

शिक्षा का अधिकार

सर्व शिक्षा अभियान
सब पढ़ें सब बढ़ें

NATION SYNTHESIS REPORT

INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL AND IN THE CLASSROOM IN PRIMARY AND UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOLS

A qualitative study commissioned by Sarva Shiksha
Abhiyan, MHRD, Government of India.



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Research Team

Principle Investigators and National Synthesis	Vimala Ramachandran and Taramani Naorem
AP State report	A Padma and P Prasanthi, AP Mahila Samatha Society, Hyderabad
Assam State report	Gita Rani Battacharya, Assam Mahila Samata Society, Gawahati
Bihar State report	Taramani Naorem, Ajay Kumar Singh and Ajay Kumar Jha, TSG-SSA, Ed CIL, New Delhi and A N Sinha Institute of Social Sciences, Patna.
MP State report	Anjali Naronha and Kavita Suresh, Eklavya, Bhopal
Odisha State report	Lohitakshya Joshi and Prasant Kumar Panda, Lok Dhrushti, Bhubaneshwar
Rajasthan State report	Shobhita Rajagopal and Radheshyam Sharma, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur
Review, editing and academic inputs	ABL Srivastava (TSG-SSA, Ed CIL), Prerna Goel and Hema Ramanathan

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Chapter 1: Why this study? Recapturing the background

Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, a flagship Government of India programme was launched in 2001 and it followed the District Primary Education Programme (1994-2001). Both these ambitious elementary education renewal efforts of the government sought to work towards universal elementary education (see Box 1). Close to the heels of SSA, the government enacted the Right to Education, which was notified and came into being in 2009. Both these signalled the determination of the government to make universal elementary education a right that every single child could realise.

Box 1: SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

Goals set in 2001:

- All children in school, Education Guarantee Centre, Alternate School, 'back to School' camp by 2003;
- All children complete five years of primary schooling by 2007;
- All children complete eight years of schooling by 2010;
- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life;
- Bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage by 2007 and at elementary education level by 2010;
- Universal retention by 2010

Source: SSA Framework, GOI, 2001

The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan set in motion a range of monitoring mechanisms that would enable the government, the civil society, the media and the donors associated with the programme to keep track of progress. The District Information System of Education (DISE) periodic reports from the monitoring agencies assigned to track progress and specific surveys (of out of school children for example) generated a wealth of both quantitative as well as qualitative information on progress being made. Similarly, since the RTE came into force in 2009, an annual progress report is prepared to inform the parliament and the citizens about progress made. In addition, SSA also periodically commissions studies to help the government analyse the why and the how. This study is also one such study commissioned by SSA to explore if inclusion/exclusion practices in schools and also explore discrimination could be contributing to children dropping out of school or not learning much.

Perusal of the wealth of data generated by SSA and also the periodic Joint Review Mission reports reveals a disturbing picture. Enrolment rates have gone up significantly and the number of out of school children (OOSC) has come down. The 15th Joint Review Mission (2011) notes that in 2009, 14.25 million children were estimated “not attending” school (NSS 66th Round data, 2009-10). The recent SRI-IMRB OOSC survey data, however, found that the number of out-of-school children has declined from 13.5 million in 2005 to 8.1

million in 2009. The corresponding enrolment data reveals, “At primary level, as per DISE data, 135.2 million students are enrolled (an increase of 10 million children between 2005-06 and 2010-11). However, at upper primary level, enrolments have been on the increase, reflecting more children moving in grades without repetition at primary level. The DISE data shows that 57.8 million children are enrolled at upper primary level, an increase of 14 million students from 2005-06 (15th JRM Aide Memoire, MHRD, GOI, 30 January 2012).

Table 1: Access and Enrolment		
	2005-06	2009 - 2010
Primary Enrolment	124 million	133.4 million
Upper Primary Enrolment	43.6 million	54.4 million
Elementary Enrolment	168 million	187.8 million
GER Primary	103%	115.6 %
NER Primary	84.5%	98.2 %
GER Upper Primary	59.2%	75.8 %
NER Upper Primary	43.1%	58.2 %
Elementary Enrolment in government schools + aided schools	126 million	146 million
Out of School Children+	13.4 million	8.1 million

Source: Aide Memoire 13th JRM, citing data from DISE, IMRB survey of OOSC various years

While the numbers as well as the proportion of children from educationally disadvantaged communities like ST, SC and Muslims have been steadily going up, their share of children dropping out at different stages remains high. It is not enough to only look at enrolment data. Different analyses reveal that a majority of SC and ST children attend government primary / upper primary / elementary schools – far higher than their share in the population. The recent 15th JRM noted: “DISE data for 2010-11 shows that 70% of students are enrolled in a government school (including Local Body schools)¹. Another 6% enrolments are in Government Aided Private schools. At upper primary level, DISE data shows 62% enrolments in government schools and another 15% enrolments in Government Aided private schools. NSS 2009-10 data show that 71.5% of elementary students were attending a government / local body schools (see graph). The private unaided (both recognised and unrecognised), accounts for not less than a fourth of the enrolments in the country” (15th JRM Aide Memoire, MHRD, GOI, 30 January 2012).

The periodic sample survey conducted by GOI remains a rich and reliable source of information on actual attendance across all kinds of schools (government, private aided, private unaided and even private unrecognised). The NSSO 64th (2009) Round reveals a disturbing picture –gross attendance rate across different locations (rural / urban), different economic status group

¹ The share of government schools in total enrolments using DISE data is not compared with previous years’ data since DISE data collection improved to collect more private school data in 2010-11 and a comparison would only provide a distorted picture.

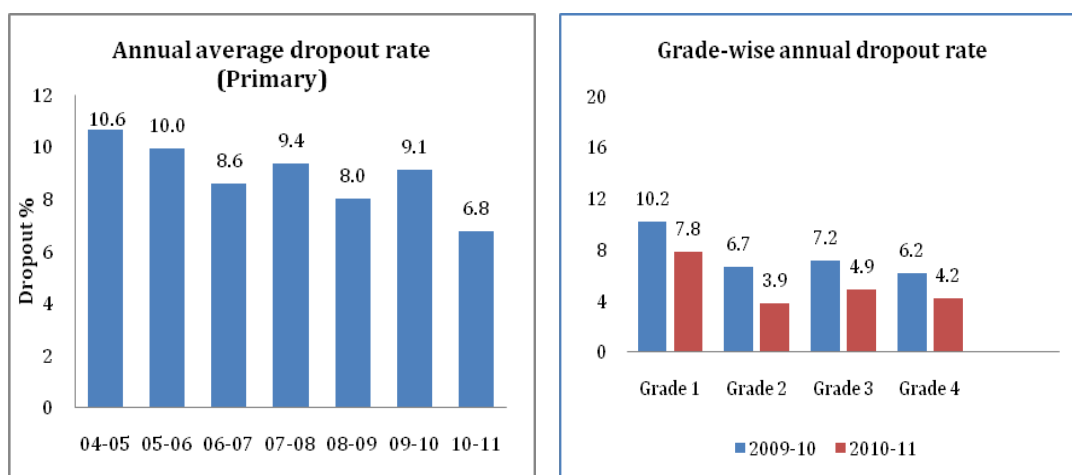
(MPCE) and social and religious communities reveal a discernable hierarchy. Lets us take rural India, the lowest MPCE decile class – out of those in 5-29 years recorded as attending the percentage distribution across levels is quite revealing: while 32.3 percent are attending primary (in 5-29 years age-group), and 10.8 percent are in middle school, only 3.3 percent of them are in secondary and 1.6 in higher secondary and above. If we take the highest MPCE decile class, only 16.8 percent of those reported attending any educational institution were in primary, 13 percent in middle school, 10 percent in secondary and 16.4 percent in higher secondary and above² (Statement 3.9, NSS Report No. 532, Education in India, 2007-08, page 21).

Gross Attendance / Participation Rate of 5-29 years persons by Social / Religious Groups (NSS 64th Round)

	Overall	ST	SC	OBC	Gen Category Hindu	Muslim	Other Religious Groups
GAR	70.2	52.5	61.0	70.5	91.0	51	81.9
NAR	41.0	27.2	34.1	41.8	56.4	27.2	46.4

Source: Dipta Bhog 2011, data from NSS 64th Round

Children drop out at all stages and what is particularly important to understand is that they drop out from all kinds of schools – government, private aided and private unaided. However a quick perusal of the data on drop out reveals a disturbing picture.



(Source: Graph generated from DISE data, 15th JRM, Aide Memoire, 30 January 2012)

The above picture is quite alarming; however a disaggregated look at who is dropping out is even more disturbing. The imbalance across different socio-economic groups is quite noticeable.

² “The proportion of persons in the age-group 5-29 years currently attending educational institutions increases at a steady but gradual pace with increase in economic level – from 48.9% for the bottom 10% of population to 57% for the top 10%, ranked by MPCE, in the rural sector and from 45.7% for the bottom 10% to 62.7% for the top 10% in the urban sector.” NSS Report 532; page 21

DROP OUT RATES CLASSES 1-8									
	2003-04			2007-08			2009-10		
	ALL	BOYS	GIRLS	ALL	BOYS	GIRLS	ALL	BOYS	GIRLS
ALL	50.84	50.49	51.28	42.88	43.72	41.34	42.39	40.59	44.39
SC	57.26	55.95	59.95	52.47	53.56	51.12	51.25	50.59	51.99
ST	65.87	64.97	67.09	62.48	62.62	62.31	57.78	55.15	60.64

(Source: Select School Education Statistics, GOI (Various years))

Despite enhanced inputs and special efforts made by SSA across the country – dropout rates of children from SC and ST remains high; and recent information on Muslim children also reveal a similar trend. “The Sachar Committee Report measured the Mean Years of Schooling (MYS) and found this to be low in absolute terms in contrast to all other SRCs, except in some cases marginally higher than SCs/STs. The same is true of attendance levels of Muslims. In fact, in some states/regions, SCs/STs have overtaken Muslims. While there is a significant rural-urban differential, the Sachar Report observed that the gap between Muslims and other SRCs is generally higher in urban areas than in rural areas. Analysis of time trends too indicate that, despite overall improvement in educational status, the rate of progress has been the slowest for Muslims³” (Dipta Bhog, 2011).

What and how much are children learning? NCERT conducted the National Achievement Survey (NAS) in 2010-11. Students of class 5 in government schools, local body schools and private aided schools in 31 states and Union Territories were tested in language, arithmetic and EVS. Some of the significant findings of NAS 2011 are:

- Students with only one sibling outperform, by a small but statistically significant amount to those who have two or more brothers and sisters.
- Children who are given homework every day and have it checked by their teacher do better than their peers.
- Under-achievement is common among children belonging to SC, ST and minority groups. Apparently, efforts to enable these children to reach their full potential require a deeper preparation in terms of curriculum planning (*and not merely in terms of textbook revision*) and teacher training (Aide Memoire, 14th JRM, 28 July 2011).

Pratham, a national NGO conducts an annual survey of education. Apart from enumerating if children are attending school (if yes, what kind of school, whether they take tuitions before and after school), ASER tests children’s ability to read a level 2 text and simple carry forward subtraction. The first good news is that close to 95% of children in 7-10 and 11-14 years group are attending school. Among them 69.9 percent are in government schools and 25.6 percent attend private schools. The not-so-good news is that 23.8 percent of children going to government schools and 21.8 percent of children going to private schools attend paid tuitions. The news on learning is

³Sachar Committee Report, Page 68-69

not that good – like in the past a significant proportion of children in classes 2 to 5 are not able to read a simple level 2 text or do a simple subtraction problem. Though the numbers are shocking by themselves, it is even more worrisome that this is merely a precipitation of the cumulative year on year drop in learning levels being reflected. For instance, around 75% of the children in Bihar between Std III-V could do subtraction and more in 2005, but in 2011 this number has shrunk to a mere 48%. Bihar is not alone. Similar decline in reading and mathematics was also reported from Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Haryana.

% Children by grade who can read level 2 text and can do subtraction and above, All India, Rural

Grade	% Can read level 2 text 2010	% Can read level 2 text 2011	% Can subtract and above 2010	% Can subtract and above 2011
1	3.40	3.00	5.50	4.40
2	9.10	8.70	17.10	13.70
3	20.00	18.80	36.40	29.90
4	38.10	34.20	57.40	48.40
5	53.40	48.20	70.30	61.10
6	67.50	62.80	80.10	72.20
7	76.20	72.40	84.30	78.30
8	82.90	79.40	85.40	83.10
All		38.30		46.3

Source: ASER 2010 and 2011 reports.

Some educationist and administrators have questioned the veracity of methodology used by ASER to test children. The 15th JRM noted “The JRM acknowledges that the ASER survey provides an independent snapshot of early learning levels, which is in keeping with the JRM’s commitment to independent monitoring. It also has the advantage of providing information on learning outcomes in a timely manner. However, there have been issues raised related to the rigour of ASER’s methodology, including the representative nature of its sampling and the training of its enumerators. The NAS due to its comprehensive design, has not been able to provide the status of achievement levels on an annual basis” (*Aide Memoire, 12th JRM, GOI*). Notwithstanding these observations, the broad national findings of ASER stand and the sad reality is that learning remains an area of concern across the country and there is also growing evidence that more and more children reach out to private tuitions. This trend only reinforces existing inequalities – whereby the very poor in both rural and urban India end up learning very little as they cannot afford tuitions.

The big unanswered question:

The big unanswered question is why are more children from rural/remote areas, from very poor communities, from specific socially disadvantaged communities dropping out more than others? Why do learning levels continue to be poor across both rural and urban areas?

Obviously the data that we have tells us what is happening, but does not throw much light on why it is that learning levels continue to be so low.

It is to answer the why and how that SSA commissioned a range of studies. The four listed below pertain to understanding why children drop out and why learning levels continue to be low. Summary of findings of studies commissioned by SSA:

1. 2006: Study of student's attendance in primary and upper primary schools. It was found that overall average attendance rate of students was 68.5% at primary and 75.7% at upper primary levels. For teachers, the average attendance rate was 81.7% in primary schools and 80.5% at upper primary schools. The attendance rate of girls was a little higher than that of boys. The average attendance rate in first hour was a little lower for SC and Muslim students at primary level (68.7% and 66.4% respectively) compared with that of all students but at upper primary level there was not much difference between attendance rates of different social groups; these were between 76% and 79%. The main reasons for children absenting from schools given by head teachers, teachers and VEC members were (a) lack of adequate facilities in school, (b) teacher shortage and overcrowded classrooms, (c) children being required for household work or sibling care at home, (d) children required to help parents in agriculture or occupational work or participation in other income generating activity and (e) parents' indifference or lack of interest in child's education. Parents mostly felt that lack of facilities in school and child's unwillingness to go to school was main reasons for child's frequent absence from school⁴.

2. 2008: Deployment and competence of Para-teachers: The study was conducted in 12 states where Para-teachers are employed on a large scale, namely Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Odisha. The study found huge regional/state level variations. One of the key disturbing findings was that 45% of the Para-teachers were untrained. It is noteworthy that 75 per cent of Para-teachers are deployed in rural areas and in schools with high pupil-teacher ratios and/or in schools that have one or two teachers.

3. 2008: Time on task: This was a very important study that tried to ascertain how much time is actually spent in teaching and learning. The study found that less than one third (an average of 29%) of the teachers' time in classroom was spent on student-centric activity. It was 27.6% for grade II, 26.2% for grade IV and 30.8% for grade VI. Percentage of time

⁴ "However, the achievement survey carried out by NCERT through an improved research methodology shows that under-achievement is common among children belonging to SC, ST and minority groups. Apparently, efforts to enable these children to reach their full potential require a deeper preparation in terms of curriculum planning (*and not merely in terms of textbook revision*) and teacher training." Aide Memoire 14th JRM

spent by teachers in classroom on teachers' centric activity for grades II, IV and VI was 53.3, 56.3 and 55.9% respectively. Percentage of time spent by teachers on supportive instructional activities was 14.1% in grade II, 13.6% in grade IV and 10.5 in grade VI. Percentage of time spent by teachers' on 'class management' activities and 'being off task' was 2.1% and 2.9% for grade II, 1.5% and 2.4% for grade IV, 1.5% and 2.1% for grade VI respectively. Overall, students' time spent on active learning activities was about 25% of total student-time. Students' time spent on active learning gradually declined from 26.4% in grade II to 22.0% in grade VI. Of the total time of students' classroom activities, time spent on passive learning activities was 46.9% on an average. The average student-time spent on learning activities of mechanical type was 15.4% of total student-time.

4. 2008: Effectiveness of BRC and CRC in providing academic support and supervision to elementary schools. BRCs were overloaded with administrative work, had inadequate infrastructure and were burdened with too many training programmes. They had insufficient official power and suffered from lack of recognition for good work. Also lack of transport facilities affected the performance of BRC and CRC functionaries. Some perceived problems at the CRC level included insufficient capacity building of CRCCs, lack of job knowledge, non-acceptance of teachers to adopt innovative teaching methods and of CRCCs themselves by teachers. SSA is envisaged as a decentralized programme but in most cases the power vested with the BEOs undermined BRCCs' position. By and large, BRCCs, BRPs and CRCCs were satisfied with regard to most aspects but some discontent was found in respect of physical infrastructure, existing emoluments and balancing between administrative and academic work.

Independent studies:

In addition to the studies directly commissioned by SSA, the Indian education community has also engaged with the issue. There is today a rich body of research based papers and books that have explored equity and quality issues in elementary education. The two PROBE reports (1999 and 2010), Manabi Majumdar and Jos Mooij (2012), Poonam Batra (2005 and 2009), Geeta Gandhi Kingdon (2009), Kartik Muralidharan and Michael Kremer (2006), Geetha Nambissan (2006, 2009), ASER Reports (2005 to 2011), Rashmi Sharma and Vimala Ramachandran (2009), Vimala Ramachandran (2004a, 2004b, 2009), A R Vasavi et al (2012), UNICEF UNGEI study 2009 (done by Ramachandran, Mehrotra and Patni) have all contributed to our understanding of what happens inside the school and have tried to tease out the texture of teaching and learning in government primary schools.

One of the overarching messages that emanate from these research studies that touch upon reasons for low outcomes is that it is not easy to identify / pin point exclusion in school by looking at outcome indicators; and that one has to carefully look at teaching-learning processes and overall

school environment (teacher-pupil relationship, pupil-pupil relationship etc.) that lead up to these outcomes. Therefore outcome data per se does not always throw light on why some children drop out or why some children learn so little even though they have been attending school, and even being promoted from one grade to the next. Many of the above listed studies point to the prevalence of exclusionary or discriminatory practices in schools. In particular, studies done on mid-day meal programme point to the prevalence of deep-rooted caste based prejudices in appointment of the cook. Some studies have also pointed that some children get excluded from active learning in school for a variety of reasons / or even a combination of reasons. Apart from the caste or community based exclusion, several studies have pointed to the exclusion of children who are not able to keep pace with the class or with the teacher. Frequent absenteeism of students due to work or health reasons, long term absence due to migration or short term bondage, inability to follow the language of instruction in the school have been cited as contributing to both poor learning as well as dropping out. Several international NGOs have commissioned and conducted studies on corporal punishment and also on factors that inhibit learning (Plan India, Save the Children India) and many of these studies also point to the prevalence of both subtle and overt forms of exclusion and discrimination.

In a recent report Geetha Nambissan poses the question: "To what extent do the oppressive and unjust hierarchies of the caste system continue to 'lock' Dalit children out of full participation in education and in what ways does it happen within schools? This is an issue that has surprisingly been neglected by education policy, pedagogic discourse as well as research..." (Geetha Nambissan, 2009). This has also been acknowledged by successive Joint Review Missions of SSA (Aide Memoire 10th JRM to 15th JRM GOI) and also in popular newspaper articles on education. In particular a well-known journalist P Sainath (The Hindu) has done a series on kinds of exclusion that is being practiced in some states of India.

Reporting on the findings of a study on exclusion experienced by Dalit children in Rajasthan, Geetha Nambissan notes that children experience exclusion in many ways. Starting from discriminatory attitude of teachers towards SC in general and some sub-groups of SC like Valmiki in particular; children also reported that they were denigrated or ignored. There have also been reports of teachers assigning menial tasks to some children - like sweeping classrooms or cleaning the toilets. The report noted that some teachers called children by their caste / community name or by their location - for example children may be referred to as Colony children or Basti children or Thanda children. Peer interactions were often caste or identity based as children mixed with their friends from the same locality. They also share food with their own peers from the same social group. One of the interesting insights from the report is that "seating arrangements influenced by teacher expectations and preferences - intelligent children in the front and weak at the back..." (Geetha Nambissan, 2009). If schools are located in the main village, then children of that area had the say and children from other

colonies or Dalit settlements had to take the back seat – literally. The report also noted that many of these practices are slowly coming to an end – for example, children reported that till few years ago Valmiki children were made to sit in a corner in the back of the class. But this is not the case anymore. However, one of the main findings of this in-depth qualitative study is that fear of ridicule is so real that many children from extremely poor or disadvantaged backgrounds remain silent in school. They also refrain from participating in extracurricular activities, leading the morning assembly or taking leadership roles (Geetha Nambissan, 2009).

A recent report done by NIAS, Bangalore brings together the findings of a wide range of research studies and data on the tribal community in India. There are more than 600 tribal communities in India and it is widely acknowledged that they are among the most deprived social group in India – with a majority of them living in rural areas. The important issue raised by this report pertains to systemic exclusion - “By design and through overt and covert practices, education became part of the systematic exclusion of non-elite students... Neither the makeup of the education system nor the lack of participation by Adivasis is by accident. This brings us to the condition of ‘invisibilisation’ that also marks the educational experience of the disadvantaged. Even as they participate in formal education as students, teachers, parents, staff and school administrators, Adivasi people can never hope to find Adivasi knowledge, ethos, traditions, histories and languages as part of their educational experience. In addition to the impact of these forms of erasure and silence, Adivasis are portrayed in stereotypical ways that are based on perceptions of their primitiveness and closeness to nature. Continued legacies of exclusion and invisibilisation loom large on the discourse of inclusion of Adivasis in all forms of public life including educational institutions⁵” (Page 20, Veerabhadranaika, P; Revathi S Kumaran, Shivali Tukdeo and A R Vasavi: The education question from the perspective of adivasis: conditions, policies and structures, NIAS and UNICEF, Bangalore 2012).

Concerns flagged by SSA JRMs

The JRMs are conducted with an objective of reviewing the progress in the implementation of SSA (and RTE) with respect to SSA Goals, especially

⁵Dhaatri Resource Centre for Women and Children, “the report states that a large number of Adivasi children who should be enrolled in elementary schools continue to be outside, unenrolled, or are dropouts. The following findings of the report particularly stand out:

- Quality of educational institutions for ST children is low. In particular, the quality of residential schools/Ashramshalas “is shockingly below the minimum standard of human dignity for any child.”
- In what seems to be a serious violation of the right to education, the primary schools in Adivasi districts have almost become dysfunctional.
- Teacher retention, qualification and quality in the region are abysmally low.
- Arbitrariness and ad-hoc decisions continue to play a role in teacher recruitment. Mid day meals programmes have been crucial in increasing enrolment in rural and tribal areas. However, the facilities and management of the programme leaves much to be desired (Quoted in Veerabhadra Naik et al, 2012, page 27

the interventions and its results in terms of agreed indicators, and to discuss follow-up action. The JRMs also review the actions taken upon the recommendations made by previous JRMs.

The 10th JRM⁶ observed that positive trends at the national level with respect to enrolment of girls, SC and ST, Muslim minorities, children from urban slums, migratory families and those in difficult circumstances. However disparities still existed in relation to retention, proportion of OoSC and achievement. The mission noted that “for girls and socially marginalised groups the issue is not merely one of bridging quantitative gaps in enrolment and retention but also of ensuring the right of children from these communities to an education that is free of discrimination and one that empowers them to participate as equals in all spheres. In this context it is important that discrimination against marginalised communities (including CWSN) should be dealt with in all aspects (for example, classroom practices, teacher behaviour, peer relations and so on).” Accordingly the Mission recommended that different forms of discriminatory practices in schools be monitored so that sensitization, conscientization and appropriate actions are initiated as these impact retention and learning in schools. Towards this, the Mission further recommended that research studies be commissioned to expert institutions.

Successive JRMs noted that SSA symbolizes the commitment to ensure that girls and children coming from disadvantaged backgrounds enjoy the opportunity to learn and grow without experiencing discrimination. Equity is clearly linked with quality and there is a need for viewing this as an essential precondition and integral element for quality and pedagogical integration. Some of the main concerns identified with respect to equity and quality by the 15th JRM are as listed below:

- Steps taken to address equity issues need to go beyond provisioning.
- State institutions and experts to engage with the challenge of ensuring equality and dignity for all children within the school and classroom space.
- Teachers are the key to ensuring an egalitarian learning environment and training of teachers assumes critical importance in this respect, both in pre-service and in-service categories.
- Schooling processes can play a critical role in protecting girls from cultural practices like child marriage if teachers are equipped with requisite understanding and skills to seek and utilise necessary support from community and state structures.
- Girls’ education is often viewed as being synonymous with gender; this perception should be replaced by a broader vision of child-centred education for all.
- Poor attendance and prolonged absenteeism are important factors of retention, especially at the upper primary stage. Community

⁶ 10th Joint Review Mission Report (July, 2009)

involvement may be the key to improving attendance; therefore, this issue deserves to become a major agenda of SMC's orientation and training.

- Prolonged absence from school has serious consequences for children's academic progress and the teacher's capacity to cope with their learning needs. As such this dimension needs to be incorporated in the broader perspective of the concept of special training for which appropriate policy and curricular strategies are being evolved.

This study:

Drawing upon the insights from above mentioned research studies and JRM reports GOI recognised that one of the important challenges faced has been the persistence of certain discriminatory practices in society and also in our schools. While there have also been important positive changes in society and in our schools, there is disturbing evidence of emergence of new forms of exclusion and discrimination. Significant anecdotal evidence and case studies/media reports have established the positive impact of proactive inclusion and negative outcome of exclusion. A wide range of related issues need to be explored, such as the link between corporal punishment and discrimination, dignity of the child, and the social conditions in the child's village. Corporal punishment does not necessarily happen in vacuum and active exclusion/or ignoring is a means of denying equality. Leadership roles that children get in schools, such as class monitor, leading the assembly, reading out news in the assembly, performing in important school functions, is a mechanism through which children develop a sense of self-respect and dignity. Active exclusion from such forums and activities could have the opposite effect. In addition to what happens inside the school, dominant groups, political economy of the village also lead to children developing an inferiority complex and resentment against certain social groups. Linked to this is the problem of child labour and short-term bondage or part-time work. All these contribute to the social gap between the teacher and a child.

In August 2011, GOI, MHRD (SSA) commissioned a study to explore inclusion and exclusion in primary schools in six states. This study was coordinated by the SSA TSG (located in Ed CIL) and Vimala Ramachandran was invited to be the principal investigator and Taramani Naorem was designated as the nodal person for this study in TSG. The TOR of the study is given in Annexure I while a list of the Advisory Committee members is given in Annexure II.

Chapter 2: Methodology

This study sought to systematically explore the following:

- Caste/community/parental occupation/ poverty related discrimination (they may intersect one reinforcing the other);
- Within the above, implications of gender for school experiences;
- Within the above, burden of disability;
- Other forms of discrimination - health/disease related and identity related.

The methodology adopted was primarily qualitative and interpretative in nature. The study was a focussed and intensive effort to analyse inclusion/exclusion issues related to religion/health/disability/gender/caste/economic issues/social factors in the school and based in rural areas. In other words, it tried to look into the inclusion and exclusion dimensions of discrimination within the school as a whole; within a classroom and tried to explore the relationship between teachers, students, parents and the community. Issue of inclusion/ exclusion was looked into within the school as an institution and within the classroom and not in the society at large. A team of four investigators including at least one female member conducted the assessment procedure in Upper Primary Schools while a team of three investigators including at least one female member conducted the study in Primary Schools.

Objectives:

Major objectives include the following:

- To map the nature of participation of students from diverse social groups in the school, in the classroom and extracurricular activities.
- To identify practices/behaviour in different spheres of school (mid-day meal, drinking water, use of toilets, assembly, sacred space if any), classroom (teaching and learning, corporal punishment, verbal/physical abuse, extra encouragement versus neglect), extracurricular (morning assembly, special functions of the school, games/sports, cultural activities), and the attitude of teachers towards pupils of different social groups;
- To identify practices/behaviour in different spheres of school among children;
- To gather parents' views on school environment and effectiveness in developing a child's personality and prevalence of inclusive/exclusive practices;
- To suggest measures to encourage inclusion (positive) and discourage and eliminate exclusion (negative) practices in schools.

Coverage:

Since there is no fool proof methodology for such kind of studies the idea was to conduct this study initially in six states of the country, preferably one from every region, which can then be replicated later on in other parts. In this context, the importance of capturing state specific issues and nuances was also taken into consideration. As such, the selection of states as well as agencies/organisations for the study, related to background and location, was, crucial considering the focussed and intensive nature of the study. Ultimately, the selection of states was done in terms of range and dimensions of issues on inclusion/exclusion that still lie untapped in most states. In this context, the process of selection of field investigators by the agencies in their respective states was also critical to the ensuing result of the study as they needed to exercise due caution and deliberation keeping the overall objective of the study in mind. The study was conducted in six states: Madhya Pradesh in Central India; Bihar in the North; Rajasthan in the West; Odisha in the East; Andhra Pradesh in the South; and Assam in the North East. Details of the institutions/organisations in each state are given in Annexure III.

Sample:

Twenty schools were taken up in each state. Four districts were selected and five schools including both Primary and Upper Primary Schools were selected in each district. The criteria for selection are specified in Box 1. The focus of the study was Class.

Box 1: Selection Criteria for Schools:

I. Location

- Near or on the main road (access)
- One interior village at least five kilometres from the main road
- Two schools somewhere midpoint
- One school in Block HQ

II. Teachers

- All schools must have at least 2 appointed teachers
- At least 3 schools in each district with some female teachers
- Mix of schools with 2,3,4+ teachers
- At least 3 schools with SC/ST teachers

III. Schools

- At least 50% of the sample should be elementary schools (coeducation) without a high school in the same compound
- Not more than 25% should be elementary plus High Schools
- No NPEGEL Schools
- All schools selected should be a mix representation of different communities (FC/General, SC, ST, OBC, Muslim etc.)- at least two different communities in the same school
- At least 50 % of schools with Children with special needs (CWSNs)
- All sampled schools should be serving MDM and at least 75% where MDM is cooked in the schools
- Reasonable proportion of schools with toilets (Refer DISE data)
- Few schools with adverse pupil-teacher and student-classroom ratio

IV. District

- Pick one district from different regions of the state with at least 20% ST population, one 20% SC population and if possible one district with Muslim/Christian minority population.

Research Tools:

Following tools were developed for the purpose of this study to capture gender and social equity dimensions of discriminations within schools and classrooms:

- i. Classroom Observation Schedule
- ii. School Observation Schedule
- iii. Schedule for Semi Structured Interview of Teachers
- iv. Focus Group Discussions with Teachers
- v. Focus Group Discussions with Adolescence
- vi. Focus Group Discussions with Parents of Deprived Community
- vii. Structured Activity with Children in Class IV and VII

Draft tools were finalized after incorporating inputs from the pilot field-testing of tools, which were conducted in the States of Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh (one Primary and one Upper Primary School in each state).

Box 2: Field-testing of Tools

Rajasthan: Dausa District -One UPS at Malpuria which was quite inside the habitation and one PS at Jeerota which was right next to the main road.

Andhra Pradesh: Medak District - One Zilla Parishad High School (ZPHS) and one Upper Primary School (UPS) in Medak district.

Revised tools were sent to the institutes who conducted a pilot of these tools in their respective state. These tools were finalized based on feedback and inputs from six institute/agencies were shared in an orientation workshop conducted for training of field investigators. Basic purpose of the workshop was to recapture the background and highlight the importance of the study and finalize draft tools after incorporating inputs from the field. Another important agenda was to discuss the schedule for fieldwork, data formats and preparation of state reports. Research tools are given in Annexure IV.

State specific issues

The importance of capturing state specific issues and nuances were highlighted during sharing of experiences from the field from different states. Important state specific issues were also highlighted, namely:

I. Andhra Pradesh:

- Explore the impact of local dialects on Scheduled Tribe students.
- It is important to keep in mind that community characteristics and their social status differ from state to state.
- Discrimination based on the colour of skin could also be explored.
- Discrimination based on merit.
- Teacher-teacher relationship- caste and gender also needs to be examined

II. Assam:

- FGD should not be held necessarily with BPL communities (below poverty line) but with the most deprived social group in a village, if they should be different.
- In Assam, role numbers are assigned according to the academic performance of a child and this has emerged as a marker of exclusion. Therefore, it may be useful to explore this further and see if there is an overlap between the so-called bright students and their academic performance. It may be useful to speak to or do FGDs with parents of “bright” and “weak” children.
- It is important to note the names of persons serving MDM, doing the cleaning.

III. Bihar:

- Be aware of an additional class specification of EBC (Educationally Backward Class).
- EBCs may be enrolled in two or more different schools. It may be useful to explore if this is really the situation.

IV. Odisha:

- Observation should be for at least three days in each school
- Coastal Odisha language is different from the languages in western Odisha. Also STs are not familiar with the main Odisha language and this could be an important site of discrimination.
- In classroom observation, note whether the teacher uses local dialect to communicate with children.
- It may be interesting to look at the notebook of first five students and the notebook of last five students and note observations.

V. Madhya Pradesh:

- Have a separate discussion with SCs/STs/Minorities.
- Note techniques of punishment that may be different for boys and girls (e.g. teachers pull hair of girls and twist ears of boys or hit them with a stick).

- During class activity draw a chart indicating the sitting positions of students in class. Note their names and later find out their caste/community.

VI. Rajasthan:

- It is important to select a mixed community school.
- During triangulation, address issue of difference between what students and teachers are saying.
- If there is an SC teacher in the school, it may be worthwhile to get his/her inputs. Need to explore how teachers from diverse backgrounds are treating children from diverse backgrounds.

Box 3: Order of Schedule to be followed during Data Collection

- School tools (day 1, 2 and 3 - ongoing and compile on day 3)
- Get a master list of children in classes 4 and 7 - and then take from the register / or through teacher the social group / community; get this information on day 3
- Reach before school time to observe assembly at least on 2 days
- Classroom observation (day 1 and day 2 - try and do this first thing in the morning)
- Teacher - semi structured interviews (on second day)
- Teacher - FGD (after completing all the 5 schools)
- FGD parents from deprived community (evening / afternoon of any day)
- FGD adolescents - boys and girls (evening / afternoon any day)
- Structured activities with children of class 4 (day 3)
- Structured activities with children of class 7 (day 3)

Time line of the study:

A structured timeline for the study was worked out after much deliberation and it is given in the table below:

Sl. No.	Activity	Time Line
1.	Concept Note	February, 2011
2.	Research questions	March, 2011
3.	Construction of Draft Tools	July, 2011
4.	Field Testing of draft tools	August, 2011
5.	Field Testing of Revised Tools by States	August, 2011
6.	Orientation Workshop for Principal Investigators	September, 2011
7.	Finalization of Research Tools	September, 2011
8.	Orientation in respective States	September, 2011
9.	Data Collection	Oct - Dec, 2011
10.	Data Formats for Analysis	December, 2011
11.	State Draft Reports	February, March, 2012
12.	National Workshop for Synthesis	February-March, 2012
13.	Final Reports State	May-June, 2012
14.	National Synthesis Report	July, 2012

Chapter 3: Brief background of sample states

Andhra Pradesh (AP): The four districts selected were Mahaboobnagar, Adilabad, Vizianagaram and Kurnool. Regional representation was ensured in the selection of four districts to capture broader situation in each region. In the process certain selection criteria could not be met. For instance, Vizianagaram falls in North Coastal Andhra and has lower SC population (10.58%) compared to Prakasam (21.29%). Similarly Kurnool represents Rayalaseema region but ST population is less. Further other criteria like dropout rates (SC/ST) and population of children with special needs (CWSN) were considered while finalising the districts. Another exception in AP is that all 23 districts are covered under the NPEGEL programme.

Assam: Four districts i.e., Barpeta, Dhubri, Nagaon and Sonitpur were selected from different regions of Assam representing the middle and the west. In each district, blocks were identified on the basis of SC/ST population. Since education access of Muslim and Tea Community children is still challenging in Assam, selection of districts was done strategically so that two districts having representation of children from both the community were part of the selection.

Bihar: It is the third most populous state in the country with a population of 83 million and with 40% of the population falling below the poverty line-highest in the country. The most backward caste (MBC) is a majority in the state followed by the backward caste and upper caste while Muslims and the scheduled tribe are a minority. Four districts in the state were selected on the basis of their geographical and socio-cultural background. The selected districts are Bhojpur, Gaya, Katihar and Muzaffarpur.

Madhya Pradesh (MP): Four districts were selected from different socio-cultural and geographical context within the state based on the selection criteria prescribed for this study. These districts are: Panna district in the north eastern part which is part of Malwa region; Ujjain district in western MP which is part of Malwa region; Mandla district in south eastern part which is part of Gondwana region; and Sheopur district in north western part bordering Rajasthan.

Odisha: In Odisha, four districts were identified on the basis of regional and socio-cultural variations so as to get a proper representation of the state. The districts were selected keeping in mind heterogeneity in social composition so that it is reflected in the student profile and compositions in schools. These four districts are Nuapada in the west, Kendrapada in the eastern coastal region, Koraput in the south and Keonjhar in the north central zone of the state.

Rajasthan: It is the largest state in India in terms of geographical area. The vastly varied agro-climatic and social dimensions of the state make it difficult to deliver basic services of health, education and water to people. The state is divided into 33 districts spread over various geographical regions. Four districts were selected from different regions representing the plains (Dausa), desert (Jodhpur) and tribal (Udaipur) region. One district Tonk was selected to understand issues related to Muslim minority children. In each district blocks were identified on the basis of SC/ST composition.

Educational Indicators in the Six States:

S No	States	GER		NER		Dropout Rate (SES 2009-10)*		GPI	
		Primary	Upper Primary	Primary	Upper Primary	Primary I-V	Upper Primary I-VIII	Primary	Upper Primary
1.	AP	108	95	98	81	15.80	41.29	0.96	0.98
2.	Assam	104.4	96.4	95.7	89.5	35.89	61.21	49.6	51.3
3.	Bihar	102	80	95	72	42.45	66.02	0.97	0.95
4.	MP	136.65	102.11	-	71.54	21.16	21.44	0.97	0.98
5.	Odisha	99.69	104.93	93.26	90.85	26.45	54.30	0.94	0.95
6.	Rajasthan	114.30	112.06	95.51	95.22	50.51	50.32	0.89	0.81

Source: AWP&B 2012-13/DISE 2011-12*These are cohort dropout rates of class I children who do not reach class V or class VIII and that is why these are much higher than the annual dropout rates reported in DISE.

Information about Schools and Enrolment:

	States	Enrolment*		SC share in Population Census 2001 (%)	SC share in enrolment (%)	ST share in Population Census 2001 (%)	ST share in enrolment (%)	Muslim share in population Census 2001 (%)	Muslim share in enrolment (%)
		Primary	Upper Primary						
1	AP	4060278	2130832	16.19	18.51*	6.59	9.84*	9.17	9.33*
2	Assam	3055803	1041911	6.90	9.30	12.40	15.10	30.92	38.10
3	Bihar	15368913	4195801	15.72	18.32	0.91	1.92	16.66	13.85
4	MP	7405517	3248363	15.20	17.21	20.30	24.31	6.37	4.64
5	Odisha	4014347	1639650	16.53	19.06	23.30	28.19	2.07	1.50
6	Rajasthan	5098382	2005797	17.16	20.54	12.56	15.73	8.47	7.66

Source: AWP&B 2012-13/DISE 2010-11* & 2011-12

Chapter 4: Main findings of the study

India is indeed vast and diverse – the study covered six states and each one of them was different. The ability of children to access a school, participate in school activities, learn and grow and, most essentially, develop a sense of self-worth is influenced by a wide range of issues, variously related to the school, to the family and to society. In many ways, schools are a microcosm of the society we live in – it mirrors attitudes, prejudices and also practices. The National Policy on Education (1986) saw universal education as a powerful tool to help neutralise “distortions of the past” and give children a level playing field. The Right to Education Act of 2009 tried to take this forward by guaranteeing all children the right to go to school, right to be treated with love and care and, most importantly, the right to be treated equally and with dignity. Despite good intentions and some very good policies and programmes, extraneous factors pull or push children to school, ensure they learn and develop a positive self-worth.

Education is after all not only about reading and writing; it is about preparing oneself for life. It is in this context that the issue of inclusion and exclusion, or to put it more starkly, discrimination and unequal treatment, acquired a new meaning. In this study, we have tried to explore blatant, subtle and hidden practices that influence the ability of children to learn and grow.

Before delving into the details of what this study found, some overwhelming/overarching issues caught the attention of researchers. At the meeting of researchers of the project held on February 2012 to share findings from six states, a few issues leapt to the foreground.

Overarching insights

It is now fairly well known and established through research that in most areas government elementary schools primarily cater to the very poor and that there has been a steady growth of private schools even in rural and remote areas of India. There are, however, significant variations among the states with regard to these generalizations. In states like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, government elementary schools are not so exclusive and serve children from almost all social groups (castes / communities), especially girls from forward castes. In Andhra Pradesh, on the other hand, most upper or forward caste children do not attend government schools, which primarily cater to Backward Caste (BC), Dalit (SC) and Adivasi (ST) children. There has been a significant growth of residential schools so that after primary school (Class 6) many Dalit and Adivasi children who do well academically shift to residential schools⁷. In Assam and Odisha, habitations/villages are quite

⁷ The Andhra Pradesh Social Welfare Residential Institutions Society was created in 1987 and since then the state operates 289 residential schools for SC, the Kasturba Gandhi Balika

distinct and so are schools that children attend. The major distinction in Assam is between the tea garden community, the non-Assamese migrants, and specific tribal areas for Bodo, Karbi, Mishing, Chakma etc. As these communities reside in distinct habitations/villages, they often go to schools that are fairly homogeneous.

Given the social norms of Indian society, discrimination against Dalit (SC) was more prevalent than against Adivasi (ST), with Rajasthan being a notable exception (especially with respect to Bhil and Sahariya). This may be attributed to most ST communities living in exclusive habitations/village where they are often in a majority. On the other hand, Dalit communities are spread across the state and are often a minority in the village. However, where the Dalit community was in a majority in a village, dynamics was noticeably different.

One of the overarching insights from this study is that we need to view inclusion and exclusion from different vantage points: from the outside (who goes to what kind of school), from the inside (what happens inside the school) and from society (who is visible and not visible, for example seasonal or new migrants are often invisible in data on OOSC). Equally significant is the influence of the larger society and social norms on what happens inside the school, the attitude and practices of teachers and the involvement or lack of involvement of parents and community leaders. Political and social assertion of the rights of Dalits and Adivasi also influence practices and attitudes. The differences between Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan are a case in point. While all three societies are highly stratified in terms of social and community identities, explicit (blatant) caste based discrimination is not so evident inside the school in AP or for that matter in Bihar; while in Rajasthan discrimination is quite explicit. This may be because of the impact of political environment in the state. Further, as discussed above, composition of student community is more homogeneous in AP while it is quite diverse in Rajasthan where children from forward castes also attend government schools.

Language is an important site of exclusion. This is particularly evident when the language of teachers' or the official state language is different from the mother tongue of children. In Odisha, teachers from coastal district do not know the language spoken in western Odisha districts and the tribal languages and therefore they are unable to communicate. Equally, Odia language spoken in coastal areas is considered as the standard official language and is used in books and for classroom transactions. Due to which students from the rural western Odisha and tribal students, who have a different dialect, usually face difficulty. Therefore language is an important caste marker in the state. In other states, language is a big exclusionary issue for migrant children. For example, Assamese is the main medium of instruction in Assam, which is very different from the mother tongue of tea-

Vidhyalaya was extended to class 10 and there are a also 48 residential schools for ST children covering 15252 students.

garden workers. This was shared by migrants from Bangladesh and West Bengal who speak Bangla at home while their children go to Assamese medium schools. Similarly, in the border areas of Andhra Pradesh medium of instruction is very different from the mother tongue of children. In Rajasthan the local dialects vary with each district and children may not be familiar with the standardised Hindi used in schools.

The issue of language as a site of exclusion has been highlighted in India for over 60 years. This study does not purport to explore it in detail but has tried to keep language issue on the radar while exploring inclusion and exclusion.

Mid day meal was one area in which social and community issues invariably surfaced. Some areas where dominant practices of the village dictated norms included appointment of cooks (belong to a caste/community that would enable all children to eat, mostly non-SC), seating arrangements for eating the meal, access to water to wash plates and hands and drinking water. However, wherever there is a dynamic and strong head master or head teacher the school has been able to swim against the current.

In almost all the areas infrastructure facilities were poor. There were not enough adequate classrooms. Usable toilets were few and far between, highlighting the fact that providing toilets means little on the ground unless equal attention is paid to make sure it is usable, and that there is water and it is cleaned regularly. A miniscule proportion of schools had usable and functional toilets for girls. And where there were such toilets, girls from the poorest or the most socially disadvantaged group in that village were asked to clean them.

Similarly, availability of adequate teachers was also a big issue. This was not only due to teacher shortages but also due to the fact that all teachers did not come to school regularly, even when they were appointed to schools. The ability of the educational administration at the district / block level to make sure all posted teachers attend every day is uneven.

Another important similarity is that the present structure of the School Management Committees (SMC) or erstwhile Village Education Committee (VEC) is not effective enough to ensure the involvement of parents, especially from the most backward community in the sample school villages. They were apathetic and admitted that their voices were rarely heard and they did not participate regularly. They were also not aware of exclusionary practices in school and often accepted the situation as given and one that could be changed. They were also quite unaware of the Right to Education Act (RTE) of 2009.

Discussions with teachers from six sample states also highlighted a common perception: children from very deprived social groups do not perform well in school. Interestingly, information from same schools also revealed that this is

a misconception and that many children from deprived social groups were actually performing well academically. There is a disjuncture between teacher' perceptions and reality, and it is noteworthy that teachers themselves pointed out children who were "bright" and keen on studies (many of them Dalit/ Adivasi), and at the same time they continued to hold on to prejudices and stereotypes.

One reason for the above could be student attendance. Across all states, regular attendance is a serious issue among children from extremely poor and marginalised communities. This could be due to different reasons such as poor health and recurring illness, short-term migration of parents for work, taking on household responsibilities (especially girls), parental absence for daily wage labour and children being neglected. Frequent absence essentially means that children are not able to keep pace with learning. When children fall behind, teachers ignore them. In all six states, teachers preferred to focus on "bright" children who sat in the front rows. This process resulted in a self-perpetuating mechanism leading to exclusion.

Quotes from state reports:

Odisha: Caste equation plays a crucial role in determining discrimination. The school/village where one caste is in a dominant position often looks down upon the other caste that has less population. For example, in a school where there are more OBC students, they have the upper hand and they discriminate against ST and SC children. If STs are dominant, then they discriminate against SCs. But this is never in case for SCs. Even if they are in the dominant position, we did not find any instance of their undermining STs or OBCs. We can see this in School 18 where 61% students are SC and yet, SC helper is discriminated. Specific examples were found in School 3, 8, 12 and 19. In Nuapada district OBC is in the dominant position and ST and SCs are in the minority position. However, only people from SC category are discriminated against more overtly. In Keonjhar district, STs are in the dominant position and SCs are discriminated against. Similarly, in Koraput district STs are in majority and SCs again are in a vulnerable position. In Kendrapada district the equation is not very different. Even if SCs are very few in number, they are isolated by the SEBC (OBC) as they are popularly known there.

AP: An example of exclusion on the basis of caste discrimination was seen in the case of drinking water. Children from SC and ST communities were not allowed to go near the well/hand pump which was the source of drinking water in the school. Manjula (name changed), a class VII student belonging to the SC community was observed drinking water from a plate during MDM. Other children standing near the hand pump were seen pouring water from a height in her plate. She was not allowed to touch the pipe. On further probing, other students remarked that she does not bathe and is unclean- "We do not like to sit with her as she smells bad. Because of this we do not allow her even to touch the water pipe".

Rajasthan: A common teaching method was teachers standing in front of the class and addressing the children. There was little effort made by the teacher to

seek students' participation. It was evident that the teacher's time and attention was mostly focussed on children who perform 'well' in academics. A prominent case of exclusion during classroom transaction was seen in one school in Jodhpur (Jod1). The maths teacher entered Class VII with a stick in one hand. Throughout the class he only addressed two boys sitting in the first row. Both these students were good in studies. In the next class, a Hindi teacher entered and asked students to open the textbooks. She asked a few questions related to the chapter she had taught the previous day. Only three girls sitting in the front row raised their hand and answered the questions. Children sitting in the back rows were not attentive and the teacher did not pay any attention to them. Before leaving the classroom the teacher asked the students if they had completed their homework. Only a few answered. The teacher left the classroom stating that all students should finish their homework.

Assam: Though caste discrimination was not so pronounced, subtle cases were found during MDM. There was some Brahmins and OBC students who were not eating MDM. In one school, Hindu and Muslim students were seen sitting separately while eating the midday meal. In another example, Anuja in Class III at a school in Sonitpur never avails Midday Meal. Her friends and teachers informed us that she and her elder sister never take MDM in the school. They belonged to Brahmin caste and their father performs Puja in other houses. Therefore, their parents had forbidden them from eating food that has been cooked by other caste. In another school, name of each student was written on the back of the plate so that they do not get mixed up by mistake. Once a Muslim boy used a plate belonging to a Hindu girl and afterwards, this girl stopped eating MDM in school. In 2 other schools in Sonitpur district, all students don't eat MDM because cooks belong to Tea Community and were Christian converts.

Bihar: During morning assembly it was observed that a majority of students leading the assembly were so called 'bright students' and in most of the cases, it was girls (70%) who were leading. Stereotyped assignment of task was also observed during the assembly such as only boys reading out the newspaper headlines or reading a preamble of the constitution while girls were reciting the prayers or singing. It is also important to note that majority of these girls come from economically better off families and girls from deprived communities would rarely get an opportunity. As reported during the FGD with parents, children from deprived communities never get an opportunity to lead morning prayers, even if they want to. It was also observed that boys belonging to economically better off families go to private schools, while girls go to government schools. These girls, due to their better exposure, exhibited more confidence and participated actively in school activities.

MP: The pattern of exclusion that emerged during the cleaning task showed that generally students clean the playground, verandah and rooms in school. Often, SC children do the cleaning, although there are instances where OBC and sometimes, general category children also do the cleaning. This shows that there has been some change in schools because OBC and general children were also found involved in cleaning tasks, as long as it is not the toilets. In many places, boys do not touch brooms or sweep, so double discrimination of gender and caste (SC girls doing what is considered 'menial' work) is seen.

The state of toilets is abysmal and most schools have dysfunctional toilets. It may be hypothesised that a major reason for the present state of toilets is that cleaning of toilets is considered an untouchable activity. But there were still a few cases of functional toilets that were being cleaned by SC sweepers or by SC girls who would pour water.

Enrolment and attendance related:

In all states, the proportion of children from socially disadvantaged groups, mainly BC, SC and ST, was much higher than their share in the population. This confirms available evidence that government elementary schools essentially cater to the poor and marginalised and that children of forward caste groups do not access government schools to the same extent. There are state wise variations, as evident in the table below.

Table 1: Enrolment in Sampled Schools

State	Class	Total		SC		ST		Muslim		BC		General		CWSN	
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Andhra Pradesh	IV	349	358	100	101	68	65	6	16	153	153	17	22	5	1
	%	49.4	50.7	14.1	14.3	9.6	9.2	0.8	2.3	21.6	21.6	2.4	3.1	0.7	0.1
	VII	533	413	119	65	67	40	14	13	307	264	25	30	1	1
	%	56.3	43.7	12.6	6.9	7.1	4.2	1.5	1.4	32.5	27.9	2.6	3.2	0.1	0.1
Assam	IV	215	224	43	42	12	26	42	51	106	94	11	7	1	4
	%	49	51	20	18.8	5.6	11.6	19.5	22.8	49.3	42	5.1	3.1	0.5	1.8
	VII	337	347	44	69	26	45	137	109	103	106	26	18	1	0
	%	49.3	50.7	13.1	19.9	7.7	13.4	39.5	31.4	30.6	30.5	7.7	5.2	0.3	0
Bihar	IV	1040	1002	200	195	22	27	118	110	586	568	114	102	3	4
	%	50.9	49.1	19.2	19.5	2.1	2.7	11.3	11.0	56.3	56.7	11.0	10.2	0.3	0.4
	VII	1563	1376	266	246	75	99	244	199	821	713	157	119	9	10
	%	53.2	46.8	17.0	17.9	4.8	7.2	15.6	14.5	52.5	51.8	10.0	8.6	0.6	0.7
Madhya Pradesh	IV	963	1165	290	400	154	174	16	12	436	520	62	75	6	4
	%	45.3	54.7	30.1	34.3	16	14.9	1.7	1.0	45.3	44.6	6.4	6.4	0.6	0.3
	VII	849	1085	296	364	178	215	42	29	267	388	66	89	7	8
	%	43.9	56.1	34.9	33.5	21	19.8	4.9	2.7	31.4	35.8	7.8	8.2	0.8	0.7
Odisha	IV	186	218	46	49	82	85	2	4	53	78	3	2	1	0
	%	46	54	24.7	22.5	44.1	39	1.1	1.8	28.5	35.8	1.6	0.9	0.5	0
	VII	307	283	82	67	96	82	4	1	123	131	2	2	3	2
	%	52	47.9	26.7	23.6	31.3	29	1.3	0.4	40.1	46.3	0.7	0.7	1	0.7
Rajasthan	IV	143	213	42	63	38	44	2	5	37	67	24	34	-	-
	%	40	60	29.4	29.6	26.6	20.7	1.4	2.3	25.9	31.4	16.8	16.0	-	-
	VII	221	278	58	65	71	90	13	10	45	73	34	40	-	-
	%	44.3	55.7	26.2	23.4	32.1	32.4	5.9	3.6	20.4	26.2	15.4	14.4	-	-

Equally significant is the finding that attendance rates are also fairly uneven. There is a gap between attendance reported in school records and those present on all 3 days of field visit (being the highest attendance in the 3 days visited). While this phenomenon is fairly well established, the main issue here is that children from extremely poor families (landless daily wage labourers, seasonal migrants) tend to miss school more often. Equally, girls from very poor families are also irregular. Many children from such families also reach school late. They are, therefore, not involved in school activities like leading the morning assembly and participating in school functions.

Table 2: Attendance in Sampled Schools

State	Class	Total		SC		ST		Muslim		BC		General		CWSN	
		B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
Andhra Pradesh	IV	316	290	81	72	60	54	5	11	160	153	-	-	-	-
	VII	433	340	97	56	50	29	14	13	272	242	-	-	-	-
Assam	IV	91	103	27	28	15	14	13	15	33	42	3	4	0	0
	VII	215	135	49	27	44	12	22	55	34	40	66	1	0	0
Bihar	IV	456	516	75	98	11	13	38	41	267	294	41	49	2	2
	VII	666	785	122	101	44	60	73	97	351	409	51	57	1	5
Madhya Pradesh	IV	172	247	61	69	30	48	2	3	66	116	13	27	3	2
	VII	310	357	109	123	64	73	3	1	121	136	26	25	4	6
Odisha	IV	140	155	34	38	62	60	2	4	39	51	3	2	1	0
	VII	226	210	62	48	76	64	4	1	83	96	1	1	3	2
Rajasthan	IV	105	160	33	42	21	32	2	2	31	59	18	25	-	-
	VII	184	217	48	48	54	69	12	9	44	62	26	26	-	-

It was therefore important for this study to understand what happens to the frequently absent children when they attend school. The study found that in all states such children were excluded from active participation in class because they are not able to keep pace with the lessons being taught. They also tend to sit in the back rows and are often ignored. *The combination of being poor, first generation school goer, SC or ST and being absent frequently is perhaps the most compelling reason for their exclusion from school activities.*

A note of caution:

We have tried to triangulate quantitative information that we gathered with qualitative insights that we gained during classroom/school observation, focus group discussions and interviews. Given the complex nature of this study, and given that a lot of exclusionary practices are very subtle, the study had to rely on the ability of field investigators to observe different forms of exclusion.

Infrastructure, facilities and children's access to them:

Despite compelling evidence, from for over five decades, that the mere availability of building, toilet or a hand pump/bore well does not necessarily ensure access, school level data that is compiled every year continues to record availability without any other information on its status (see table 3 below). This study also found a huge gap between formal availability, the status of its use and even its usability. Another repeated and important issue that was confirmed in this study is that water, toilets and mechanisms used for cleaning is the site of caste-based and community-identity-based exclusion. It is important to clarify at this stage that schools are not the only sites of such exclusion and equally significant is the fact that a committed head master or head teacher can indeed go against the dominant social practice and instil an egalitarian and equal environment in the school. The findings of this study on these issues would therefore have to be viewed in this perspective.

Table 3: Infrastructure Facilities in the Schools (In %)

Sl. No.	States	Available Toilets		Drinking Water	Play Ground	Kitchen	Library Books*
		Common	Girls				
1.	Andhra Pradesh	63*		78	67	67	78
2.	Assam	95	75	55	95	80	20
3.	Bihar	75	80	100	40	95	60
4.	Madhya Pradesh	23	5	80	53	65	13
5.	Odisha	80	55	90	10	100	90
6.	Rajasthan	50	50	90	60	85	60

- *Facilities available but not necessarily accessible especially in the case of toilets and library
- Where the toilets are usable, it is used mainly by teachers and in a few schools girls are allowed to use them.

Water woes:

The study found a range of exclusionary as well as inclusion practices. In Rajasthan, in most schools the forward caste children drank water first/or wash their MDM plates before SC and ST children. In one school, water pitcher was not accessible to SC and ST children but other children poured water for them. Interestingly, in three schools, one ST community children (Meena) did not use the hand pump because other ST (as they are perceived of a different status) would touch it. Rajasthan perhaps reveals one end of the spectrum of exclusion, with rigid caste based norms of society playing out in the school as well. In AP almost all children brought water in a bottle from home, mainly because water from the school pump was considered unhygienic. In three of the twenty schools visited, SC and ST children were seen standing away from the hand pump/tap, even to wash their hands or plates. They had to wait for other children to pour water for them.

In Odisha, 90% schools have some drinking water facility either in the form of tube well, open well or piped water. In one of the twenty schools visited water was used for drinking as well. The study did not find any water-related exclusion or discrimination. Water portability is a big issue in this state and the study found that in 2 schools water was contaminated with fluorine.

In Assam, six out of twenty schools visited did not have any drinking water source. However, like in AP, almost all children carried water bottles from home and no discrimination/exclusion was observed in using the hand pump or tap to wash hands, plates etc.

In Madhya Pradesh, most schools had a proper water source, mostly a hand pump. In 5 out of 40 schools studied, children had to fetch water from a little way off. In almost all places all children could drink from the hand pump. In one or two places, upper-caste children brought water from home. However, only children from the upper caste were asked to fetch water for teachers and guests. In most schools water is not stored and kept, children drink directly from the hand pump. While all children drink water from the

hand-pump there is subtle discrimination. For example, often SC children wait for their turn by standing at a distance. In 2 schools, where water is either stored in steel tanks or a bucket is used to carry it, SC children are not allowed to touch these vessels. Girls of OBC and general category were found practicing untouchability with their schoolmates in two schools, more than boys. These girls had been asked by their parents to do so. The state report notes that teachers, who should ideally be leaders of change, get their own water or ask upper caste children to get it from their homes or from the home of a forward caste family near school.

In Bihar, drinking water from hand pumps was available in all sampled schools and DISE (2011-12) figure for the state shows that 93% of the schools have access to drinking water. However, it was observed that children from economically better off families get their own water bottles from home at least in 10% of the schools. With regards to the issue of drinking water directly from the source, it was observed that girls often have water after boys and children from deprived communities often get the last chance. Furthermore, in the minority dominant district of Katihar, in majority of schools it was observed that girls generally use the hand pump for drinking water after boys. A similar trend was also found in 50% of the schools in Bhojpur and Muzaffarpur. Thus discrimination observed was not just on the visible basis of access, who can touch the pump and who can drink water but more subtly in the order of priority of access.

Toilet Tribulations:

This study found overwhelming evidence of gender as well as caste based discrimination in practices around cleaning of toilets. To begin with, very few schools actually had usable toilets with proper water facilities. Therefore, wherever toilets were being used children had to clean them by fetching water from the hand pump or tap and pouring it. In AP and MP, a person was hired to clean the toilets but girls (mostly of SC community) had to bring water from the hand pump and pour it. In several schools, usable toilets were locked up for the use of teachers and even in these schools girls were asked to clean them.

In Odisha none of the sample schools had usable toilets for boys and girls separately. In Assam, all the toilets were unusable and where there were toilets for teachers, girl students were expected to clean them. This was also the case in Bihar, where 75 per cent of the schools had usable toilets but most of them were locked up for the use of teachers. In Rajasthan, the situation was also similar and teachers said that they kept toilets locked up because children “spoil and dirty the toilets”. In Andhra Pradesh, parents said that their children are used to going out in the field and therefore toilets were not that essential, an arrangement preferred by many schools children if the alternative means cleaning the toilets.

Sports facilities and library:

One of the most notable findings of this study is a glaring absence of sports facilities for children in sample schools. Games and sports seem to be notable by their absence. Where sports materials were available they were made available to “select” boy who were favoured because of their perceived academic ability. In most cases, these boys were considered “bright” by teachers, attended school regularly and sat in the front rows. The study did not find any caste based discrimination in access to and use of sports facilities, probably because sports is not a priority in schools and children were seen playing with their friends.

Like sports, libraries were noticeable by their absence. Even if schools had books, they were not given to children. Therefore, it was not possible to see if there was indeed any exclusion. Only in one school in Andhra Pradesh, there was an exception. Although library books were issued to students, teachers did not allow SC students to take books home or use them because they were considered dirty and likely to soil the books.

Participation in school activities and tasks assigned by teachers:

Observing what children do, activities they participate in and the tasks teachers assign to them were important elements of the study. School and classroom observation schedule tried to capture various roles and responsibilities of students and the conditions in which they perform various academic and classroom oriented tasks.

Democratic practices are not the norm in schools. Teachers decide the roster of tasks to be performed inside the classroom and around the school. These include routine duties like sweeping the playground, classrooms and veranda, toilets, MDM serving place, vegetables, high profile tasks such as leading the morning assembly and participating in school functions by dancing, singing, giving a speech, and reading out from newspaper, and finally personal tasks such as fetching water or register for teacher, making and serving tea, cleaning the blackboard, collecting notebooks/papers, and carrying desks/chairs.

These tasks were allotted to students depending on teachers’ own perceptions of acceptability. This makes it possible for discrimination arising from teachers’ own biases and prejudices.

An overwhelming finding was that teachers, across all six states, categorised students as being “bright” and “passive”. These labels served to identify students who would be called upon to do various kinds of tasks. The “bright” students had high visibility in the school community and performed high profile and personal tasks. It was observed that the hierarchy of chores that children performed was also often an unspoken marker of caste, gender and economic status.

School functions, morning assembly:

A day begins with a morning assembly. Teachers select students on the basis of two criteria for leading morning assembly i.e. gender and perceived academic ability. Girls were given precedence over boys as teachers felt that they sang in tune and were more disciplined.

While the criterion of gender is straight forward and clear, the second criterion of perceived academic ability has ramifications of class and caste. Teachers perceived those students as “bright” who attended school regularly. As a result, performance of these students is possibly higher with respect to studies and spoken English, compared to students who were not able to attend school regularly. Therefore, irregular students generally lose out on opportunities. Given these conditions, it is not surprising that upper caste students should be identified as “bright” and are eligible for more prestigious responsibilities.

Exceptions to this rule was one school (out of 20) in Odisha where a SC boy was seen leading the prayer. Again, in schools where majority students belong to ST category, a bright girl was asked to lead the prayer. Parents in almost all the states did not seem too concerned about the assignment of tasks and were largely silent on this form of discrimination.

Pattern found in morning assembly was repeated in all major school functions like Independence Day, Republic Day and Teachers Day. Some festivals are also celebrated depending on the location of school. Similar patterns were found during these festivals, for example, wherever formal ‘Puja’ was performed, it was led by teachers with the help of ‘bright’ students.

Tasks assigned by teachers:

The study observed clear gender and caste-based behaviour in teacher-pupil relationship in the classroom and school through the kind of chores that teachers assign to children. We have tried to capture a pattern in the table given below. With tasks that involved home-like chores such as filling water for teachers, making tea or washing lunch boxes of teachers, there was an overwhelming preference for girls especially from forward castes or OBC. In tribal areas where almost all children belong to ST category, teachers would ask any girl to do the task. There also seemed to be a clear hierarchy of tasks from menial to educational and teachers invariably called the best and the brightest, according to them, while poor and marginalized were asked to do menial tasks.

Subtle and not-so-subtle gender and community/caste based distinctions made by teachers could be observed quite easily. Teachers did not make any effort to “hide” their biases and in fact they took it as an extension of societal values and practices. This was the most worrying part

that teachers, administrators and those involved with the school did not perceive this as being an issue.

In Andhra Pradesh, it was observed that the overt appearance of children played a significant role in terms of task allocation. Teachers differentiated between neat and clean children and the ones who were untidy or “dirty”. Colour of the skin of a child seemed to play an important role when special duties were assigned in school like speaking in the assembly or leading morning prayers. With respect to appointing class monitors, boys were given a preference.

Table 5: Tasks assigned by teachers

Task	Gender based	Gender and caste	Caste based	Ability based "bright", "intelligent"	All or randomly assigned
Cleaning Classroom	Assam (G), Odisha (G)	Raj (G, SC/ST), MP (G-SC)			AP
Cleaning playground	Assam (B), MP (B), Odisha (B)	Raj (G, SC/ST)			AP, MP
Write on black board, come forward in class				Assam, AP, Raj (FC, OBC), Odisha, Bihar	
Class monitor	Odisha (B)	Rajasthan (B, FC)		Assam, AP, Raj	
Cleaning toilets	Odisha (G)	MP (SC, G)	Raj (B, SC/ST), AP		AP, Assam
Fetch water for teacher	AP (B), Bihar (B)	Raj (FC G),	Odisha (non-SC) MP (FC, BC)		MP, Assam
Prepare tea for teacher / guests	Bihar (G)	Raj (FC G), Odisha (FC G), MP (G, FC)			
Arrange books	Assam (B), Bihar (G)	Raj (FC, B)		AP, Bihar (G-Bright)	Assam
Ring the bell	AP (B), Odisha (B)	Raj (FC, B)			
Wash lunch box of teacher		AP (G- SC), Odisha, Raj (SC/ST G)			
Clean floor after MDM	Odisha (G)	Raj (G-SC/ST)			
Leading the Assembly		Raj (G, FC), MP (G, FC, BC, Muslim)		Assam (G), Bihar (G-Bright), AP (G- Bright)	AP, MP
Cultural Activities	Assam (G)	Bihar (G, FC, BC)		Bihar (G-Bright), AP	
Sports Activities	Assam (B), Bihar (B), Raj (B)			AP (B&G)	

Task	Gender based	Gender and caste	Caste based	Ability based "bright", "intelligent"	All or randomly assigned
Seating Arrangement:	Separate rows for Boys and Girls in UP level- AP, Assam, Bihar, MP, Odisha, Raj (separate rows or girls occupying the front rows and boys back)			Front Benchers: Assam (B&G-Bright), Bihar (Bright), Raj (Bright- FC), Odisha (Bright-FC), MP (Bright)	

G: Girl, B Boy, FC Forward Caste, BC Backward Caste, SC Schedule Caste & ST Schedule Tribe

Cleaning related

Across all states, cleaning tasks were assigned according to caste, gender or both. For example when it came to cleaning classrooms, preference was given to girls and boys were given a preference for cleaning playgrounds. However, with respect to cleaning toilets, along with gender, caste category was also important.

Discipline and school activity related

Interestingly the issue of discipline is closely linked to being a “good student” across all the states. Only children who are perceived as “good” or “bright” were selected to be a class monitor, speak in the assembly, and participate in national day functions and so forth. Although this form of discrimination was not blatant, it was a definite consequence of certain conditions. Teachers had clear views on what boys and girls could do. When it comes to leading the prayer, teachers preferred girls. As there were no special school functions during fieldwork, we could not observe if all children participated in national day functions.

Corporal punishment and sexual harassment:

Across all states, scolding was common. Physical punishment was not that common, or may be because of the RTE teachers were more careful about overt forms of punishment when the research team was in schools. In Odisha we found a small stick in almost every class and with every teacher, even though the government has painted “No Punishment Zone” in all schools. In 20 percent of schools, students reported some kind of punishment. In two district a few schools reported verbal abuse, often using caste or community identity as a peg to abuse. During discussions with teachers and parents in Assam, it emerged that teachers use the recent ban on all forms of corporal punishment as an important reason for lack of discipline in schools. In

particular, parents complained that teachers are not strict. In Rajasthan teachers carried sticks and some of them were observed hitting/slapping children. In Andhra Pradesh, children reported that physical punishment was common, for example teachers pull the hair of girls and twist the ears of boys. Sexual abuse of girls was reported in two districts.

In MP, discussions with teachers and parents revealed a complex understanding of discipline and learning. According to parents, the difference between a 'good' teacher and a 'bad' teacher was about how much s/he punished children. For parents, the quality of a teacher was measured in teaching 'well', which meant explaining lessons to children, assigning work for class and home, conducting classes on time, coming to school daily and being punctual, and maintaining discipline. The RTE notwithstanding, teachers and parents were quite vociferous about the need for punishment.

In all states, we did not find any direct connection or link between caste discrimination and physical punishment, though verbal abuse using caste/community identity was observed in several schools. However, there seems to be a visible link between attitude towards women and girls and the kinds of punishment that is meted out to them. As it is a taboo to touch a girl after puberty, teachers usually scold girls.

A matter of great disquiet is that there were at least three schools in Andhra Pradesh where sexual harassment was mentioned by parents. The girl students complained that some male teachers touched them and also abused them both verbally and physically. The parents corroborated these statements. In one school a complaint had been registered with the District Collector and the teacher was reportedly suspended.

Mid-day meal:

It is no surprise that mid-day meal emerged as the single most important site for inclusion and exclusion. In this study we came across a staggering range of practices:

Who eats and who does not?

- In all states, children from better off families do not eat MDM and go home for lunch.
- In AP, where majority of children in government schools are from very poor families, even extremely poor children from Gondi and Lambada tribal community do not eat MDM as the food is cooked by a BC or forward caste person.
- In Assam, many forward caste, especially Brahmin and OBC children go home during MDM.
- In Rajasthan children from Rajput, Brahmin, Jat, Bishnoi and Gujjar do not eat MDM. Meena (ST) eats only if the cook is from their community.

However any child from a relatively well off family did not eat MDM in the sampled schools.

- In Odisha, adolescent girls do not eat MDM because of socio-cultural taboos that restrict adolescent girls from eating food made outside their homes.

Who cooks?

- By and large, cooks for MDM belong to the OBC category while SCs work as helpers.
- In Odisha, 20% of the sample schools had SC cooks and in the rest, they were either from OBC (50%) or ST community (40%). This is a common practice in order to avoid any social tension in schools. SC women worked as helpers.
- In Assam too, caste identity was observed as an important criteria in the selection of cooks.
- In Rajasthan, most of the cooks belong to the forward castes, OBC or ST (Meena Community). Older children of relatively forward community in the village serve food.
- The situation is not different in AP. Cooks are mostly from BC (5 of 20 schools) or from the forward castes (15 of the 20 schools). Although SC and ST women are appointed as helpers, they are not permitted to touch the food.
- The situation MP was quite ironical. The state government had taken a decision to allot MDM work to SHG women from SC community. However, given the caste dynamics in villages, almost all the cooks belong to OBC community.
- In Bihar, the cook, again, belong to forward caste or BC community in majority of the cases.

Who sits where?

- In Odisha, children were observed to sit in their own community groups. While teachers did not ask them to sit separately, they did not encourage them to sit together in rows either.
- In Assam, there was no pattern as to where children sat during MDM. They were found sitting in small groups of two or three in single-sex groups, i.e. girls with girls and boys with boys. In one school, teachers shared that Hindu and Muslim children sat separately.
- In AP, children sit in rows, segregated by gender while in some other schools they were seen sitting community wise, sharing food brought from home along with the MDM. Children from the Upper Caste go home for lunch.
- In Bihar, MDM was irregular. Children were observed sitting with their own friends in caste-specific groups.
- In Rajasthan as well, children sat in caste groups, with a clear demarcation between boys and girls.

- While children were found to be sitting in their caste specific groups, what was noteworthy in MP was that even teachers of different castes sat separately. For example, SC teachers ate separately. In one school, children of SC community were not allowed to eat in the plates provided by the school. When a child forgot to bring his/her plate, food was served on a roti.

Seating arrangements in school and teaching-learning practices:

The study found three different patterns of seating:

1. The brightest/more active and engaged students sit in the front rows, with boys and girls in separate columns. In Assam, roll numbers were assigned according to academic performance and children would sit according to their roll numbers. Similarly, in AP bright students or those who are active and regular sit in front. Other children sit in the back along with students who are irregular. Same situation was found in Odisha as well.
2. Children from forward castes or children from better off families or those who are better dressed sit in front rows. Children who are poor or poorly dressed sit at the back. In Rajasthan, children from Adivasi and Dalit families sat in the back rows and remained passive and silent throughout the class. In one school in AP, one girl Manjula was made to sit separately in the last bench because she does not wear proper clothes (due to her poor economic status and because she has to perform household chores, she gets little time to bathe regularly) and is ignored by both students and teachers. Even the regular absentees and CWSN are normally ignored by the teachers. Similarly, in Nuapada and Keonjhar district of Odisha, poor and shabbily dressed children were backbenchers and ignored by teachers during classroom transactions.
3. There is no pattern at all, and children sit wherever they find space. This is most common in overcrowded and multi grade classrooms.

In all six states, boys and girls sat in separate columns or in clearly demarcated spaces. As the classroom observations were done in Classes 4 and 7, boys and girls did not interact much with each other and they sat separately. Teachers also did not encourage interaction and in most states, even women teachers did not interact much with male teachers.

Peer interaction among students:

Seating arrangement was also reflected in peer interaction. In all the states, children seemed to sit with and play with their own "kind," as defined in their environment. While caste identity was not so significant in peer interaction in Andhra Pradesh, they did not necessarily eat together. Children seem to draw a line between eating together and playing together.

Teacher perceptions and practices:

Interviews and group discussions with teachers revealed some startling biases, even when the empirical evidence before them was contradictory.

- Andhra Pradesh: Teachers did not voice any caste-based prejudices, however, they said that “some communities” were uneducated, unaware, unclean and only interested in employment and “they are not bothered about the performance of their children in school”.
- Assam: Most of the teachers did not articulate any caste or community specific biases. However, almost all of them said that they focus on academically bright children. They also said that girls are not interested in sports and that girls should be trained in household duties. Some non-ST teachers attributed lack of cleanliness to community practices.
- Bihar was not very different from Assam. Teachers did not voice any caste specific biases and they were very careful in their speech. They were dismissive of children from extremely deprived / poor families and believed that they will not be able to learn.
- Madhya Pradesh: Teacher-pupil interaction was mostly formal, related to assignment and task. They were also observed favouring children who were ‘active’ and were of the opinion that children who were not “bright” were left behind in class. According to them, since education was not considered a need in their home culture it was difficult to motivate them.
- Odisha: General perception, including among teachers from SC community is that children from SC and ST (and some OBC) are “dull and lagging behind in studies”, and they attribute this to lack of interest among parents. Majority of teachers exhibited strong bias against some SC children (especially very poor) and called them “unhygienic and dull”.
- Rajasthan: The reticence visible in Assam and Bihar was absent and teachers freely talked about caste/community patterns and stereotypes. All of them said that they pay greater attention to children who are bright and attentive in class. Only in two schools, it was found that teachers make extra efforts to reach out to all children academically. Majority of the teachers said that parents of SC/ST children are often not educated and they eventually pull their children out of school or do not ensure regular attendance. They were aware of caste hierarchies that played out during mid-day-meal and in accessing water resources.

Children’s perception:

This study captured the perception of children through structured activities with children of Class 4 and Class 6 and discussion with adolescent boys and girls (in separate groups) who had studied in the sample school.

- Andhra Pradesh: In all the schools, children said that girls do the cleaning and boys carry and dump the collected dust. Children in school did not refer to toilet cleaning duties; however they said that sometimes teachers ask girls students to throw water. In all schools, children said that they bring water from home in bottles. However, in one school of Adilabad district SC children are not allowed to drink water from the well. Girls lead the prayer and also the daily pledge that is taken by children.
- Assam: In almost all the schools, children said that teachers pay attention to bright children. In a few schools, ST children said that teachers use derogatory language when they refer to tribal children or those from tea-garden areas. Children also said that boys clean the play ground and girls clean the classrooms; that girls lead the morning assembly and all children have equal access to hand pump. Overt forms of exclusion were not an issue with children and they did not have anything to say about MDM cooks or seating. Children also said that everyone participates in school functions (National Days) and that no child is excluded.
- Bihar: Majority of the children reported that cleaning task in school was mostly assigned to children from deprived communities and children from upper caste generally came up with some excuse or the other to get away from such task and often succeeded. Though all children had equal access to drinking water but during rush hour, such as break time and midday meal, children from upper caste and boys got first preference for using the hand pump. In case of participation in school functions and assembly children from upper caste mostly got more opportunities and particularly girls in case of leading the assembly.
- Madhya Pradesh: Children were quite articulate about task assignment and identities. They said that mostly none of them clean toilets or classrooms. If and when children have to do the cleaning teachers do not ask forward caste girls but they ask students who are disadvantaged and poor to do the cleaning. While in most schools all children have access to hand pumps/tap, SC children are not allowed to touch water stored in a bucket or tank. However, adolescent girls in one village said that SC children cannot touch the hand pump and that forward caste children pump it for them. Like in several other states, girls who can sign well and are academically good lead the morning assembly.
- Odisha: Children were quite clear that only girls do the cleaning, with older girls also cleaning the veranda while the open space used for MDM was being cleaned by the cook and helper. Toilet cleaning is not a regular activity, however, when they have to do it then boys pour the water and girls sweep with the broom. In one school, SC boys and girls said that they are not allowed to touch the hand pump. During Puja (Saraswati Puja and Ganesh Puja) boys take the lead.
- Rajasthan: Children in Rajasthan were quite articulate about assigning of task. In almost all the schools they said that sweeping tasks are invariably give to girls from SC or ST community. While most children use the hand pump, there is an order in which children can access i.e.

boys from forward caste use it first and in the end, it is used by girls from most backward caste/community and CWSN. Most children wash the mouth of hand pump before they drink water. However, when water is stored in clay pot, SC and ST children are not allowed to touch it. Older girls (from higher classes) lead the morning assembly and teachers pick girls who can sing well.

What parents had to say:

Discussions with parents from the most deprived/poor community in villages were most illuminating. Like other studies have shown (NUEPA VEC Study 2011) parents were mostly not aware of what happened inside the school, in particular about tasks assigned to students by teachers. In Rajasthan they were not aware that cleaning duties were assigned, while in Assam they were aware that girls sweep the classroom and boys clear the playground. In MP, parents had almost nothing to say about what children do in schools and they believe that, barring a few forward caste children, others eat mid day meal and use the hand pump and water source without discrimination. Awareness level was also very low in Odisha and discussions with parents on what children do in school did not yield much except that children do not use toilets in the school and that children from better off families are given priority in school activities like assembly and special functions. Parents in Rajasthan had more information about cleaning duties being assigned to girls, but did not have much to say about it. They believed that forward caste children would naturally get more attention. In AP parents seem to randomly participate in meetings particularly the male members and those from the BC community. They are also largely ignorant of what is actually happening in the schools for instance the issue of sexual abuse of girl students.

Inclusion and positive practices:

The present study also tried to understand and identify inclusive and positive practices in schools and classrooms. There were few inclusive practices that were observed by field investigators across all states. It was observed that inclusive practices were found in schools where Head Teacher was interested and committed towards the issue or where teachers had taken initiative in promoting inclusion of students regardless of caste, gender or disability.

Some instances of positive practices from different states are as follows:

Midday Meal:

In AP, out of 20 schools visited, only one school was observed actually setting an example for inclusive practices in terms of access to food, water for all children. During MDM all children were observed eating together and no one was seen skipping meal or sitting in segregated caste groups. Teachers

also monitored MDM to ensure that good food is served and quality is maintained. Similarly during classroom transaction, it was observed that teachers were giving attention to all students. Further, during school activities, equal participation was ensured through rotation and students shared responsibilities during assembly, special days/events and school functions. Similarly, in Odisha, 30% schools have MDM managed by women self help groups who have effectively managed to ensure the quality of food and proper hygiene and thereby leading to greater participation during midday meal.

SMC and Community:

Good cooperation and communication between local community, teachers and the school management committee is another factor that leads to promoting inclusion in schools. For example, in Assam, it led to better infrastructure, classroom transaction and 100% participation during midday meal, irrespective of caste and religious backgrounds. In this context, the role played by SMC is also quite crucial. In Odisha, it was found that SMC plays an active role in appointment of voluntary teachers to address teacher shortage, which has led to better classroom transactions.

Good Infrastructure:

Even though improving infrastructure facilities in schools is a major focus of SSA, majority of sample schools have infrastructure deficit. However, there were some schools that have adequate and good facilities. In MP, some schools were observed with good infrastructure facilities and they were opening on time, with active classroom transaction and teachers were supportive to the needs of students.

Prominent State level Initiatives:

Bihar Government's initiative such as the Tola Sewak and Hunar programme has gone a long way in promoting inclusiveness and cohesiveness in schools. Tola Sewak have been appointed at school level and their prime responsibility is providing handholding to students and most importantly bringing them to schools. Their second major responsibility is to ensure that no discrimination takes place for smooth participation in school activities. Hunar is a Programme for the Empowerment of Minority Muslim Girls launched by the state government in collaboration with NIOS. Field Investigators interacted with girls who have benefitted from the program and found them to be vibrant and confident in their outlook and behaviour.

Children with Special Needs (CWSN):

It is important to note that in all the schools visited there were either no or very few children with special needs (CWSN). A serious cause for concern is to know whether these children are actually being included in schools or

not. Under inclusive education, the SSA Framework clearly mandates that SSA will ensure that every child with special needs, irrespective of the kind, category and degree of disability, is provided education in an appropriate environment. SSA will adopt 'zero rejection' policy so that no child is left out of the education system"⁸. In all six states factors such as availability of CWSN friendly infrastructure, positive and supportive attitude of the teachers and students towards CWSN did not seem to reflect this very mandate. There have also been instances of ignorance of their presence, denial of admission and verbal abuse by teachers and peers, as in the case of AP. Moreover even though ramps were provided in some schools and there was even a CWSN friendly toilet in one school in AP, the question of their usability still remains a big concern. However there is also a silver lining as in the case of one school in AP where teachers and HM were observed to be taking an active interest in school activities and being very supportive to the needs of CWSN and children from deprived social groups.

Can we end all forms of exclusion / discrimination in schools?

As the research teams travelled across sample states one question kept propping up: "when and how will the situation change?" There are no easy answers and given our track record of the last 65 years, some kinds of prejudices have only become more palpable. Issues such as caste, religion, economic status, place of residence, and knowledge of English have become significant markers in our social and political life. Many elder teachers admitted that the feeling of national unity and being one is fading away. Many of them attribute it to the way our electoral system has evolved whereby mobilisation of political support is done on the basis of social and cultural identity.

Despite the fact that the larger socio-political environment is becoming more and more stratified and divisive, there are islands of hope across this vast and diverse country.

Taking the Constitution of India as the guiding spirit, teachers, administrators and community leaders need to be clearly told that violation of the right to equality and the right against discrimination would invite strict penal action. A non-negotiable code of behaviour needs to be communicated to all those who are involved in school education. This needs to be done in writing and pasted prominently in all schools and educational institutions. Simultaneously, children need to be involved in activities that enable them to understand and appreciate diversity, respect differences and formulate school level norms of behaviour. Involving children in creating an egalitarian atmosphere could bring about moral pressure on teachers, administrators and local leaders to not differentiate or discriminate.

⁸ From the web, siteresources.worldbank.org/INDIAEXTN/.../Richa_Sharma

As it stands today, teacher orientation and training is often limited to administrative requirements and subject knowledge and there is growing evidence of training fatigue among teachers. Equally, short duration training programs are not able to do justice to support basic subject knowledge and pedagogy issues. It may be worthwhile to create alternative forums/platforms where teachers and community leaders can come together to communicate the need to ensure schools are free of discrimination.

There are no simple answers. The tragedy is that, we as a nation have consciously ignored issues of exclusion and discrimination in school. The very fact that Government of India commissioned this study is noteworthy. The first step towards resolving a problem is recognising that it exists. May be this is the beginning of a new journey, one from which we do not turn our backs to exclusion and discrimination, but confront it and put an end to it.

Chapter 5: The way forward – some ideas

Teachers' are the key to any change in the classroom. They are the most crucial agents in ensuring inclusion of marginalised children. Both pre-service and in-service teacher training should have a dedicated module on equity and inclusion in society and in schools. The commitment made in the Constitution of India towards equality and non-discrimination have to be communicated to all teachers – and in case of all future appointments the teachers and educational administrators could be asked to sign a pledge agreeing to uphold in letter and spirit the constitutional guarantee of equality and non-discrimination. Equally, the findings of research studies on the impact of exclusion and discrimination have to be discussed in the above training programmes – so that teachers become aware of the long term impact of such practices on the overall development of children.

Promotion of children's rights through school based forums such as Bal Sansad, children's clubs and children's newspapers could play an important role in educating children about their rights and thereby minimising social exclusion among peers within the schools. Research studies have pointed out that school level committee function on very limited agenda and that parents from marginalised communities do not have a voice in these committees (NUEPA 2011). In view of these findings, teachers could be encouraged to promote activities such as debates, discussion, poster making competition, sports etc; addressing inclusion and equality – so that these issues are internalised by children, parents and teachers.

The RTE and the SSA framework provides for intensive social mobilisation to enhance community ownership of schools. Given that majority of the children attending government schools are from poor and marginalised communities, it would be useful to use this mechanism to address ingrained social prejudices and practices. This would then strengthen the SMCs so that they become strong forums wherein parents of the marginalised and disadvantaged communities can engage with teachers on issues related to their children's schooling and teaching-learning activities. Training of SMCs is another strategic area, which could to be explored – especially with respect to performing social audits of schools, teaching-learning practices and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and exclusion. Review of training modules with focus on developing the School Development Plan, Such processes would make communities aware of the barriers to learning and who schools need to become inclusive and nurturing spaces.

Drawing upon the framework provides by NCF 2005, school curriculum and textbooks need to be reviewed to make them inclusive – i.e., the experience of marginalised communities need to find a space in the textbooks. Equally, there is a need to review existing teaching methodology

and create more space for social learning and activity based learning which would benefit children identified as slow learners so that they can realize their potentials and learn without inhibitions. Issues of gender, social discrimination and equity should be interwoven in the lessons so that children learn about them and are positively socialized. For example, Odisha government has already initiated an effort in this direction and has started generating materials/booklets (in the form of supplementary reading materials) based on children's experiences and knowledge of their geo-cultural position through a process of content generation.

This study found that poor or inadequate infrastructure also contributes towards exclusionary practices - especially when it comes to toilets, drinking water and playgrounds. There is therefore a need to provide infrastructure that is easily maintained and that the burden of maintenance is not borne by children. Equally, design of drinking water sources/taps could be done in such a way that all children can access it and that some children are not made to clean and maintain the spaces. Most importantly, while SSA provides funds for new infrastructure, there are little funds for maintenance and to hire people who can clean and maintain the school facilities. This needs urgent attention.

This study found that the MDM is an important arena for overt and subtle exclusionary practices. Appointment of cooks, helpers, seating arrangements, plates/utensils used by children - all these were found contentious. It is therefore essential for the state governments to review these practices and issue guidelines to make sure no child is discriminated because of her/his gender, caste, community or disability.

Community and school events in the sports day, national days, Metric Melas, Vigyan Melas and other cultural events have the potential for promoting inclusive practices. The schools should be asked to consciously include all children in such activities - and guidelines to this effect could be issued by the state governments.

In the case of Children With Special Needs (CWSN), the idea of inclusive education has remained a policy and is yet to be practices in the school. Successive JRMs have also highlighted the need to make inclusive education a reality on the ground. To this end, the state government need to prepare a time-bound plan to make all schools open and welcoming to children with special needs - especially providing special education to teachers, provision for home-based education in some situations and also review infrastructure facilities to make sure that the classrooms, toilets, drinking water sources and play grounds are disabled-friendly. Equally, it is important to generate appropriate teaching-learning materials for children with special needs like visually impaired, hearing impaired and those with differs mental abilities.

Essentially, what is required is that we now start looking seriously at inclusion-exclusion in schools and work at all levels to bring about lasting change on the ground. There are no short cuts and the government and civil society organisations need to take this issue seriously and address it in every context.

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Annexure I: Terms of Reference of the study

Inclusion and Exclusion of students in the school and in the classroom in primary and upper primary schools.

Contextual Background:

Indian society is highly heterogeneous, unequal and diversified. The last fifty years have seen significant progress in the field of elementary education, in terms of improvement in overall literacy levels as well as addressing the problems of access to a significant degree. Education continues to be seen as a key instrument for bringing about equality and social justice. In a quest for the expansion and democratization of the education system, two primary egalitarian goals were the universalisation of elementary education and the educational “upliftment” of disadvantaged groups. However, with all its promises, India has failed to provide universalization of education as it remains under the stranglehold of extreme stratification leading to discrimination. Poor educational achievement of the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe can be best understood in the context of deeply embedded caste and social hierarchies that are enacted and expressed in everyday social interactions of community, school and economic life.

While educators still remain divided on how best to provide quality education that will bring about substantial improvement in the lives of these excluded groups, there is consensus that education is a critical resource in addressing marginalization of these groups. Recent studies also show that there is increasing demand for education among these groups (Dreze and Sen, 2002; Ramachandran, 2003) and between 1991 and 2001 literacy rates have increased for girls as well as for overall scheduled caste and scheduled tribes because of higher school participation (Government of India, 2009). Further, by providing free education along with other means of support such as mid-day meals, hostel facilities, separate toilets and other programmes, many states have also accelerated the participation of scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and girl child in schools.

While the school system requires a more generous and efficient provision of facilities meant for marginalized children it has been felt that there is need to develop pedagogic and classroom practices that aim at improving self esteem and identity of these children. Teachers, community leaders and administrators play an important role in trying to lead, influence and sustain this change.

Literature Review:

The caste system is one of the oldest surviving social hierarchies in the world. It has its roots in traditional Hindu mythology which categorizes people into one of the four levels of the caste structure. Brahmins (priests and teachers) are at the top of the hierarchy followed by Kshatriyas (rulers and soldiers), then Vaisyas (merchants and traders) and Dalits or untouchables occupy the lowest positions. Caste hierarchies are hereditary and generally maintained through intermarriage restrictions. Dalits are segregated from members of other caste based on the assumption that they are polluted. Gender based issue cuts across all issues in social discrimination. Though men and women comprise two halves of the society, rights and opportunities accorded have never been on par. Generally, the ideological contents of a culture and rules and regulations of society perpetuate the socio-cultural milieu of any society. Moreover with the widespread upsurge of exploitation and marginalization, children belonging to the lower caste and especially dalit girls bear the brunt of all forms of discrimination in schools.

Inclusion and Exclusion in schools:

What is discrimination? Prejudiced views and behaviour towards any particular individual(s) because of her/his caste/gender, occupation or region. It can be latent, manifest, open or subtle. Inclusion can be defined as an act or behaviour whereby an individual makes an effort to involve and include all regardless of social, gender or other characteristics. In the field of education, schools and classrooms are a site for discriminatory practices and where discrimination or inclusion can be assessed. Inclusion can also be defined as a coming together of various forces to provide an advantage to the child in his or her life. On the other hand, exclusion in the context of discrimination can be defined as unfair treatment of a person or group on the basis of prejudice related to identity of that person. Exclusion manifests itself in many ways and it could be blatant or subtle. Secondary literature available on schools in India reveals that inclusion/exclusion are serious issues and children from some social groups/communities experience discrimination in school. Children who experience discrimination and social exclusion will often have lower self-esteem, poor self-confidence and fewer opportunities for participation, consequently impacting the development of their skills and strengths. They also internalize the negative attitudes held within their community to define their own limits and capabilities. Thus, teachers have a critical role to play in making sure all children have an opportunity to participate irrespective of their ability, gender, ethnicity, caste and class. The Constitution of India guarantees all citizens the right against discrimination. State commitment to the education of all children is contained in Articles 15(4), 45 and 46 of the Indian Constitution. In the initial Five Year Plans, main focus was on making basic educational facilities available such as schools, especially in remote areas, and providing scholarships and books. Both Central and State governments took up the responsibility of special educational provision. The scope of enabling interventions expanded

considerably after the Fourth Five Year Plan. There are various special schemes pertaining to education of SC/ST students such as free text books, stationary, uniforms, girls' and boys' hostel and ashram schools and most importantly the right to be treated as equals. Notwithstanding this, gender, caste, tribe and class inequalities exist in access, retention and years of completed schooling. In sum, despite considerable quantitative progress, exclusion remains a depressing feature of the educational scenario of SC/ST children.

In addition, gender relations in society influence behaviour and opportunities. Girls from SC, ST or specific minority communities are doubly disadvantaged as they face the brunt of both social as well as gender discrimination. However, despite all this we find that girls aspire to an education and parents also increasingly want to educate them. In fact, the prospect of 'better marriage' often acts as a driving force. Evidently, larger social structures reinforce caste/class gender differences in education (Velaskar, 2004).

Exclusion in the context of the RTE Act:

Government policy in the last decade, especially through Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), has made inclusion an important part of its agenda. However, strategies adopted have largely been limited to providing "incentives" to attract children from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2010 has defined children belonging to disadvantaged group and children belonging to weaker sections as follows:

Disadvantaged Groups are defined as those that belong to "the SC, ST, socially and educationally backward class or such other group having disadvantage owing to social, cultural, economical, geographical, linguistic, gender, or such other factor as may be specified by the appropriate Government by notification."

The strategies adopted in educational policy and the practice on ground, in the last decade, have not sufficiently acknowledged different forms of exclusion and different ways in which it manifest itself in different parts of the country, making exclusion, perhaps, the most important problem in terms of access to education. The issue of gender that cuts across categories of disadvantaged groups as well as weaker sections will also require separate and renewed efforts. The Act outlines critical issues related to quality, equity and a need to ensure that educational space is discrimination free. The RTE also prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment to a child.

Caste-based discrimination:

In India, the socially imposed segregation of society into a caste hierarchy is an overarching feature of all social and economic relations. Caste and Gender identities intersect to make schooling of girls relatively more at

risk than that of boys. Within the family, time and space made available for girls to go to school and to be able to devote time to their education is relatively more constrained as compared to boys. An examination of current trends in educational participation have shown that exclusionary practices within schools still exist and can be observed especially during mid-day meal and in drinking water habits (WASH Report, UNICEF, 2009 & Nambissan, 2009). Mid-day meal provides space to bring principles of equality and non discrimination within schools and strengthen peer relations. School ceremonies, rituals and functions are another domain where students participate in preparing, serving and eating food. Similarly, play is inextricably a part of childhood, however, its manifestation is, to a large extent, shaped by where, with whom and who is playing. The tendency of a teacher to include members of his caste has also been suggested. It has also been observed that where group performances were concerned it was important to be 'included' (Nambissan, 2006). Schools, thus provides a platform where inclusive and equitable practices can be effectively taught and encouraged.

Gender based discrimination:

India is reputed to have a progressive education policy with regards to gender. The National Policy on Education (1986) put specific emphasis on women's education. India is also a signatory to several international treaties that reinforce this commitment, such as The Dakar Framework for Action 2000, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals 2000, the Programme of Action 1992, CEDAW 1993, The Beijing declaration 1995, and the World Conference on Education for All. However, despite over three decades of commitment to gender equality and universalisation of education, ground realities are still grim, especially in the context of girls from marginalised groups and rural areas.

The education system reflects the inequality found outside the classroom. Girls, world over, are less likely than their brothers to be attending school. In some cases, where a decision has to be made about which children to send to school, parents decide to invest in their sons' education rather than their daughters'. Gender being the most pervasive form of inequality operates across all classes, castes and communities. Moreover even though girls are not a homogeneous category, nowhere do they enjoy a status which is equal to that of boys. In their case, the dimensions of rurality, class, caste and tribe, religion, and disabilities are further complicated by contemporary political and socio-economic forces that create cumulative disadvantages.

Corporal Punishment in schools:

The first nationwide study on child abuse in India (2007), published by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, revealed a high prevalence of corporal punishment of children in all settings i.e. their family homes, schools, institutions and on the streets. Most common forms of punishments

were hitting with hands and stick, pulling hair and ears, and telling children to stand for long period in various positions (Plan International India, 2006). The Supreme Court has already banned corporal punishment for children on December 1, 2000, when it directed the state to ensure that children are not subjected to corporal punishment in schools and they receive education in an environment of freedom and dignity, free from fear. The National Policy on Education (1986) and the subsequent POA (1992) also states that “corporal punishment will be firmly excluded from the educational systems” although only 17 states/union territories in India have prohibited corporal punishment in schools. Further, NCPCR (National Commission for Protection of Child Rights) Guidelines also states that all forms of corporal punishment are a fundamental breach of human rights. Since corporal punishment is a common phenomenon in the daily lives of most marginalized children there is indeed a need to strongly advocate a free and fair educational environment.

Summary:

One of the important challenges faced has been the persistence of certain discriminatory practices in society and also in our schools. While there have been important positive changes in society and in our schools, there is a disturbing evidence of emergence of new forms of exclusion and discrimination. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence and also many case studies / media reports on both positive and negative aspects of inclusion and exclusion. This study seeks to systematically explore both dimensions and focus on the following:

- I. Caste / community / parental occupation / poverty related discrimination (they may intersect one reinforcing the other);
- II. Within the above the implications of gender for school experiences;
- III. Within the above, the burden of disability;
- IV. Other forms of discrimination - health / disease related and identity related.

Objectives:

Major objectives include the following:

- I. To map the nature of participation of students from diverse social groups in schools, in the classroom and extracurricular activities.
- II. To identify practices/behavior in different spheres of school (mid-day meal, drinking water, use of toilets, assembly, sacred space if any), classroom (teaching and learning, corporal punishment, verbal/physical abuse, extra encouragement versus neglect), extracurricular (morning assembly, special functions of the school, games/sports, cultural activities), and the attitude of teachers towards pupils of different social groups;
- III. To identify practices/behavior in different spheres of the school among children;

- IV. To gather parents' views on school environment and effectiveness in developing the child's personality and prevalence of inclusive/exclusive practices;
- V. To suggest measures to encourage inclusion (positive) and discourage and eliminate exclusion (negative) practices in schools.

Coverage:

The study would be conducted in only six states, namely Madhya Pradesh in Central India, Bihar in the North, Rajasthan in the West, Orissa in the East, Assam in the Northeast, and Andhra Pradesh in the South. The list of agencies is given at Annexure III.

Sample:

Twenty schools would be taken up in each of these states. Four districts will be selected from different parts of the state and five schools in each district including both primary and upper primary schools. The focus of study would be Class IV students in Primary Schools and Class VII students in Upper Primary Schools.

Methodology:

The study will look at inclusion/exclusion dimensions of discrimination, within the school as a whole, within the classroom and within the above to explore relationships between teachers, students, parents and the community. A team of four investigators including at least one female member would be conducting the assessment procedure in Upper Primary Schools while a team of three investigators including at least one female member would be conducting the study in Primary Schools. Schools selected for this study would be on the basis of the following criteria:

- Two Schools that are close to the main road
- One or Two School located at some distance from the main road
- One or Two School located in remote village

The first day of assessment would be assigned for School and Classroom observation and the second day would be reserved for Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and Teacher Interviews. A detailed guideline for classroom and school observation would facilitate the training of investigators in order to enable them to capture subtle and overt forms of inclusion/exclusion.

Following tools would be developed to capture gender and social equity:

- Classroom and School Observation for two or three days.

- Semi-structured interviews with teachers and head teachers would be conducted. Class teachers of class IV in case of Primary and class VII in case of Upper Primary would be interviewed.
- Focus Group discussions would be conducted with the following:
 1. Parent groups - Mixed
 2. Parent groups- only dalit bastis or localities where socially disadvantaged lived
 3. Boys/girls who have finished schooling in that school
- Structured Activity with children of class IV in primary and class VII in upper primary stage. These activities would be structured on a basic guideline, which would be rigorously followed.

Time Schedule:

Time schedule of the study is 12 months including 2 months for consolidation at the national level. The effective time for completion of this study and preparation of the state report will be 10 months.

Budget

The budget is fixed at Rs. 7 lakhs for each state. Over and above, an additional budget of Rs. 15 lakhs is earmarked for meeting national level expenses on organizing 3 National level Workshops, Development of tools, Preparation of Synthesis Report, Remuneration of Experts and other national level expenses. The State report will be prepared by concerned Organisations and the synthesis report at the National level will be prepared by Dr. Vimala Ramachandran.

Annexure II: Advisory Committee Members

1. Dr. Vimala Ramachandran (Principal Advisor)
2. Ms. Aruna Rathnam, UNICEF, Tamil Nadu
3. Ms. Suman Bhattacharjea, ASER, New Delhi
4. Ms. Kameshwari Jandhalaya, ERU, Hyderabad
5. Mr. Venkatesh Malur, UNICEF, New Delhi
6. Ms. Hema Ramanathan, Associate Professor, University of West Georgia
7. Prof. ABL Srivastava, TSG, SSA-RTE, EdCIL

Annexure III: List of partner Organisations

- 1. Ms. Anjali Noronha (Madhya Pradesh)**
Eklavya, Madhya Pradesh
E-10, BDA Colony, Shankar Nagar
Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh- 462016
Phone: 0755- 2671017/2551109
Email: anjali_noronha99@yahoo.com

- 2. Dr Shobita Rajagopal (Rajasthan)**
Institute of Development Studies (IDS)
8B, Jhalana Institutional Area
Jaipur 302 004, Rajasthan (India)
Tel: 91-141 270 5726/ 270 6457
Fax: 91-141 270 5348
E-mail: director_idsj@dataone.in/idsj@dataone.in, id-shobhita@idsj.org

- 3. Prof. DM Diwakar (Bihar)**
Director
A N Sinha Institute of Social Studies
Gandhi Maidan, Patna
Bihar- 800001
Phone: 0612 2219226/ 2219856
Email: dmdiwakar@yahoo.co.in

- 4. Ms. Prasanthi (Andhra Pradesh)**
Samatha Gender Resource Centre
Andhra Pradesh Mahila Samatha Society
12-13-485/5, Nagarjuna Nagar
Tarnaka, Secunderabad- 5000017
Andhra Pradesh
Phone: 040 27150233
Email: psanthip@yahoo.co.in

- 5. Ms. Gita Rani Bhattacharya (Assam)**
State Project Director
Assam Mahila Samata Society
AshirwadBhawan, 3rd Floor
Dispur, Lastegate
Dr. R.P. Road, Guwahati-6
Assam
Phone: 09435194439
Email: assammahila@yahoo.com

- 6. Dr. Abani Mohan Panigarhi (Odisha)**
LokDrushti, Khariar (Gadranunda)

District Naupada
Odisha- 766104
Phone: 09437071812
Email: lokdrustikhariar1@rediffmail.com

Annexure IV: Research Tools

Schedule 1

Inclusion and Exclusion of students in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper Primary Schools: School Schedule

I. General Information

1. Name and address of the School:

2. Level of Schools: 1: Elementary only 2: Elementary plus High School

3. Distance from Block / Mandal HQ, and Cluster HQ _____

II. Attendance/Dropout Related

4. Teachers:

Teachers	Male				Female			
	GC	SC	ST	Others Specify	GC	SC	ST	Others Specify
Number of teachers								
Regular teachers								
Para teachers								
Others (mention)								

5. Number of Teachers /absent due to the following reasons on the day of the visit:

Day of visit	Date	No. Of teachers (Based on observation)	
		Present	Absent
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			

6. Enrolment as on 30. 9.11 - Class-Wise and Social Group-Wise(20011-12)

Class-wise/ social group-wise	All Enrolled		SC		ST		Muslim / Christian		CWSN		OBC (if available)		Others Specify	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Class 4														
Class 7														
Total*														

*Whole school total

7. Average Attendance in August and September 2011

Specify	All	SC	ST	Muslim /	CWSN	OBC	Others
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the months	Enrolled		SC		ST		Christian		CWSN		OBC		Specify	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Class 4														
Class 7														
Total*														

*Whole school total

8. Attendance on day of visit as per the records and as per headcount done by the researcher – for the 3 days, only by boys and girls (copy this form the classroom observation schedule)

Day of visit	Attendance		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			

9. Repeaters in the academic year 2011-12: (include OBC details wherever available)

Records from the School Register	All Enrolled		SC		ST		Muslim	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Class 4								
Class 7								

- Add no. Of students present on working days and divide by no. Of working days

III. Access to Physical Facilities/Infrastructure

10. Facilities in School: 1: Available and working; 2: Available but not being used/ dysfunctional and 3: Unavailable

Usable toilets/urinals:	i. All students	
	ii. Girls	
Drinking Water		
Play Ground/Space		
Kitchen for Midday meal		
Library books (other than text books and TLM of teachers)		

11. Who cleans the veranda/playground? _____
(Note the name, and then check if the person (adult or child) is SC, ST or Muslim and also note the gender)

12. Is there a usable accessible ramp: 1: to classroom, 2: to toilet and 3: to other areas of the school (library, assembly area)

13. Are there library books? 1: Yes 2: No
 (a) Is it being used?

 (b) If there is a library period, observe and see if there is any discrimination in use.

14. Who cleans the toilet? (*Name of persons; caste, explore if there is a rotation in duties*)

15. What is the drinking water source in the school? 1: Water Pump
 2: Water tap
 3: Stored water 4: Any other (specify) _____
16. Who fills the water? (*Name of person; caste/community and gender*)

17. Who can drink water directly from the source? Observe for at least 1/2 hour every day to see if there is any discrimination in use. Preferably immediately after MDM. If you see any child being kept out of the water pump / tap area and has to wait for his/her turn to be served by another child, then go and note down the names of the children who are excluded and then ascertain their social status.

IV. Prevalent Practices

18. Who arranges the materials (mats, books etc.) in the classrooms?

 (*Note the names of children and cross check if they are SC, bright students, regular students, or any other special identity related*)
19. Do all students participate in the school assembly? 1: Yes
 2: No
20. Who takes the lead during the assembly? _____
 (*Name of person; gender; caste; is it by rotation; also note who all are included in the rotation*)
21. Is there a regular assembly prayer? 1: Yes 2: No
 (a) If so, do all the children participate? (Observe if some children do not participate or are assigned other duties like cleaning / making tea)?

- (b) If so, who conducts the prayer during the morning the assembly? Is it by rotation (*note who all are included in the rotation*) _____
22. Does the school organise some functions on occasions? 1: Yes
 2: No
 (a) If so, specify: _____
23. Do all the students participate or only a particular social group participates in these functions? _____
24. Did you notice the teachers making any personal comments with regard to a particular child's social group/gender/ritual etc.? If yes,

record what you heard.

-
-
25. Did you notice the children running errands (such as bringing water, making tea, cleaning lunch box etc.) for the teacher? If yes, record what you observed. _____
-
26. Did you notice the teacher subjecting the students to any form of verbal/physical punishment? If yes record what you heard / observed. _____
-
27. How is the behaviour of children towards children with special needs:
- A. Assist them with physical mobility: _____
 - B. Assist them in class: _____
 - C. Assist them during meal times: _____
 - D. Assist them for toilet: _____
 - E. Do not assist or support: _____
 - F. Tease or pass rude comments: _____
28. Record behaviour towards children with health related problems (such as boils on the skin, scabies, leucoderma etc.)? (*Record what you observed*)
-
29. Did you notice the children participating in any other extracurricular activities together in the school? Was there any exclusion and if so of what type?
-
-

V. Midday Meal Related

30. Who cooks the midday meal? (*Name of the person; gender; caste*)
-
- (*In schools where the cook is a Dalit need to pay special attention to see if children from other castes are eating*)
31. Who serves the food? And how it is being served: with some care or indifferently (*Name the person; gender; caste*) _____
-
32. What are the seating arrangements for taking the meal? Did you notice any segregation?
-
33. Who cleans the utensil after food? _____
(*Name of the person; gender; caste*)
34. Who cleans the eating area after food? _____
(*Name of the person; gender; caste*)
35. Did you notice any student not eating the midday meal? If so, who are they? Note down. _____
-
-

36. Are all children served the meal together? If no, who gets served first?
(Note if some children are served last or at the fag end of the queue)

37. Did you notice anyone getting a second helping?

38. Was second helping denied to anybody?

39. Did you notice any teacher or child helping the children with disabilities? If so, record what you observed and if no, record what the children with disabilities were doing during the mealtime.

Name of the Investigator: _____

Signature with Date: _____

Schedule 2

Inclusion and Exclusion of students in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper Primary Schools. Classroom Observation Schedule

(Observe two periods- one language and one math each for classes 4 and 7 in each school. Make sure you sit in a corner and please remain silent through the classroom observation. DO NOT SPEAK OR TALK TO CHILDREN OR TEACHERS DURING CLASSROOM OBSERVATION)

Note: Prior to the classroom observation the interviewer should get a list of children enrolled in the class from the official records. The official records would have whether the child belongs to SC/ST Category. When the interviewers go for the first day of classroom observation they should introduce themselves to the children and ask them to introduce themselves. The interviewer must try familiarizing herself with the children so that she can make her observations locating students by name – DO NOT ASK THE CHILDREN ABOUT COMMUNITY. This can be cross checked at a later stage with the head master or teacher. This will give the interviewer an idea of who the children are and they will be able to make observations. They should have a list of groups (caste/tribe/minority group/general) and codes for them so that these can be mentioned as far as ever possible.

1. a) State: _____ (b) District: _____
2. Name and address of School: _____
(Give a school code or use DISE code for example Raj Dist 1, School 1, School 2, School 3...) _____
3. Name of Investigator: _____
4. Which Class was sitting in the classroom that you observed? _____
5. What subject was being taught? 1: Language 2: Mathematics
3: Others

(Need to specify how long the interviewer is going to be present in the class. Effort should be made to cover different subjects over the 3 days of observation)

6. Number of students present in the class room:

Day of visit	Attendance		
	Boys	Girls	Total
Day 1			
Day 2			
Day 3			

(Note that this is Head count, this can be crosschecked with the official enrolment figure – this is the same as in the school schedule)

7. Where did the class take place? 1: Classroom 2: Veranda 3:
Outside
8. What was the seating arrangement in the class?
1: rows/columns 2: circles 3: Others

(Draw it out on a piece of paper. As the interviewer will have a list of the children she can name the children. The focus of the interviewer can be on the first two

rows of girls and boys and the last two rows if the seating is in rows or if the interviewer notices any segregation. This drawing can be used on subsequent visits to note if there are any changes. What is important to observe is if specific groups are sitting in the back/front rows and who receive the attention of teachers, who answer etc.)

9. What arrangement was there for seating in the class? 1: Table-chairs;
2: Mats
3: Others (specify) _____
10. (a) How did the teacher teach during this class (*It is not either or, you can also tick both*)?
Sitting or standing in front of the class:
Going up to individual students:

(b) If the teacher went up to individual students who were these students? (*Note groups/rows in which sitting*) _____
11. Did the teacher ask questions during the class? 1: Yes 2: No
(a) To whom were these questions directed?
1: To all students 2: Only to some students.
If only some then who are these children? (*Indicate groups/ rows and use some marker to check the name / social group of children who are active and those who are not active*)

(b) If so, could the students answer the questions? 1: Yes 2:
No
12. Did the teacher encourage students to ask questions? 1: Yes 2: No
13. Who are the more articulate/ active students in the class? (*Note the sitting position or the name of the child (if you can remember)*) _____
14. (a) Did you notice any students who were silent (passive) during the class?
1: Yes 2: No
(b) Who were these children? (*Either note the sitting position and later identify which child, or note the names and then later identify which social group that child belongs to*).

15. What was the teachers' response to those who do not answer? (*Look for differences according to groups*) _____
16. Observe if the teacher used only the formal language or he/she made efforts to communicate with children in the language of the children - make a note on the language used by the teacher while teaching / interacting with children during the class.
17. Is there a class leader/monitor in the class? 1: Yes 2: No
18. Who is the class monitor?

(There may be more than one monitor. Find out the group to which the monitor(s) belong and observe work they are assigned)

19. (a) The students in the class mixed freely with each other. 1: Yes 2: No

(b) If no, then note your observations: (Who interacts with whom within the class- keep the groups in mind) _____

20. (a) Did all the children in the class have the following: 1: Yes 2: No

Text Books

Note Books

Pencil/Eraser

School bags

Other learning materials

(b) If No, which children did not have (Later find out reasons for not having?)

21. **Tasks assigned to children:** Note the tasks assigned to children (come to the board and write, read out from book, solve a sum, grouping and teaching other children, correcting lessons; make tea, fetch water or tea for teacher etc...) and if there is a pattern to this: Are only some children assigned some tasks. Are some tasks not assigned to some children and is it because of their group and gender identity. If this is not clear initially note the name/seating position and find out later. You can add errands/tasks. Find out later if some children are not assigned tasks and which groups they belong. (To give an idea if there is any discrimination in the mind of the teacher)

22. Note down if you find any pattern for assigning duties to children?

23. Observe teacher-student interaction in the classroom? (Need to elaborate and give specific instances mentioning groups etc)

(a) Did you find any child / children who were hesitating / holding back? (Note) _____

(b) What was the nature of the inhibition? _____

24. Did you notice any student being punished (slapping, pinching etc.) during the class by the teacher? 1: Yes 2: No

If yes, which child? (Make your observation and then tray and get the child's identity discreetly)

25. Did you notice any teacher using insulting / derogatory language, abusive language in class? 1: Yes 2: No

(a) If yes, which child? (Make your observation/describe)

26. **Overall observations:** [Please complete this questions after reviewing your observations]

(a) Did you notice any specific group (groups identified in the study) being treated differently? Who were they? (We are interested in those belonging to the study group- **SC/ST/Muslims/disability keeping gender within the groups in mind.** Describe the basis on which you have come to this conclusion) _____

(b) If you have observed that there are any other ways in which some children were being segregated/treated differently please note this, also describing the basis on which you have come to this conclusion.

Signature of Investigator: _____

Date: _____

Schedule 3

Inclusion and Exclusion of students in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper Primary Schools. Schedule for Semi Structured Interview of teacher

Interview one teacher each from Classes 4 and 7 (Class teacher where available). Please make sure you interview them separately and try and do this after school hours. Try and ensure that the teacher whose class you observed is interviewed.

I. General Information

1. Name: _____ Age: _____
2. Gender: 1: Male 2: Female
3. Ability / disability - nature of disability (record it)

4. Type of Teacher: 1: Regular 2: Contract Teacher 3: Any Other (specify)
5. Educational Qualification: 1: Below Secondary 2: Secondary 3: Sr. Secondary 4: Graduate 5: Post graduate
6. Social Group: 1: SC; 2: ST; 3: OBC; 4: Muslim minority; 5: Other
7. Have you had any special training in the last two years? 1: Yes 2: No
8. Total Teaching Experience (in complete years):

II. Attendance/Drop-out related

9. Are there any children who are not regular? 1: Yes 2: No
If yes who are not regular?

10. Do you notice any difference between boys and girls in respect of regularity in attending school and why?

11. Are children from any specific social group, community, occupation of parents, location more prone to being absent and why?

12. What are the reasons for children dropping out? (Explore family occupation / migration of family etc.) _____

13. Has your school made any effort to improve attendance of students?
1: Yes 2: No
If, yes. What efforts?

III. Access to Physical Facilities

14. Do the children eat their Midday Meal together? 1: Yes
2: No
15. Do all children drink water directly from the tap, pot etc? 1: Yes
2: No

IV. Prevalent Practices

16. Are the toilets in use? 1: Yes 2: No
(a) If yes, who uses them?
(b) If no, why?

(c) If yes, who cleans the toilets (*Note down the person / persons / adult / children etc.*) *Please probe this carefully because this is where we may be able to identify some discriminatory practices.*

17. How frequently are the toilets cleaned?

-
18. Who cleans the classrooms?

(*Explore if there is rotation and who does what kind of work*)

19. How frequently are they cleaned?

-
20. Who leads the morning assembly? How are they chosen?? Do you have any method for selecting children in extracurricular activities? Specify.

-
21. Are there any students who do not participate in any co-curricular activity?
1: Yes 2: No
(a) If yes, explore who they are and state the reason they give.

-
22. Is there a class monitor? 1: Yes 2: No
(a) If yes, who selects the class monitor/leader?

-
23. Do you check the general cleanliness (nails, hair etc.) of students?
Would you like to comment on the general cleanliness and hygiene of children?

-
24. Do the children in your school participate in any children committees/ BalPanchayat? 1: Yes 2: No
(a) If so, who constitutes it and on what basis?

-
25. Do all the children in your school avail the midday meal?

-
26. Do some children bring their own food or go home for food? 1:

Yes 2: No

(a) If yes who are they? (explore gender/ caste / community/ parental occupation)

V. Teacher -student Relationship

27. What are the ways in which you maintain discipline in the classroom and in the school?

(a) Can you describe some incidents of punishment / disciplining in the last one month? (*Get information on who are the children who were punished and why?*)

28. Do you interact with parents on a regular basis? (Visit their homes; call them to school) 1: Yes 2: No

(a) If yes, who are they (those with poor attendance, results, health any other)?

(b) Can you describe one of your meetings with parents in the last three months?

29. How are parents nominated or selected to VECs/PTAs/SMCs/ AMC?

30. Which VEC/PTA member is more regular and attends all meetings/takes active interest? (Explore further)

31. Who are the children you consider the brightest (performance in class, learning related) in your class? Explore why the teacher feels they are the brightest.

32. Who are the children - according to you - are not able to learn and who lag behind academically? Explore the reasons.

33. Are you able to communicate with all the children in the medium of instruction (Hindi, Oriya, Telugu, Assamese etc.) 1:Yes
2:No

34. Are there any children who are not able to understand the main language used by you in the classroom? 1: Yes 2:No

35. If yes, who are they and have you made any special effort to

communicate with them (how do you teach such students)?

Field Notes:

Name of Investigator: _____

Signature with Date: _____

Schedule 4

Inclusion and exclusion in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper Primary Schools

(Collect a group of teachers from the block/schools that you visit. Try and organise an FGD in one of the sample schools or in the CRC or BRC for not more than 10 teachers. Only one FGD in each district. Take down the list of persons, who attend, you could also circulate a form asking for details including gender / social group)

Focus Group Discussions with Teachers (at the Cluster level)

1. What is the profile/composition of children in your school (explore gender, social group, disability, migration)?
2. (a) What are the difficulties faced in teaching children from disadvantaged groups?
(b) Is there any specific thing you would like to share?
(c) What are the ways in which you have addressed these issues?
3. What are the specific problems girl students faces in school?
4. What are the specific problems teachers' faces in the classroom – explore language, regularity of students, learning outcomes, CWSN?
5. Your general comments on the cleanliness and hygiene of children?
6. Are there issues/concerns regarding children eating the midday meal?
7. Can you share any specific incident / issue that emerged in your school with respect to disadvantaged groups of children (SC, ST, Minorities, Girls, CWSN etc. Also see if any teacher brings up the language issue and if they do, record what they say. You could also explore it with some leading questions.)
8. Has your teacher training programme covered issues of
 - (a) Inclusion/exclusion
 - (b) Gender Issues
 - (c) CWSN
 - (d) If no, do you think it should be made part of the training programme?

Schedule 5

Inclusion and Exclusion of students in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper Primary Schools.

Focussed Group Discussions with Adolescents

Note: A group of not more than 10 boys/girls. Initiate the process of rapport formation with a game or a general round of introduction. Start with a discussion on the importance of school education and what their likes and dislikes are about their school. Questions directed should try and explore issues pertaining to inclusion-exclusion issues in school such as those relating to curricular activities, midday meal etc.

HAVE SEPARATE FGD FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AND TRY AND DO THE FGD IN THE HABITATION OF THE MOST DEPRIVED COMMUNITY IN THE VILLAGE - TRY AND INCLUDE SOME CHILDREN WHO MAY HAVE STUDIED IN THE SAMPLE SCHOOL. DO NOT DO THE FGD IN THE FORWARD CASTE SETTLEMENT OF THE VILLAGE, THIS MAY INHIBIT THE PARTICIPATION OF ADOLESCENTS FROM THE DEPRIVED SOCIAL GROUPS.

The discussion should focus on the school related activities- what they enjoy and like best about their school. It needs to be ensured that the sessions are fun filled and relaxed. If necessary some warm-up games can also be incorporated. Then go on to their everyday experiences at school, highlighting the importance of sharing and respecting our differences. The group needs to be reassured from time to time that this general information would be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of the study.

1. What did you like most in your school? What is it that you did not like?
2. Did you face any problems (specific to gender, social groups etc.) in school? (*Explore if there was any discrimination, stereotyping, exclusion from certain activities etc?*)
 - a. Can you recall any student who had a painful/bad experience in school?
3. Do you know of any boy/girl who dropped out due to this specific problem?
4. Let's go back to you elementary school days - recall who usually cleaned the
 - 1: classroom; 2: veranda, 3: toilet?
5. Did you have to run errands (filling water, making tea etc.) for the teachers in school?
 - a. What errands were given to girls?
 - b. What errands were given to boys
 - c. Did some boys/girls get more work/errands than others?
 - d. If yes, who were they?
 - e. Who was not allowed to bring water/fill water for teachers? Why?

- f. Who made tea for teachers/HM and visitors? Why was he/she chosen?
 - g. Talk about the work children did and any inclusion/exclusion issues therein
6. Were the teachers in elementary school warm and affectionate towards all the students?
 - a. Do you think the teacher favored children from certain caste, community, socio-economic background? If yes, in what way?
 7. Do you know of anyone in school who was punished/scolded because he/she could not answer a question in class? Who? What for?
 8. Was there any other form of discrimination in the schools you attended? Please describe.
 9. Has anything changed since you went to the school?

Schedule 6

Inclusion and Exclusion of students in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper Primary Schools.

Focussed Group Discussion with Parents of Deprived Community (SC, ST: within them also make sure you talk to the most deprived community in the sample village)

1. Do you interact with the teachers in the school? If so, how often? If not why?
2. Can you talk about your children's experience in the school? What do they like and what are the problems they face?
3. Do they go regularly? If no, can you explore the reasons for being irregular?
4. Do your children eat the MDM in school?
5. Do your children drink water in school?
6. Do your children use the toilet in school?
7. Does your child participate in school functions (assembly, prayers) and activities?
8. Are children from different communities treated differently in school?
 - a. Explore tasks like sweeping / cleaning classrooms, play ground; making tea, bringing water, cooking & serving mid-day meal etc.)
 - b. Scholarships, incentives, free textbooks, uniforms etc.
9. Have your children ever been subjected to punishment in school? If so, why and what was the punishment?
10. Are any of you members of the VECs/PTAs/SMCs/AMCs?
 - a. If so, do you hold any position like president, secretary, treasurer?
 - b. Are your suggestions / inputs accepted by the members?

Schedule 7

Inclusion and exclusion in the Schools and Classrooms in Primary and Upper primary Schools

Structured Activity with Children in Classes 4 and 7

Structured Activity with Children in Class 4 <i>(The Games and Activities will be finalized during the Research Team training)</i> Make sure there are no more than 15 children in one Group: Class 4 only Maximum time 35-40 minutes with Class 4 Children	
<p>Ask the children to form a circle, hold hands (example, maybe changed). Start with some games- like "Fire in the mountain, Run! Run! Run! Or Bolo BhaiKitnehai" use Hindi version of this. Let the children relax and enjoy the game</p> <p>Start with what we do from morning to evening- from getting up in the morning.... This has to be done in a fun manner so that children relax and talk about all kinds of things...</p> <p>Introduce water....</p> <p>Facilitator pretends to be a child in the school- "I am thirsty! I am thirsty!..I need water.</p> <p>Then pretend to go to the "source"-</p> <p>Can I drink water from this?</p> <p>Ask the children? Ask those who say yes to move into the blue circle (drawn with chalk) and those who says no into the white circle (drawn with chalk)</p> <p>Why can't I drink this? Encourage children to speak freely.</p> <p>Who are the children who are not allowed to drink water from the tap/pot/pump? Note down what the children say.</p> <p>Who cleans the classroom every day? (If children say they do it, then play circle game and ask those who cleaned the classroom to come into blue circle, and those who have never done so to move to the white circle)</p> <p>After this, get the children to sit in a circle...sing a song or clap hands.</p> <p>Who cleans the water pump area/pot every day? (If children say they do it, then play circle game and ask those who have cleaned to come into blue circle, and those who have</p>	<p>Note down numbers in each circle</p> <p>Note down numbers in each circle</p>

<p>never into the white circle) Get back in the circle and then play another game... Do all the children eat midday meal? Ok tell me who all ate it yesterday and today..is there anyone who never eats the midday meal in school? Play circle game again to get the numbers and identify in the school observation sheet... to be finalized during training.</p>	<p>Note down numbers in each circle</p>
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<p>Structured Activity with Children in Class 7 Make sure there are not more than 10 children in one group, boys and girls separately Maximum time 35-40 minutes for Class 7 children</p>	
<p>As they are older children- we can organize a more structured activity to explore the same issues. Organize the students in groups of 5 and give them one question/topic to discuss among themselves- give 2 topics to each group. Ask them to present through drawing/charts- followed by open discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ice breaking games for children to open up 2. Give chart paper to the children and ask them to draw how they sit together in the class, ask them to draw where water is kept etc.... 3. Explore the tasks children do in school - first the tasks and who does what. Which boy / girls 4. Who all eat MDM? Who does not? Where do they eat? Why do some children not eat the MDM? - This can be a oral activity following the drawing. 5. Similarly, ask about water... depending upon the local situation try and explore if some children are not allowed to touch the water source (pot, hand pump etc.) 6. Responsibilities during morning assembly, Independence Day / School Function 7. Who is the school monitor / maintains discipline 8. Punishment 	

<p>9. Sports / games</p> <p>10. Who are the children who do not come regularly to school, why</p> <p><i>Note: You can ask children to form groups and assign different tasks - this could be followed by a discussion on the charts that children draw.</i></p>	
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