inter-colleges was much more explicitly described. Section 16-A of the Intermediate Act stated that: “Every recognised institution shall be managed in accordance with the Scheme of Administration framed under, and in accordance with, sub-section (1) to sub-Section 9(5) [of 16-A] and Section 16-B and 16-C.” (Jain, 2001, p. 31). The scheme and any subsequent amendments to it were to be approved by the Director of Education, and should have outlined the constitution of a “Committee of Management” delineating its and the head’s powers, duties, and functions. Provisions under Section 16-B enabled the Director to suggest any alterations or modifications to the scheme. Section 16-A of the Intermediate Act set out the Committee of Management as:

[...] vested with authority to manage and conduct the affairs of the institution. The Head of the institution and two teachers...who shall be elected by rotation according to seniority in the manner to be prescribed by regulations, shall be *ex officio* members of the Committee of Management with a right to vote (Jain, 2001, p. 31).

The concern over the potential monopoly of the managing members of a school through its committee is expressly stated in the Third Schedule outlining the principles on which the scheme would be approved. It states that every Scheme of Administration shall, among other things:

(3) provide for the qualifications and disqualifications of the members and officer-bearers of the Committee of Management and the term to their offices:

Provided that no such Scheme shall contain provisions creating *monopoly in favour of any particular person, caste, creed, or family* (emphases added) (Jain, 2001, p. 178).

Any disputes over the ‘true’ management were to be resolved by the State through the Regional Deputy Director of Education, who could lead an enquiry and was given the authority to construe one of the contested parties as “deemed fit to be in actual control of its [the school’s] affairs [and] may...be recognised to constitute the Committee of Management...until a court of competent jurisdiction directs otherwise” (Section 16-A (7), 1921 Act, Jain, 2001, p. 32). The term of a recognised Committee of Management was supposed to be for three years and one month, upon which a new elected committee should have assumed responsibility. As data in Chapter 6 revealed, in practice however, case study schools were managed by the individual owners and their appointed heads (often close family members).

In principle, the constituted committee limited the heads’ role and made them responsible to it for their duties (Jain, 2001, p. 182). Thus, head’s were confined to the “internal management and discipline of his [or her] institution” (Jain, 2001, p. 182) to three broad areas: (1) daily teaching and student related management: admissions, withdrawals, and punishments; school timetabling; maintenance of equipment and reports including liaising with parents; (2) staff management: maintenance of service books; recommending disciplinary action to the committee; permitting teachers to take private tuitions; and (3) limited financial management: drawing and disbursing of stipend and scholarship money and certain types of grants. Thus, instead of the institutional control they claimed in practice (Section 6.4.1), in principle their role should have been similar to the middle managers of case study schools of maintaining the FIF and alerting the use of enforcement mechanisms.

The Committee of Management was entrusted with wider powers (outlined in Ch. I, Regulation 13, 1921 Act), the most relevant of which were: (1) appointment, confirmation, promotion, and any punishment for the heads, teachers, or other staff; (2) control and management of all monies, securities, property and endowments and taking necessary steps for their legal protection and investment; (3) entrusting the proper utilisation of any grants; (4) receiving any income including subscriptions, donations, gifts, interest, grants, dividends, etc. and meeting any financial obligations of the school (Jain, 2001, pp. 183-184).

The intent of State control becomes blatantly clear regarding the power of the Director to “*appoint an Authorised Controller...and thereupon, the State Government may, by order, for reasons to be recorded, authorise any person...to take over, for such period not exceeding two years, as may be specified, the Management of such institution and its properties*” (emphases added) (Section 16-D (4), 1921 Act, Jain, 2001, pp. 93-94). The State could install an authorised controller if the Director felt that a school failed to comply with the Intermediate Act or its regulations. The two-year term could be extended to another five years, which could again be extended “until the State Government is satisfied that a Committee of Management has been lawfully constituted” (Section 16-D (5), Intermediate Act 1921, Jain, 2001, p. 94). Section 16-DD of the 1921 Regulations outlined the powers and functions of the authorised controller as the managing authority:

(1)(a) he [or she] *shall take over the Management of the concerned institution and its properties to the exclusion of its Committee of Management*, and shall, subject to such restrictions, as the State Government may impose, have all such powers and authority as the Committee would have if the institution and its properties were not taken over under the said-sub-sections;

(b) every person in whose possession, custody or control over property of the institution may be, shall deliver such property to the Authorised Controller forthwith (emphases added) (Jain, 2001, p. 101).

While the study did not encounter such a case, the intent to control the inner workings of even those schools considered ‘private’ or financially independent of the State was clear. In addition to the State’s power to install an authorised controller, it was empowered to suspend an existing Committee of Management “[...] and make such arrangements as it thinks proper for managing the affairs...” (Jain, 2001, p. 95) of the school. The State protected itself in Section 16-D (12) of the Act by stating that no decision taken under Section 16-D could be called into question in any court, effectively muting any disputes and instituting outright State control in principle.

The ‘private’ managing bodies of recognised high schools and inter-colleges should have functioned in strict adherence to State intervention, right down to their very composition, according to the formal institutions governing them. It can be argued that the intent of corresponding enforcement mechanisms (particularly the instatement of an authorised controller) was to garner control and compel recognised secondary schools to cooperate and work within the FIF largely, as case study principals felt, out of a general climate of mistrust. Instead, case study schools (as other LFP schools) relied on their own internal institutions and the SIF to function.

7.6 *The Shadow Institutional Framework*

As evident from the previous discussion, the FIF applicable to LFP schools was extensive and detailed, although difficult to piece together. Upon completion of the necessary first step of deciphering the FIF in key areas applicable to LFP (hence case study) schools, the focus of the remaining analysis is on how case study schools actually mediated the FIF in practice through the SIF.

Results indicated that case study schools relied on a complex network of ‘*internal institutions*’ (drawing on the work of McMeekin’s “within school institutions”) common across the set, and ‘*external institutions*’ (higher-order institutions) that

together formed the SIF. As expected, some internal institutions were *school-specific* (Section 6.4.1) (e.g. dress code, daily timetables, student punishment, ways of contacting parents) according to the school’s particular circumstances and pedagogical ideology. While school-specific institutions governed certain technical aspects of how case study schools functioned, internal institutions that assumed primary importance for achieving good institutional performance were those common across them.

Common internal institutions enabled case study schools to interact with other LFP schools, exchange vital information, and form institutional links key to their performance. They were concerned with reducing “information asymmetries” (North, 1990) on knowledge about the FIF’s formal properties and the SIF’s informal arrangements. The type of information exchanged about the FIF was used to buffer the school against any deficiencies regarding institutional requirements for the LFP sector and interpretations of the FIF. Hence, common internal institutions were implemented to structure the school’s internal institutional environment as an LFP school organisation, allowing it to operate and be identified as such. External institutions, were higher order institutions governing how case study schools, like other LFP schools, interacted with the State regarding the FIF for basic and/or secondary education and private schooling to minimise “transaction costs”. Table 7.8 lists the internal and external institutions that formed the SIF for case study schools.

<i>Common Internal Institutions</i>	<i>External Institutions</i>
• Fee practices and fee collection structures • Admission procedures • Internal management structure and processes • Hiring of and employment terms for staff	• Affiliation procedures • Procedures for delivering formal secondary schooling in schools not recognised at the high school or intermediate levels • UPBHSIE examination provision • Norms and practices for recognition

Table 7.8 Set of Common Internal and External Institutions Forming the SIF

In the strictest new institutional sense, the SIF was not a formal set of institutions, as they were neither formally written nor passed in any legislative or

authoritative body, and thus did not have formal legitimacy. Nonetheless, for case study schools as other LFP schools, the SIF gained *practical legitimacy* on two counts: (1) it minimised uncertainty and provided case study schools with structure in terms of their performance and (2) it was proven to be the ‘way to get things done’, not least because the perverse incentives embedded within the FIF made it difficult for schools to operate solely in accordance with it. Thus, it encouraged isomorphism to it and not the FIF. In spite of its practical legitimacy, some case study schools felt that there was something not ‘proper’ about schools functioning according to the SIF, but sensed that they had no other choice if their school was to survive.

While most owners/principals felt that it was important to run their school according to the SIF, they maintained the official line that playing by the formal rules was the only way to guarantee that recognition would not be withdrawn, or that they would not face administrative problems with the State. Despite the FIF’s “enforcement mechanisms” (North, 1990) (possible imprisonment or fines), those of the SIF: (1) the possibility of losing recognition for recognised schools, (2) the inability to obtain recognition for unrecognised schools, and (3) the reduction in the number of clients and fees or both assumed precedence for case study schools.

In order to reduce information asymmetries and navigate the FIF for ‘good’ institutional performance, case study owners had to access information about it and establish how to mediate it. Case study schools accessed direct information about the FIF in principle by approaching the District Education Office and/or state boards. However, determining how the FIF would be mediated and how it actually worked in practice was done by making contacts and establishing partnerships with other LFP schools. Common internal institutions allowed case study schools to forge such relationships with other LFP schools, enabling the exchange of pertinent information. These relationships were made personally by case study school

owners/principals by contacting other LFP schools on the basis that they too would have mediated the FIF in a similar fashion.

Common internal institutions identified case study schools as LFP schools, allowed them to identify other LFP schools, and enabled them to form part of the LFP sector. For example, case study principals noted that making such partnerships with state schools was not in their best interest because not only was the FIF applicable to state schools quite different in nature, so too was the manner in which state schools operated within it and how it was applied to them by institutional actors. They also felt that there was an increased risk in LFP-state school alliances due to the close relationship that state schools had with the State. On the other hand, principals claimed that high-fee schools were not amenable to forming institutional relationships with LFP schools, since their reputation could be at stake with such associations, as they were marked largely through a different set of internal institutions (governing, for example, fees and hiring).

Thus, ties with more experienced and/or recognised LFP schools reduced uncertainty about mediating the FIF for case study schools, enabled them to exchange information, and form partnerships to gain legitimacy and to enable good institutional performance. These, along with external institutions governing institutional arrangements among LFP schools and between LFP schools and the State, constituted the pool of LFP schools as a distinct sub-sector within the larger private sector, *despite the fact that the sector was not formally defined and the SIF was informal.*

7.6.1 Common Internal Institutions

As indicated by organisational-level data (Section 6.4.1), case study schools instituted certain rule-like procedures and practices to reduce uncertainty in their daily functioning. The set of common internal institutions across the set of case study

schools are summarised below: fee practices and mechanisms, admission procedures, internal management structure and processes, and hiring and employment terms.

7.6.1a Fee Practices and Mechanisms

As discussed extensively in Section 6.6, case study schools instituted the five fee mechanisms to structure their interaction with households utilising fee-bargaining and/or fee-jumping engagement strategies. According to principals, these fee mechanisms were specific to case study and other LFP schools. Interactions governing school fee practices in case study schools were vastly different to high-fee and state schools, neither of which instituted such mechanisms. In addition, no case study school actually charged the prescribed fees of Rs. 15/month at the primary and junior levels. Nonetheless, they remained within a certain upper limit¹⁸, keeping in mind their clientele. Thus, the SIF's internal institutions relating to fees were not constructed in accordance with the FIF, but in response to interactions with clients, and according to the LFP market niche and its enforcement mechanism of possible reductions in clientele and profit.

7.6.1b Admission and Enrolment Procedures

According to State Government rules, new admissions should not have been accepted after September 30 of a given school year (GO8-1, FIF/St, p. 41). Furthermore, no new admissions should have been granted without a TC from the previous school. Nonetheless, case study schools admitted that the general procedure was to admit any student at any time of the year to expand their clientele. In fact, the exit and fee-jumping household engagement strategies encouraged case study schools to do so. The SIF's internal institutions governing admission procedures not only

¹⁸ For rural case study schools the highest official amount charged before concessions or bargaining was Rs. 50 for primary and Rs. 80 for junior. For urban case study schools, the maximum charged was Rs. 130 for primary and Rs. 145 for junior

fuelled competition between case study and other LFP schools, but provided them with a chance to increase their client base and profit. One principal explained:

2. There's always competition because a child from one school can easily get admission in another school...Even if he has outstanding fees...

[...]

Suppose there's an outstanding balance of Rs. 150 here, [but] the next year that child doesn't come here so he takes his Rs. 150 with him. He goes to another school and he gets enrolled over there without a TC.

They take him.

But it shouldn't work that way.

The school loses out. The child left, and the fees went with him. The guardians benefit because they saved on the fees. And the other school, that school also benefits...

Its enrolment increased.

Its enrolment increased [...]

They'll surely have to pay some admission fees at that school (PL5-3, SIF/Sch, pp. 2-3).

The standard procedure in case study schools was open enrolment without TCs upon the payment of an admission fee, particularly in the primary and junior grades. This was harder for high school and intermediate years because of the FIF's stricter rules governing examinations. Upon admission, case study schools claimed to administer a school-devised test to determine the grade level for enrolment. In most cases, children were placed according to the results regardless of age. However, one principal claimed that in some instances parents negotiated the grade level that they would allow regardless of the child's previous schooling or skills:

3. After examining the admission test we decide which class children should be placed in. If they are capable to be put in the 1st grade, then we put them in the 1st. If they're not capable then we'll place them in nursery to make sure that they can get a solid foundation. [...]

But some parents come and say, 'No, you have to admit my child in the 5th grade.'

Why?

That's just how they are. They say that you have to for my child... when we've already taken the test and found that the child's not even ready for nursery.

Then what happens?

Well, we're caught in a difficult position, we're helpless. Either we admit the child. Like if our enrolment is low, and we have to fill up the number of children, then we'll take him. And if not, then we won't.

So do you take him in the 5th then?

We take them.

But then how is that child able to cover the material?

He's not able to cover it. It's immoral regarding that child's future. He won't be able cover it (PL9-3, *Proceds/Sch*, pp. 2-3).

7.6.1c Internal Management Structures and Procedures

As discussed in Chapter 6, the internal management structure and procedures were highly bureaucratic, with tight hierarchical control in the hands of the owners. This is contrary to the FIF governing recognised basic schools, which essentially placed control of internal management and procedures in the hands of the State. This was particularly the case for secondary schools. The principals of both case study schools recognised until intermediate claimed to have the requisite 'Scheme of Administration' and a separate 'Committee of Management'. However, owners confided that they existed on paper only and were submitted for the purposes of recognition. The SIF favoured a hierarchical internal structure because owners had high personal vested interests in the functioning of their schools and, in most cases, harboured mistrust towards teaching staff.

Furthermore, while the FIF highlighted the role of the societies through which the schools were registered, in practice they were little more than a loose collection of individuals who had close connections with the owners and very little input or involvement in the functioning of the schools. In one instance, the principal, a co-owner of a case study school with her husband, was not even aware of who the

society members were. In essence, while owners acknowledged the necessity of having a society through which the school was registered for its establishment and a prerequisite for its subsequent recognition, the SIF treated it as a mere technicality.

7.6.1d Hiring Procedures and Conditions of Service

With the establishment of the SES Board, the hiring procedures and conditions of service were clearly outlined in the FIF (presented in Section 7.5.3), particularly regarding teaching staff in secondary schools. However, since recruiting teachers was difficult (Section 6.4.2a), and staff turnover rate was high because of low salaries at LFP schools (inconsistent with the FIF), the key features of the SIF's internal institutions governing hiring and employment were flexibility in qualifications and a complete disregard for most of the FIF.

As organisational-level data revealed, only five of the 87 teachers in the total school-level sample were trained, even though all should have been. Furthermore, the detailed recruitment and selection procedure was not usually followed. In fact, owners of recognised schools claimed that they usually spread notice of vacancy through word-of-mouth instead of advertising in newspapers, so that they could avoid the involvement of selection committees and the DEO altogether. Furthermore, the disqualification rule stating that no one related to the management could be appointed as a head or teacher was ignored by all case study schools, as in each case the principal and/or at least one teacher was either a co-owner of the school or a close relative (most commonly husband, wife, son, or daughter).

Similarly, at the secondary level, both recognised case study inter-colleges also made appointments on an ad-hoc basis, neither one recruiting teaching staff through the SES Board. This was evidenced through observation as well:

...it seemed that this woman (young, in her twenties[...]) was entering negotiations with Anand [the owner and principal] about a possible job at the school as a teacher. She was asking for a salary of Rs. 1500

when he had already said that the maximum he would pay is Rs. 1000. In addition, she said that she wanted to have shorter working hours (until 1:00 pm only) because she had to be home by that time in order to take care of her home duties. Anand said that he would ask her to be 'in-charge' as well as take on teaching duties if so needed. She said that she would want an increase in salary for that or a reduction in workload/hours. She said she wanted to take satisfaction from her work but from her earnings as well. It ended that AK offered the maximum of Rs. 1000 and she said that she would take a day or two to think about it.

After Anand finished with her, there was another teacher, this time a young male (also in his twenties) that he had to attend to. He...seemed to be a current teacher at the school. However, it seemed that he was only there to collect his final salary because Anand said that: '*Aap acchha padhaate the. Bachche aap ko bahut pasand karte the*' [You taught well. The children really liked you]. This indicated to me that it was his last day at the school but that Anand did not really want him to go.

However, Anand said, 'Where were you the past week?' The teacher replied that he'd gone to visit his family somewhere. He also asked about his time demands and asked when he would be free to which the teacher replied that he only had time between 11:00 to 1:00 because he was running private tuitions before and after that. Anand said, '*Lekin 11:00 baje se kaam kaise banega. Khair, aapne kaam achchha kiya tha*' [But how can we manage if you're only free from 11:00. Anyway, you did a good job]. He also said that if he can make use of him at that time (between 11:00 and 1:00 in the future) he will contact him. With that Anand gave him Rs. 600 and the teacher left (FN 25-09-02).

As apparent from the excerpt above, in addition to conducting interviews and making offers on the spot, conditions regarding the dismissal of staff and salaries were also not followed. In fact, hiring procedures and conditions of service at all case study schools were often contrary to the FIF, despite the possible threat of punishment formally embedded in it. However, owners/principals explained that it was important to establish close links with State departments, particularly for high schools and inter-colleges as in the case above, where the other co-owner worked at the Education Department until retirement. Owners/principals claimed that they had to be prepared to pay an under-the-table 'fee' to hire independently. Thus, the SIF's institutions regarding hiring and conditions of service took advantage of the perverse incentives embedded within the FIF to be effective.

7.6.2 External Institutions

While common internal institutions allowed case study schools to seek out other LFP schools with similar institutions and form linkages, external institutions enabled case study schools to minimise transaction costs when interacting with the State. They were the set of higher-order institutions that governed the interactions of case study schools mainly for the purposes of recognition or examinations. These were the rule-like procedures for affiliation, delivering formal schooling in secondary education, and UPBHSIE exam provision, and the cognitive structures guiding the norms for obtaining recognition that relied on perverse incentives for success. From the NIE perspective, external institutions were in direct response to the formal rules.

7.6.2a Affiliation Procedures

The ‘affiliation’ or ‘attachment’ procedures and process described by case study schools were instituted to enable unrecognised schools to provide their students with certification from the formal system. Affiliation was also employed by schools that were recognised until a certain level to provide certification to students in higher classes operating on an unrecognised basis. For example, case study schools that were only recognised until the primary level, but operated junior, high school, or even intermediate classes, affiliated themselves with LFP schools that were recognised up to the desired level.

Case study schools relied on common internal institutions to identify, contact, and make relationships with a recognised school wishing to be an affiliating school. The affiliating school charged an ‘affiliation fee’ per student calculated on a monthly basis, but to be paid as a lump sum by principals wishing their schools to be affiliated for a period of 12 months. For case study schools this ranged between payments of Rs. 10 to 20/month/student (Rs. 100-240/year/student). Case study

schools saw these fees as necessary, some claiming them indirectly through their own tuition fees, while others charged parents outright. Affiliation ensured that affiliating schools officially registered students from unrecognised schools on their books, providing TCs and any other official documents. In essence, the affiliating school, and not the Board, became the certifying body for unrecognised schools (or grades).

The unrecognised school provided all instruction on its premises. Principals explained that they delivered essentially the same material taught at the affiliating school, usually according to UPBBE or UPBHSIE guidelines. As primary and junior exams were home exams, the affiliating school designed the exam and unrecognised schools administered it to their students. Completed exams were submitted to the affiliating school, where they were corrected, and through which results were released. The process for high school and intermediate exams was more complicated (Section 7.6.2c). Any official information about students' results was sent to the Board or Department under the affiliating school, as students of unrecognised schools or classes officially belonged to it.

Some case study schools were affiliating schools, some sought affiliation, and others were both. In basic education, affiliation was usually sought in grades 5 and 8 as requirements for TCs from these years (particularly junior school) were more stringent for gaining admission in high school. In the early primary years, some case study schools continued providing instruction without affiliation as it was also possible for parents to present the DEO's office with an affidavit claiming that the child had been home-schooled, which could be certified through the office and act as a valid TC. Two government officers explained:

The whole point of the TC is to prove that the child is studying in a particular school in a particular grade. TCs are mandatory for all children and there is [a] countersignature on it from the office. They said that this is the reason that schools wish to have recognition because it is the only way for them to be able to issue transfer certificates and get the countersignature of the [DEO] office.

I said that I had heard from people that it isn't really necessary to have a TC—that you can still gain admission without it. They said that yes in practice that becomes the case because in basic education their goal is that: '*Kissi bhi tarah se bachcha padhe*' [Children should study no matter what]. Therefore, for grades 1 to 5 parents can present an affidavit stating that [their] children have studied to a particular level in the home. The school then should give a test to see what level the child is at and then students should gain admission to the school based on the results. [The two officers] said that this is the reason that people say that you can get around not having a TC. [One officer] said, 'Our motto is *Education for All*'.

[...] 'We have to educate as many children as possible—that's our goal' (FN 04-03-2003).

Thus, given the push toward UEE targets, the FIF incorporated some flexibility in terms of TC requirements. Nonetheless, most case study schools claimed that they preferred to seek affiliation for key primary and junior years because it encouraged greater participation and cooperation between them and the affiliating school, which was essential for them to access information about the FIF and increase their institutional performance. Finally, case study schools, particularly in rural areas justified their insistence on the SIF's procedures governing affiliation by stating that it allowed them to increase access to formal schooling for children in areas that were otherwise too remote to access recognised LFP schools:

4. Principal: It's convenient for the children...

Teacher: Yes, that's it. It's just like... just consider that the children really belong to that school. We just have to teach them here, we teach them here. It saves them having to go there to study (PL3b-2, SIF/Sch, p. 15).

7.6.2b Procedures for Delivering Formal Schooling in Secondary Education

In addition to the affiliation procedures outlined above, a separate set of procedures were instituted by those case study schools (similar to other LFP schools) that were unrecognised at high school or intermediate levels, but that delivered formal secondary education. Owners/principals explained that in addition to following affiliation procedures, they could also provide secondary instruction

through the guise of a 'coaching centre'. Coaching centres are where students receive private tuition. They are generally seen as businesses and are usually run by teachers from state or private schools as private ventures to supplement their income. Their aim is to provide additional instruction¹⁹ for board and other competitive public exams (e.g. IAS, medical, or engineering selection, etc.).

Ordinarily, coaching centres operate during after school hours as students arrive after regular instruction at school. Originally an upper and middle-class phenomenon, a spectrum of coaching centres have emerged at varying price ranges to meet increasing demand (similar to the private schooling phenomenon). Anecdotal evidence suggested that the number of coaching centres was quite high in urban areas, and the general trend was that the proportion of students frequenting them increased as the education level or competitiveness of the exam increased. In Lucknow, some of the most popular coaching centres were reported with enrolments exceeding 2000, illustrating the popularity of the coaching phenomenon.

Owners/principals explained that there was more incentive to deliver secondary schooling through coaching centres, as the FIF governing their establishment was less tight than gaining recognition as a high school or inter-college. Owners registered the same building they were using for their school (or some part of it) as a coaching centre for high school and intermediate. However, this distinction was in name and on paper only. Unlike traditional coaching centres, those at case study schools operated at the same time as the regular school, and in the same rooms. Teachers were common to both and their salaries were taken out of the monthly revenue obtained through combined school and coaching fees. The management was also the same. Finally, none of the schools advertised themselves as having both

¹⁹ While the focus is on additional instruction for exams, a common perception particularly regarding UPBHSIE exams is that teachers (particularly state ones) are keener to provide instruction at their coaching institutes rather than at school (even to their own students) as a money-making venture.

functions: a basic school and a coaching centre. Admissions for secondary students were made on the basis that it was a school, although parents may have known the technical distinction. In effect, for all intents and purposes, coaching centres were nothing more than the higher grades of case study schools that were unrecognised up to high school or intermediate.

During the data collection period, newspapers frequently reported that the State was increasing its monitoring of coaching centres in response to claims that many were running on unregistered bases or were not operating in the spirit that they were intended. Nonetheless, owners/principals justified their actions by asserting that they fulfilled a duty towards students (particularly in rural areas) who had no other means of accessing formal secondary education:

5. But if I... at the moment they're mainly children that live around my house or children of people I know and have relations with. That's why, and they're mainly girls... if I don't operate this coaching centre or if I close it down then there won't be anything for all of these girls. Because you can't even see a high school or inter-college anywhere for at least 10-12 km that's recognised by the government until 10th. So in such a situation, guardians are telling me to do this themselves. Otherwise I don't have any great desire to do this. Because my school is running until grade 8 without any real problems. But because of the guardians... (PL10-3, p. 9).

Effectively, institutions governing the delivery of secondary education in unrecognised high schools and inter-colleges enabled owners to access another FIF (that governing coaching centres), reconstitute it (as the part of the SIF for delivering formal secondary education through an essentially non-formal structure), and ultimately use it to mediate the FIF for the delivery of formal secondary education in their schools.

7.6.2c Procedures for UPBHSIE Examination Provision

The provision of UPBHSIE exams is closely linked to the procedures structuring affiliation and the provision of formal secondary education. Case study schools that were unrecognised as high schools and/or inter-colleges had to ensure

the provision of UPBHSIE exams to students at those levels. This was done in two ways: (1) through affiliation: enrolling concerned students as regular students at an affiliating school and instructing them on their own premises, with or without a registered coaching centre; and (2) through the coaching centres: providing instruction only at the coaching centres without any affiliation, and registering students as private candidates for Board exams.

Schools that opted for the affiliation and regular student procedures did so because the prescribed Board examination fees were lower for regular versus private candidates (Rs. 150 vs. Rs. 500 high school; Rs. 300 vs. Rs. 600 intermediate). Even including the extra cost of affiliation (a maximum of Rs. 100/year for high school and Rs. 240/year for intermediate for the sample), it was still more economical.

Schools that opted for the coaching centre procedures did so because they felt they had more flexibility in enrolling a greater number of students. According to the FIF, this is because regular candidates for 10th and 12th grade examinations must have been registered at a recognised institution the year before (Section 7.5.2). Hence, schools opted for the second option to maximise their potential enrolment and minimise financial risk. Case study schools chose the set of procedures they thought would encourage their best performance given their particular situation, assessment of the FIF, and personal contacts at the state level.

One case study school (School E) acted as an affiliating secondary school for other unrecognised LFP schools. It charged affiliation fees of Rs. 100/student/year for high school and Rs. 200/student/year for intermediate. In return, it enrolled students from other unrecognised LFP schools on its books, completed required paperwork for the Board, and issued TCs and other official documentation. School E had two main incentives to act as an affiliating school. Firstly, its revenue increased quite significantly for little more than administrative duties. Out of its total enrolment

of 590 students, only 15 were its own students at high school. A further 453 were simply affiliated for the purpose of being regular candidates for UPBHSIE exams. This represented an extra Rs. 64,500 in income. Secondly, the co-owners felt that if affiliated children obtained good results it would enhance the school's reputation in the local school market. One co-owner felt that using the school as an exam centre for affiliated students boosted its reputation by playing up that it was recognised:

6. No, the school benefits. We benefit like this: when children from the other [affiliated] schools came here to take the exam for Grade 9, we benefited from that.

Meaning?

When the 9th exams are conducted, we conduct them in our school.

I see.

So we got a really good response then. People's eyes popped out: 'It looks like it's from the Board, like it's a really a big school of good standing'. So we got good reactions (PL1-3, RecogBen/Sch, p. 3).

7.6.2d Norms and Practices for Recognition

The above description of the SIF addresses how case study schools that were either unrecognised or unrecognised at a certain level mediated the FIF. While the external institutions until now, though informal, were regulatory in nature the final group is normative (Scott, 2001) in nature, closer to the sociological variant of new institutionalism's typology. This final set is focused on the recognition process, and points to the norms and practices actively employed by case study schools to obtain recognition. Many of these institutions relied on manipulating perverse incentives embedded in the FIF (Section 7.7) to increase institutional performance. They explicitly highlight that some institutional actors were aware of the SIF's existence, but allowed it to function nonetheless because of those perverse incentives.

As evident from Section 7.5.1, the formal recognition procedure had an extensive set of rules and procedures outlined in various acts, regulations, and

government orders. However, in practice school interviewees stressed that they found ways around them. According to owners/principals, recognition could be easily granted even if a school did not fulfil the requirements (like most recognised case study schools) through political influence (connections with high-level institutional actors), administrative influence (connections and bribery of administrative clerks), or by 'buying it':

7. I mean... either you'll get it [recognition] through political influence. Or you'll get it through administrative influence. Or you can get it by spending money. That's how... (PL7-3, Recog/Sch, p. 10).

Owners/principals reported that their main course of action was to approach state-level contacts. If that did not prove fruitful, or if they did not have such contacts, the easiest and quickest course of action was to offer bribes in the form of 'fees' to various clerks and/or officers ensuring their file would be passed. Principals claimed that recognition norms were pre-emptive and difficult for an LFP school to fulfil, but since recognition was important in attracting the maximum number of clients, it was necessary to engage in such practices. Summarising the norms and practices described by most case study owners/principals, one respondent explained:

8. *So there must a lot of people who don't get recognition.*

There are lots. Or then people approach officers, as I was telling you the other day, worship money and get your recognition. That's how it works too. You have to give money because, say I don't have something and that's the thing I want, then of course I'll have to spend money to get it. So that's how people spend money and get it [recognition].

So do people know about this?

Everyone knows. Everyone knows about this. This isn't something that's hidden.

Yes. [Pause]. So... people must say that if you want to get your file...

No, we go there and make the request ourselves. They won't say that. Officers won't say, 'Give me money'. We say it ourselves, 'Please commit this wrong act on our behalf, and take money for it.' We do it ourselves. Actually, we're more at fault than the officers here.
[...]

We do it for our own selfishness. Like, say the number of children is increasing and we haven't been able to make the required arrangements. And we can't give out our own [official school] records [e.g. TCs] until we get recognition. And if we can't give out our own records, then what's the benefit.

For example, I'm teaching here at my school... for my name and reputation. And if all the mark sheets and TCs are in the name of the other school then everyone will think that, 'Seeing as all the documents are from the other school, why not go there?' That's why we'll have to do something or the other to get our own documents (emphasis added) (PL10-3, Recog/Sch, p.8).

This respondent was not alone in claiming that state-level actors were aware of and openly accepted these norms and practices. This highlights that, at the very least, institutional actors were aware of the existence of some features of the SIF. Principals stressed that despite certain ethical concerns over the insistence of such practices in the SIF, they felt that it was in their school's best interest to comply in order to maximise their institutional performance. The following concluding discussion highlights the existence of perverse incentives embedded in the FIF itself, which gave root to some of these norms and practices for recognition.

7.7 Perverse Incentives, Application of the FIF, and Features of the SIF

The existence of "perverse incentives" (North, 1990) embedded in the FIF may help to explain how case study and other LFP schools were able to form a SIF that, in certain instances, either completely disregarded the FIF or usurped it, and how it was able to function with the knowledge of institutional actors. From an NIE perspective, it indicates that private wellbeing was favoured over the greater formal institutional interest. The roots of perverse incentives seemed to stem from two main features of the FIF governing overall education provision and delivery: (1) differences in the FIF for state and private schools and (2) the FIF's long and laboured procedures.

To case study owners/principals, the differences in the applicable FIF for private and state schools suggested that while LFP schools were meant to conform to strict standards and conditions, state schools were not. The most common examples given by interviewees concerned junior schools and the insistence on the: (1) numbers and dimensions of classrooms for private schools when (as observations confirmed) often state schools would be built with just three classrooms and a veranda; (2) numbers of desks and other equipment when children sat on the floor on mats in state schools and often without so much as blackboards; and (3) employing trained teachers, when the State had recently launched the *Shiksha Mitra* initiative to recruit intermediate-pass para-teachers to cover the shortage of qualified candidates in state schools. While case study owners/principals interpreted these differences as unequal and unfair, officials claimed that the difference in the FIF was a guarantee measure against a private school closing its doors without warning or offering sub-standard quality schooling. One officer explained:

9. *You know those guidelines you showed me?*

These ones for recognition. Yes, yes.

Are these the same guidelines applicable to state schools or...

No, no, no. Here [for recognition] we have conditions like the establishment of a security fund. We ask for that because a private individual is opening that school, an individual we don't know. We don't know how devoted they will be to that school. I don't have any information on that.

So our conditions and their conditions are going to be different. We ask them to fulfil whatever conditions already exist in our [state] schools. That's what we say. Not like I open a school today, and it works for a while, and then the owner of the building says, 'Vacate it.' In order to prevent this we require the landlord to present an affidavit that at least for 10 years or until the school is running he won't have it vacated, otherwise we don't give recognition.

[...]

Otherwise what would happen to the kids?

The kids would be at a loss. What will they do if they're in the middle of their course? The school owner's business flopped and the children's education is ruined, so we can't let that happen. We don't have such problems in state schools (GO4-1, FIF/St, p. 14).

Nonetheless, to case study owners/principals, the differences suggested that there was an inherent level of inequality institutionalised in the FIF. They felt that if strict conditions (Table 7.3 and Table 7.5) were instituted for quality control the same should apply to state schools. Since by their assessment the FIF for both school types did not encapsulate equivalent conditions, they felt that LFP schools in particular, and recognised schools in general, were mistrusted by the State. This atmosphere of mistrust fuelled certain aspects of the SIF.

Furthermore, owners/principals felt that even though PUA schools received no state funding they were required to be at its beck and call for certain functions with severe sanctions if they did not comply (e.g. invigilating exams and providing their buildings as exam centres). This suggested an asymmetrical relationship in which the State exerted control without granting any privileges to low-fee PUA schools. According to school interviewees, if LFP and other recognised schools had to comply with such conditions and take on certain State functions, then their schools should be accorded privileges enjoyed by state schools. The most commonly mentioned were the provision of free text-books or the 'mid-day meal scheme' where children received 3 kg of wheat per month. Instead, participants felt that their schools (like other LFP schools) were treated like businesses to which unfair rules were applied, such as an 'advertisement tax' for putting up school signs in local areas. Their perception of a FIF that was inherently unfair and unequal, despite their belief that LFP schools aided the State to achieve EFA goals through increased provision for disadvantaged groups, further aggravated the atmosphere of mistrust resulting, in a certain level of animosity:

10. ...what big sin is the school committing for it to be punished? On the one hand the State is saying that everyone should be educated. It's chanting slogans about 'Education for All'. They're advertising on TV. But on the other hand if a private school puts up a board for teaching children at its school, then it has to pay an advertisement tax (PL4-3, StPerceps/Sch, p.3).

The second root of perverse incentives in the FIF seemed to be the long, laboured, and bureaucratic procedures, particularly regarding recognition. As recognition was the key to increasing a school's status in the local market, owners were undoubtedly interested in acquiring it as quickly as possible. However, they felt that some of its conditions acted as barriers that LFP schools could not fulfil. Other interviewees claimed that even if they could fulfil them, the process of getting their file passed was too long and inefficient:

11. ...you can say that it [acquiring recognition] relates more to finances. Like in order to get your file moving you need to spend more money, that's all. That's the main problem. Because there's so much paperwork backlogged at every desk, and there are lots of processes in order to get your file moved from one to another. There are lots of steps. You have to go there, pursue it, then go and check it again, and make it run smoothly. These are the main problems.

It should be that there's one formal procedure that's been established and that for a certain query you go with your papers to one desk and that's where you should be able to get your recognition. But there are so many that there's a primary set, then for junior, and you have to go from one to another. There are so many steps that people just get totally fed up. [...]

So...suppose there's a school and it wants to get its recognition quickly... then what action can it take?

Spend money... they get it by spending money.

By spending money.

Yes.

And does that cost a lot of money?

No, it doesn't cost a lot of money. I mean it depends on the individuals involved, that's what I mean, according to the set up [at the offices], the connections that one has, and up to their own interest meaning how much of their funds they want to put towards that (PL7-3, Recog/Sch, p. 5).

Therefore, both the roots for perverse incentives stemmed from the FIF itself and contributed to its uneven application by institutional actors to LFP schools. The SIF manipulated the FIF through its perverse incentives, which in turn fed those incentives and resulted in the uneven application of the FIF across schools. This led to a cycle, one feeding the other. The uneven application of the FIF by institutional

actors and its manipulation through the SIF and perverse incentives by organisational actors was apparent in the sample of case study schools. For example, School E was granted recognition through to intermediate, despite the fact that it clearly did not fulfil most required conditions. This was acknowledged by the school itself, whose co-owners clearly stated their reliance on perverse incentives through the SIF in order to obtain recognition:

12. Principal (PL): Yes, yes there are lots of problems [in getting recognition]. But we didn't have any problems. Here, we got recognition right from the beginning.

Brother (BR): If you look at it, this is a big accomplishment.

Yes, it is. So you must have done a lot of running around to get it so quickly?

BR: Yes, that's true... we did do a lot of running around [chuckles] you're right.

PL: There was a lot of running around and our father's previous work...

BR: Actually, our father worked in the Education Department before. You might have known.

No, I didn't know that.

BR: Oh, I see. He was in the Education Department before...So he had some contacts at the UP Board [UPBHSIE] as well...

PL: Yes, he has good contacts that's why...

BR: He has a wide field of contacts.

PL: And basically, you can get it easily. It's not that hard. [...]

People say it's very difficult

[...]

PL: Well, contacts definitely count.

BR: Either you should have good contacts, or you should fulfil all of the Government's conditions (PL1-3, Recog/Sch, pp. 15-16).

This example demonstrated how at least one case study school relied on perverse incentives for recognition. Some owners gave examples of institutional actors relying on perverse incentives to access case study schools through the SIF so that they could unevenly apply the FIF for their personal gain. For example,

recognised PUA schools were eligible for state scholarships for students belonging to scheduled caste, scheduled tribe, and backward caste groups. However, in the sample, only one recognised case study school actually applied. Owners explained that this was because officers demanded a 'fee' equalling 20% of the total scholarship amount to release the funds, reducing the scholarship amount that would be distributed to students. However, if principals distributed an amount lower than the official amount, parents would believe the school was keeping the cut. Another school stated that some officers requested schools to submit more applications than the number of eligible children, and to split the extra money. When the case study school refused, it was threatened with the possibility of withdrawing recognition:

13. ...what used to happen was that the Department used to commit some wrongful acts... the Department was more at fault and used to try and entice managers to do such things as well. Like, 'Show that you're applying for 300 children, that you have 300 children. So we'll give you money for 300 children, we'll keep half, and you can keep the other half.'

Who used to say this?

State aah the Department... the money that the Department used to give for scholarships, so some people were enticed... everyone is hungry for money, but it's just that you have to keep some people under control.

[...]

We distributed all the money to the children, whatever we had. Officers from the Education Department came... to do the inspection, they came and said, 'Show us, call the children'. So some children, because it was a new school year, had left and some children were still here.

...then he came into my office for the money [the fee], and we didn't give him the bribe. And he wrote, 'They didn't distribute all the money [to the kids]'...They also said something about possibly withdrawing recognition. And I think some other schools had court cases against them. So we thought that if the government thinks that we're corrupt, even though we behaved honestly and they still think we're corrupt, then we're just not going to accept the scholarship money (G03-1, Corrup/Sch, pp. 1-2).

As alluded to above, many case study owners/principals felt that recognition could be withdrawn according to the whimsy of particular officers if they were not appeased through perverse incentives. They felt withdrawal could result, not due to

unfulfilled conditions, but because the FIF could be unfairly applied if they did not agree to certain demands. Thus, some interviewees felt that this could only be offset by essentially ‘buying’ recognition from the outset. Any subsequent withdrawal would implicate the Department and its officers, which would serve as an enforcement mechanism against this:

14. It won't be withdrawn. Because it's very difficult to get recognition. If you get it they won't take it back.
[...]

Definitely. How can you [an officer] ask for it back? If you're the one who gave it to me when in reality I would have given you money and only then would you have given it to me. Then how can you say, that there's anything wrong [with the school]? Because when you get something on the basis of money then it's not that easy to take it back (PL10-3, Corrup/Sch, pp. 10-11).

Finally, allegations of corruption were not made solely by case study owners/principals, but even within various State education departments by other officers and employees. The following is taken from an observation excerpt:

As this was the first day back from Holi²⁰, Mohan was talking to the typist and said: '*Maine to Holi ki shubkaamnaayein kissi ko nahin din—koi is layak to ho—meri to ashubkamnaayein hain.*' [I didn't wish anyone good wishes for Holi—they should at least be worthy—I only wish them unwell]. I was a bit shocked at the bluntness of this statement. I guess there are a lot of undercurrents of conflict running around the departments. However, since the comment was general and [not] specifically targeted at anyone it was hard to know exactly to [whom] he was referring. However, minutes later, Mohan clarified this by stating: "*Kissi bhi BSA jo hum call kartein hain... agar...Sahib karna chahte hain to karte hain, hum nahin karte.*" [Any DEO that I call... if...Sir wants to call he does, I don't.] He further went on to add that he feels they don't do any work. None of the files that were passed to them...have been passed. At this the typist interjected and said: "*Kyonki isme paisa nahin milne vaala hai na, is liye. Aap unko [Rs.] 5000-10,000 dete to voh karte*" [Because they're not about get any money for this, that's why. If you give them Rs. 5000-10,000 then they'll do it]. Mohan stressed firmly: "*Ye ghalat baat hai. Har kaam paisa se thodi na hona chahiye*" [This is wrong. Everything shouldn't be done on the basis of money]. The typist responded, "*Haan, ye hi to hai. Aap dijiye to voh kaam phat se ho jaayega*" [Yeah that's true. But if you give it then it'll be done lickedy-split].
[...]

The banter on this topic continued as other clerks came in and out of the office to get forms signed. Mohan then began talking about [name omitted] and how [they] used to even get GOs (government orders) written by [themselves] if need be: "*Unke samay to humne bahut*

²⁰ Holi is the major Hindu 'Festival of Colours'.

dhaandli dekhi thi" [I saw a lot of rigging going on during their time]. I couldn't believe that he was saying this about...a senior IAS officer, by name in a room full of people! Another man was also sitting with a file waiting...Mohan told one of the peons to let us in ASAP. Then going back to the topic of [the IAS officer], Mohan said: "*Jaanch ki thi, sab farzi paya gaya tha—sab ghalat. Unhone counters nahin lagaaye muqaddme mei*" [There was an investigation and everything was found to be fraudulent—everything was false. They haven't countered the cases yet] (FN 20-03-03).

Thus, the reliance on perverse incentives both by institutional and organisational actors seemed to be common knowledge. Furthermore, certain elements of the SIF were known to institutional actors who allowed it to function, despite it being in opposition to the FIF. One government officer was quite candid about the extent of their knowledge about the SIF, owing to the bad reputation of various education departments and the hassles involved in following the FIF:

15. It's because [pause]... government offices are notorious for giving people the run-around. They [private school owners] want to save themselves the hassle from all of this. They just go ahead and open their schools (GO4-1, SIF/St, p. 9).

The officer was also aware that schools used the SIF to send parents with false affidavits to obtain TCs for children at unrecognised primary schools, and of the procedures for exam provision as private candidates:

16. Private candidates... those that are home-schooled. For example they say that they've studied until grade 5 at home. So they get it done through an affidavit. [Unrecognised] private include themselves in this provision as well.

So they do this as well...?

I mean as an...Education Officer I shouldn't say that they get exams done through this basis, but that's how they include their students [as private candidates].

They probably do it like that.

Naturally, that is how it's done. That's how they include themselves in the system (GO4-1, SIF/St, p. 6).

The same officer claimed that the various education departments and offices were aware that PUA schools charged more than the mandated monthly amount of Rs. 15 at primary and junior levels. Nonetheless, they turned a blind eye allowing the

practices governing fee charging to function because of their assessment of the State's inadequacy and incapacity to meet increasing educational needs and demand. In such a climate, officers felt that it was in the State's best interest to allow private schools to function despite them not adhering to the FIF:

On one of the forms it specifies that the teachers should be paid a government scale...I asked whether or not [they] thought that was really possible for PUAs to do that [...] she quickly added that it's not possible and that she and the District Office knows it's not possible for PUAs to pay that much.

...this was similar with the case of fees...that the government prescribed tuition fee is Rs. 15 however [the officer said], "*Rs. 15 tuition fees agar lenge, to voh school baith jaayenge*" [If they charge Rs. 15 then their school will collapse]. Therefore...said what the schools do is that: "*Voh tuition fees baaki charges aur kuch mei dikhaa denge jaise karma, pankha, khel. Lekin tuition fees ke naam me hume yehi dikhaayenge.*" [They take other charges on top of tuition fees and show some other charges like for fans, toys. But here in the name of tuition fees they will only show us the mandated amount]. [They were] aware that, "*naturally teachers voh ussi se denge*" [naturally, that's the money they use to pay teachers], but that...the Department had to turn a blind eye. I was struck by the frankness with which [I was] told...about these 'back-door' policies or unofficial practices—it goes to show that the state officials do know a lot of how these PUA schools are actually run. Anyway, [the officer] said that [they] understand the reasons why school owners charge higher than Rs. 15 fees: "*Unko school chalaana hai. Hum kuch kehte nahin hain aur chalaane dete hain, varna bandh kar ke baith jaayenge ki, 'Tum hi chalaao Rs. 15 mei.' Issi liye shant ho jaate hain*" [They have to run a school. We don't say anything and we let them run it that way, otherwise they could close it and say, 'You run it in Rs. 15.' That's why we stay quiet] (FN 04-04-03, pp. 5-6).

In effect, the SIF proved to be beneficial for LFP owners, the State, and by relying on some of the FIF's perverse incentives, for certain institutional actors as well. Its success partially relied on those perverse incentives, but also on the SIF's enforcement mechanisms (i.e. possibly losing recognition, inability to obtain recognition, or the reduction number clients and fees), which assumed primacy for case study schools over those of the FIF's. This effectively guaranteed compliance and isomorphism to the SIF and governed LFP school interactions with other schools in the sector and with the State. In short, the SIF increased the legitimacy of case study schools and allowed them to maximise institutional benefit. Furthermore,

it enabled them to be bound to other LFP schools, indicating that they were part of a distinct LFP sub-sector within the private sector with its own set of institutions despite the fact that they were all independently owned.

Case study schools relied on common internal institutions to reduce information asymmetries about knowledge on the formal properties of the FIF and the informal arrangements of the SIF as LFP school organisations. External institutions were used to minimise transaction costs when interacting with the State. The SIF's rule-like procedures, normative properties, and enforcement mechanisms comprised a complete institutional framework from a Northian perspective, despite it being informal.

Finally, the ability to isolate school-specific and common internal institutions and external institutions; challenge the notion of 'performance' as a purely results-based concept; and determine the intricacy of how case study schools operated and mediated the FIF, highlights the usefulness of new institutional analysis in examining emerging education sectors. Fundamentally, institutional-level results exemplify an application of new institutional theory to an emerging education phenomenon, challenging the role that formal rules play in determining school operations and highlighting instead their critical assessment of 'how to win the game' with their best institutional interests at heart, thus extending the application of theoretical paradigms not commonly applied to educational analyses.

CHAPTER 8 Synthesis & Critical Reflections

Concluding Summary and Remarks

The concluding discussion aims to synthesise the implications of the main findings and methodological, empirical, and theoretical contributions of the study. The discussion will link back to some of the methodological literature, contextual debates, and foundational theoretical concepts which shaped the study, and which in turn it challenges or adds to. It is worth stressing that the study sees itself primarily and fundamentally as an inquiry into a new emerging local model of private schooling. As such, it is hoped that the insights gained here could help to frame analyses on the direction that the provision, delivery, and financing of schooling is taking in the context of globalised reforms such as UEE, through an empirical and theoretical analysis of a local response to the persistence of inefficient, insufficient, or ineffective schooling in a developing country context.

8.1 Methodological Contributions: Pushing the Boundaries of Methodology

The methodological contributions of the study lie mainly in its role of highlighting and problematising issues of researcher identity and the dynamics of language and translation in international research. Both of these are issues of

increasing importance in the new global research arena with larger numbers of researchers of diasporic or mixed backgrounds conducting research in all parts of the 'global village'. The significance of the analysis incorporated in this study on issues around the multiplicity of researcher positionalities lies in its assertion that '*field identities*' are inexorably linked with '*real-life identities*', both of which are constantly in flux. The former cannot exist without drawing on the latter, and the latter must incorporate the former to be a more complete representation—both are multiple, exist in symbiosis, and are not fixed in time or space.

Certain aspects of the real-life identity which are relatively malleable can be mediated through the use of *currencies*, which themselves will be dependent and framed by the positionality of real-life identity at the specific point in time and space of the field activity. Field identities can change according to different participant groups and even during single field events. Furthermore, participants can ultimately accept or reject these identities in relation to their own. This challenges traditional methodological literature which either ignores the impact of the symbiosis between real-life and field identities, provides 'how to' advice on merely altering appearance through dress, or on crafting a 'persona' suggesting a certain superficiality and implying that the two identities are relatively independent.

Secondly, the tension between the '*language I use to think in*' and the '*language of the data*', most blatantly expressed during analysis, problematises the role of language and translation in accessing, interpreting, and presenting data. The notion of automatically 'slipping in between' the two analytic languages is fundamental to a reconceptualisation of the role of language in the analytic process.

It can be postulated that the relative lack of discussion about language and translation, particularly in educational research methodology discourse, seems to suffer either from ignorance and inexperience or an epistemological position that

sees researchers as objective instruments of research where: “Who controls the analysis is irrelevant if objectivity is achieved in the research process. The researcher can represent others by dint of this objectivity once translation problems are ‘solved’” (Temple & Young, 2004, p. 163). Given the relative openness of educational research to a phenomenological epistemological stance not captured above, I would like to believe that it is an error of omission. This is not to imply a lesser degree of seriousness, but to point to the critical need of addressing such issues in order to help move our thinking of educational research methodology forward. In so doing we can present it in all its real-life messiness and capture a certain level of authenticity which is otherwise snuffed out of such discourse.

Finally, there is one subtle contribution to the thinking about the ‘case study’ as a methodology. Drawing on Eisner’s (1985) conception of using “theory as a window”, this study was designed through a new institutional theoretical perspective by viewing the case, ‘the phenomenon of LFP schooling in Lucknow District’, over three conceptual levels—the individual, the organisational, and the institutional. In so doing, the integration of theoretical perspectives in influencing case study design was applied. The resulting design added a depth to the study that would have otherwise been lost by viewing the case as composed of only one or two units in the absence of such a theoretical perspective. The resulting study was multi-faceted and examined the phenomenon through a more rounded approach, which allowed the emergence of key insights in providing a fuller analysis of LFP schooling.

8.2 Empirical Contributions: Towards an Understanding of LFP Schooling

This study’s value lies in its examination of an emerging local model of formal private schooling which is pervasive in India (accounts of similar models in

other developing countries exist), but on which little empirical research has been conducted. The study has enabled a critical description and interpretation of the emerging phenomenon of LFP schooling in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh on three levels: (a) the individual: processes of school choice, schooling behaviours, and strategies of engagement; (b) the organisational: internal organisational structure, market strategies and typology, and changing household-school relationships; and (c) the institutional: a detailed account of the FIF governing LFP schools, the existence of the SIF, and how schools operate in the institutional arena. The following discussion returns to the link between key empirical findings and the theoretical concepts and pervasive debates rooting and framing it.

8.2.1 Implications for School Choice: Individual-Level Results

The study aims to address the gap in the school choice literature applicable to developing country contexts (currently framed by economic analyses and models) to extend our current thinking on school choice processes. The empirical work resulted in a unique analysis of the school choice processes of disadvantaged parents from the standpoint of educational studies. It added to and challenged the current literature based on economic models assessing school choice outcomes to examine instead *school choice processes—how schooling decisions are made within disadvantaged households*. In so doing, it necessarily placed those groups at the centre of analysis which are otherwise marginalised in dominant research, and challenged assumptions about their role in and processes of school choice.

At the most basic level, the study redirects the academic discussion by highlighting the fact that any debate on school choice, schooling decisions, or schooling patterns in a developing country context must begin from a very different starting point than in the traditional literature. The basis of increased choice is framed

within an institutional context for school choice (in Uttar Pradesh) which is fundamentally different from most Western countries. The increase in choice for disadvantaged parents comes not from state-sanctioned voucher programmes or the alleviation of catchment rules, but increased privatisation resulting in an array of private schools on the market. As institutional-level findings have shown, in practice, the institutional framework governing LFP schools and through which school choice is made approximates choice_m (Tooley, 1997), an opening up of the supply-side reducing state monopoly of provision for this group. This is despite the fact that in principle the framework for private provision should activate choice_s, where choice is enacted through heavy state regulations even in the private sector. We will return to this point in Section 8.2.3.

Secondly, prerequisite factors taken for granted by middle-class households in India and in economically advantaged countries (from which current school choice thinking stems), must be made explicit in any attempt to understand disadvantaged parents' school choice processes and behaviour. Results revealed that the prerequisites for LFP school choice for households in the study could be broadly categorised as those relating to: (a) infrastructure ('school pool' and 'safe and secure access to schools') and (b) prioritising education ('ability to prioritise' and 'changing mental models'). The interplay of these prerequisites on the assessment of the schooling needs of disadvantaged households enabled those in the study to make the fundamental prerequisite choice of sending their children to school in the first place. This in itself marks a change in the schooling decisions of disadvantaged groups, particularly in rural areas.

Critically considering the prerequisites for choice as the starting point for assessing disadvantaged groups' schooling choices, behaviours, and decisions necessitates the examination of *systemic barriers* that may have traditionally pre-empted

the prerequisite choice to send their children to school, rather than conceptualising disadvantaged groups as making a 'non choice' because of devaluing schooling. In effect, the choice not to send a child to school or to send a child to a state school can be conceptualised as a *choice in and of itself* (even if it is judged to be undesirable or one with negative consequences). In so doing it becomes illogical to conceive of such parents as 'non-choosers', but necessitates reframing the school choices and behaviours of disadvantaged groups. It permits asking the question: why did this household choose not to send their children to school? Such a starting point for inquiry is necessary to examine systemic and institutional impediments to school choice.

The crux of the individual-level inquiry examined the complex nature of school choice for households accessing LFP schools. The resulting empirically derived model points to a *systemic set of values, beliefs, and mental models which guided these disadvantaged households in enacting their school choices favouring the LFP sector*, and in engaging with their chosen school. It consisted of a dynamic and inter-related process structured by the macro-level attitudinal factors, 'beliefs about education' and 'perceptions about state and private sectors', and the micro-level contextual factors, 'information about local school characteristics' and 'constraints'.

The two levels of choice were interconnected and fed into each other. They were neither linear nor ordered. The attitudinal factors were essentially households' world views or ideological constructs about education and schooling. Contextual factors were the application of such constructs to their local circumstances. Any one of the four factors informed the others and could be sources for reassessing the choice. Thus, the choice of LFP school was continually reassessed by households in the study who stated that it may be altered at any time.

This poses a direct challenge to rational assumptions about school choice in exactly the scenario they were assumed to operate—an exceedingly privatised and marketised school arena. The prototype of the *homo-economicus* choosing through rationally constructed assumptions and ordered processes seemed not to apply. Instead, an individual considering the choice through ideological constructs that can be influenced by peers and changing socio-economic conditions, school popularity and reputation, the child's choice, value-laden perceptions of a failing state sector, and a class-constructed typology of the school market (where every social group has its place) emerges. The continual reassessment of the resulting choice seems to suggest that the parent is either never entirely certain of or satisfied with the result. It points to the fact that transaction costs due to uncertainty are perceived to be high, from both the school's and the household's perspective. The significance of empirical results supporting such an analysis challenges the foundations of the way school choice is expected to operate in a highly privatised and marketised system.

Turning to a characterisation of households in the study, empirical results showed that despite their relative lack of familiarity with the formal school system, disadvantaged households in the study made a deliberate and considered choice, albeit from a different frame of reference. Contrary to assumptions, they did not assume the role of “disconnected choosers” in Gewirtz et al.'s (1995) typology, which would be the expected class-related typology most closely capturing the group in this study. As the authors outlined, disconnected choosers in England are overwhelmingly from working class backgrounds and:

...are disconnected from the market in the sense that they are not inclined to engage with it. It is not that these parents have no views about education, or no concerns about schools and their children's achievement. They do, but they do not see their children's enjoyment of school or their educational success as being facilitated in any way by a consumerist approach to school choice (Gewirtz et al., 1995, p. 45).

Results indicated that households in the study were in fact *convinced* that their children's schooling could only be improved through active engagement with the school market and a consumerist approach to school choice, rather than relying on state provision. In fact, the very nature of the school market (discussed in Section 8.2.2) facilitated the emergence of an approach to school choice even more consumerist than many Western countries. The results present households in the study as active choosers and participants in their children's education, making deliberate and systematic choices about their children's schooling. For example, the astonishing finding of near gender parity in the enrolment of girls and boys from households in the study in LFP or other private schools suggests a fundamental change in their engagement with the private school market.

The engagement strategies employed by households in the study also highlighted their active engagement with the school market. The strategies of stay, fee-bargaining, exit, and fee-jumping by decreasing degrees of nesting demonstrate the extent to which households were able to engage with their chosen school for their benefit. The threat of exit and fee-jumping in particular caused considerable pressure for schools to respond (or seemingly respond) to parental demands for fee reductions. The empirically derived strategies challenge Hirschman's analysis of clients' market strategies. The concept of loyalty did not seem to exist. Voice for educational improvement was neither encouraged by schools nor practiced by clients. It could be hypothesised that clients' relative inexperience with formal schooling and their low educational status that did not permit them to make such an analysis. However, voice was enacted for fee reduction—the element that they were most directly concerned and intimately familiar with.

The emergence of fee-bargaining and fee-jumping strategies used specifically in the LFP market (and not reportedly practiced in the high-fee sector), along with

the resulting fee mechanisms schools instituted, highlight that the specificities of the contextual make-up and processes guiding school choice in any market must be considered. Simply implanting client strategies developed in another market is insufficient for an adequate analysis, since resulting client strategies are themselves contextually derived.

However, according to Hirschman's typology, parents accessing the LFP sector would be classified as the quality-conscious alert clients in relation to the competing state sector. This has fundamental implications for the future of children whose parents either cannot or do not access the LFP sector. For if the state sector is as malfunctioning as it is perceived and documented to be, and there is cream-skimming of clients from among the most disadvantaged groups, then the future of schooling for the most disadvantaged does not seem promising. From this perspective, while greater school choice through the LFP sector seems desirable for disadvantaged groups who had little or no choice before, it may also be highly iniquitous if it has no recuperation effect for the state sector.

8.2.2 Implications for Marketisation in Education: Organisational Level Results

LFP schools have been portrayed in the existing literature as one of two ways. Either as "zealous and innovative centres of feverish activity" (Tooley, 2001c), or as ill-equipped 'teaching shops' out to make a profit and dupe otherwise unsuspecting and vulnerable parents:

The so-called public schools [using 'public school' to refer to private schools] and model schools are increasingly becoming commercial ventures and even the rural areas are falling prey to the idea of their 'excellence'. It is a warning signal. However, people definitely want quality education at the foundational stage and they are prepared to spend and suffer for it.

Some urgent steps are therefore, needed to discipline the petty teaching shops to save students as well as teachers from exploitation (Singh, 1995, p. 140).

Empirical results from this inquiry demonstrate that it would be hard to characterise at least the LFP schools in this study as entirely one or the other. While there was a definite financial motive for case study school owners to open them, they couched it as a desire for social service and a response to the failing state sector. On this point, if as limited observations at state schools revealed that the quality of state schooling requires improvement, then perhaps LFP schools can provide, in principle, an alternative to this sector. With this being said, it is important to state that the study did not judge the relative levels of 'quality' (however defined) between state and LFP schools. This is a crucial component to assess the type of efficiency in the LFP sector—crude or productive.

In order to judge efficiency, there must be a comparison between available schooling options in the market for disadvantaged groups. Thus, in absolute terms it may be that compared to high-fee schools, LFP schools are more crudely efficient (lower cost for lower quality product), but these are largely unavailable as feasible alternatives for disadvantaged groups. On the other hand, LFP schools may be more productively efficient than state schools (higher cost but slightly higher quality). Nonetheless, any such quality analysis must include broader based indicators (similar to Lloyd et al., 2000; 2003) beyond economic or results-based ones to more closely approximate students' lived experiences at school. This should be a point for further research.

The extent of parental involvement was reported by school and household interviewees as minimal. While it was a common complaint of case study owners, it was consistent with the hierarchical internal management structure limiting parents to the role of end-users and reflecting owners' intent to keep schools loosely coupled. The loosely coupled structure provided a solid buffer between management and technical activities vis-à-vis clients, government officials, and school staff. Low

parental involvement was further exacerbated by schools not establishing forums inducing voice or greater participation, and parents who were hesitant in approaching schools because of their lack of 'educational' capital or outstanding fees. Additionally, similar to Goldring and Shapira's (1993) analysis, many households felt that once the LFP sector choice was made, the rest of the 'work' of schooling was the schools' responsibility.

The direct influence that households had on school finances altered traditional household-school power dynamics in case study schools. This was contrary to the assumption that interactions would typically mirror parents' social positioning vis-à-vis school owners of higher socio-economic class. However, as previously discussed, empirical results indicated that some parents actively engaged in exit, fee-bargaining, or fee-jumping strategies because they were unconcerned about any negative consequences to their children's education (such as expulsion). They were aware that the school relied on their money to survive and that they wielded more bargaining power. In such a context, far from further disadvantaging households, the act of paying fees actually seemed to *empower* parents to some extent.

"Empowerment" in the context of choice has been defined by Goldring and Shapira (1993) as "...the parents' role in exercising control within a school, typically through decision-making. [...] Empowerment, usually through decision-making forums, is accompanied by sources of power and influence" (p. 398). In this study, empowerment was not realised through increased decision-making, but by exercising control resulting from increased bargaining power through fee paying. This resulted in case study schools establishing certain mechanisms (e.g. fee mechanisms) in response. The resulting influence of this empowerment in affecting the operation of case study schools and partially identifying them as LFP schools must be stressed. Thus, 'responsiveness' was a combination of the reactionary or pre-emptive actions

taken by school owners, and the ensuing internal institutions that were instituted to cope with clients' increased bargaining power. In essence, it promoted an increased marketised and consumerist approach to schooling.

The schooling market was differentiated by its users and suppliers as being highly class structured. As individual-level data suggested, disadvantaged households presented a school market typology by social advantage and saw themselves as being accommodated by the LFP sector. Owners/principals of case study schools largely also conceived of their schools as targeted to the same group. As a result, marketing strategies adopted by case study schools were governed by the overarching concern to maintain and expand their existing client base. As such, strategies such as 'rebranding' were bidirectional. Some schools aspired to rebrand as high-fee schools to increase their revenues. Others, previously high-fee or medium-fee schools, saw the potential to attract a larger client base through disadvantaged groups. Another strategy was to engage in mimetic isomorphism (in accordance with the SIF), to mimic internal and external institutions deemed successful in attracting and maintaining clientele by other LFP schools. This partly enabled case study schools to form part of a distinct LFP sector (detailed in 8.2.3).

Finally, it is important to engage in a discussion about the degree of 'quasi-marketness' and the lived market. As institutional data revealed, LFP market operations, the organisational structure of LFP schools, and the nature of the school choice process were framed by the LFP sector's formal properties and informal arrangements. The informal arrangements (through the SIF) determined how LFP schools operated and made institutional arrangements to occupy a specific place in the school market as part of a distinct sector (discussed in Section 8.2.3). The formal properties were characterised largely through the FIF as applied *in practice*, which will in turn determine its degree of quasi-marketness.

Applying Le Grand (1991) and Glennerster's (1991) criteria to the LFP sector, it is possible to see that the degree of quasi-marketness expressed by the LFP market is much lower than in Western countries. Unlike traditional quasi-markets, LFP providers were essentially for-profit providers competing with each other and the state sector for individual clients and not public contracts. Consumers paid for schooling services directly, in cash, and were represented by themselves and not through an agent. Furthermore, while in principle there were heavy restrictions for exit and entry from the market, in practice they were unevenly applied to LFP schools by institutional actors, and mediated by LFP schools through the SIF. Choice regarding diversity in curricula was limited, since most schools followed the State curriculum to gain legitimacy.

Therefore, it could be possible to state that the LFP sector operated more as a free market than a quasi-market. However, the LFP sector's preoccupation with the FIF and the FIF's role in partly determining the SIF is an important distinction. In other words, it could be that the 'look' of a quasi-market may have different properties determined by the extent to which the FIF not only influences entry and exit, but actual operations of school sectors through informal institutions (as in the SIF). Nonetheless, its success as an altered quasi-market by Bartlett and LeGrand's (1993) conditions seems questionable. This is particularly since as analysis showed, access to accurate information by clients about the 'quality' of schooling was complicated; transaction costs between clients and LFP school providers, and among the pool of LFP providers and LFP providers and the state were high (some playing up perverse incentives of the FIF); and some LFP providers aimed to cream-skim and enter the medium-fee market, even though this was difficult for many to do.

8.2.3 Implications for Institutional Analysis in Education: Institutional-Level Results

Institutional-level data outlined the formal institutional requirements governing PUA schooling in basic and secondary education, of which the LFP sector is a part. This was an essential first step given that the importance of norms and regulations governing LFP schools has been acknowledged in existing literature but a detailed description of relevant institutional requirements for LFP schooling in Uttar Pradesh has not been previously undertaken. The analysis demonstrated that a main feature of the FIF was the constant tension between the State, districts, and boards regarding the outward intent to control private schooling. Although a certain semblance of freedoms were granted to the boards (e.g. the granting of recognition), in principle the ultimate power and control rested with the State. Secondly, the level of State, district, and board interference in the operation of private schools (e.g. internal management structures and hiring processes) was considerably high in principle, despite the fact that PUA schools are financially unsupported by the State. However, empirical results demonstrated that the intended outward institutional control as enshrined in the FIF and its embedded perverse incentives prompted the opposite effect on LFP schools. It encouraged them to play a different game with its own rules—*the shadow institutional framework*.

Empirical data indicated that the unevenness in the application of an explicitly articulated FIF was mainly due to the existence of perverse incentives embedded within it. Evidence regarding the persistence of perverse incentives could be directly extracted through the relatively recent enshrinement of sanctions and enforcement mechanisms in the formal rules against institutional and organisational actors (e.g. for exam leakage and staff appointments). As observation, informal, and

formal interview data further indicated LFP, schools relied on perverse incentives to extract maximum institutional benefit in vital areas such as recognition.

To this end, and to ensure ‘good institutional performance’, case study schools employed the ‘*shadow institutional framework*’ through which the FIF was mediated. From the perspective of case study schools and a new institutional paradigm, ‘good institutional performance’—their chief concern with ‘how to win the game’—moved beyond a results-oriented conception of performance and instead was their *ability to function within or around the FIF to ensure their maximum benefit, i.e. their maximum potential to survive, profit, attract, and maintain clients and, minimise transaction costs.* The SIF’s common internal institutions allowed case study schools to reduce information asymmetries about the formal properties of the FIF and the informal arrangements of the SIF. Its external institutions minimised transaction costs when interacting with the State in key areas for performance, such as recognition and examinations. The SIF’s enforcement mechanisms: (1) possibility of recognition withdrawal; (2) inability to obtain recognition; and (3) potentially losing clients or revenue were assumed primacy for case study (and other LFP schools) and were more binding than the FIF.

As a result, case study (as other LFP) schools were more isomorphic to the SIF for gaining legitimacy and enabling schools’ smooth functioning. The SIF seemed to be the product of a process that encouraged a combination of coercive and mimetic isomorphism. Coercive isomorphism felt by case study schools as “pressures exerted on organisations by other organisations upon which they are dependent [...] and as invitations to join in collusion” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 150), can be slightly readjusted to explain the emergence of the SIF. The pressures exerted on case study schools were more strongly felt through the FIF in key areas such as recognition or examinations. As a result, unrecognised case study schools

(like other unrecognised LFP schools), became dependent on recognised LFP schools and actively sought collusion through affiliation. This pressure and dependence greatly influenced the mix of the SIF's external institutions that emerged. Furthermore, increased household bargaining power, and the interest of case study schools to attract and maintain clients, resulted in mimetic isomorphism restricting the array of internal institutions instituted as part of the SIF.

While the study was not large enough in scope to assess the resulting mix and degree of diversity in the LFP sector, the application of the empirical results above to theoretical debate about school choice and diversity through a new institutional lens are critical. Further research may reveal the relative lack of 'actual' choice between LFP schools for clients as a consequence of their reliance on the SIF to survive. In effect, this may mean that while there may be increased choice for disadvantaged groups between sectors (state and LFP), there may be decreased choice within them (LFP of interest here). This would be in line with the sociological variant of new institutionalism's claims about inherently converging institutional arrangements in education sectors, reducing diversity of provision (however, here it would be as a result of the SIF).

Returning to empirical findings about the SIF, results indicate that it was informal as it was neither written down nor formally legislated. At first glance, the significance of informal over formal institutions seems to be in line with the sociological variant of new institutionalism. However, at the very least, the SIF's external institutions were specifically devised in response to and, for the purpose of, mediating the formal rules. As such, the regulatory element as stressed in NIE assumes importance. The SIF, though informal, did not simply respond to or operate in culturally formulated norms, but was explicitly devised to mediate regulatory norms, and as such largely assumed rule-like status and structure. The SIF's rule-like

procedures, normative processes, and enforcement mechanisms constituted a complete institutional set for case study schools and bound them together with other LFP schools as part of distinct LFP sub-sector of the greater private sector.

The synthesis of and reflections on empirical findings at the three levels of inquiry herald the complexity of the LFP phenomenon and its far-reaching consequences in framing the delivery and provision of schooling for disadvantaged groups in India. The implications of increasing consumerist behaviour by households accessing the sector and its impact in influencing certain internal institutions of LFP schools are relevant to assessing their structure. The implications of an increasingly class-differentiated schooling market and its effects for the schooling of most disadvantaged groups must be stressed. Finally, the emergence of LFP schools as a sub-sector of the greater private sector and not as a set of fragmented schools has fundamental implications for the general provision of schooling for this group.

8.3 *Advancing the Application of Theoretical Perspectives in Education*

As evidenced by the discussion above, the main empirical findings at all three levels challenged, advanced, or realigned certain theoretical concepts fundamental to school choice, school markets, and institutional analyses of schooling. As such, it is difficult to divorce the application or implication of empirical results with theoretical analysis—they formed a dynamic dialectic. This discussion is focused on the advances to theoretical perspectives in education.

The main theoretical contribution of this study lies in its application of institutional analysis to education. By combining the sociological variant of new institutionalism with NIE, the analysis resulted in a more robust examination of the phenomenon of LFP schooling as it focused not only on the formal regulatory

framework, but also provided a way to examine the organisational structures operating within it. These two approaches are fundamentally treated in isolation by economists and organisational theorists. However, their application in studying, for example, how loose coupling operates regarding the technical and administrative aspects of organisations, as well as in examining a sector in relation to its FIF, can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of that sector as a whole. For example, the SIF enabled a loosely coupled LFP sector (regarding its FIF) which allowed case study LFP schools to gain legitimacy by buffering them from certain formal institutional requirements.

Furthermore, combining McMeekin's constructs of micro-level "within school institutions" with North's analysis of macro-level formal institutions enabled a more complete analysis of how LFP school organisations operated internally and in relation to the external regulatory environment. This allowed the emergence of the 'shadow institutional framework' as a theoretical construct contributing to traditional analyses in new institutionalism. North's framework allows one to consider the process of institutional change through the constant interplay of organisations and institutions, but does not offer a way to incorporate micro-level institutions at the organisational level along with macro-level institutions. And while North and McMeekin's perspectives do not highlight the possibility of informal institutions in overriding formal regulatory frameworks; the sociological variant does not include the possibility of informal institutions as encompassing more than cognitive or cultural norms and being constructed in response to (and effectively as) 'formal' rules themselves. Thus, the analysis of LFP schools through both perspectives enabled an extension of current theoretical perspectives in new institutionalism.

Furthermore, the application of NIE allowed the examination of "information asymmetries" and the arrangements school organisations may engage in

to address them; and the “transaction costs” that they must minimise through altering their interactions with the FIF and the State. It also enabled the examination of “perverse incentives”, not as externally imposed constructs promoting private wellbeing over institutional commitment, but as actually embedded within the FIF itself. Thus, from an institutional perspective, an answer to why the FIF was not altered despite the fact that the SIF usurped it with the knowledge of institutional actors, would simply be that the bargaining power to create new rules rested with those (the institutional actors) who benefited from the existing perverse incentives embedded in the FIF.

Finally, the study’s use of new institutionalism from design to analysis brings forward the applicability and usefulness of such a paradigm to the study of educational organisations and institutions. It highlights new institutionalism as a useful and powerful tool through which to gain new insight and critically describe and interpret emerging educational phenomena. It draws attention to a strand of economic theory which has otherwise gone largely unnoticed in educational analyses, and alters it in turn, to suit educational studies. As such, it is hoped that the study has extended the current theoretical discourse in educational studies, and will continue the application and refinement of such an approach in future educational research.

8.4. *Future Areas of Inquiry*

This inquiry on the emerging phenomenon of LFP schooling was envisioned as a starting point to critically describe and interpret the phenomenon from which further points of interest could be uncovered. It is clear that future inquiries should focus on a broader study to enable a quality comparison between state and LFP schools. If these are the two options currently available to disadvantaged groups then it is crucial to assess what, if anything extra, parents get for their money. Future

inquiries should assess 'quality' by employing indicators beyond expenditure and results to include, for example, students' gendered school experiences, facilitation of home-school support, and teachers' attitudes.

Secondly, broad-based inquiries on gender patterns in LFP schooling should be conducted. Results from this study did not suggest gender selectivity but, given the nature of the sample and the study's main aims, the finding cannot be generalised to the total population of households accessing the LFP sector. Such gender analyses should also compare drop-out, repetition, attendance, and delayed enrolment rates.

Thirdly, an institutional analysis on the extent to which the LFP sector is considered by the state when developing policies or initiatives for disadvantaged groups is also crucial. If disadvantaged groups are increasingly attracted to the LFP sector, then the implications of such schooling in achieving UEE targets and MDGs must be assessed. The potential role (if any) LFP schools have in aiding states to achieve EFA targets must be assessed for more effective and efficient implementation of international and national education programmes. This may have implications in creating LFP-state school partnerships, which could be incentives for LFP schools to comply with existing state norms or alter the formal rules that are seen as unnecessarily restrictive or inefficient. Furthermore, it may provide state schools with the incentive to increase their quality of provision. An institutional analysis may also examine whether the SIF or its components are institutionalised in the FIF *over time*. This may have fundamental implications for the formal delivery of schooling to this group.

However, the implications of the current study and future inquiries must be kept in check. Unlike assertions to the contrary (Tooley, 1999; 2001a; 2001b; 2001c), while LFP schools are popular among disadvantaged groups, the latest statistical data (Mehta, 2004) incorporating recognised and recognised PUA schools show that state

schools are still the overwhelming choice. While the statistical data do not disaggregate this choice by social advantage, future analyses should incorporate socio-economic indicators to show to what extent sectors are accessed by different social groups. By ignoring such an analysis, the conditions of schooling for the great majority of children in reportedly unsatisfactory conditions, will go ignored. While it is important to recognise the potential of LFP schooling to redress some of these imbalances, it should not be seen as a panacea for greater ills in education caused by overarching perverse incentives, inefficient redistribution of resources, an educational agenda greatly influenced by international debates, and insufficient monitoring. The hope that the LFP sector brings must be carefully reserved until the results of future inquiries are available.

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Appendix 1

Original Quote in Hindi for Chapter 4

- 1. “Haan, main matlab ghar mei jaati hoon [kapde] dhone ke liye colony mei na. Vaise main jaati hoon... jaise aap log ke yahan jaati hoon na... [chuckles] ”
(PR128-1, p. 3)

Appendix 2

Original Individual-Level Quotes in Hindi for Chapter 5

1. “Haan bahut school hain, aise bahut school hain, matlab bahut hain” (PR114, UPre-req, p. 4).
2. “Theek veek nahin... kahan likhaya jaaye? Sab vaise hi school hain gaon mei. Gaon mei jo hai sab vaise school hain, matlab koi khaas achchhe school nahin hain. [...]

[Muffled words omitted] ab paise nahin hai, kya kiya jaye. Aur achchhe school itne hain nahin jo achchhe school mei likha dein naam, utna fees de saken, utna kharcha uthha saken to yehi behtar hai.

“Ye sab se behtar hai?”

“Haan. Gareebi ke hisaab se to behtar hai hi hai” (PR24, RPre-req, p.1).

3. “Bas ye hai ki gaon mei zyada ye maante hain log ki akeli ladki hai to itna door hai to kahan jaa paayegi... thoda dikkat hai. [...]

Bahut dikkat hoti hai. Bas issi ki problem hoti hai. Aur har school... hmm... door door hai. School bhi kitni doori pe hai. Ab yahan hai to hum log bhi... gaon mei thoda parida bhi rehta hai ab hum log jaldi nahin jaa paayenge... lene. Ab yahan aadmi duty chale jaate hain apan aa jao” (PR104, UPre-Req, pp. 3-4).

4. “Humaara beta, jiske ye ladke hain, voh padhe bhi nahin.”

“Achcha, voh nahin padhe hain?”

“Voh padhe bhi nahin.”

“Kyon?”

“Arrey, hum log gareeb aadmi kahan padhaye paayen? Tabhi 50 paise, Rs.1 ki mazdoori.”

“Tab?”

“Isse zyada nahin rahe. Tab ki baat hai. Rs. 1, Rs. 1.50. Se zyada nahin rahe aur inka logan ka khilay ke liye raha 2 ladki 2 ladka rahein, 4 logan ka paise...”

“Haan. Bahut kam mazdoori hoti thi...”

“Aur Rs. 1-1.5 mei kahan chalta” (PR27, RPre-req, p. 2).

5. “Voh bhi nahin padhe hain.”

“Voh bhi nahin padhe hain.”

“Arrey dehaat mei jab tehoki take jamaana raha ki baal bachche khavavein ki tab padhavein?”

“Sahi hai. Ab? Thoda badal gaya hai, zamaana?”

“Hmm. Ab bahut badala hai. Thoda kahe badla hai? Zamaana... utte bachche nahin hai. Utte zamane kitna badala jaaye hai.”

“Ab 3 bachche se zyada ab operation kara lete hain sab ki padhao likhao pehnao vehnao. Puraane zamaane mei chaheje hon, koi operation hi nahin karaya tha” (PR20, RPre-req, pp. 1-2).

6. “Arrey, kami to bahut mehsoos hoti hai jaise ab hum log kiraaye bhaade pe hai... Rs. 600 kamre ka hai. Ab jaise bachche hain to doodh voodh bhi lena hai to to pareshaani to rehtin to hai bhai ghar mei.”

“To kya karti hain aap?”

“Ab kya karen? Bhai aise kaam to chalta hi hai bhai idhar udhar se. Ab jaise humari nand bhai, unki to service hai thoda voh bhi madat kar detin hain. Nahin kaam vaam hai to unka to fixed hai na? Bhai jab nahin ho paata to unke yahan se jaa ke de do fees vees, agey apna phir dete rahenge” (PR111, UFM, p. 2).

7. “Apna makaan vagera ho gaya to ab yehin rehne lage phir humne socha ki hum padha likha bhi li matlab ab makaan ho gaya to padhayein bhi.”[...]

“...pehle kabhi yahan, kabhi vahan... is liye nahin padhate the. Phir yahan aa gaye to humne socha ki laao padha hi dein. Hum log nahin padhe hain to bachche to padh jaayein” (PR109, UPre-Req, p. 1).

8. “Array hum log pehle gaon mei rehte the, phir samaj bhi nahin thi. Hum log gaon ke hain na. Pehle samaj nahin thi. Phie bada hoga to sabko humne dekha ki sab padha rahe hain sab school jaa rahe hain. Humne socha ki laao hum bhi padhayein thoda. Hum khud nahin padhe likhe hain to bachchon ko to padhade” (PR109, UPre-req, p. 1).

9. “Padhana to bahut zaroori hai. Humaare miya, asal baat, doosre mizaaj ke hain. To voh sochte hain ki ladkiyon ko kya padhaayein? Magar hum sochte hain ki array bhai aapke zamaana aisa... humaari behan ki ladki khud hi padh rahi hain. Ab koi BA kar rahin, koi kuch kar rahin to aadmi dekh ke... ab humaare khandaan mei hum hi log kamzor hain padhane mei. Ab humari behan log kehti hain, ki bhai kyon? Pet to chahe chatni kha ke bharo ki chahe roti magar padhana to bahut zaroori hai” (PR111, UMENT, p.1).

10. “Sahoolyat kaun hoti hai? Padhi rahe hain to apan kaam karhi rahe hain. Kahin paaye liye hain jaise padhi hain to kahin naukri vaukri paaye liyen hain. Tab apun rahi hain to. Ab kheti baadi to hai nahin zyada” (PR20, UMent, p.1).

11. *“To aage aap kya sochte hain apne bachche ke baare mei?”*

“Padhi hain to maza karhi hain. Hum to kheti karhin hain. Aur jo na padhe hain to jo unke bhaag mei likha hai to hue.”

“To unko bhi beti mei koi voh nahin hai ki humaare bachche bhi kheti mei aaye?”

“Nahin.”

[...]

“Voh, aap kya chahte hain?”

“Hum to kehte hain likhai jaayen, Lucknow mei rahen jaa ke. Aur jab naa likhai paave to koi zabardasti to hai nahin, likhai naa pao to.”

“Tab kheti hai...”

“Haan. Aur kheti nahin ka ye 10 saal ke andar jaaye liya.”

“Achchha.”

“Ye humaare...mei jaaye 15 saal mei. Kheti humaare saamne hi khatam ho jaayhi.”

“Achchha... to unko to kuch karna hi hai...”

“Haan” (PR22, RMent, p. 9).

12. “Humko to padhana hai.” [...] Naukri milegi to milegi warna koi dhanda karenge. Padh lena bahut zaroori hai... uske baad me jo hoga dekha jayega” (PR6, RMent, p. 10).

13. “padh likh jayegi to kuch bhi kar satki hai” (PR8, RMent, p. 5).

14. “Hum to kam padhe hain, matlab kam hi padhe hain. Bachche humaare inter tak kiya hai. Yahan se inter kiya hai vaise 88% mark high school mei ladki ke.”

“Achchha. Bahut achchhe number. Ab iske baad kya hoga?”

“Iske baad kya, shiksha mitre ke liye apply kiya yojna jo hai unki taraf se open hai. To bhai ladke ladki to padhaye hain to uske hisaab se baat kiya hai ki bhai humaari ladki ko cancel hai jo ho chuki hai.” [...]

“Guest house mei hum hain chaprasi hain. To is liye humaare bachchon ko padhaai hai kyunki hum log ke paas koi kheti baadi to hai nahin.”

“Kheti nahin hai?”

“Nahin.” [...] Hum sochat the ki jo inter kar chuki hai usko shiksha mitre ho jaaye. Thoda sahooleyat milti na? Humko thoda apne bachchon ko dekhna...”
[...]

“Bas isme kuch... [pause] asal mei kuch kathin bahit parivaar bhi lamba har ghar aur income kam ha.” (PR30, RMent pp. 12-13).

15. “Hum soche thoda parishaani uthaayenge bachche hain... badi vaali ladki badhiyan se padh likh le gi to gyan shikshit ho jaayegi.”

“Aaj kal ladkiyon ko bhi padha rahe hain na log... gaon mei bhi?”

“Ab to har jagah padha rahe hain.” [...]

“Hai na? To ab kya change aaya hai logon mein?”

“Logon mei change aaya... padhi likhi ab parivaar jahan shaadi karta hai aadmi ladkiyon ka ab sab log bhi shikshit khoj rahe hain. Ladki ki... shaadi mei problem hoti hai bachchon ko. Aur aaj kal ladki ladka mei farak... ab to ladki bhi har service har jagah har service mei aadmi ka muqaabla kar rahi hai. Zamane ke anusaar ladki ab padhne lagi hai” (PR104, UMent, p. 19).

16. “Bachchon ko padhana hai to pareshaani to uthaani padegi. Ya pareshaani na uthaayen ya bachchon ko naa padhaayen” (PR112, UMent, p. 13).

17. *“To aapko kabhi ye nahin lagta hai ki padhai ke karan bahut jaa raha hai kharcha?”*

“Ye sab hum nahin sochte. Hum log jo hain bahut kam mei guzaara kar lete hain. Magar... ek kilo aata hai, to ussi mei hum guzaara kar lenge. Ye nahin ki hum log ke bahut hi-fi kharche hain.”

“Achchha achchha. Aapko lagta hai ki padhai...”

“Hmm... jo achchhi se ho jaaye. Zaroori hai” (PR26, RMent, p. 8).

18. “Arrey kami to lagi rehti hai. Kabhi kam hua kabhi zyada hua. Kami to lagi rehti hai har ek insaan ko. [Muffled] kami to rehe rehe ke to...”

“Phir aap kya karti hain? Matlab kya sochti hain? Kaise chalaati hain?”

“Chalta hi rahega. Kaise leke chal jaata hai. Bachchon ko padhana hai hi hai. Kissi tarah chahe pareshaani uthake ya kisi tarah padhana hai hi hai bachchon ko” (PR109, Ument, p. 13).

19. “Haan, padhana hai hi hai.”

“Issi liye aapne apni chhoti ladki ko yahan bheja hai?”

Haan, yahan bheja hai lekin humko bhi yahan rehna ka koi irada nahin hai. Kyunki kiraaye pe rehte hain. To ab soch rahe hain ki is saal yahan padh le humaari nand yahan PSC mei rehti hain, service karne lagin...

“Achchha...”

To vahin ladki ko kar denge. Vahin padhegi ye.

“To aap kahan jaayengin phir?”

Apne gaon chale jaayenge.

“Aap chali jaayengin. Aur voh ladki ko apni bua ke yahan chhod dengin?”

Haan.

“To aap gaon kyon gaon kyon jaana hai aapko?”

“Arrey ab voh sayani ladki voh bhi soch rahi hai padhna humko bhi chah... voh soch rahi hai ki ab hum bhi kuch padhenege. [...] Ab hum soch rahe hain ki ghar mei rahe to padhana to hai hi hai” (PR111, Ument, p. 16-17).

20. *“To aapko kabhi aisa nahin laga ki shayad hume bhi gaon mei padhana chahiye?”*

“Padhti thi badi vaali ladki, lekin jab hum yahan aagaye to usko bhi le aaye tab bachche jahan rehte hain unko rakkhna pasand achchha lagta hai chahe kam hi khayein kam pehne lekin voh achchha lagta hai. Saath saath rehte hain to achcha lagta hai. Apna dukh sukh apna saath mei manzoor hota hai.” [...]

“Nahin to badi vaali ladki gaon mei thi abhi bhi kaha tha log ki chhod do vahan pe dikkat hoti hai. Lekin humaara nahin man maanta hai ki chhod do” (PR104, RMent, p. 14).

21. *“Jo sabse bada ladka hai voh kyun nahin padh raha hai?”*

“Voh kuch din padha hai sarkari mei uske baad chhod diya.”

“Usne chhod diya?”

“Haan.”

“*Kyon?*”

“Yahan se raasti mei likha diye aur apna jaa ke ghoomta ghaamta hai” (PR124, UMent, pp. 9-10).

22. “Sarkari mei voh baat nahin rehti na sarkari mei” (PR114, UGvP, p. 12).
23. “Yahan [ghair sarkari] vahan [sarkari] to zameen asmaan ka antar hai” (PR22, RGvP, p. 10)
24. “Is liye ki sarkari school mei dekhiye... jis style chahiye, teacher pe bharosa nahin karti hai. Dekhiye abhi lunch nahin ho, abhi nikal gaye basta utha kar, abhi padhai nahin hui, abhi baith gaye... ye ho gaya hai sarkari school mei. Abhi bachchon se oon khulayenge baith kar. Mere gaon ke bachche jaate hain voh oon kholenge maam ka baith kar. Sweater ka oon sahi karvaayenge. Voh matlab apna kaam lenge aur padhane ka mood nahin rahenge. Aur yahan pe ye nahin hai. Yahan pe time hoga, bilkul time pe bachche padhne aayenge, der ho jaayegi to bachche ko guardian le aayenge” (PR126, UGvP, p. 5).
25. “Sarkari school mei bas ghaddaari hai aur kuch nahin. Ghar mei baith ke log pension paa rahe hain. Padhana nahin hai.”

“*Shehar ke bhi school mei?*”

“Shehar ke **bhi** school mei. [...]”

“Teacheron ki posting local mei ho jaati hai. Apna ghar ka kaam karte hain... kheti, badi, dhanda, business sab karte hain. Padhane se unko koi matlab nahin hai. To vahi do chaar bachche aas paas ke chale gayi ghoomne phirne voh padhne vale nahin hain. Vahin voh khel rahe hain. School mei bhi jaake khel rahe hain, kya farak padta hai? Ghar mei khelne ke bajai school mei jaake khel rahe hain.”

“*Aur yahan, shehar mei sarkari school ka kya hai?*”

“Shehar ke sarkari school... voh to maine abhi dekha nahin. Naa humare paas aisa koi power hai jo hum jaa ke vahan visit karein. Koi matlab hi nahin hai vahan pe jaane ka.”

[...]

“Mujhe lagta hai ki yahan pe bhi lump sum vahi mahaul hoga.” (PR110, UWNG, p. 2)

26. “Ab to vahin achchhi padhai hoti hai jahan fees hain. Sarkari se achchha yehi hai” (PR7, RGvP, p. 7).

27. “Haan. Voh is liye ki sarkari mei ye hai ki itni tabajjo dete hain? Isme jo hai tabassum na denge to voh school band ho jaayega.”

“Haan, ye to hai.”

“Ye baat hai. Isme to hazzri denge aur nahin denge to hum test karenge, bhai usko keh sakte hain” (PR26, RGvP, p. 6).

28. “Yahan bachcha tez hai. Aur vahan utna padhate thodi hain sarkari mei” (PR22, RGvP, p. 4).

29. “Isse pehle sarkari school mei padhte the.”

“To aapne sarkari school mei se yahan kyun bheja bachchon ko?”

“Is liye bheje the ki do saal padhe the kuch aaya nahin.”

“Kuch nahin aaya?”

“Doosre bachche jaate the aata jaata raha. Inke papa bole ye bachche padh rahe hain kuch aata jaata nahin. Dekho achcha sa [Muffled] To jo hai yahan do saal se daal diya phir dheere dheere aane laga. To is liye private mei daal diya sarkari mei nahin” (PR120, UGvP, pp. 6).

30. “...hum khud kahen the ki sarkari mei padhe ab do saal ho gaye inko aa jaa nahin raha hai aur inki zindagi bekaar ho jaa rahi hai bade chale jaa rahe hai inko padhai mei kuch aa nahin raha hai...” [...]

Do saal ho gaye, teesra saal chal raha hai private mei. Aur ab padhenge jaise bhi padhenge private mei padhenge. **Kuch** aayega jaayega, zindagi to banegi. Nahin voh chale jaa rahe hain sarkari school se kuch aa jaa nahin raha hai. Utna batati bhi nahin hain sarkari school mei. Tab isme daal diye the” (PR120, UGvP, pp. 6-7).

31. “Sarkari mei ye hai bilkul ni hi ho ekdam na paisa ho kabaadi ho to vahi log bhej sakte hain. Sab log thodi na bhej sakte hain.”

“Matlab vahan padhai... nahin hoti hai?”

“Na, na, na... bilkul nahin hoti hai. Vahan kaun padhai? Vahan jaate hain laut ke jaise [muffled] koi. Ab jiski manlo nahin kahin matlab nahin dei fees bahar private mei vahi koi likhaayega.”

“Achchha... aur jo zara sa bhi de paaye voh nahin padhayga?”

“Voh kya padhaayega. Jab nahin fees usko ponch rahi hai to voh private mei kaise likhayega. Private mei kam paisa? Bahut paisa lagta hai.”

“Lekin padhai hoti hai?”

“Padhai to hoti hi hai dekho. Private ki cheez hi alag hota hai” (PR114, UWNG, p.5).

32. “Sarkari school mei neech kul ke bachche jaate hain aur padhai phir hoti nahin hai” (PR1, RWNG, p.1).
33. “Bachche padhe agar kismet hai to naurkri mil jaayegi” (PR9, RHHEd, p.5).
34. “Isme to koi guarantee hi naahi... inter pass vale aise hi ghoomat hain. Lekin padhne se apne dhanda kar sakat hain. Kahan naukri milat hai... bank manager aur teacher ke liye bhi 1.5 lakh rupiyah ghooos chalat hai” (PR7, RHHEd, p. 4).
35. “Nahin hum nahin hain padhe likhe. Humaare bachchon ko humne sab ko padhaya hai, matlab hummare maa baap ne nahin... pehle zamaane mei itna nahin tha aur ladkiyon ko to padhate bhi nahin the. Ab sab sochte hain ladkiyon ko zaroori hai padhana. Aur hum bhi sochte hain ki ab bahut hi zaroori hai.”

“Kyon?”

“Isse ki ab hum jo sthithi jhel rahe rahe hain, voh humaare bachche na jhelein.”

“Aap ne kya jhela?”

“Bahut se jhelein hain. Ab hume nahin maalum hai aapne kya likha hai. Aur ye cheez humko dekhna hai. Ab nahin samajh paa rahe hain saab. To humko us cheez ko to feel karegi. Aagey humaara jaisa koi paisa aapne zyada bhar diya. Aur humne kaha le lein, vahan poochha ki kitna nikaala unhone kaha ki itna hai hum usko nahin samajh paaye.”

“To issi liye aapne apne sab bachchon ko padhaya likhaya.”

“Hmm, padhaya likhaya. Humaari teenon ladkiyan bhi padhi hain” (PR125, RGE, pp. 7-8).

36. “Haan hum hi... humare ghar mei bahut ladai jhagda hota hai magar hum kahein, ‘Nahin padhana zaroori hai.’”

“Aap aur apne miya ke beech mei...”

“Aur kya... humare log mei beech mei yehi hai bahut hi ladai hoti hai...”

“Padhane ke us mei...”

“Aur kya, padhana bahut zaroori hai.”

“To ab jab aap padha rahi hain, to ab woh kya sochte hain?”

“Kehte hain, ‘Theek hai padhao’, aur kya” (PR111, UGE, p. 3).

37. “Jaanch, pata ki hai ki kanuse school mei achchhi padhai hoti hai. To sarkari school mei hum gaye to vahan ki padhai samajh nahin aayi. Maine kaha, ‘Do paisa lag jaaye, bachche achchhe padh jaayen’” (PR19, RWTS, p. 3).
38. “Sabhi logon ne ek doosre se poocha ki yahan achchhi padhai hoti hai, achchhi padhai hoti hai, achchhi padhai hoti hai... to issi liye...” (PR107, UWTS, p. 3).
39. “Sarkari padhai ka faida kuch nahin. Agar bachche padhane hai to achchhe school mei padhao jo aage jaake koi pareshaani na ho” (PR112, UGood, p. 7).
40. “Matlab har class mei 2-2, 4-4, 8-8 bachche the [doosre private school mein]. Kam bachche aate the. Kam bachche aate the. Hmm. Har class mei paanch the... kaksha 8 tak. Koi class mei 5 bachche, koi class mei 6 bachche, koi mei 8 bachche aate the... tab humko laga padhai bhi nahin achchha ho raha hai tabhi to bachche nahin aa rahe hain.” (PR104, UGood, p. 4).
41. “Maine jaise yahan pe padhai pehle hoti thi to room bahut chhote the. Aur chhote the phir upar se bachcha itna tha us class mei ki bachchon ko uljhan hoti thi jo class se chale jaayein. Is tarah se lagta tha yahan pe. Matlab aisa lagta hi nahin tha bachchon ko padhane ka, lagta tha aayein hain aur chale jaayenge” (PR126, USCh, p. 15).
42. “Hum... hum... bhej rahen ki yahe humare ladkan ko padhai hum ko padhai achchhi lagi. Humaare ekko baar humaare ladke fail nahin hue, sab paas chalti gayen sab ladkiyan humaari. Dono ladki paas ho gayein, ek 8vi tak ek inter tak. Aur ye inter tak aur nahin fail hui ekko baar. Humre sab niklat gaye. Aur ye issi vajah ehoo bachche yahan bhejen. Hum ka yahan achchha hai araam...” (PR16, RWTS, p. 4).
43. “Humaare hisaab se yehi school sahi lage aur to itne mehenge mehenge school hai. To issi hisaab se apne hisaab se lagaana chahiye. Ye thodi na bade mei karado fees hi nahin jama kar pao to faida kya hai? Apne hisaab se karna chahiye.”

“To aapne logon se poochha bhi ke ye school achchha hai padhai mei?”

“Humaare samajh se to sahi hai. Humaare liye sahi hai. Ab apne apne hisaab se jisko jahan samajh mei aaye, vaha karaye. Humaare liye to sahi hai ye ki itna jitna fees jo utna hi usko...” (PR127, USCh, p. 19).

44. “ Gareebi ke hisaab se to behtar hai hi hai. Paisa ho to Lucknow mei bhejen, achchhe school mei. To vahan pe to kiraaya, fees, aur riksha ka kiraaya sab lagega. Kahan de paayega koi? To yehin humne... paas hi hai aur kam paise bhi padte hain. 40, 50 Rs. lete hain, zyada nahin lete hain” (PR24, RSCh, p. 7).
45. “Nahin, main aur kahin nahin gayi. Bas ek voh [school ka naam] mei, aur ek yahan bas. Aur kahin nahin. Hume achchha laga, aur kahin gaye hi nahin. Ab bachche bhi humko kehte hain ki ‘Nahin, padhai achchhi hai’. Bachche se bhi poochha karte hain, ki padhai kaisi hai” (PR19, RStay, p. 4).
46. “Kyunki antar matalb yahan bhejo ye bachche yahin ke padhe hue yahin fail hoge high school, aur yahin teacheri karne lage. To is liye jab unko khudi knowledge nahin hai to voh teacheri kya karenge? Is liye bachchon ko hum log dekhte hain to shuddh Hindi bhi nahin padhate hain. Lekin ab chunki baar baar hataane se achchha nahin hai... is liye yahan padha rahe hain” (PR29, RMent, p. 1).

Appendix 3

Original Organisational-Level Quotes in Hindi for Chapter 6

1. "...padhai to zaroori hai hi hai, must hai. Bhai ghareeb bachchon ko bhi agar sachcha banaaye to kam se kam jo hai voh desh humaara voh achchha rahe. Sakshak to ho hi jaayega. Aur iski to zaroorat hai hi hai" (PL8-2, Needs, p. 3).
2. "Is liye private schoolon ki baadh si lagi hai. Jiske paas paisa hai vahan voh school khole. Jiske paas nahin hai voh bhi ye chahta hai uski ye tamanna hai ki hum apne gaon ya apne aas paas mei ilaake mei shikshit karen. Lekin bagair paise ke to kuch kaam chal nahin paata hai" (PL5-2, GvP, p. 2).
3. "...ye hi dekhagaya jo hai ki jo hai samaaj mei jo hai shiksha jo hai bada abhaavo hai. Jitne bhi sarkari school hain unme bachchon ko shiksha ki achchhi vyavastha nahin de rahe hain.

To hum logon mei ye jaagrik aayi ki thoda sa jo hai bachchon ko padha kar ke jo achchhi vyavasthaen hai unko padhaaya jaaye, to zyada bachchon ko faida hoga. Ussi lakhsya ko le kar ke hum logon ne ye school khole. Bachchon ko yahan par kam paise mei, aur achchhi shiksha achchhi vyavastha se...

Aur vahi lakshya ab tak hai. Earning lakshya ab bhi nahin hai...Issi prakaar jitne bhi is astar ke vidyalaye hain, voh sab bahut se zyada se zayda Rs. 100, 150 ke under hi fees le rahe hain. [...] To issi prakaar jo hai to ye hai ki bachchon ko kam kharch mei achchhi shiksha hume desh ke bachchon ko shikshit karna hai.

Uske liye hum vyavastha karenge. Kam fees lenge, ye karenge, magar padhaane se inkaar nahin karenge ki, 'Tumhe nikaala hai'. [...] **Padhaana hai.** Usko chahe... ghareeb ho usko bhi padhaayenge aur paisa de sakta hai to usko bhi padhaayenge" (PL12-2, Phil, p. 11-12).

4. "School kholne ka to pehle uddesh to ye hi tha humaara ki jaise ghareeb bachche hain bhai theek hai, fees bhar hi nahin paate hain. Achchhe schoolon mei fees padti hai. To kam se kam to ye ki ek koi achchhi sanstha ho jo ghareeb bachchon ko bhi shiksha mil jaaye. Ye hi tha aur to bas kuch nahin"(PL8-2, Phil, p. 10).
5. "Aur agar voh shehar tak nahin ponhch paa rahe hain to voh private vidyalaya mei nahin padh paa rahe hain. Aur private vidyalaye mei yadi nahin padh paa rahe hain to uski shiksha hi nahin ho paa rahi hai."

"Because agar vidyalaya hain bhi, sarkari school hain. Phir bhi usme agar teacher nahin hain, agar teacher aayen bhi to voh padha nahin rahe hain. To un par koi zor to nahin kar paayega. Issi liye vohi sab soch kar sab ye sab chalaaya gaya aur shiksha hi badhaate chale jaa rahe hain hum log" (PL10-2, Phil, p. 11).

6. “Jaise ab hum log tin ke chhatti ke neeche baithe hue hain, to kya ye private vidyalaya kharaab maana jaayega? Agar issi mei abhi building ban jaayegi to ye achchha maana jaayega? Nahin. Hum nahin maante.” [...]

“Lekin already hota kya hai ki jaise ab jaise yahan par sab dikhne mei theek nahin lag raha hai, tin rakkhi hui hai, to yehi log kahenge ki ye achchha vidyalaya nahin hai. Agar, achchha vidyalaya voh hai jahan par building bana hua hai” (PL10-2, Good, p. 4).

7. “Itna bada commitment kar dena ki, ‘Bachche ko padha denge, pass ho jaayega’, thoda difficult hai. Ghalat baat bolne se kya faida? Jaise father humaare 10th ko bada like karte hain. Ki achchhi padhai karaayenge, pass ho jaayega... padhai to tab karaaoge jab bachcha padhega. Aap boliye.”

“Jab 15 bachchon mei 2 bachchon mushkil se padhne vaale hain, to aap padhai kaisi bhi karaayenge, kaise bachcha nikal jaayega?” (PL1-2, EdBel, p. 1)

8. “Dekhte to hain lekin kursi par baith kar ke dekhte hain. Agar ground pe jaayen aur voh bhi interior ilaaka, [...] round karen, apne schoolon ko dekhne ki humaare schoolon ki kya vyavastha hai. Tab apni vyavastha samajh mei aayegi ki ye weakness ye weak point hai kahan” (PL5-2, State, p. 2).

9. “Gaon mei... voh graam pradhan ke... to voh jo hai koi interest nahin leta hai. Matlab unka ek dabao hona chahiye ki jitne school chal rahe hain, ki, ‘Chalo unse mil lein, vahan principal se milein, aur padhai kaisi ho rahi hai nahin, teacher aa rahein hain.’ Jo sarkari hain yahan koi dabao nahin hai.” [...]

“Agar ye graam panchayat ke jo pradhan hai [...] ye agar jaagrut hon to har kaam jo hai padhai ke liye astak [...] Government se laparvahi ho rahi hai. To vahan pe ye log dabao bana sakte hain. Lekin koi jaagrut nahin hai. Ya to ye log sab log mile rehte hain.”

“*Matlab?*”

“Graam pradhaan aur ye jo hain apna jo hai apna bhaichaari ke roop mei mile hai kuch awaaz hi nahin uthate hain. Nahin awaaz uthate to unka transfer hota. Sach hai na. Agar hum nahin padhayenge, humaare khilaaf agar awaaz uthai jaayegi to kuch na kuch action hoga? Yahan koi acc... application bhi nahin lagaane vaala ki agar ki bachche hain chaar teacher hain, nahin aaye. Yehi soch rahe hain, koi nahin aaya to school band ho gaya. To us committee ko ye karna chahiye ki kyon nahin aaye?” (PL9-3, R&U, pp. 9-10)

10. “...jo traditional education chal rahi thi...is liye thi ki us vaqt educated persons kam the. To jo naye log education le kar ke aaye voh sab [jagah] fill up ho gaye. Ab saari jagah bhari hain. Ab to education ki koi ahamyat... ab jaise humaare Atal [Behari Vajpayee] Pradhan Mantri ne bhi ek statement diya that ki, ‘Ab jisko

computer nahin aayega voh illiterate kehlaayega'. To education ki paribhaasha kitni badal gayi" (PL7-2, EdBel, p. 6).

11. "Inme ye jo hai gabrahat kam hoti hai. Ki agar humaare paas ek skill to aisi hai hi hai ki hum apni life ko [aage le jaa sakte hain], isme ab har ek ki thinking is tarah ki banaayi jaati hai ki aap chhote se start karein magar aap usko aage tak le jaa sakein" (PL7-2, EdBel, p. 3).

12. "Vahan [mehenge ghair sarkari school] ke staff [adhyapak] ko voh salary zyada dete hain to voh kaam bhi zyada zyada lete hain. Vahan teacher Sunday ko bhi bula lete hain. Aur mere vahan 10 baje bol dijiye to bhaari hai. Is tarah se hai. Is saal kuch problem zyaada chal rahin hain."

"Staff ke kaaran?"

Staff ke kaaran. Staff yahan bilkul rukna pasand nahin karta hai jaise. Abhi aapne dekha hoga, jaisi chhutti hui, sab aake khade ho jaate hain. Ki, 'Sir jaayen?' Ye koi baat hui?" (PL1-2, Staff, p. 1)

13. "Trained to ab zyada milte nahin hai."

"Nahin milte hain?"

"Shiksha vibhaag mei hi nahin mil rahe hain, tab voh shiksha mitra rakh rahe hain. To jab unko nahin mil rahe hain to hum logon ka kya..." (PL12-2, Staff, p. 6).

14. "Ab ek baat ye reh jaati hai na ki dehaat ilaaka mei achchhi education ki padhe likhe candidate hain hume nahin mil paate hain. Jinke madhyam..."

"Matlab teaching ke..."

"Haan, teaching. Voh ya shehar se yahan koi aana nahin chahta. Aur agar aana chahta hai to voh salary hum usko dei nahin paate hain." [...]

"Hum lag bhag Rs. 500, 600, 400 ye dete hain. To issi liye to jo shikshak ya shikshikayen hain voh gaon mei bahut kam milte hain. To uska bhi padhai par bahut asar hota hai" (PL5-2, Staff, pp. 4-5).

15. "Haan, parents ki to parents [meeting] hoti hai magar teachers ke sang teachers-parents hum nahin rakhte. Kyonki voh yahan par bhi education ko khareedna chahte hain humaare yahan ke parents jo slum areas se aate hain voh ye chahte hain ki, 'Hum yahan par kuch fees dete hain aur yahan ke teacher ko agar hum apne yahan rakh lenge to humaara bachcha asaani se pass ho jaayega.' Kyonki question usko pata chal jaayenge, sab kuch chal jaayenge" (PL 7-2, Perceps, p.7).

16. “Dekhiye samay bahut kharaab hai. Achchhe logon se ban ke kaam nikaalna... ye to hona chahiye...Teacher ko kya padi hai?[...] Do din kaam karein, chal dein. Gaon phir bheek maangne lagen. Uska kya hai? Jo jiska koi standard koi point hi nahin hai... bhai kaise batadein ki koi zimmedaari honi chahiye. [...] Is tarah se teacher nahin co-operate karte” (PL1-2, Staff, pp. 2-3).

17. “[Fees] Aate hain lekin irregular. Fees irregular aati hai. Regular nahin hota hai. Is liye jo adhyapak ya adhyapaken rakkhi jaati hain unka regular payment nahin ho paata hai. Bhai voh bhi... chahe usko 500 mile, 600 mile ya 300 mile. Is aasha mei voh zaroor hain ki mahina khatam hoga to humko ye paise milega. Lekin fees se hi paisa diya jaata hai. Fees regular aati nahin hai. Yahan unka paisa bhi held up hota rehta hai” (PL5-2, Fees, p. 5).

18. “Kuch guardian jo hain regular... jo education ki importance ko samajhte hain, ya jinka parivaar padha likha hai pehle se, voh regular fees dete hain. Jo illiterate hain, jo education ki mannata importance ko nahin samajhte hain voh irregular rehte hain. Kyonki vahan unke ghar ka poora vyavahar [sp?] voh sab irregular hai. To voh fees mei bhi irregular hain” (PL5-2, Fees, p. 5).

19. “...ek do log ichchhuk hain to padhaane se zyada dhan ko pakadte hain. Ki bachche ki fees na diya jaaye aur bachche ko sab kuch aajaaye. Aisa bhi hai” (PL9-2, Fees, p. 16).

20. “Gareeb bachche hain inko... sach to ye hai ki bhai jaise hum log hain to apne yahan jaise fees nahin bhi diye to padhate chale, ‘Theek padhte raho beta. Nahin fees doge to bhi humaara koi baat nahin hai.’ Das ladke de rahe hain, agar usme chaar nahin bhi dene vaale hain to padhte raho chalo. Aur hum ye maanke chalte hain ki agar maanlo hum unhe tight kiye, ki, ‘Nahin fees nahin laaoge to hum baithne nahin denge’, to kya unko hum nahin baithne denge class mei to mera extra benefit to kuch ho nahin jaayega. Humaari voh hi 10 ladkon ki jo fees aa rahi hai vahi aayegi. To jab extra benefit nahin kuch ho raha hai, aur humaara ek teacher jo 10 ladkon ko padhayega vahi voh 4 ladkon unko padha raha hai. To hume dikkat kya hai? Padhne do unko saath mei.” [...]

“Hum to ye maante hain, jin bachchon ko maan lijiye jaise inhone hum agar inki ladki ka hum pravesch patra naa dete ki, ‘Aapka fees baaki hum nahin denge’, to kya hota? Ye ya to karz kaad ke laata, ‘Lo bhai. Paisa le lo.’ Aur ya to nahin kahin vyavastha to inki ladki exam naa de paati. Aur jo exam naa de paati, to mujhe to paisa naa mil jaata. Is tarah mujh aasha bandhi hui hai ki chalo jo inko mera Rs. 600 chadha hua, aaj nahin to kal shayad dei hi dein” (PL4-3, Fees, pp. 17-18).

21. “Is tarah poochhte hain ki jaise, ‘Bhaiyya, fees ab fees ye baaki hai, nikaalna nahin humaare ladke ko, padhaate raho. Dedenge aage peechhe.’ Is tarhe aate hain, bas.”

“To zyadatar log fees ke baare mei discuss karte hain...”

“Fees **hi** ke baare mei haan discuss karte rahenge hain ki abki ki nahin agle baar de denge” (PL3b-1, HHReIns, p. 5).

22. “Bahut kam ruchi lete hain. Kaha hai 350 guardian mei se muskhil se 100 guardian aaye. Jab ki sab ka naashta, paani, khaane, peene ka sab ka intezaam tha. Sab se pehle unko bata diya tha ki jo kuch bhi bolna ho poora keh daaliyega. Yahan jo hai hum aapka sudhaao maanega, koi bura nahin maanegein. Magar phir bhi voh jo hai apne sattata ya kuch kehne ke liye jaayega. Baut se... jo 100 aaye bhi, usme 50 aise honge jo ki bolne se ghabrate hain. Ye hai” (PL12-2, HHReIns, pp. 19-20).

23. “Voh Rs. 60 ya Rs. 80 fees dete hain to voh samajhte hain ki teacher ki sab liability hai. Aisa mehsoos karte hain voh. Issi mei problem aati hai. Aur unko samjhaane mei badi dikkat aati hai ki aap itne rupay ke hisaab se itni fees hui aur voh kabhi kabhi to voh keh dete hain ki zumma hai humaari” (PL1-2, Responsib, p. 1).

24. Principal (PL): [...] “Guardians utna jo hai respect bhi to nahin deta hai na teachers ko.”

Parent (PR): “Sahi baat hai, sahi baat hai.”

‘Jaise pehle dete the?’

PL: “Hmm. Teachers agar maan lijiye kissi bachche ko maar bhi deti hai voh seedhe jo aaya bachche ka haath pakde seedhe chale aaye school ki aapne kyon maara? To pehle to aise to nahin tha na?”

“Achchha yahan pe maar sakte hain? Matlab...”

PL: “Nahin... maarte to hai hi hain. Lekin ab jaise zyada kabhi by the way chot lag jaaye...”

PR: “Maar diya haan. Nahin maarte nahin hain voh to baat sahi hai. Ye log maarte nahin hain.”

PL: [muffled] “...aur kahin maan lijiye thodi bahut lag bhi sakti hai. Ab voh kya guardian seedhe le ke chala aa raha hai? To pehle to aisa nahin hota tha. Agar jab maan lijiye humaare bhi jab padhte the to khoob maar padti thi [muffled] bhi humaari [muffled] jaati thi, ghar vaale kehte the, ‘Theek hai. Achchha. Achchha maara’” [...]

PL: “Magar ab to kya, uska haat pakde seedhe le aayenge. Guardians ko bhi thoda chahiye na thoda respect de” (PL114, p. 14-15).

25. “Bahut se parents ye kehte hain ki, ‘Mera bachcha do saal se padh raha hai, ‘A’ hi nahin pehchaan na aata hai.’ To is baat ko aap chhod dijiye. Jitna aap is baat ko

yaad rakkhenge ki 'A' nahin pehchaan paa raha hai, mathematics ka '1, 2, 3' nahin pehchaan paa raha hai, iske education kuch nahin ho paa rahi hai. Iska ek routine ban raha hai. Voh zyada zaroori hai. Ki yahan par aaye, padhe aur ye sab cheez jo nahin aa rahi hain isko jab aap ye kahenge ki isne bahut kuch aur seekha to isme zyada achchha result aayega. Bagair iske ki aap ye bhi iske saamne kahenge ya hum se ye baat kahenge aa kar ke ki kuch seekh nahin paa raha hai, do saal se padh raha hai, paanch saal se padh raha hai, is se bachche ka koi improvement nahin aa raha hai." [...]

"To usko thoda sa dhyan ye dekhna chahiye ki jitne bhi cheez aur jitne bhi marks uske aa rahe hain, usko kabhi bhi matlab itna force naa kiya jaaye ki bahut zyada marks laaye. Interest zyada create kiya jaaye" (PL7-2, Responsib, p. 10).

26. "Kabhi nahin kehte [teachers se]. Humaare humaara parents ki jo bhi voh [complaint] hoti hain, hum parents ko convince karne ki koshish karte hain ki parents ko convince karein ki jo cheez hum padha rahe hain voh kahan tak sahi hai, aur kahan tak ghalat hai, kahan thinking unki ghalat hai, aur humaari thinking mei kya change hai. Voh cheez zyada samjhaane ki koshish karte hain. Agar koi bhi instructions aisa aata hai [padhai ke baare mei] to hum bilkul bhi nahin dete hain [teachers ko]. Maane humaari capability hi kuch nahin rahi agar humko koi parents guide karta hai aa kar ke aur uske hum teacher ke upar jaate hain, maane ki hum yahan baithe bekaar kursi pe" (PL7-2, PWR, p. 8).

27. "Agar bahut zyada zidd karte hain to Rs. 100, 200 ki baat hoti hai to unko adjust kar diya jaata hai, kyonki jhagda karenge to voh agle saal padhega nahin. Padhega to faida zyada hoga. Is tarah se hai thoda. Business point sooj jaati hai usme to. Ye hi hai" (PL1-2, Fees, p. 1).

28. "*Aur fees bhi aap thodi sa increase karenge?*"

10. Rs. 10.

"*Bas Rs. 10.*"

Bas. Is se zyada nahin. Chahe 10 guna chalne lage tab bhi hum seedhe 20 nahin badha sakte. Samajh lijiye isko. Is cheez ko aap samajh lijiye. Agar mere vahan kal 5000 bachche hon jaayen tab bhi hum 10 Rs. se zyada, nursery to 10th ke baat kar raha hoon. Nursery to 10th tak hum nahin bada sakte hain.

"*Kyon?*"

Kyonki aisa hai na ki mere padaus ke school bhi utne kam paise mei shiksha de rahe hain. Aadmi vahan bhaag jaayega. Meri building chunki utni badi bhi nahin hai ki main kissi bhi haalat mei zyada paisa le sakoon. Aur dheere dheere kharenge to zyada din tak milega, is tarah keh lijiye" (PL1-2, Fees, p. 2).

29. "Arrey, voh sab de dete hain parik... humko fees nahin denge lekin examination ke naam par voh sab kuch de denge. Kyonki voh vahan jama hona hai. Nahin to

unka bachcha exam nahin de paayega. Abhi hum tight kar dein to voh nahin denge, kissi keemat par.”

“Lekin voh kehte hain humare paas paisa hi nahin hai to kaise unke paas...”

“Voh paisa sab ho jaata hai. In logon ke paas paisa rehta hai. Lekin voh padhai ke naam par nahin usko kharch karna chahte hain. Ab ye maan ke chaliye, Rs. 50 labour ki mazdoori hai per day ki. Agar voh 30 din tak mazdoori hi kare to Rs. 1500 uska ho gaya. Aur dehaat mei aadmi aurtein sab hi kaam karte hain. Maanlijiye aurtein nahin 1500 kamaayengi to 500, 700, to 800 to kamaayengi hi. **Kuch** to milega. Kuch kheti baadi hai apne usse zameen se [muffled] to ho jaata hai.”

“Kuch kar lenge?”

“Kuch kar lenge. Aur yahan pata chala ki keval primary education mei hum keval Rs. 40 mahina fees le rahe hain. Jo Rs. 50 per day ka income karne vaala, usko Rs. 40 mahina dena mei dikkat hogi? Aisa nahin hai. Lekin voh padhai ke naam par nahin dena chahte. Isko bilkul voh anwar roop mei nahin samajh rahe hain ki humare avashaktaayein hain” (PL4-3, Fees, p. 19).

30. Parent (PR): “Arrey problem kis baat ki, humari to koi problem hai hi nahin.”

Principal (PL): “Problem nahin hai? Fees time se dete hain nahin dete hain...”
[Laughter]

PR: “Ye aap log bata rahe hain. Fees jab nahin aati hai to hum time pe dete hai.”

PL: “Pareshaani hoti hai na. Kitaab lani hai to kitaabon mei kya pareshaani hoti hai, dress hai dress khareedne mei kya pareshaani hoti hai...”

PR: “Pareshaani ho ya na ho humko to jo cheez lena hai to chahe hum maang le chahe hum maang ke laayein hume to karna hi hai.

[...] Aur fees bhi humari dekho padi hai arrey do-do teen hazaar rupiya ka koi voh baat nahin padti hai pareshaani vaali baat. Hum baad tak jama karte... ye baat hai.” [Laughter]

[Joking] *“Aapko nahin pareshaani, inko shayad padti hogi.”* [Laughter]

PR: “Inko nahin... inko kaunsi pareshaani padne vaali hai. Rs. 10-20,000 nahin aayega to isme kaunsi pareshaani ho jaayegi?”

PL: “Humari koi pareshaani nahin... staff hai, humara parivaar hai, kaise poora ye... pareshaani hai.”

[Background muffled and laughter]

PR: “Arrey inko Rs. 2-4000 nahin milega mahin to inki kaunsi pareshaani hai?”

PL: “Aise 10 candidate ho gaye to to kaise hoga...?” [Laughter]

PR: “Kahan hai, kuch nahin. Voh koi baat nahin hai.”

PL: “Haan, to 20-25 bachche to aise hi gaye.” [Laughter]

PR: “To kaunsi baat hai? Rs. 5-6 lakh aata hai to 30-40,000 rupiya chala jaaye to kaunsi problem ho jaayegi? Aur kya...”

[...]

“Yehi soch lijiye... yehi soch lijiye ki aap hi ki vajah se bachche sab padh rahe hain sab hi ke. Gareeb bachche ke koi bhi hon” (PR114-1, PWR/Pr, pp. 13-14).

31. “Guardian ki thinking hai bhai vahan [sarkari school mei] humare bachche jo hai neech baithenge.

Ab jo bilkul hi ek dam se ghareeb hain, to unke bachche to sarkari mei jaayenge. Jo thode se jaise maan lijiye lag bhag Rs. 2000-2500 per month bhi paata hai voh ye sochta hai ki, ‘Chalo kahin achchha school ho thoda sa, ussi mei likhva dete hain.’ Jo fees bhi kam ho, padhai bhi achchhi ho” (PL8-2, Mrkt, p. 4).

32. “Change to ye hai ki ye ab pehle to school bhejna nahin jaante, chahte the. Voh bhi kyon sarkari mei bhej diye teen kilo chaar kilo jo genhoon milta. hai uske liye. Ab voh uske hat kar ke convent school jo khul rahe hain, vahan bhej rahe hain iska matlab unke liye thodi changing hai tab hi to aisa kar rahe hain. Nahin to genhoon 3 kilo 4 kilo jo mil raha hai usse lete naa to school... kyon convent school mei fees adhik hai. Ab us sarkari mei jo hai genhoon milta hai. [...]

Abhi unke andar sirf itna aaya hai ki, ‘Mera bachcha ko convent padhaaya jaaye.’ Voh shehar jaati hain vahan dekhte hain ki bachcha jo hai padh to unko bhi ye hai ki mere bachche ko dress ho uniform ho, matlab is dhang se unko abhi ye shauk aayi hai matlab ye shauk abhi nahin hai...ki jaa kar ke school adhyapak se miloon ki kya padh raha hai, nahin padh raha hai, ya main ghar mei hi dekhoon” (PL9-2, Percepts, pp. 12-13).

33. “...aaye to dheere dheere andar to aayega hi aayega” (PL9-2, Percepts, p. 13).

34. “Baki aur puraane hain to voh jaante hain ki kya cheez humko kis tarah se humko voh karna, hai kya kya change hai, kya unko itna mentally thoda voh kiya jaata hai, uplift kiya jaata hai ki voh saari cheez ko samajhne lagte hain ki hum kis oar mei jaana chahte hain aur student kis oar jaa raha hai” (PL7-2, Percepts, pp.7-8).

35. “Agar maa anjaan hai, shiksha ke baare mei nahin jaanti hai anpadh hai to pita ka farz banta hai ki shiksha ka mahtv hai. Aap bachche ko samay se bhejein school, aur uske baad uspe dhyaan dein, aur uske baad voh pita [mumbled]. Jaise maa nahin jaanti hai to pita aaye to usse aadha ghanta ek ghanta samjhaaye ki, ‘Beta kya padhe ho, kya nahin’, usse bataaye. Maa ki bhumika to hai. Lekin maa agar

anpadh hai, maa ki bhumika keval school bhejne ki hai. Voh tayyaar bachche ko kar sakti hai. Bachcha beech raaste se jaa raha hai to pita dhoondega ki maa dhoondegi ki bachcha kahan gaya aadha raaste se ghoom raha hai ki kahan jaa raha hai. Maa ki zimmedaari bas hai ki voh khaana naashta tayyaar karde, bachche ki tiffin tayyaar karde, bag dede, kapde pehnade tayaar kar de aur ghar se kehde ki, 'Beta ab samay ho gaya hai jaao'" (PL9-2, Responsib, pp. 5-6).

36. "Jaise humaari to ichchha hai ki hum jo cheez padha rahe hain, ya humaare yahan jo bhi padha rahe hain voh sab humaare guardian jaante chalen, samajhte chalen ki hum log theek dhang se padha rahe hain, unko achchhi shiksha dei rahe hain, ya nahin? To jo angootha... ya matlab jo kam padhe likhe hain, voh kabhi bhi is maamle mei sahyog humaara nahin karte."

"Apni boomika voh log nahin nibha paa rahe hain kyonki voh log jaan nahin rahe hain ki jaise mujhe aa nahin rahi hai kuch cheez, to hum apne bachche ko kaise padhai. Ye problems hain un logon par... Fees de kar uske baad mei koi bhi cheez nahin dekhni hai, 'Bachcha tum aaj padh ke aaye ho, ki nahin aaye ho, ya padhoge, nahin padhoge', kuch bhi nahin..." (PL10-2, Responsib, p.8).

37. "Haan, ab jab parents ko jinki fees irregular rethi hai unka keval ek hi complaint rehti hai. Aur voh bhi saal ke anth mei. Poore saal nahin aayenge. Saal ke akhrir mei aayenge, kahenge, 'Humaare bachche ko to kuch aaya nahin. Aur paisa hum baraabar dete rahe.' Jab ki paisa usne nahin diya. Irregular diya. Paach-paanch, chhe-chhe mahine mei paisa diya. Phir bhi voh jhooth bol gaya. To saal ke last mei aane se hum bhi usko tabajjo nahin de paaye. Bhai ek ladka to yahan hai nahin. School mei to ek kaksha mei 20 bachche, 15 bachche hain, to unko to baraabar shiksha di jaayegi. Vyaktigat roop se to usko padhaaya nahin gaya. Voh guardian jo hai saal ke anth mei kehta hai, humaare bachche ko kuch aaya hi nahin."

"Phir aap kya karte hain?"

"To hum kehte hain nahin bhai, beech mei aap aaye nahin rahe varna hum aapko bataate ki is bachche mei bhi to kuch kami rahi hai. Kyonki aap ki bhi kamiyan rahi hain... kahin kitaab nahin hai, copy nahin hai, hum likh likh kar ke jo hai aapke paas bheje. Aap is liye nahin aaye ki jab hum jaayenge school to paisa maanga jaayega. Aur hum paisa ke liye aapko nahin bula rahe hain. Hum bula rahe hain aapke bachche ki kami ko kehne ki" (PL5-2, HHRelns, pp. 6-7).

38. "Private school mei progress ho rahi hai [shiksha ke samband mei], dhyaan de rahe hain. Isme ek to ye hai ki unko fees se matlab hai. Usme jaat bandhan nahin hai. Voh sabko matlab ek class mei bachche baithe hain to vahan unko ye nahin hai ki ye is jaat ke hain us jaat ke hain. Aur kahin sarkari mei bhi aisa bhi hai... ki jo hai logon [adhyapak] mei ye dhaarna hai ki backward backward hi reh jaaye, to voh jo sarkari teacher hain, unke andar ye bhaao hai. Kyonki 90% aapko jo hain gaon ke log gareeb hain aur backward hain. To teacher kaun hain? 90 [%] log forward hain."

“Shehar se aa rahe hain?”

“Shehar se aa rahe hain. Unki ye hi thinking hai, ‘Mujhe araam mil raha hai, padhein naa padhein’.”

“To private schools mei zyada ye nahin hai?”

“Haan. Private mei kahin itna nahin hai. Bhai private school jo hai isse bhi dede uski policy hai. Usme [government mei] itne paise kharch karne ke liye nahin hai ki aaj kahin school kholein.” [...]

“Is liye unko bhadaava de rahi hai. Aur private school mei jo hai loot ho rahi hai.”

“Kaunsi loot?”

“Matlab fees manmaani dhang ki fees. Jo aap chahe voh le lein. Shehar mei dekhiye. Nursery mei bachcha jaata hai uski admission mei Rs. 3000, 4000 lagta hai. Vahi padhega ‘aa’ se ‘gya’ tak A se Z. Ya uthna, baithna nursery ke bachche ko kitna padhaya teen saal ke bahcche ko kya jaankaari denge?” (PL9-2, GvP, pp. 6-7)

39. “Kamai ka dhanda bhi banaaya hua hain kuch” (PL4-3, Mrkt, p. 14).

40. “Bas ye hai ki chal raha hai, samaaj sudhaaran samajhiye, bas voh kaam kar rahe hain hum log” (PL3b-2, Slf Cncpt, p. 2).

41. “Ussi lakhsya ko le kar ke hum logon ne ye school khole. Bachchon ko yahan par kam paise mei, aur achchhi shiksha achchhi vyavastha se...”

“Aur vahi lakshya ab tak hai. Earning lakshya ab bhi nahin hai. Kyonki bahut se vidyalaye ka... hum to apna thoda se udhaaran denge.”
[...]

“Kaam to bahut hi achchha hai. Is se naik kaam to hum samajhte hain samaaj to koi nahin hota hai, shiksha se. Shiksha ye aisa mandir hai ki poore pradhesh ya desh ke bachchon ko shikshit kar[e]...Is se bada mandir koi nahin hai” (PL12-2, Slf Cncpt, p. 1).

42. “Haan, zyadatar hum log ke yahan lower aur middle ke aate hain. Shuroo shuroo mei jab khola tab tak IAS, IPS, engineer aur jo hain achchhe, achchhe log bhi admission ke chakkar mei khola tha. Us samay to IAS tak ke, IPS tak ke bachche aur bade bade logon ke bachche [mumbled] padhte the. Lekin ab bahut bade bade hi-fi schools khul gaye hain to ab voh unke paas paisa hai, sab kuch hai to voh log udhar apna divert ho gaye.” [...]

“Pehle itne school bhi nahin the. Jaise itne school [locality ka naam] mei, ek bhi nahin tha jab humaara school khula tha.”

“Achchha.”

“Haan, ek bhi English medium ka school nahin tha. Prathamik asthar ka junior school tak ek vidyalaya tha [sarkari] issi... To is liye jo IAS, IPS udhar udhar ho kar ke aate the, to apna nazdeek ke kaaran chhote bachchon ko apna. Ab koi aisa bachcha nahin hoga jab ki IAS, IPS, engineer aise bachche humaare yahan hon” (PL12-2, Mrkt, pp. 10-11).

43. Principal (PL): “Jaise maine kaha ki college mei aaj kal total dikhaava hai.”

“Haan.”

PL: “Collegeon mei total dikhaava hota hai. Padhai kuch hoti bhi hai uske peeche. Magar pehle number pe dikhaava hota hai. Dikhaava mei sab kuch aata hai building ka look bhi hona chahiye, teacher bhi achchhe hone chahiye, aur neeyam bhi taur tareeqe bhi sakht hone chahiye. To jo jab ye sab cheezein sakht hongy to ek baar agar aapke vahan kam bhi padhai hoti hai to college achchha log samjhenge.”

“To voh kya kehte hain?”

PL: “Voh utna nahin kehte hain. Voh kehte hain bas padhai karaao, padhai karaao, padhai karaao issi tarah se kaha karte hain mere saath. To usme teacher ka dete hain magar...” [...]

“Bhai sab se asaan hai is me fund arrange kar ke isko badhaane ko asaan hai. Iske thoda decorate karne mei asaan hai. Padhai to karaana hi karaana hai. Padhai tab karaayenge jab humaare vahan dekhne sunne vaale achchhe honge. Ki pehle karaane lagenge? Pehle number pe to hum decoration pe dhyaan denge, aur sab cheezon pe dhyaan denge. Jab ye cheezon pe hum dhyaan denge to usme hume log achchhe achchhe milna shuroo ho jaayenge. Humaari padhai ki starting jo hai achchhi ho jaayegi.” [...]

Principal's Brother: “Nahin voh aapka kehna bilkul sahi hai apni jagah, ki vidyalaya jab tumne start kiya pehle to har ek cheez ko hume qaide se vidyalaya ko hi dekhna hai. Uska staff to secondary cheez rehti hai. Staff to baad mei lagaayenge.”

PL: [...] “bolte hain, ‘First impression, the last impression.’” [...]

“To issi tarah mera apna sochna hai ki jab hum shurooaat hi achchhi rakkhenge, tight vyavastha rakkhenge, achchhe tareeqe se rakkhenge, to humko response achchha milega. Jaise humne iska rakkha sujhaao [pointing to the construction work being carried out]...” (PL1-3, Comp, pp. 18-19).

44. “...aatma nahin ganvaara karti hai ki, hum kaise fees badhayein?” (PL4-3, Comp, p. 26).

45. "...kuch jo keval is usdesh se lage hue hain ki humko high school chalaana hai bachchon ko padhana hai, voh na to building bana sakte hain aur naa hi qaide se school chal sakta hai. To voh saari cheezein paise ke liye. Ab ye hi hai ki agar isko aamdani ka zariya bana kar ke hum chalavein. Aur yahan Rs. 40 ke bajai in ladkon ki fees Rs. 100-150 kar dein, to ye hi school achchha ho jaayega. Aur log paisa bhi ho dene lagenge."

"Achchha ho jaayega?"

"Achchha ka matlab achchhi building khadi ho jaayegi, saare teacheron ko baqaaya khatam ho jaayega."

"Aur padhai usme?"

"Padhai to jaisi chal rahi hai vaise hi chalegi. Padhai mei koi farak nahin hai. Lekin bas aaj ke samay mei ye hai ki log ye sochte hain ki fala jagah ka bada maintain kiye hain" (PL4-3, Comp, p. 26).

46. "Lag bhag voh hi 14-15 bachche the. Hai na? [...] Class 1st se le kar class 8th tak hum unko achchhe dhang se padhaate chale gaye, unko khoob mazboot kar diya, ki theek hai ab 9th mei 10th mei result laayenge. Hua ye ki class 8th mei jab first division nikle sab hi bachche, kareeb saat ya aath bachche aise the jo turant apna apna TC maangne chale aaye. Ki, 'Sir mujhe TC de dijiye. Sir mujhe TC de dijiye.' Humne kaha, 'Ab ye kya ho gaya?' To kehne lage, 'Humko 9th padhna hai, achchhe vidyalaya mei daalenge. Kissi bhi jagha daalenge.'"

"To hum unke guardian ko bulvaaya sab. Humne kaha, 'Hum isko badi ummeed se laga ke, aur bahut mehnat kar ke hum inko padhai kiye.' [...] 'Kyonki tum aisa kyon bhaiyya kar rahe ho? Kya hum log theek nahin hai?'"

"Baat ye hai ki bhaiyya hum unko chahte hain ki achchhe vidyalaya mei daalen."

"Tab humne phir kaha, 'Yaar ye achchhe vidyalaya ka kya hota hai, aur kharaab vidyalaya kya hota hai?'"

"Achchhe vidyalaya ka kya matlab hota hai parents ki oar se?"

"Bas parens ke hisaab se achchha vidyalaya vo hi hai jo dekhne mei theek lagta ho. Humaare hisaab se. Humaare hisaab se. Haan, aur kya?" [...]

"To sab chale gaye?"

"Haan, sab chale gaye. Sab hi."

[...]

"Nahin aur the lekin aur bach gaye. Jo achchhe vaale the voh nikal gaye."

[...]

"14 the saat chale gaye the, saat bache the...to humne kaha, 'Vaah! Iska matlab zyada padhaana bhi theek nahin hai.' Zyada agar padha ke achchha kar denge to voh hume chhod ke chale bhi jaayenge" (PL10-2, Good, p. 5).

47. “Dikhaava vaala jo hai thodi der rise karenge ek jo hai rise bhi kar sakta hai phir ek baar girega bhi. Kyonki dikhaava jo kara aur padhai nahin hai to kya hoga?”

“Unka kehna hai ki hum dikhaava karenge to bachche zyada padhenge, to phir usko theek karedenge.”

“Arrey, phir kya theek kar paayenge? [Laughter] Voh to aise is tarah se ho gaya jaise [laughter] makaan bana rahe hain aur uski neev jo hai mazboot nahin hai. Upar ka voh khole jaa rahe hain kahin baad mei seedi rakkhenge to maalum hai gir hi ja raha hai” [Laughter.]

[...]

“Aisa bhi humne dekha hai ki bachchon ki sankhya kissi school mei bahut hai lekin padhai nahin hoti hai. To voh dheere dheere down ho gaya” (PL8-2, Comp, pp. 7-8).

48. “Humaare guardian jitne bhi hain sab santusht zaroor rehte hain. Kyon? Kyonki issi se hai humaari padhai...Hum guardian se fees lete hain, agar Rs. 10 fees liye hain to hum ye prayartan karte hain ki unko roz kissi tarah se shiksha zaroor deden. To ye hum logon ka aim rehta hai. Is tarah se hum log ke yahan shiksha badhti chali jaati hai.”

“Aur guardian bhi badhte chale jaate. Kyonki bachchon ko voh issi liye bhejte hain ki hum apne bachche ko unnati karvaayenge aur... unko matlab achchhi shiksha dilvaayenge” (PL10-2, Mrkt, pp. 4-5).

49. “Haan, nahin competition to khair hai hi hai...jab paas mei school honge to competition to hona hi hai. Ab competition ye hota hai ki ek competition hota hai padhai ka. Ek competition ho jaata hai building ka. To humaare vichar se to padhai must hai. Kyonki humne jo dekha, humne apna school jab shuroo mei khola, tin chhapad mei, us samay bhi humaara yahan sankya achchhi thi.”

“Tab bhi achchhi thi?”

“Achchhi thi. Aur ab to khair building bhi ban gayi hai.”

“Ab to bahut achchhi hai.”

“Haan, ab to aur achchhi ho gayi hai. To must padhai hai.” [...]

“Padhai. Padhai to jaise fees, iska bhi dekhna padta hai. Fees bhi kam ho. Fees zyada rakh dein to phir voh hi-fi jo jaane hain to ghareeb jagah vaale [muffled] [kaise aayenge]...” (PL8-2, Comp, pp. 6-7).

50. “Hum ye kehte hain ki aap pehle bachchon pe kharch kariye.”
[...]

“To unhe ye kaha jaata hai ki, ‘Bachche pe aap bachcha samajh ke uspe kuch kharch karen. Tab aap usse kuch return lenge. Jab aap usse padhaayenge hi nahin

to aapko dega kya? Pehle uspe kharch kariye tab uske baad jo hai. Voh padh likh kar ke aage badhega, tab aapko dega [...]' To ye sab samjhaaya jaata hai" (PL9-2, Needs, p. 3).

51. "...pehle to cheez ye hi hai ki jitte bhi humaare students yahan par aa gaye hain, unke surrounding areas mei pamphleting karte hain. Is tarah ki jo bhi points hain humaare unko dete hain, bataate hain. Phir uske baad jo students hain voh humaara sab se zyada isko advertisement ko karte hain. Students ko jab ek baar bachcha padhta hai...To phir voh usme jo changes dekhte hain doosre parents us se zyada humko [publicity] milta hai. Main to advertisement se utna effect nahin padta hai jitni humaari work ki publicity hai uska effect padta hai." [...]

"...ek baar hum se milte hain aa kar vaise hum unke paas bhi jaate hain, kabhi kabhi unko yahan bhi call karte hain. Jo humaare students nahin hain, unke parents ke paas. Ki aap kya [interested] hain?"

"Kaise? Matlab unko contact kaise karte hain?"

"Jaise students jo bhi hain humaare us locality mei gaye to alag alag jaa kar ke milte hain unke 4, 5 gharon mei. Kabhi kabhi hum log culture programme karte hain, art competition karte hain, usme bhi call karte hain doosre log bhi aayen yahan par. Doosre log sang le kar ke aayeye sab ko" (PL7-2, Mrkt, p. 7).

Appendix 4

Original Institutional-Level Quotes in Hindi for Chapter 7

1. “To, ek cheez aapko thoda sa hum bataayein, thoda aap hansogi zaroor... galat kaam humne bhi kiya. [...] To apne yahan raat bhar teachers se likhva daalo, hum apne yahan raat bhar teachers se likhva daalein copiyen [chuckles]. Aur copiyen lagva kar bhej diya Board, Board chale gaye. Magar jo prabhavaashaali vyakti the, jo paisa de ke aise kaam karaaye jaate the, humari teachers ne raat raat bhar likha...lekin ye sab last mei daal diye gaye. Ye galat cheez hai. Vaise nahin karna chahiye hum logon ko, magar kya karein, majboor ho kar ke karna pada.”

“Aapne is liye kiya ki hum dekhne ki kya hoga?”

“Haan, dekhne, ki kya hone vaala hai, sab. To ye hua ki humare bachche bas voh first hi class paaye. Voh first class ke bachche the bhi, magar first hi class paaye, magar merit nahin mila unhe” (GO3-1, Exams/Sch, p.4).

2. “Competition to chalta hi rehta hai. Kyonki ek school ka bachcha doosre school mei easily naam likh lete hain...Chahe us school ki fees baqaaya ho...”
[...]

“Maanliya yahan pe Rs. 150 baaki hai, agle saal voh bachcha nahin aaya to Rs. 150 to voh le gaya. Doosra school mei gaya, usme baghair kisi angpatra pramaan-patra kuch nahin naam likh liya.”

“Le liya.”

“To aisa nahin hona chahiye.”
[...]

“School ka nuksaan hai. Bachcha chala gaya, fees chali gayi. Guardian ka faida hai, uski fees bach gayi. Aur jo doosre school mei us school ka bhi faida hai uski...”

“Uski sankhiya badh gayi...”

“Uski sankhiya badh gayi.”
[...]

“Vahan to admission fees de hi denge” (PL5-3, SIF/Sch, pp. 2-3).

3. “To usko [admission test] dekhne ke baad tab class ka decision hota hai ki bachcha agar 1st ka hai to 1st mei. Agar 1st layak nahin hai usse nursery mei daal diya jaayega. Ki uski base mazboot ki jaaye” [...]

“Lekin kuch guardian aise bhi aate hain ki kehte hain ki, ‘Nahin mere bachche ko 5th mei admission karna hi hai.’”

“Kyon?”

“Bas hote hain. Kehte hain humaare bachche ko jo hai... aur unka test lijiye to bachcha nursery ke kaabil nahin hai.”

“Phir kya hota hai?”

“To ab majboori bas. Ya to jo hai aap lijiye. Jaise bachchon ki sankhya kam hai hume bachchon ko bharna hai to lelenge. Aur nahin agar hai to nahin lenge.”

“To aap phir 5th mei le lete hain?”

“Leliya jaata hai.”

“Lekin phir voh bachcha kaise cover paata hai?”

“Nahin cover paata hai. Voh bachche ka jo hai bhavishya adharmi jaata hai. Voh cover poora nahin kar paayega” (PL9-3, Procds/Sch, pp. 2-3).

4. Principal: “Haan bachchon ki suvidha hai...”

Teacher: “Haan, bas ye hi hai. Maan lijiye ki jaise ki... aap ye maan ke chaliye ki bachche ussi school mei padh rahe hain. Keval padhaana yahan, hum log yahan padha dete hain. Unko vahan padhne jaane se bach jaata hai” (PL3b-2, SIF/Sch, p. 15).

5. “Lekin agar hum... ye filhaal humaare yahan ke zyadatar ke humaare ghar ke nikat ke aas paas ke, ya humaare sambhandit logon ke hi bachche hain. Agar, is liye zyadatar girls hain... agar main ye coaching na chalaaoon ya isse band kardoon to inh sabhi **ladkiyon** ka koi [muffled] na. Kyonki yahan se kam se kam 10-12 km tak to koi vidyalaya nahin dikhta hai vaisa. Jo ki government mannyata prapt ho kaksha 10 tak. To aisi positions mei guardians khud hi keh rahe hain ki aisa karo. Varna ye meri ichchha nahin hai kuch. Kyonki mera vidyalaya kaksha 8 tak chal raha hai voh koi vishesh problem nahin hai. Lekin ab chunki guardian ke...” (PL10-3, p. 9).
6. “Nahin faida hai. Faida aisa hai ki jab ye 9th ke exam bachchon ne diye the doosre school se aa ke, to uska hum log faida mila tha.”

“Matlab?”

“9th ki pariksha jab hoti hai voh hum log apne hi school mei karaate hain.”

“Achchha.”

“To uska response mila tha yahan. Logon ki aankhen chuakanni ho gayin thi. Ye to lagta Board hai, bahut bada school hai. Is tarah ka humko thoda uska response milta hai” (PL1-3, RecogBen/Sch, p. 3).

7. “Nahin unki... matlab ya to political influence se aapko milegi. Ya phir ye administrative influence se aapko milegi. Ya phir aapko money spend kar ke aapko milegi. Is tarah se...” (PL7-3, Recog/Sch, p. 10).

8. *“To usme bahut log hote honge jinki [recognition] nahin hoti hai.”*

“Bahut hote hain. Ya phir adhikaari log, to vohi jo hum bata rahe the us din, ki paisa poojo aur lelo mannata. Is type se bhi hota hai. Paisa issi liye dena padta hai ki jaise suppose mere paas koi cheez nahin hai aur mujhe voh cheez chahiye to phir to uske liye to kharcha karna hi padega. To is tarah se paisa kharcha karte hain aur le lete hain.”

“To logon ko pata hai ye vaali baat?”

“Sabhi ko pata hai. Ye baat sabhi ko pata hai. Ye koi chhipi hui baat nahin hai.”

“Haan. [Pause] To... log kehte honge ki aapko agar file apni...”

“Nahin hum log khud hi jaa kar request karte hain. Voh log nahin kahenge. Adhikaari log nahin kehta hai, ‘Mujhe paisa do.’ Hum log khud hi kehte hain ki ‘Ye ghalat kaam aap log kar lo meri taraf se, aur paisa le lo.’ Ye hum log karte hain. Adhikaariyon ki galati vaastav mei kam hai. Galati to hum log ki zyada hai.”
[...]

“Swaarth ke liye apna. Jaise bachche badhte chale jaa rahe hain. Vyavasthaein ko idhar hum nahin kar paa rahe hain. Mannyata jab tak nahin milegi tab tak voh apna record nahin de paayenge. Aur jab tak apna record nahin denge unka kya benefit hoga?”

“Jaise hum padha rahe hain apna vidyalaya ke apne bachch... apne naam ke liye. Aur hum [doosre school] vaali hi total marksheet, TC sab humesha dete rahenge to log sochenge, ‘[Doosre school] se sab hai to chalo yahan kyon nahin?’ Is liye apne document ke liye hum log ko kuch na kuch karna hi padega” (PL10-3, Recog/Sch, p. 8).

9. *“Nahin voh jo guidelines thi na, dikhaai thi aapne?”*

“Achchha, ye maaannyata, maannyata vaali. Haan, haan.”

“Voh government schools ke liye bhi vahi guidelines hain ki...”

“Nahin, nahin, nahin. [...] Jaise ki isme voh shartein hain ki inki security money jama honi chahiye. Kyon jama honi chahiye, kyonki voh ek private insaan khol raha hai, jis insaan ko hum nahin jaante hain. Voh school pe kitna, kitna devotee hoga school ke prati ispe meri koi jaankaari nahin hai.” [...]

“To humaari aur unki shartein to alag alag ho gayin. Jo humaari schoolon mei pehle se maujood hain shartein, vo hi sab shart unse poori karate hain. Vahi to kehte hain. [...] Ye nahin ke aaj humne school khola, school chal gaya, aur phir

makaan maalik ne keh diya ki khaali kariye. Ye stithi naa ho ki jab tak ki makaan maalik ka likha hua affidavit hum nahin dekh lete hain to kam se kam 10 saal ke liye, ya jab tak school chalega hum khaali nahin karaayenge, hum maannata kissi ki nahin karte hain.”

[...]

“Varna phir bachchon ka kya hoga?”

“Bachchon ka loss hoga. Bachcha beech mei hai to kya karega? Uska business chaupat ho gaya schoolvaale ka, aur bachchon ka padhai chaupat ho jaayegi to voh hum nahin kar sakte. Humaare sarkari schoolon mei to ye sab problem nahin aati” (GO4-1, FIF/St, p. 14).

10. “...kaunsa itna bada apraadh kar raha hai ki usko [school ko] saza di jaaye? Ek taraf sarkar keh rahi hai ki sabko sakshak bana jaaye. ‘Sabko shiksha’ ka naara laga rahe hain. TV mei advertise ho raha hai. Aur doosri taraf agar koi private vidyalaya ek board laga deta hai bachchon ko padhana ke liye to usko vidyapan [check spelling] tax dena padta hai” (PL4-3, StPerceps/Sch, p. 3).

11. “...ek tarah se kahein ki ye finances se zyada relate hai. Ki bhai apni file move karaane ke liye paisa zyada kharch karna padta hai bas. Ye problems hai isme main. Kyonki paperwork itna zyada pada hua hai ki har table se yahin move hone ke liye process bahut saare hain. Bahut steps hain. Jaa kar aap jaayein, usko pursue karein, uske baad dekhen, tab usko aap run kara paayein. Ye problems hain zyada.”

“Matlab ek hi hona chahiye jab ki ek formality banadi gayi hai ki koi cheez ek baat ek paper ek table pe le kar ke jaayen aur vahin pe recognition mil jaani chahiye. Itni zayada hai ki voh primary set aur junior phir vahan se vahan. Itne zyaada steps hain ki voh aadmi pareshaan ho jaata hai.” [...]

“To...koi school ho aur voh chahte hai ki hum recognition lein jaldi...To phir voh uska kya... action kya leta phir.”

“Paise kharch... paise kharch kar ke lete hain.”

“Paise kharch kar ke.”

“Haan.”

“Aur usme bahut paise lagte hain?”

“Nahin bahut paise nahin lagte hain. Matlab voh to jiska jaisa, vahi to keh rahe hain, jaisa set up hai, jaisa source hai, jaisa uska apna interest hai kitna funds voh isme lagaana chah rahe hai” (PL7-3, Recog/Sch, p. 5).

12. Principal (PL): “Haan, haan bahut si dikkat hoti hai [recognition ke liye]. Yahan pe koi dikkat nahin padi. Yahan to mannata bahut pehle hi mil gayi thi.”

Brother (BR): “Ye to ek bahut badi baat hai ek tarah se ye.”

“Bahut badi baat hai. To aap logon ne matlab bahut bhaaga daudi ki hogi jaldi usko karne mei?”

BR: “Haan, ye tha... bhaaga daudi ki thi, [chuckles] sahi kaha hai aapne.”

PL: “Bhaag daud bhi ki aur father ke humare aise kaam the...”

BR: “Actually humare father Shiksha Vibhaag mei rahe hai na iske pehle. Aapko maalum hoga.”

“Nahin hume nahin pata hai.”

BR: “Achchha, achchha. Voh Shiksha Vibhaag mei hi the iske pehle...To thoda approach rehti hai UP Board mei bhi...”

PL: “Approach unki achchhi hai bas issi kaaran se sab...”

BR: “Field achchhi hai unki voh wide.”

PL: “Aur basically ye mil bhi jaati hai asaani se. Aisa nahin hai kuch.” [...]

“Log kehte hain bahut dikkat hoti hai...”

[...]

PL: “Nahin dekhiye sampark pe to hota hota hai.”

BR: “Ya to sampark achchhe hon, ya to phir voh maana ke jo hain government ki un sab ko poora kar dein” (PL1-3, Recog/Sch, p. 15-16).

13. “To isme hota kya tha ki Vibhaag bhi kuch ghalat kaam karta tha... Vibhaag zyada ghalat kaam karta tha aur usko prabhandakon ko prerit karta tha. Ki jo hai, ‘Tum 300 bachchon ko dikhaado, tumhare paas 300 bacche hain, to hum 300 bachchon ka paisa dei denge, aadha hume de dijiye, aadha aap log lei liya.’”

“Kaun kehta tha aise?”

“Shaasan aah Vibhaag... Vibhaag jo paisa deta tha vibhaag chhatravit vibhaag to voh paisa deta tha to voh kuch logon ko usme aa gaya apne... paisa ka laalach sabhi ko hoti hai, magar ye hai ki kuch logon ko hum log zor dabaye rehte hain.” [...]

“Humne matlab, bachchon ka jitna paisa laaye, sab bachchon ko poora poora baant diya. Shiksha vibhaag ke adhikaari aaye... jaanch karne, ki yahan pe aaye, ‘Dikhaaiye, dikhaaiye bachche ko bulaaye.’ Kuch bachche to phir doosra session hoga, chale bhi jaayenge kuch rahenge.”

“...uske baad mei voh gaye apna office mei, paisa hum log ne rishvat diya nahin. Aur vahan voh jaa ke likh diya. Unhone paisa kam baanta. Ab hum log ne

[muffled]. Mannata ka smaapt karne ka bhi, kuch logon ke upar mqadmei bhi shayad hue. To hum logon ne soch liya ki jab government hum log ko beimaan hi samajhti hai, hum imaandaari bhi karte hain, tab bhi beimaan samajhti hai, to paisa hi nahin liya jaayega” (GO3-1, Corrup/Sch, pp. 1-2).

14. “Vapas nahin hoga. Kyonki vaise to jaldi milti nahin hai mannayata, agar mil gayi to voh baad mei voh jaayegi nahin.”
[...]

“Bilkul. Aap kaise kahengin? Jab aapne mannata de rakkha hai mujhe aur vaastav mei paisa jab diya hoga tabhi mannata diya hoga. To aap kaise keh sakti hain ki ye nahin? Kyonki vaise jab paisa le kar jab koi cheez prapt ki jaayegi to itni jaldi nahin jaa sakti” (PL10-3, Corrup/Sch, pp. 10-11).

15. “Aisa hai ki [pause]... government office badnaam hote hain chakkar lagvaane ke liye. Voh chahte hain in sab se bachna. Unhone apna school khol liya” (GO4-1, SIF/St, p. 9).

16. “Private candidate... [jo] ghar mei padhte hain. Unhone jo hai, example, kaksha 5 tak voh hai ghar mei padhai kar li. To voh affidavit ke through kar rahe hain. Ya isme voh log bhi shaamil ho jaate hain jo [unrecognised] private school vaale.”

“Voh bhi aise hi karte honge...?”

“Matlab voh as a...Shiksha Adhikaari to mujhe nahin kehna chahiye ki voh log unka exam dete hain ya nahin dete hain, lekin voh log shaamil ho jaate hain.”

“Voh kar lete honge.”

“Naturally voh ho hi jaata hai. Issi tarah se voh log shaamil ho jaate hain” (GO4-1, SIF/St, p. 6).

Appendix 5

Official Documents Consulted in Determining the FIF

The official documents consulted in determining the FIF for case study schools are listed below. References to the documents were given by government officials and were published in *H.S. Nigam's Uttar Pradesh Education Manual, 5th Edition* (Jain, 2001). The page numbers in parentheses correspond to those of the *Education Manual*.

◆ Basic Education

The Uttar Pradesh Primary Education Act, 1919 (pp. 623-627)

The United Provinces District Boards Primary Education Act, 1926 (pp. 628-633)

The Uttar Pradesh Basic Education Act, 1972 (U.P. Act No. 34 of 1972 as amended by U.P. Act No. 18 of 2000): (pp. 549-564)

Uttar Pradesh Basic Educational Staff Rules, 1973 (pp.665-670)

The Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers and Other Conditions) Rules, 1975 (pp. 583-585)

The Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Junior High Schools) (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Teachers) Rules, 1978: (pp.586-603)

The Uttar Pradesh Junior High Schools (Payment of Salaries of Teachers and Other Employees) Act, 1978: (pp. 613-622)

The Uttar Pradesh Basic Education (Teachers) Service Rules, 1981 (pp. 565-582)

The Uttar Pradesh Recognised Basic Schools (Junior High Schools) (Recruitment and Conditions of Service of Ministerial Staff and Group 'D' Employees) Rules, 1984 (pp.606-612)

U.P. Basic Shiksha Samitis (Manner of Choosing and Nomination of Members) Rules, 1992 (pp. 642-647)

◆ Secondary Education

Uttar Pradesh Intermediate Education Act, 1921 (pp. 3-178)

Regulations under the U.P. Intermediate Education Act, 1921 (pp. 181-522)

The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education [Services Selection Board] Act, 1982 (pp. 673- 739)

The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Services Selection Board Rules, 1998 (pp. 740-795)

U.P. Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 1998 (pp. 1609-1612)

◆ **General**

The Societies Registration Act, 1860 (pp. 1517-1537)

U.P. Societies Registration Rules, 1976 (pp. 1538-1547)

Education Code (Extracts), 1958 (pp. 1679-1714)

Latest Government Orders Related to Education (pp. 1815-1864): Compilation of government orders and circulars covering the period, November 1999 to July 2001