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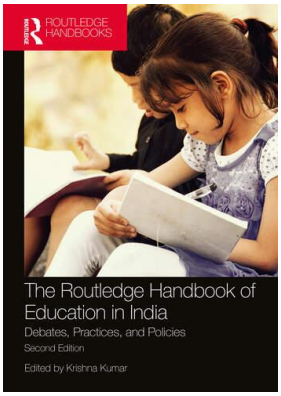

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Krishna Kumar

Institutional diversity and quality

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3
Institutional diversity and quality

Padma M. Sarangapani

The research and discussion on quality in Indian education has been disproportionately shaped by the government vs private school war and focused on primary schools for the 'poor'. We have little or no formal knowledge of the vast and growing private sector of schools. A few surveys conducted on schools that cater to the middle class segment, such as the ones carried out by magazines like *Education World* and *India Today* from time to time are more in the nature of being marketing exercises of quality reputation, and are based on self-reporting and perceptions, which reveal more about what the middle-class values in its schools. In contrast, key studies on schools catering to the lower socio-economic segment that have informed our understanding of this sector have either taken learning outcomes and parental choice or else have chosen a few input parameters as metrics and proxies of quality (see, for example, Centre for Civil Society 2015; Jalan and Panda 2010; Karopady 2014; Mehrotra 2005; Tooley *et al.* 2007). These studies tend to 'plug into' and add grist to the government vs private schools war with assumptions on how quality is produced by the state (bureaucracy) vs the market, highlighting features such as teachers' accountability and cost efficiency/value for money or what is to be valued as an education outcome.

For the moment let us set aside the effects these studies intend to have on the government vs private schools for the poor debate, and take the findings of the studies at face value. What we have are segmented and partial pictures that do not tessellate to cover the landscape – we are not able to understand the schools as a part of a societal ecosystem within which they function in relation to each other. This partial picture of the landscape allows stereotypes to persist which draw on and reify prejudices regarding the culture of schools, of teachers and their work (see, for example, Centre for Civil Society 2015). Apart from anecdotal personal knowledge, we don't know of the types of institutions that exist, how diverse they are, and if this diversity is of any educational consequence in terms of meriting attention and explanation or having an explanatory potential. We have little comprehensive knowledge on what their education qualities are, or what diversity exists in 'quality' and why. We don't know who goes where or what kinds of teaching take place in different settings. We don't know what typology may be most useful to characterise and explain the diversity of quality, and how these qualities are produced and maintained.

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In this chapter I propose answers to some of these questions through an analysis of data that was gathered in a survey of *all* schools in one education block of the city of Hyderabad, Telangana (Sarangapani *et al.* 2013; forthcoming). The survey was designed to gather data collected by trained education researchers on every single school in the block. The block was selected as it had a demographic range from slum areas to upper middle-class localities, and a relatively high concentration of schools of all types including aided, private, government (Telugu and Urdu medium) and madrasas (according to DISE[1]). The survey design was aimed at understanding the school: management and finances, clientele, and 'quality'.

The concept of 'quality' was operationalised as a 'master concept' following the works of Naik (1975) and Winch (1996). Elsewhere I have noted how their construction and commentary on 'quality', although set apart by close to 30 years, in different social and historical milieu, and in response to different issues, are remarkably similar in scope (Sarangapani, unpublished note). Based on this work we developed the concept of quality as having six dimensions that need assessment and comment in order to be able to judge and compare quality of education of schools in a public school system. The six dimensions that enable a comprehensive understanding of quality when taken together include (1) aims and relevance; (2) provisioning (infrastructure and staffing); (3) curriculum; (4) pedagogy; (5) standards and outcomes; and (6) efficiency and accountability. In this chapter I will be examining school diversity through the lens of aims and pedagogy.

The city of Hyderabad and Block A

The city of Hyderabad, with a 400-year history, has become well known in education and development literature through the studies of James Tooley, who has written extensively and appreciatively of the low-fee-paying schools that cater to the poor, particularly in the Muslim-dominated parts of the old city (see for example, Tooley and Dixon 2003; Tooley *et al.* 2007). About 30 per cent of the city's population is Muslim, with Urdu as its mother tongue.[2] From 2003 onwards Tooley conducted a series of studies and surveys through which he claimed to have gathered evidence that private schools for the poor fared better than government ones, even if the private schools were not recognised. Such schools, it is being claimed, produce better value for money than the government schools on account of the market discipline that makes them oriented to meeting parents' expectations for quality and keeping the wages of teachers low (Tooley 2009).

In 2003, when Tooley began his work in the city, Hyderabad had already disproportionately benefitted from about ten years of an IT-savvy chief minister who was able to draw several IT businesses into the city, convey a climate of receptivity to business, corporate houses and the World Bank, and deregulate services such as health and school education (Mooij 2003). The 1993 School Regulation Act[3] deregulated salary fixation for teachers, requiring only that a private unaided school must earmark 50 per cent of its income for staff salary and an additional 15 per cent for the Provident Fund and health insurance. The state already had a booming, successful chain of coaching classes training students for a range of competitive examinations involving science and mathematics, engineering, medicine, and pharmacology, etc. From 1993 onwards, many of these institutions had re-invented themselves as schools. At the time of our survey, the city had several such chain 'corporate schools' – which typically admitted students in middle school and combined state board studies with high-intensity study of mathematics and science problem-solving and speed-oriented coaching.

Mandal 'A' (Figure 3.1) is known by a busy retail commercial hub nestled in it. A few arterial roads run through the Mandal, connecting the centre of Hyderabad city to an industrial estate, to new development to the north, and to the city of Secunderabad to the north-east. The area

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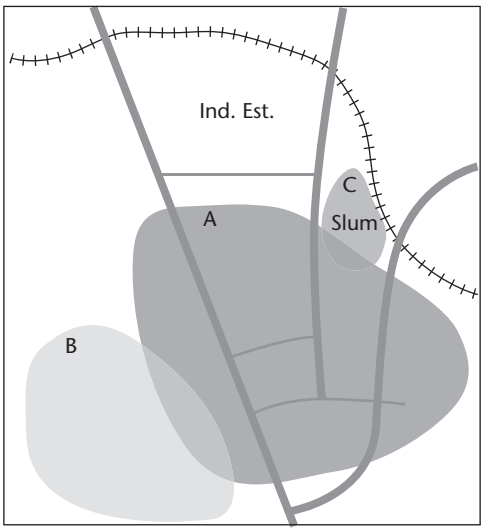

Figure 3.1 Sketch of Block A.
Source: rough sketch (not to scale) by author.

includes a range of socio-economic groups from upper middle classes – professional, bureaucrats, and police etc. – to lower middle class, working class and a few slums with migrants from North Telangana. Sections of the population include old residents of the city, Muslim and Dalit-Christian residential areas, and also newer migrant communities from diverse linguistic and regional backgrounds.

Driving through these roads it is difficult to miss the schools and coaching and tuition centres amidst the shops and restaurants, all crowded along the main roads. With their brightly coloured walls and hoardings advertising the school's name with photographs of their top student ranks from the most recent class X examinations, the schools seem to have positioned themselves so that they can catch the eyes of passers-by, like any shop selling its wares in the marketplace.

Between July and October 2011, 84 schools were identified and surveyed by a group of 12 trained researchers, using tools developed for this purpose. This chapter presents findings from the survey in three parts. In the first part, the schools are introduced. In the second, the 'education market' is introduced based on a discussion of the management and the clientele of the schools. The third part discusses quality, drawing on findings pertaining to 'aims' and 'pedagogies' of these schools.

An introduction to school diversity

Of the 84 schools surveyed (see Table 3.1), 71 were in Mandal A. Additionally, eight schools (including six unrecognised) were in the areas between Mandal A and B and of uncertain jurisdiction, and five were in a large slum area bordering Mandal A.

Conventionally used typology – Government, Aided, Private Unaided Recognised, Private Unaided Unrecognised, and Madrasa – reflects first the 'ownership' of the school, i.e. its key management/decision making – government or private/non-government – and second the core financing of the school – government funded or not receiving government funds/supported directly.[4] This categorisation is useful for a majority of government purposes around financing

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Table 3.1 Schools surveyed

Management type and funding	*Mandal A*	*Mandal A/B*	*Mandal C*	*Grand total*
Government	**8**		**1**	**9**
Aided	**5**			**5**
Government aided	3			3
Government aid and charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)	2			2
Private unaided recognised	**45**	**2**	**1**	**48**
Charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)			1	1
Fees and charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)	2	1		3
High-fee-based	10			10
Low-fee-based	33	1		34
Private unaided unrecognised	**12**	**6**	**2**	**20**
Charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)	1		1	2
Fees and charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)	1		1	
High-fee-based	6			6
Low-fee-based	5	5	1	11
Madrasa (unrecognised)	**1**		**1**	**2**
Grand total	**71**	**8**	**5**	**84**

Source: data for all tables in this chapter are compiled by the author.

and regulation. Literature discussing school quality has tended to follow this categorisation. The main effect of this categorisation is that only funding and regulation emerge as the key (explanatory) variables when comparisons between schools are made. This is convenient for neoliberal institutional theorisation of the school, which approaches school functioning with the assumption that 'accountability' and 'value for money/cost optimisation' are adequate to explain what schools do or don't do, what they do well or do poorly and which schools 'succeed' or 'fail'. In what follows, I introduce the 84 schools, drawing attention to additional distinctions that bring to the fore characteristics that give a more differentiated sense of the educational range and types of schools.

The nine government schools included six primary and three high schools (grades six to ten). Of the five aided schools, three were managed by religious trusts.

There were a total of 48 private recognised schools: ten were high-fee-charging, 33 were low-fee-charging, three included support from charities along with their fee and one was CSR (corporate social responsibility) funded. There were 20 private unrecognised schools of which two ran on charities, one had a combination of fee and charities, six were high-fee charging, and 11 were low-fee charging. Two madrasas, both unrecognised, were funded fully by religious charity. Of the schools that were run by a combination of fee and charity, two in Mandal A were partially supported by religious missions. Three others (of which two were not recognised) were special schools – dealing with impairments and with learning difficulty.

Fifty-five per cent of schools could be accessed and studied with great ease, accepting us at face value or after seeing our official letters; 19 per cent required an official introduction by the Mandal officers; 15 per cent of schools, even after such an introduction and a great deal of time, were obstructionist and gave us limited access or made access difficult and took up a lot of time and repeated visits; 11 per cent obstructed our entry through various tactics of excuses, delay,

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rudeness and in a few cases point blank refusal. In the case of the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) affiliated schools, the Mandal Education Officers said they were helpless; these elite schools refused to deal with the local education authorities, claiming that their affiliation to the CBSE gave them this immunity.

The schools were unevenly spread over the area of the Mandal – in what seemed to be related to their potential clientele base; 57 per cent of the schools were located in residential areas; 33 per cent in commercial areas; and 7 per cent in slums. The schools along the main road seemed to be vying for attention from passers-by.

The schools were established in the block from the 1930s onwards. The oldest schools in the area were two for girls, established by a Hindu reformist mission in the 1930s with the aim of promoting girls' education in the memory of the daughter of a founding trustee. Both of these, after Independence, became aided schools. One, however, closed down the previous year, and the other continued under a new related 'Marwari women's trust' that had expanded to vocational training, a pre-university (PU) college for girls, and had recently also established a fee-paying English-medium school for low-income children in the same premises. Between the 1950s and 1970s, most schools in this Mandal were government and government-aided ones. After the 1980s, no new government or government-aided schools were added to the Mandal. Instead there was a rapid expansion of private ones, with as many as 16 from the 1980s and growing at a steady rate, with over ten being added each decade. In the year of our survey as many as seven new schools were added to the Mandal, of which six were 'high-fee-paying'. The emergence of relatively more high-fee-based schools from 2010 onwards was indicative of the new and changing aspirations of the residents of the area.

A few new primary government schools were added in the decade of the 2000s under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan Mission (SSA) in the slum areas of the block. A number of low-fee-based private unrecognised schools at the time of the survey were in existence from the 1980s onwards.

Ninety-three per cent of the schools were *coeducational*. One Madrasa was only for boys and one had segregated classes for boys and girls. The other coed segregated school was also one based on Islamic faith values. The other three girls-only schools were all run by religious missions (two by a convent). In all the coed schools, boys and girls were seated in separate sections of the class. One recognised school and three unrecognised schools catered to children with *special needs*.

English-medium education was offered in 90 per cent of the schools – 100 per cent of the private recognised schools and 90 per cent of the unrecognised private schools were all English-medium only. Additionally, eight of the nine government schools offered English-medium teaching in addition to Telugu- and Urdu-medium teaching. This was following a recent government policy decision. The teachers told us that admission into the English-medium section was based on parental choice. We found equal class strengths in both English- and Telugu-medium sections of the schools. The teachers told us that there were parents who had decided against English medium as they felt that they may not be able to cope with its needs. Aided schools were required to be only Telugu medium. The management of three of these five aided Telugu-medium schools had also begun an English-medium fee-paying branch. *There were only four other schools that were not English medium – all funded by charities.* Two of these were Urdu madrasas, one Telugu-medium school was an evening school centre funded by a Christian mission, while another Telugu-medium school was a Shishu Mandir, affiliated to the RSS and funded by a Hindu mission for whom education in the mother tongue was an ideological choice.

The *sizes of the schools* varied widely, from fewer than 50 students (five schools) to very large schools with 2,000–3,000 students (one school). Twenty per cent of schools that were surveyed had enrolments of fewer than 100 (35 per cent with enrolments of fewer than 150). These small schools are of interest as the small size raises questions about their stability. About 20 per cent of

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schools in the area had enrolments between 150 and 400. *An enrolment of about 400 seemed to be a 'tipping' number for stability*, giving an average class size of 33 in 12 levels starting from pre-school to class X. Thirty-eight per cent had enrolments of more than 400, with three schools being very large with enrolments of more than 1,500.

Based on the reports of the heads of these schools, their enrolment trends were noted: in 15 per cent the enrolment was growing and the institutions were sought after and well established. Forty-two per cent were steady; 25 per cent were struggling to keep their enrolment intact and to survive with regular fee collection; 14 per cent were shrinking and steadily losing their clientele.

Seventy per cent were neighbourhood schools drawing their catchment from surrounding areas; this included all the low-fee-paying schools. About 15 per cent drew children from a wider area and ran school buses and vans. Eleven per cent of schools, almost all from the high-fee-paying group, drew their clientele from the entire city. One exceptional case was that of a high-fee-paying school whose catchment was largely the neighbourhood and area. This had been established by a reputable and charismatic maths and science teacher who had become very successful and had built up a reputation for the school – it was among the older private schools of the area and had secured the patronage of established professionals living there. The special school and its unrecognised branch centre drew clientele from very far, clearly on account of the exclusive service they provided.

Forty-nine of the 84 schools (58 per cent) had the full range of levels from pre-primary to secondary school. All of the private recognised schools except for three followed this model, with pre-primary also being the key stage for admissions. The three exceptions had only upper primary and secondary (i.e. classes VI to X) and were among the 'coaching type' schools with a focus on class X exam results in mathematics and science. The government and aided schools did not have a pre-primary grade and were from class I onwards. Three primary government schools included a pre-primary cohort; this group sat in the corridor and was minded by a teacher funded by an NGO. (This enrolment has not been included in the figures.) The government high schools were from grade VI to X. Urdu sections in particular in the government school were multigraded, with only two teachers for classes I to V.

Twenty-eight were classed as 'small schools' with an enrolment of fewer than 150. Of these, 17 were low-fee-based, of which seven were recognised and the remaining ten were unrecognised (accounting for 90 per cent of all unrecognised low-fee-based schools). In other words, low-fee-based, unrecognised schools in the area were very small (average enrolment fewer than 100). Twenty-one out of the 29 small schools (with enrolments fewer than 150) were found to be struggling to survive or with shrinking enrolments – this included all 17 small low-fee-based schools. The only small schools that were steady or even growing were the ones that were government funded or which had the support of charities. Aided schools, which had not secured any other source of funding, were struggling and shrinking.

Fifteen of these small schools which were running on fees had children in a range of grades – all the way from PP till secondary school. The class cohorts were not mono-graded; there were not enough students or teachers for this. These schools had multigraded classes: a teacher would be surrounded by students from different grades sitting in groups, who she taught, rather than tutored, by turns.

The education market: school management and their clientele

The government schools in the Mandal were all under the District Education Officer (DEO) of Hyderabad and managed by the systems of the DEO. On a day-to-day basis they were under the

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supervision of the Block Education Officer, who had an office in the campus of one of the government schools of the block. Each school had a headmistress (HM; primary school) or principal (high school) who was appointed to this post, or the acting HM who was from among the senior most teachers of the school. All other recognised schools that were not directly under the Department of Education were required legally to be under the management of a trust or society with education in its mandate. This included the aided institutions and the fee- or non-fee-paying institutions. However, in reality many schools were not managed by collectives of trustees or office bearers, but by individuals or families. Some were created by and managed in the style of 'corporates'. Schools were legally required to be 'not-for-profit', but understandably for all schools, finances were important. Fee-based schools had to be more concerned about *fixing the level of the fee as well as ensuring the regularity of monthly collection* as the fee was the only source to finance various expenses of the school. For non-fee-based schools also, managing with the available resources was a concern, because the loss of all clientele would lead to closure of the institution – an undesirable eventuality for those whose livelihoods depended on it. However, in addition to finances, there were other considerations that were also found to inform each institution's educational ideals and the design of its offerings and provisions – i.e. its unique academic identity and the qualities of the education it offered.

Managements

In addition to the Department of Education, ten distinctive types of private management forms were identified which were found to be useful in understanding aspects of the financing, academic identity, and education qualities of schools (Table 3.2). *Each of these management forms represented a distinct education ideology – defining their purpose in being in education and their educational imagination and their intentions. Inherent was also an imagination of their clientele – as representing either a particular community (socio-economic ('poor' and in need of charity) and/or religion) which they wished to serve and/or a particular economic group defined by the amount and regularity with which they would be able to pay a fee.*

Table 3.2 Types of management

	Type of management	*Classification*	*Total number*	*Break-down*
1	Department of Education (District Education Office)	Government	9	
2	Corporate social responsibility (CSR) trust	CSR philanthropy	1	
3	Non-government organisation (NGO)	NGO or expert specialised group	2	
4	Charity (linked to religious group)	Religious organisations	12	1
5	Mission (religious – Hindu, Christian, Islamic)			5
6	Religious trust			6
7	Family trust	Family trusts	7	
8	Teacher entrepreneur	Individual entrepreneurs	41	19
9	Tuition teacher–entrepreneur			5
10	Entrepreneur			17
11	Corporate	Corporates	12	
	Total		84	

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The 12 corporate management schools in the Mandal were all branches of statewide chains (in two cases nationwide), and were known for competitive examination coaching. Corporate management was characterised by hierarchical control in matters such as teacher appointments, curriculum, textbook selection, assessment and reporting, and even daily lesson plans, across all branches from the central control office. New corporate schools were professionally run, while old corporate schools used family to extend and keep control of finances, fee collection, and parent relations. There were three such family-based corporates in the block. The professionally managed groups had refined their 'product' beyond engineering competitive exams towards higher-level aspirations in the competitive coaching space – oriented to very high-stakes competitive examinations such as the IIT entrance, private 'Olympiads', and a global competitive world. These institutions used IT in their management more intensively.

Family trust-run schools were among the oldest in the area. Some of these institutions had been started by individuals with close involvement in the national movement and who regarded education as important in developing their communities – Muslim, Hindu, and Dalit-Christian. They had been active in local politics, and began these institutions at a time when there were few schools in the area. Two family trust schools were relatively new and established in the 1980s, and both had grown into successful large schools, one of which was CBSE affiliated and had a strong Hindutva character. Most of these older family trust schools were now managed by the second generation of the families and also included some family members who had qualified as teachers and were active in teaching and managing the schools as heads. If not, the families kept direct control of the school through their presence on a daily basis.

Fifty per cent of all schools (61 per cent of all fee-based) were started as *entrepreneurial ventures*. Almost all of the entrepreneurial schools were low-fee-based. Nineteen (i.e. 23 per cent of all schools) were by *teacher-entrepreneurs*. Typically they had started their career as teachers in the same local area and had decided to set up their own school. They frequently cited the desire 'not to work for someone else and to be independent' as the key motivation for this move. Eight of these teachers had established their reputation as maths and science tutors at the time they took this leap. Having an established tuition clientele seems to have given them the confidence that they could run their own establishment. Four of these teacher-entrepreneurs were women who had decided to establish their own school so that they could run it according to their education ideals. Eight of the schools started by teachers were stable, having achieved a size of 400 pupils or more.

Schools that had been established by *tuition teachers* and *business-entrepreneurs* tended to cater to the lowest socio-economic groups (mostly groups 4 and 5). Such schools tended to be very small and were run like home tutorials. Seventeen such schools were started as businesses by entrepreneurs, including three women. Most opted for the school business on the advice of family and friends, thinking it would be easy for them to establish and run, and because they had an apartment or house as an initial investment. One had seen an advertisement for a school for sale in the newspaper and had decided to buy it. There were at least seven such cases of the school registration and recognition having been bought by the current management. A few entrepreneurs held more than one school registration, but ran only one school, leading to anomalies between the DISE record and reality on the ground. In the low-fee-charging group, 19 were managed by families – husband-and-wife teams who had to run the school like a family enterprise in order to manage funds and make ends meet. They struggled as they could not raise the fee too much and at the same time had to collect it regularly from parents. Some reported that when parents could not afford the fee any more, they simply stopped sending their child to the school and sought admission elsewhere.

A total of 28 schools in the Mandal had distinctive religious affiliations and to varying degrees incorporated religious instruction directly into the curriculum. At the very least they

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included religious prayers at assembly and had displays of religious symbols prominent in the school. These included Christian, Islamic, and Hindu religions.

Twelve of these schools had *religious purposes and ideals*. These institutions drew from religion and connection. For 11 of these their own religious community was their primary focus. Only one Christian charity served the poorest of the poor working children through an evening school. Five institutions were directly under a religious mission – a Christian convent, mosque (madrasa), and the RSS (Saraswati Shishu Mandir); these institutions had a religious purpose and offered religious instruction along with formal schooling. One of the two madrasas provided only religious instruction. The teachers of the madrasa schools, the charity school, and the Shishu Mandir (all very small unrecognised ones) were inspired by their religious ideology to work for the local poorest of the poor of their community. The two Christian convent schools had minority status. Six schools were run by religious trusts. These aimed to offer modern schooling, but drawing on and informed by faith – Hindu and Islamic – in their educational ideals. These institutions were thus deeply committed to serving their religious constituency and community through education. Religion was also evident in as many as 16 of the entrepreneur-run schools: four had a Christian affiliation, five had Islamic affiliation, and one was linked to a gurudwara. Six had Hindu affiliation: in two, students were even expected to participate in *pujas* that were held in the school, and one of them actively discouraged Muslim parents from admitting their wards to his school, saying that this enabled him to appeal to Hindu parents.

There was a professionally run non-fee-paying school run by a CSR-funded trust with a non-religious approach to working with the poorest of the poor. This school had many branches all over the city. There were two 'NGO' special schools – so designated as it was a specialised expert group offering education to children with a disability. These schools were run by an expert who raised funds and research grants from numerous sources and involved parents of the children and volunteers in running the school.

As can be seen from the above description, the niche occupied by the school was a combination of considerations of relevance to a particular clientele group (its needs and aspirations) and extent of dependency on fee, in turn leading an assessment of ability to pay, and being able to pay regularly. To convey relevance and desirability, a range of considerations were invoked or cultivated involving school financing and client–vendor relationship management: being English medium; being a known successful neighbourhood tutor with a reputation; being an institution with an association with a religion; offering maths and science competitive exam preparation; offering special education; or serving to enable children to pass.

Clientele

The socio-economic characteristics of the clientele were constructed based on detailed accounts of management on the occupations of the parents. Five groups were constructed based on these occupations: Group 1 comprised professionals, doctors, bankers, IT professionals, and government administrators; Group 2 comprised small businessmen, lawyers, and shop and hotel owners; Group 3 comprised clerks, teachers, accountants, and electricians; Group 4 comprised domestic workers, watchmen, auto-drivers, fruit vendors, bakery workers, carpenters, and mechanics; Group 5 comprised rag pickers and scavengers. Group 5 represented the poorest of the poor in the area, and included migrants from Dalit communities with 'polluting' occupations and extremely poor Muslim families living in slum areas surrounding a mosque.

Schools in general had a noticeable homogeneity in clientele (see Table 3.3). Mostly this was a homogeneity of socio-economic classes as represented by the occupational groups. Only two schools had clientele from socio-economic groups 1, 2, 3, and 4. This was the Christian evening

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centre and the NGO centre for children with a learning disability. Two schools had clientele from Groups 2, 3, and 4 (white-, pink-, and blue-collared groups): one was the recognised special school run by a disability-focused NGO and the other was a religious Islamic school. The special school earlier used to admit children without disability but was subsequently prevented from continuing this practice by the government on the grounds that they were recognised as a 'special school'.

Most schools catering to the high socio-economic groups were large ones with 400 pupils or more (14 out of 18), while the four schools catering to the low socio-economic group (i.e. which included Group 5) were all small and had enrolments of 150 or fewer. Fifteen schools had clientele from Group 3. A total of 35 private fee-based schools had clientele from the socio-economic Group 4. Twenty-four schools catered to children coming from Groups 1 and 2. This included all the CBSE and ICSE board-affiliated schools.

The schools that catered to children from Groups 4 and 5 were of special interest as these were the groups who are at the centre of the government vs. private school debates – i.e. parents who worked in irregular and manual work including domestic help, etc. This group patronised a range of schools – including government, the aided, private recognised, and private unrecognised. A total of 53 schools admitted students from Group 4. Twenty-five of these were unaided recognised schools of which six were small, with enrolments between 100 and 150 students. Ten were unrecognised and all were very small schools with enrolments of fewer than 100 (including two with fewer than 20). Fourteen private unaided recognised schools had enrolments between 400 and 1,500, which may be regarded as fairly large. All of these schools had a clientele from Groups 3 and 4, rather than only 4 or 4 and 5. Eleven of these schools had been established in the 1980s and 1990s and were among the older and more established ones of the area. Government schools tended to cater to Groups 4 and 5.

Ten schools catered to the poorest of the poor, of which only two were government and one aided, started by a Christian charitable trust. Two were private recognised schools: the first, which was fee-based, had started to shrink when the second, which was CSR-funded, came up. There were five unrecognised schools, started and managed by religious organisations/organisations with strong religious connections, all catering to this segment. One was a Christian evening learning centre, another was a Shishu Mandir; three others had Islamic support (including two madrasas). Thus the majority of the schools serving this group were charitable and had a strong religious backing from all three major faiths.

In as many as 20 of these, teachers reported that the children worked before and after school hours. Girls mainly assisted their mothers as domestic workers and all had duties at home, including sibling care and cooking. Boys often worked as mechanics, delivering newspapers, or vending fruits and vegetables, and in local hotels.

Quality

As noted in the introduction to the chapter, quality has been taken as a 'master concept' involving six dimensions. The literature has largely discussed the dimensions of provisioning, outcomes, and accountability for the schools catering to Groups 4 and 5. In this last section, I discuss diversity in school 'quality' in relation to two of the quality dimensions: educational aims and pedagogy. Examining aims and how they vary across schools invites attention to the relationship between quality, clientele type, management form and school finances for survival and profitability in explaining this variation, and in reflecting on the consequences of the variation. Pedagogy involves looking at how institutions shape teachers and their practices through interpretation of educations aims and the expectations and assumptions schools have regarding home support for schooling.

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Table 3.3 School clientele

	Groups 1 and 2	*Group 2*	*Groups 2 and 3*	*Groups 1–4*	*Groups 2–4*	*Group 3*	*Groups 3 and 4*	*Group 4*	*Groups 4 and 5*	*Group 5*	*Ni*
Charities (religious mission/CSR/ grants)									4	1	
Private unaided recognised									1		
Private unaided unrecognised									1	1	
Madrasa									2		
Government funded								7	1	1	
Government								7	1	1	
Government aided								2		1	
Aided								2		1	
Government aid and charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)							1	1			
Aided							1	1			
Fees and charities (religious mission/CSR/grants)			1	1	1		1				
Private unaided recognised			1		1		1				
Private unaided unrecognised				1							
Low-fee-based	3	4	2		1	2	9	21	2		1
Private unaided recognised	1	4	2		1	2	9	14	1		
Private unaided unrecognised	2							7	1		1
High-fee-based	13	2					1				
Private unaided recognised	7	2					1				
Private unaided unrecognised	6										
Grand total	**16**	**6**	**3**	**1**	**2**	**2**	**12**	**31**	**7**	**3**	**1**

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Educational aims and the school business plan

Most schools had a narrative that established the unique niche they saw themselves occupying in terms of what they aimed to achieve for their students and what they had to offer as institutional objectives. While overall educational aims were formulated in general terms, institutions reflected more specifically on what they offered to parents – their 'unique selling proposition' which defined their academic identity both for themselves and for their clientele – i.e. how they represented themselves and how they were viewed. Usually the school's business plan was formed around this 'USP', which defined its attraction and desirability for its clientele, and additional activities and services it provided usually from a financial angle. Such narratives became available to us from more than one source: the head of the institution (leadership/management), senior teachers, school documents such as the school diary, magazine, and publicity materials, and their website.

Eleven schools *did not articulate or formulate any specific educational ideal* to define them (eight recognised and three unrecognised). All of these were struggling and shrinking, low-fee-based schools run by entrepreneurs and tuition–teacher entrepreneurs. Several of these schools were facing management crises following family problems: in one case the head had run into debt after investing in a film production that starred her son. In others, there were inheritance disputes. Four schools were being run by naïve entrepreneurs who were new to the business and seemed clueless. Three ran tutorial centres, with flexible timing for students and teachers based on mutual convenience, and multi-grade grouping based on how many teachers and how many students turned up. Only one actively pursued fee collection from parents; the others had trouble with even this; they were struggling to simply retain their students, as with any talk of fee they stood to lose the students altogether. All the schools catered to children from Group 4 (and one included Group 5). The only aim seemed to be to stay afloat by functioning within means. As one of the entrepreneurs put it, with this fee no good education can be provided.

For eight schools, the *raison d'être* derived from *serving a particular 'community' group*: in the case of three it was 'girls from poor families' and for five it was 'community needs/poorest-of-the-poor of that community'. These schools serving the Muslim community wanted to provide modern education opportunities with Islamic values. The social learning component was also important in the case of the madrasas which served the poorest of the poor (Group 5) – and strived to offer an education opportunity of privately passing exams, along with learning '*hukumat* and manners' for both boys and girls. The Dar-ul-Uloom Madrasa was not offering the community a modern education opportunity, but was serving the religious needs of the community through a purely religious education. In the case of the girls' schools, two wanted to provide a Christian education through which girls would become God-fearing and Jesus-loving: one in Telugu medium serving lower socio-economic status groups and one in English medium for higher socio-economic status groups. The third (also aided Telugu medium) drew from early nationalist ideas of citizenship and patriotism appropriate to girls from poorer sections of society. The management said that they had limited ability to offer good education as they could not press parents to pay fees beyond a point and lose them, as it was important for them to serve their community.

Nineteen schools drew their educational identity and unique purpose from the fact that their clientele was poor. These schools were *oriented to serving the needs of the poor* as interpreted by them. For eight of these schools, access to modern education was central to the needs of the poor. For two – one recognised and one unrecognised, both of which ran on fees – the focus was on providing English-medium education in which the students would succeed. They functioned like tutorials and were flexible in their timings to enable participation. They also

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prepared students to take examinations privately. Both schools were very small and with multi-graded classes. The remaining six ran on aid or charity and spoke of the importance of giving the poor an opportunity to succeed with modern education that stressed upon overall values and character, particularly traits such as resilience, self-confidence, autonomy, independent thinking and problem solving. Three of these institutions were run by religious missions and linked the development of these attributes to being rooted in the community, religious value education and education in the mother tongue. One, which was a CSR-supported English-medium school, aimed at providing social mobility through education which prepared poor students to succeed in examinations but with all-round development of understanding and self-confidence.

In the three government primary schools (two of which were in slum areas and of SSA origin), the aims of education were dominantly of 'domestication' and 'civilising the poor'. The school teachers here spoke of the poor needing education in order to become 'civilised'. In eight schools – government and aided – multiple aims seemed to be in operation, and were dependent on the views of individual teachers regarding the social situation of their students. Teachers of the Urdu-medium sections regarded the aim of education to be domestication and their own work as 'service to their community'. A few teachers of grade 1 particularly focused on domestication and conventional rote-based literacy instruction. Other teachers aimed at learning with understanding and students becoming self-confident, self-reliant, and independent. In three schools, the key focus was on learning social norms – to adjust to society, to be God-fearing, and to learn to live with others. These were run by entrepreneurs – in two cases the schools were not recognised.

'Affordable and good education' was the aim of 13 private low-fee-based schools. 'Unlike corporate schools, we want to give a good education … we want to develop children to do something for the country.' 'English and marks. This is what parents want.' 'We give duller success. Hard work and discipline leads to success.' With the exception of three of this group which were struggling to retain their client base, with a focus on negotiating fees and cajoling parents to pay, these schools had achieved a 'steady' state of loyal parents. Some of these schools resorted to humiliating children in various ways for non-payment of fees, including making them miss their examinations, or standing outside their class. What chiefly distinguished this group of schools was that they did not promise high results in maths and science. At the low end, these schools supported 'weak' students and ensured they passed the examinations. They explained that they admitted children who were rejected by other schools and enabled them to study and pass exams by focusing on their self-confidence and character. They spoke of values such as punctuality and regularity and character building. At the upper end of the spectrum, the aims were elaborated beyond 'good education' and 'values' to include 'all-round development' of children, learning English, and becoming able to secure a job. A second group of schools aimed to provide affordable maths and science scores and exam success. These schools had been started by successful maths teachers. Twelve of the schools in this group had been started by teachers and were managed by teacher entrepreneurs or family trusts. At least four of the schools in this group were anxious about the emergence of the new corporate schools that were threatening their client base. They complained that these schools lured their best students away.

A group of nine 'corporate' schools all aimed to make students *successful in science and mathematics-based competitive examinations*. Unlike the affordable group that only promised results in the high school maths and science exams, this group aimed at the competitive examinations. One 'old' family-run corporate school, which ran as a chain, was focused on entrance exam success. Other new corporate schools combined the importance of success in these engineering

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exams with 'all-round development'. With the exception of one, all of these schools were part of multi-institutional chains that had started as coaching schools – mostly at the state level, but also including national coaching schools for elite engineering entrance exams. 'The vision to prepare students for professional courses at the school level itself.' 'Imparting concept-based analytical thinking.' 'National building through science and mathematics.'

Nine schools emphasised *all-round development with success in examinations* as their key aim, adding the importance of values as well as coaching to succeed in examinations as their USP. These schools were all oriented to educating children from Groups 1 and 2. They emphasised values such as obedience, respecting elders, being God-fearing, cultivating love for the country, and being able to stand on their own feet. The schools in this group aimed to achieve this through investing in curriculum. Most schools in this group said they preferred the CBSE for this reason. 'We develop personality through scientific testing', was the claim of another. The claim 'Not an engineer or doctor but an IAS officer who can hire any engineer or doctor' suggested that these schools were preparing students for a wider range of white-collar employment opportunities. Table 3.4 offers a summary.

While there is a diversity in educational aims, this diversity was *across* schools catering to different social groups/classes. More 'progressive' and 'holistic' aims of education were found in schools catering to the highest income bracket, while lower down the spectrum the focus shifted to very discipline-based rote learning for either exam success or to be able to learn English. Teacher entrepreneur-run schools attempted to move pedagogy and aims in the direction of textbook learning with understanding as compared with other management types. The only exception was in the case of schools dealing with children with disability or in the lowest socio-economic group where the aim was for all-round development and autonomy and self-reliance – but this seems to be linked to the expectation that these children would not gain access to 'mainstream' channels of employment and success and would need to chart their own way. There was relatively limited diversity seen within social groups.

Table 3.4 Aims of education

Aspects of aims	*Groups 4 and 5*	*Groups 3 and 4*	*Groups 1 and 2*
'Domestication'/'Civilising' mission	X		
Social learning, social norms	X		
Citizenship and patriotism	X	X	
Values – respect, punctuality, working hard	X	X	
Values – religious	X	X	X
Autonomy, resilience and independence	X		X
'All-round development' – personality and interests, self-confidence, 'soft skills'	X		X
English	In a few cases	X	Taken for granted
Science and Mathematics (high school exam)		X	
Science and Mathematics (competitive exams)		X	X
Securing a job/being employable		X	
Having a career			X

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Pedagogy

The processes of teaching and learning that were being followed attempted to achieve the educational aims of the institution, but also specific educational purposes that the teachers intended. An understanding of the distinctive work being carried out in each classroom was characterised by drawing on five dimensions: (1) teachers' expectations and intended aims of education for the children they were teaching and what they expected them to achieve; (2) their expectations of the home, particularly in terms of support for schooling; (3) a 'method' they employed for teaching; (4) the 'method' that they intended by which students would learn; and (5) the method of discipline/moral regulation that was prevalent in the school. The composite of these five dimensions was reviewed and again synthesised into seven broad types of pedagogy. It was found that pedagogy was characteristic of a school, rather than of an individual teacher – the only exception being the government school where, as in the case of educational aims, there was a great deal of variation from teacher to teacher.

Teachers' *expectations about learning* referred not generally to expectations of some abstract learner, but more specifically to expectations about what these children who she was expected to teach could be and should be expected to learn. This constituted an educational aim that informed her pedagogic focus and effort. *These ranged from expectations that were teacher-referenced to those that were textbook-referenced to those that were society-referenced*. Minimal expectations took the form of the teacher-controlled and -defined learning of literacy and obedience, or expecting children to learn answers *as defined by the teacher.* The textbook-centric expectations involved learning answers to questions in the textbooks – from exact reproduction of textbook answers moving to answers which reflected the understanding of concepts and comprehension of the textbook. A last group referenced expectations of learning that was more widely valued in society, beyond school: learning of concepts and solving competitive exam papers, and in a few cases also the production of reasoning, independent autonomy, creativity, and novelty, reflecting understanding.

With regard to *expectations about home-support*, teachers had an implicit or explicit understanding of the home cultural and economic resources that supported the child's ability to learn school knowledge. At the lowest end, teachers had no expectations of home and viewed a child's home circumstances with empathy; in others a tense relationship prevailed vis-à-vis a child's home, particularly where there were difficulties in securing the school fee. The home of the child was viewed negatively as contributing problems that had to be countered in school and where no support could be expected. In a middle group, the sense was that although the home could not directly contribute useful things on its own, it could be influenced to support the child and the school and they could together support children towards meeting more and more expectations. Finally, there were institutions in which there was a cultural continuity between the home and school, in which the home provided valuable cultural capital – particularly knowledge of English. *The expectations about home support thus varied on an axis of expecting none in a situation of cultural division to full support in a situation of cultural continuity.*

Method of 'teaching': the dominant pattern of teaching in Indian schools is 'whole-class instruction', where the teacher engages and addresses the whole class and the entire group is basically doing the same thing. Also, following a set lesson is the dominant trend. Within this, variations were noted in the extent to which teachers did not give explanations, asked questions from children, and expected them to either repeat what was said, articulate in their own words, and expected and allowed children to ask questions – moving from overall silence in children to more dialogic situations with them. *Teaching varied from massified to approaches which focused on individual learners.* In the former, where there was little or no differentiation and engagement

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with what children were understanding, teachers primarily defined the objects of learning by marking portions and items to be learned without any discussion or explanation. The teachers here rarely made eye contact with the children and would ignore them even if they said something. In approaches where teaching was more *individualised*, teachers tried to monitor individual children's learning of prescribed knowledge in overall competitive settings. There were many schools, particularly the new corporate-managed ones, where pedagogy was scripted and tightly controlled by a centralised office. Here, teachers followed a detailed microplan and had fixed targets to meet in each lesson. The participation of children in these classes was also part of a script. There were schools where the teaching seemed to demand higher-order thinking from children and a few which were more dialogic and individualised. Children were often heard saying things on their own and asking questions. It seemed that their understanding was appreciated and their independent contributions valued and incorporated into an ongoing lesson.

Method of learning: a method of learning also was a part of the pedagogy. Each teacher seemed to be functioning with an implicit view of how children would learn and remember what there is to be learned or what they had been taught. *These ranged from learning by rote – i.e. repetition – to learning by thinking, understanding, and review.* This was a part of the pedagogy adopted by all teachers, where making sure that children had learned by testing and making them learn by spending time in the class on this was a part of their overall pedagogy. In other words, completing the time and effort in 'teaching' was time and effort spent also on 'making children learn': practice, rehearsal, assessment, and feedback. This ranged from rote memory-based learning methods in which the children were expected to repeat – and the teacher made them repeat over and over again – to making children think and express in their own words, revise, and attempt to apply their knowledge to answer new types of questions.

A *disciplinary culture* underlined the pedagogic work and in a sense the pedagogy only assumed and worked on this moral regulation. Pedagogy and its effects were believed to be as much about moral learning as they were about knowledge and skill development. The latter would follow from the former. Thus pedagogy was about shaping both the moral and epistemic capability and potential and identity of the student. At the lowest end, discipline was imposed through very visible forms involving corporal punishment and physical control. A second level was the use of guilt and conveying inadequacy arising out of moral failure. While there was no physical punishment, this discipline was also very visible. As the disciplinary cultures moved towards more invisible forms they could take the form of micro-control through rigorous timetabling and control of space and time of the student, in some cases for very extensive hours from early morning till late at night. Religion and religious values were also invoked in establishing invisible controls. In a few cases, control was expected to take the form of self-control through the use of reason. *The axis of variation was visible – external control of the body – to invisible – internal control through reason.*

Pedagogic types

Almost without exception a pedagogic form of the types described above marked the entire institution – the institution was broadly united in its educational identity and aims; as it was homogenous, it was largely oriented to the same educational aim and aspiration for the group that it served. There was a common view of the home and its resources to support the work of the school, as well as to contribute to its financial viability. The main areas in which variation was noted were the perspectives of individual teachers in schools – this was mainly in the dimensions of teaching and learning. Some variability from 'drill-and-repetition' in primary classes to more elaborate teaching in high school was noted particularly in the English-medium schools catering to Groups 3 and 4. Here, the initial years were more narrowly focused on

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teaching in the English medium to non-English-speaking students and moving to higher expectations when there was a higher level of fluency and comprehension of English. In five schools, a very wide variation was seen within the school between teachers. Some taught with high-level expectations and for higher-order cognition, while others adopted a domesticating pedagogy or drill. On one occasion, the same teacher exhibited dual pedagogy within a class, teaching one group in a more elaborate manner and another in a drill fashion. The schools with variations in pedagogy from teacher to teacher were schools for Groups 4 and 5, and were either government or aided schools. Table 3.5 offers a summary.

The low-fee-based private unaided unrecognised schools dominantly had 'domesticating pedagogies' (in 7 of 11 such schools). The key focus of these schools was on 'disciplining' children and keeping them quiet. The teachers felt that these children of the poor needed school in order to become civilised, and citizenship consisted of obedience. Textbooks were of no importance in these classes – the teacher defined what was to be learned and how, and was the final arbitrator in whether something had been learned or not. Discipline was mostly corporal and arbitrary. Children were constantly reminded that they were poor and that the best they could achieve was to remain silent.

Twenty-five of the 34 low-fee-based recognised schools had pedagogies involving rote and drill. The teacher-entrepreneur schools paid greater attention to ensuring that *each* child learned. A lot of time was spent on drill and repetition, mostly in a chorus learning manner, but teachers kept a strict watch on the children and from time to time would single out individuals and check that they could repeat on their own.

In the entrepreneurial schools (11 of which were struggling and shrinking and seven of which had very small enrolments), classes were multigraded and teachers did little more than supervise this rote learning. The discipline in these schools was often both corporal and psychological. The classrooms were small and shared – children were squeezed in on benches. They often had their large bags on their laps and their books on top. They got into skirmishes with each other – knocking or jabbing each other. Keeping discipline and maintaining order in an overall noisy crowded environment seemed to be uppermost on the teachers' minds. When they taught they made children repeat the spellings of each word and rote learn answers.

Pedagogies that favoured higher-order cognitive capabilities, conceptual understanding, and independent thinking and writing answers in one's own words were both in textbook referenced pedagogies (type 4) as well as in more out-of-textbook and progressive pedagogies (types 6 and 7). Here, teachers allowed far greater self-expression of students and seemed to be oriented to their 'all-round development' and life outside the textbook and school. Pedagogy type 4 was constructed around enabling children to understand and engage with textbook knowledge. School seemed to be central to person formation in this pedagogic form. Many of the schools with pedagogy type 4 also had more diversity in the curriculum and, while being mostly low-fee-based, were aimed at giving children opportunities for all-round development and whole-school activities, including sports. The disciplinary cultures of these schools was based on middle-class values. While some of these schools tried to combine success in examinations and mathematics and science, this was not so in all.

Pedagogy types 6 and 7 differed in one important respect. Pedagogy type 6 catered to children from the highest socio-economic group of the area. These were children who all had English spoken at home and parents pursuing elite careers – anticipating the future careers and aspirations of the children. The schools were run by very different management types – one a national religious mission trust, another a 'corporate' chain, and yet another a family trust. All of these schools had ample space for a diverse curriculum. *In pedagogic type 7, children were mostly from the poorest of the poor and did not have any home support for schooling.* The medium of

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Table 3.5 Pedagogic types in relation to clientele type and management type

	Group 1: doctors, software professionals	*Group 2: businessmen, lawyers, shop owners*	*Group 3: teachers, electricians, shop assistants*	*Group 4: domestic workers, mechanics, manual labour, fruit vendors*	*Group 5: rag pickers, scavengers, unemployed*	
P1: Domestication and obedience-alphabetisation					DEO and entreprenuer (unrecognised)	12
P2: Rote learning of answers to pass examinations				Entrepreneur		21
P3: Drill learning of textbooks to do well in examinations			Teacher entrepreneur			13
P4: Textbook learning with understanding		Teacher entrepreneur, family trusts				7
P5: SWOTT success in high-stakes competitive exams	Corporates					11
P6: All-round development and exam success	Religious and family trusts					3
P7: All-round development and self-reliance					Aided, government, charitable	7
Others (religious and special education)						3
No information						7

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instruction was the mother tongue. The teachers in these schools were keen to develop children's self-confidence and ability to learn to help them stand on their own feet. For these teachers, often the ability to read and understand any new text was an important aim as they felt these children had to rely on their own abilities in order to make something of their lives – they had neither any cultural capital at home nor parental resources to get them ahead in life. At the same time, these teachers did not seem to be preparing the children to succeed in life through a school examination and selection process. They would probably need to find opportunities and enter the workforce early. This included specific government school teachers.

SWOTT type pedagogy '5' was unique to Telangana/Andhra Pradesh – nine corporate-run schools and two established by successful math and science teacher entrepreneurs. Here, the ethos was heavily oriented towards success in the elite engineering examinations, with curricula that drew directly from the competitive exams. Conceptual understanding was greatly valued, but along with speed and accuracy developed out of drill and focused study to the exclusion of all else. Learning was heavily scripted and with frequent tests and analysis of the test results. The atmosphere was intensely competitive. In most of these schools order was built into the regime. One of these schools had a discipline coach posted on each floor. In this pedagogic form, success in competitive examinations was the aim and students were being trained for this. For the families of the students, maintaining and advancing one's current social status was crucially dependent on examination success. The pedagogy was thus not oriented towards the textbook per se, but to a world beyond. Conceptual learning was also valued, but only as it aided solving new and unknown problems that may appear in these examinations.

The relationship between social class and pedagogic form was striking – as the clientele of schools changed from Group 5 to Group 1, the dominant pedagogy also changed from pedagogy type 1 (or domesticating type), through which children were expected to learn obedience and to stay in their place on the lowest rung of society, to pedagogy types 5 and 6, which aimed at locating them in a wider social plane beyond the textbook and the school.

Conclusion

The heterogeneity and diversity of schools in Hyderabad city seems to be developing on account of both features of the state system as well as the market – indeed, on account of the complementary action of the two sectors. The 1970s to the 1980s was a turning point, with the cessation of state investment to open government schools or new aided schools and the beginning of the growth of private schools. Today there is heterogeneity and diversity seen in the schools, but this maps closely onto the socially stratified character of Indian society; the market has grown around class and community stratification; added to which we see a new stratum – children with disabilities (impairments or learning difficulties) and 'dullers' (i.e. 'lower' intelligence). Clientele stratification is suggestive of an inherent segregation taking place in school selection along class and community lines, as well as exclusion of children with special needs, separating them into a class of their own. (This study was conducted before the RTE 25 per cent clause was operationalised in Telangana schools and it would be of interest to see whether in future this homogeneity is disrupted.) English medium is the default language option and opportunities for education in the mother tongue (Telugu and Urdu) are severely limited and only for the poorest of the poor, in either government or charitable settings.

Schools for the poor run by entrepreneurs and unstable small schools are mostly 'shrinking', raising questions regarding their stability. Pedagogic cultures in these schools are 'domesticating' or 'drill' based. Relationships with the home on the whole are tense and combative, with the schools having to balance keeping an upper hand over the parents and extracting fees with not

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losing their clientele. Those that are able to set aside such considerations are the ones that have a community religious affiliation with their clientele. Teacher entrepreneur-run schools have less rote-based pedagogies, and although they are textbook cultures, these enable thinking and have expectations of concept development. While there are several schools for the poor which rely on shaming students – domesticating them or treating them as immoral – there also seems to be a widespread desire and parental investment in the ones that put students through a difficult regimen to prepare them for competitive examinations. These schools seem to be more desirable. On the whole, there seems to be an invisible segregation operating in which the more competent students, or at least those who can cope with the regimen, are put into high-pressure schools while the less competent ones – the dullers – are sent to the schools that will coach them sufficiently to pass examinations. The poorest of the poor are served by charitable institutions. These, along with some of the aided schools and government school teachers, also espouse pedagogies that promote autonomy, thinking, and student confidence, all practised in the mother tongue.

This diversity of school types suggests the variables in the production of education quality in these institutions: aims which are derived from the socio-economic and community identity of the clientele, school financing, and the type of management. There are multiple niches in the market ecosystem that these schools occupy. It is these considerations rather than 'private vs aided vs government' or 'recognised vs unrecognised' that provide us with a greater insight into the educational purposes and activities of these schools. Within any given bracket, being recognised vs being 'unrecognised' per se does not help distinguish any aspect of education quality between schools. However, it is instructive that such 'unrecognised' schools are found either at the 'top end' or the 'bottom end'; both these groups seem unconcerned about and are immune to the effects of the state or its need and ability to regulate.

The types of non-state interests in starting schools have evolved over the decades. Largely community-oriented initiatives until the 1970s gave way to entrepreneurship from the 1980s onwards. However, even in this group we see differences of quality even in the single dimension of educational aims – between schools established by teacher entrepreneurs and business entrepreneurs. Given how many of these schools are small and struggling, not only their quality, but also their institutional formation and stability cannot be ignored as issues when questions of their ability to serve the needs of the poor are debated. Moreover, in addition to the level or quantum of the fee charged, the ability to collect fees regularly is a major concern for these institutions, leading to their tense relationships with parents and having to resort to shaming children as a way of 'disciplining' parents. Fee collection tensions are mitigated usually on account of the simultaneous operation of charitable and communitarian considerations.

Religiously motivated trusts and institutions figure dominantly in the 'private' schools space. Also, it is instructive to note that the poorest of the poor may not be getting served by the government institutions!

Contrary to common perception, all government schools do not have apathetic cultures, nor are all low-fee-paying private schools hives of industrious effort. The diversity of institutional forms and qualities can be understood only by unpacking the categories of 'private' and 'government' to reveal the nature of their management/leadership, their reasons for being in the business of running schools, their educational aims, and the core finances of their operations. The school ethos evolves in relation to these considerations within the specific niche that it occupies and creates for itself, in the market ecosystem. Pedagogic cultures are determined at the institutional level even though they are realised through the practice of individual teachers. The stratification of school quality as manifested in its pedagogic form and educational aim is suggestive of the role of schools in the stratification of the formation of consciousness and agency (Bernstein 1977).

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The stratification between rather than within schools also provides conditions for the pedagogic messaging to be more intense, and minimises the opportunity for children to be exposed to different messaging. Surely this will have a cost for the society in which children grow up without having made friends or having been in the company of people who are different from them.

Notes

1 www.schoolreportcards.in.
2 Census2011.co.in, Hyderabad religion 2011, accessed on 14 November 2015.
3 Andhra Pradesh Educational Institutions (Establishment, Recognition, Administration and Control of Schools Under Private Management) Rules, 1993, in http://cdn.cfbt.com/~/media/cfbtcorporate/files/research/2003/r-private-schools-for-the-poor-india-2003.pdf.
4 Schools may be benefitting from indirect government funding. For example, in Delhi many 'private' schools have benefitted from a land grant/lease. Now with the RTE fee reimbursement policy, a school stands to benefit for up to 25 per cent of its fee collection.

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