

**DIFFERENTIAL SCHOOL CULTURE AND EDUCATION:
AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF A GOVERNMENT SCHOOL AND A
PRIVATE SCHOOL IN RANGA REDDY DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH**

*A thesis submitted to the University of Hyderabad
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ANTHROPOLOGY

BY

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DECLARATION

I, hereby, declare that this thesis entitled “Differential School Culture and Education: An Ethnographic Study of a Government School and a Private School in Ranga Reddy District, Andhra Pradesh” submitted by me under the guidance and supervision of Prof. P. Venkata Rao is an original research work.

I also declare that it has not been submitted previously in part or in full to this University or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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CERTIFICATE

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I declare to the best of my knowledge that no part of this thesis has been submitted previously in part or in full to this or any other University or Institution for the award of any degree or diploma.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AP	Andhra Pradesh
AT	Assignment Test
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
BRIC	Brazil, Russia, India, China
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CALP	Computer Aided Learning Programme
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CISCE	Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations
CTSA	Central Tibetan School Administration
D.DEO	Deputy District Education Officer
DCEB	District Common Examination Board
DEO	District Education Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DISE	District Information System for Education
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme
DSC	District Selection Committee
DSE	Director of School Education
EAMCET	Engineering and Medicine Common Entrance Test
EDI	Education Development Index
EFA	Education for All
EM	English Medium
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GoAP	Government of Andhra Pradesh
HM	Head Master
HPT	Hindi Pundit Training
HS	High School
HSC	Higher Secondary Certificate
IIT-JEE	Indian Institute of Technology-Joint Entrance Examination
ITDA	Integrated Tribal Development Agency
KGBV	<i>Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya</i>
KVS	<i>Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan</i>
LKG	Lower Kindergarten
MDM	Mid-Day Meals
MEO	Mandal Education Officer
MLL	Minimum Levels of Learning
MoHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
NCC	National Cadet Corps
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curricular Framework
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NIIT	National Institute of Information Technology

NIOS	National Institute of Open Schooling
NPE	National Policy on Education
NPEGEL	National Programme of Education for Girls at Elementary Level
NSS	National Sample Survey
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning and Research
NVS	<i>Navodaya Vidyalaya Sangathan</i>
OBC	Other Backward Castes
P.Ed	Physical Education
PA	Private Aided
PET	Physical Education Teacher
POA	Programme of Action
PROBE	Public Report on Basic Education
PS	Primary School
PUA	Private Unaided
RJD	Regional Joint Director
RR	Ranga Reddy
RTE	Right to Education
SA	School Assistant
SC	Scheduled Caste
SGT	Secondary Grade Teacher
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SSA	<i>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
ST	Scheduled Tribe
SUCCESS	Strengthening and Universalisation of Quality and Access to Secondary Schools
TC	Transfer Certificate
TM	Telugu Medium
TPT	Telugu Pundit Training
UEE	Universalisation of Elementary Education
UGC	University Grants Commission
UKG	Upper Kindergarten
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Education Fund
UP	Upper Primary
UT	Unit Test
V.V	<i>Vidya</i> Volunteer
VEC	Village Education Committee

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Privatization of school education has gained prominence in the recent years and is often viewed (or romanticised) as a silent revolution taking place in India. The magnitude and outreach of the private sector in the field of school education has been remarkable. It started gaining momentum in the 1990s, though private schools have existed right from independence in a marginal scale. It is viewed by many as an answer to the various shortcomings of government schools. Various literature that dealt with the issue of privatization of education painted a bleak picture of the state funded schools. The PROBE team report (1999), for instance, shows that there is a rising parental demand for education due to decline in the quality of government school system. The reasons cited were manifold - lack of accountability of teachers, poor physical facilities, shortage of teachers, high teacher-pupil ratio, and so on. Similarly, in their study in Uttar Pradesh, Dreze and Gazdar (1996) found that expansion of private schooling facilities is partly a response to the decay of the public schooling system. They found that in government schools, the physical conditions of schools were very poor, teacher absenteeism and shirking was endemic, and the student attendance was erratic. These deficiencies in government schools prompted parents to turn towards more reliable, efficient and quality services in education. This type of privatisation has been referred as '*de facto* privatisation' (Tooley and Dixon, 2006:444) where responsibilities for education have been transferred *de facto* to the private sector through the rapid growth of private schools, rather than *de jure*, i.e., through reform or legislation.

However, private schools are also criticised by scholars on various grounds. The often cited criticism levelled against private schools is that they cater to the needs of the elites, upper castes and boys, and are confined to urban areas. Tilak (2002), for instance, argued that unaided private schools do provide some financial relief, but at huge

economic and social cost and the adverse effects include accentuating dualism, elitism, and class inequalities. In similar vein, Dreze and Gazdar (1996) also pointed out that school attendance in private schools is significantly male dominated as parents are reluctant to pay school fees for female children. It involves commuting to a different village, which female children are often not allowed to do. Some scholars reported that attending private schools is considered as symbol of prestige by the parents. De and Samson (2009), for instance, reported that there are problems of access and quality in private schools. These schools are not accessible across socio-economic groups, and thus, private school education is seen as a status symbol. Kumar (2009) argues that the coexistence of these two parallel schools ensures that children of the better-off are separated early from the children of the poor.

Several pro-privatization studies (for instance, Tooley and Dixon, 2006; Kingdon, 1996; 2007) however strongly refuted this notion of class, caste, gender, and region bias of private schools. These scholars have found that private schools for the poor are growing even in slums, peri-urban, rural and low-income areas. Tooley and Dixon (2003) for example, reported that the official figures from Hyderabad, the capital of the state of Andhra Pradesh, show that more than 61% of all students are in private unaided schools and large numbers serve the poor in the slums, serving children whose parents are daily-paid labourers or market traders. Moreover, some studies (Coleman *et al*, 1982; Govinda and Varghese, 1992) found that the learner's achievement was significantly higher among private school students when compared to their public school counterparts¹. Thus, the present study addresses this debate between government and private schools from an anthropological perspective.

¹ There is a middle course too referred as Public Private Partnership (PPP) that also co-exists alongside the government and private schools.

I

ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION: EMERGENCE OF THE SUB-FIELD

Anthropologists' preoccupation with culture is extended to education too, where the latter is viewed as the process of learning and transmitting culture. The vast body of literature on schools and education from various disciplinary backgrounds were mostly devoted to criticism of textbooks and other curriculum materials. Wax and Wax argued that researchers working on schools and education have an interlocking chain of assumptions:

Schools are primarily and exclusively agencies of formal education (rather than being social institutions); that pupils are isolated individuals (rather than social beings who participate in the life of peer societies, ethnic groups, and the like); that formal education is synonymous with education; and that the principal task of the teacher is to educate (1971: 3).

The major problem was to make the schools teach their students more, better, and faster rather than asking what kind of social processes are actually taking place in relation to the schools (ibid, 1971). Thus, the educationist treats schooling as a technocist enterprise that is confined to the outcomes of teaching and learning through formal curriculum in schools and techniques for assessing, imparting, and enhancing skills (Smith, 1992).

Anthropologists and sociologists, on the other hand, focus on the relational reality of schooling characterized by a complex, ordered set of relationships. They also reiterate the importance of various non-school factors in shaping an individual's life. Kneller (1965), for instance, suggested that education in terms of schooling is only one of a number of enculturating agencies like the family, church, peer group and mass media. If the educator wants to cultivate certain qualities in the child like clear thinking and independent judgement, he may not be able to do so as other agencies might be moulding the child differently. Anthropologists are of the view that in order to create effective educational exchanges in schools, educators must take into account the distinct cultural styles and understandings that may be

operating across school, family, and other community contexts (Foley *et al*, 2001).

Thus, the unique feature that sets apart the field of anthropology of education from various other disciplines studying education is its diversity. Anthropology takes a broad view of education that encompasses almost everything that a person learns in his lifetime, through informal as well as formal means (Harrington, 1982). Durkheim, known as the founding father of sociology of education, categorises education as a social fact which is external to the individual and constraining one's behaviour. Taking a broad and holistic view of education and not just confining it to schooling, Durkheim states:

Education is the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to arouse and to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and the special milieu for which he is specifically destined (1956: 71).

In the beginning, anthropologists (Mead, Firth, for instance) primarily worked in simpler societies where institutions of formal schooling were absent and socialization was primarily in the hands of the kin groups. Gradually, with increasing technological complexity and with the impact of civilization, western style schools started appearing in simple societies too. School as a key institution took over certain socialization tasks that were the responsibilities of the kin group (Suarez-Orozco, 1991).

In the course of emergence of the subfield, the 1950s acted as a watershed with the formal acceptance of anthropology of education as a legitimate subfield. This important development took place with a major conference in 1954 on Education and Anthropology by George Spindler jointly sponsored by American Anthropological Association and the Department of Anthropology and School of Education at Stanford University. This resulted in the publication of George Spindler's edited book, *Education and Anthropology* in 1955. The

conference addressed the relationship between the two fields, anthropology and education. For the Spindlers', education is the process of transmitting culture which includes skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values, as well as discrete elements of behaviour (Spindler, 2000)². The notion of cultural therapy has also been central to their work, which is a process of bringing one's own culture (in their research, teachers) to a level of awareness that permits one to perceive it as a potential bias in social interaction and in acquisition or transmission of skills and knowledge (Spindler, 1999). George and Louise Spindler carved their own niche in the field of educational anthropology, apart from their contributions in psychological anthropology and American Indian studies.

In school ethnographies too, there was a strong influence of the culture and personality school. In fact, the anthropology of education grew in the shadow of anthropological linguistics and psychological anthropology (Suarez-Orozco, 1991). There are two conspicuous reasons for this. Firstly, many who excelled in research in schools came from the subfield of psychological anthropology (Spindler, Henry, Gearing), and secondly, the definition of indigenous education as cultural transmission has been carried forward to the definition of formal education where schooling is viewed as an aspect of cultural transmission (Ogbu, 1981).

In the 1960s, three events further developed the sub-field of the anthropology of education (Ogbu, 1994): First, anthropologists were called during the social and political crisis in the United States to contribute to the solution of the nations' educational problems. Second, anthropologists attacked the theory of cultural deprivation proposed by educational psychologists on conceptual, methodological, and substantive grounds. Third, anthropologists attempted to incorporate anthropology into the public school curriculum. Thus, the 1950s and 1960s witnessed intense educational activity and growth in

² In Spindler's words, "Every teacher, whether mother's brother or Miss Humboldt of Peavey Falls, re-enacts and defends the cultural drama as experienced" (2000: 63).

the discipline. There was diversity in geographical specialization which was accompanied by diversity in theoretical interests. The field was no longer dominated by the models of structural-functionalism and culture-personality paradigms and a wide variety of methodological tools were used to collect data and test theory in the field (Eddy, 1985).

In the 1970s, educational anthropology finally emerged as an academic subfield and anthropologists started taking anthropology of education seriously as a field of systematic inquiry. Prior to the 1970s, educational anthropology did not exist as an academic subfield³. Ogbu (1994) cited several explanations for this lack of seriousness. Firstly, anthropologists studied societies that lacked institutionalized schooling. Secondly, studying schooling as an agent of social change was incongruent with their predominantly structural-functional orientation. Moreover, Levinson (1999) reasoned that anthropologists tend to think that western-style schooling has the same effect everywhere, and hence, take the effects of schooling for granted. In 1970, anthropological interest in education resulted in the formation of the Council on Anthropology and Education. The Conference on Anthropology of Education at Stanford in 1954 and the formal organization of the Council on Anthropology and Education in 1970 were the major turning points in the history of educational anthropology (Eddy, 1985). Anthropological pursuits in the field of education have been as diverse as the field itself. Therefore, it is vital to understand the various theoretical and conceptual contributions made by educational anthropologists on various aspects of education. As the interests of anthropologists and sociologists are overlapping, the approaches used by sociologists in the field of education are worth mentioning and are discussed in the following section.

³ Nevertheless, anthropological studies on educational matters in American Anthropology were evident from its beginning in the late nineteenth century. The first American Doctorate in anthropology was awarded at Clark University in 1892 and it was titled "Is Simplified Spelling Feasible?" (Comitas and Dolgin, 1978).

II

ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO EDUCATION IN THE WEST

The extensive literature on anthropology and sociology of education reveals that there is a striking difference between British and American school ethnographies. Delamont and Atkinson report,

Whereas the American research on schools and classrooms has been conducted primarily by applied anthropologists, that in Britain has been done overwhelmingly by researchers who see themselves as sociologists (1980: 140).

Thus, they suggest that there is a relatively large amount of educational anthropology work in America and sociological work has not gained much prominence. On the other hand, the ethnographic works in Britain have sociological orientation and there is a complete absence of educational anthropology. The British sociology of education, according to them, is characterized by a higher level of theoretical and methodological awareness. The recurrent preoccupation has been the organisation and negotiation of everyday life in schools and classrooms (Delamont and Atkinson, 1980: 148). The schools themselves were the topic of systematic observation and enquiry and the structural functional mode of analysis dominated in most of the British ethnographies. The following sections elaborate the various approaches used to study education in the sub-field of anthropology and sociology of education.

Studies of cultural transmission

Anthropologists' initial engagement with education started with understanding of the process of cultural transmission and is clearly reflected in the earlier studies conducted in simple societies. In fact, cultural transmission studies remained the main focus in the sub-field of anthropology of education for a long time (Gearing and Tindall, 1973). In this cultural transmission era, the focus was on those who produced the uniformity, the *transmitters* of culture, especially the adults (Wolcott, 1994). Even though there was a shift towards cultural acquisition in the 1980s, but the terms *cultural transmission* and

cultural acquisition were considered similar to each other⁴.

Studies on socialization and enculturation, as informal means of cultural transmission, played a significant role in unravelling the learning process. Although the concepts, socialization and enculturation, are interlinked and often used interchangeably, there are subtle differences between the two which are well explained by Herskovits (cited in Hansen, 1979) and Mead (1963). Cohen (1971), however, makes an important observation by distinguishing socialization from education. For him, socialization, which is the predominant mode of shaping of people's minds, is:

the activities that are devoted to the inculcation and elicitation of basic motivational and cognitive patterns through ongoing and spontaneous interaction with parents, siblings, kinsmen, and other members of the community (1971:22).

On the other hand, education is "the inculcation of standardized and stereotyped knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes by means of standardized and stereotyped procedures" (ibid: 22). Studies of cultural transmission have their roots in the culture and personality school that gained popularity in the early twentieth century. The school was later relabelled as psychological anthropology which offers perspectives on three areas critical to the anthropology of education: cross-cultural variation in cultural process, socialization and social change (Comitas and Dolgin, 1978). In fact, this school provided the backdrop for the most famous studies on socialization. These studies were not just confined to the events in which learning occurs, but also dealt with the interactive processes that promote and facilitate learning of different kinds and significance (Poole, 1994).

Of the many famous studies on socialization, Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa* carved its own niche. Also in the 1930s, British anthropologists, Meyer Fortes and Raymond Firth analysed the educational forms among the Tallensi of Africa and the Tikiopia in the

⁴ Burnett, for instance, states, "By some peculiar semantics in the anthropologist's use of the term, cultural transmission always also in part entails culture acquisition" (1974: 25).

South Pacific respectively. Whiting's *Children of Six Cultures* (cited in Poole, 1994) is another classic example that followed the culture and personality approach. Amidst the studies of cultural transmission, numerous works (Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986, for instance) focussed on the role language plays in the process of socialization. In language socialization, the attempt was to understand how linguistic resources organize interactions between small children and their peers, older siblings, and adults in their day to day environments.

However, studies of socialization were criticized for viewing societies as static or in the state of equilibrium. It was emphasized that socialization was not a simple transmittal from one generation to another, but a dynamic process through which differentiation and change can occur. Poole (1994), in addition, argues that this approach is insufficient on its own and needs to be complemented with the nuances of children's own understanding of cultural knowledge.

Studies on home- school incongruities

As formal schooling became a dominant mode of learning, anthropologists too started studying schools and their role in learning process. The importance of home and child rearing practices was very evident in the early studies of formal education. Most of the studies pointed out the incongruence in the values and attitudes in the school and home atmosphere which, in turn, affected the child's performance in the school. The cause of these incongruities, as reflected in many studies was rooted in differential socialization experiences of working class and middle class children. Mead, for example, states:

Every intellectual capacity that is later tested by achievement, test, or observation is intimately linked with early childhood experience, with the level of education of parent or nurse, with the structure and furnishing of the home, with the content with which the members of the family and the neighbourhood are preoccupied, and with the availability of the apparatus and technology on which abstract thought is dependent (1971: 74).

Further emphasizing on the importance of early childhood experience, she states that the child who is reared in infancy and early childhood by individuals of a lower level of education faces a different

educational situation than the child who is reared from infancy by parents who represent the same level of education to which the child is expected to aspire (ibid: 74). On similar lines, Musgrove (1976), a sociologist, suggests that the differences in attainment between children of various social groups are due to the differences in childcare practices and family dynamics. Emphasizing the importance of experiences at home, Henry (1971) asserts that the outcome of the child's experience with the formal education system as the sum of several types of experiences at home, school, and peer group.

The above mentioned studies pointed out that the experiences at home are an important determinant for the performance of the child in the school. It was argued that the home environment of middle class children facilitates in school success when compared to the home environment of working class children.

Explaining academic performances of ethnic minorities

In American anthropology, most of the works addressed one common research concern: explanation of school performance of ethnic minorities (works of Ogbu, Erickson, Treuba, Phillips are a few to cite). A considerable literature exist explaining low school achievement of minorities in the United States and other developed countries. In the beginning, the explanation for this was rooted in *genetic deficit* model which explained that the poor children of colour or minority cultural and language background were inherently inferior to the children of the middle class. This model was replaced by *cultural deficit* or *cultural deprivation* explanation (Oscar Lewis 'Culture of Poverty', for example) in the 1960s which states that victims living in impoverished circumstances under the care of poorly educated kin are deprived of culture (Hansen, 1979). It was argued that the minority children were culturally deprived or socially disadvantaged and that they did not experience a cognitively stimulating environment which ultimately cripples the child's capacity for learning. Many anthropologists attacked this explanation as being ethnocentric and culturally biased and put forth the *cultural difference* explanation.

They explained the cause of differential school success as the result of deprivation of minority students arising from cultural differences.

In the 1970s, *socio-linguistic* approach emerged which identified factors inside the school that played an important role in low school achievement of minority children. The studies on the role of language and communication were not restricted to traditional cultures, but were also viewed in the context of western schooling. This approach was propagated by Dell Hymes and attained popularity for explaining school failure of ethnic minorities. The basic tenet of the socio-linguistic approach is that language serves several functions in social life, and spoken and written messages have social meanings to construct and interpret social actions (Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986). The cause of high rates of academic failure among some ethnic minorities was attributed to the difference between patterns of language use favoured in school settings and those learned at home. Thus, educational anthropologists argued that language is the 'cultural difference' that makes a difference (Foley, 1991). Each child in a classroom has a linguistic competence that is partially unique to it and largely shared in terms of social origins and experience, and not identical with that of a dictionary (Hymes, 1971).

The emphasis of this approach was to understand how culturally different 'speech styles' (kinesics, proxemics) and 'communicative competencies' (the ability to use language in socially appropriate manners) created 'cultural conflicts' or 'cultural incongruities' which led teachers to treat students differently (Foley, 1991). The unit of these studies was teacher-pupil interactions during a given classroom activity. Their argument is that students and teachers' expectations are derived from their experience outside the school called *speech communities* or *speech networks*. These cultural differences in ways of speaking and listening between the child's speech network and the teachers' speech network leads to systematic and recurrent miscommunication in the classroom (Hymes cited in Erickson, 1987). The focus was primarily on continuities and discontinuities between

the home and classroom in interactional and communication styles. The ultimate goal was to show how the educational outcome of the students is determined by the teaching process which, in turn, is viewed as a communicative process (Ogbu, 1981).

Bernstein (1975), a sociolinguist, argues that the genes of social class are carried less through a genetic code, and more through a communication code that social class itself promotes. This communication code, according to him, is of two types: An 'elaborated code', wherein the speaker selects from a range of alternatives and the probability of predicting the organizing elements is reduced. Second is the 'restricted code' in which the number of alternatives is often limited and the probability of predicting the elements is greatly increased (ibid: 125). For him, working class children and their families are limited to the restricted code. Bernstein uses these linguistic codes to explain the educability of children belonging to a particular social class.

The studies of Mehan (1980) Erickson (1987) and Susan Phillips (cited in Pelissier, 1991) are some other landmark studies using socio-linguistic approach. This perspective shifted the whole focus of classroom studies to student-teacher communication, challenged teachers to have knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds and showed how linguistic and cultural differences contribute to school failure (Foley, 1991).

However, in the mid 1970s this approach was criticised by John Ogbu (1981; 1987; 1998) for excluding larger historical and community contexts and for lacking holism and comparative analysis. Moreover, he argued that socio-linguists did not study other minority groups who do well in schools despite possessing different cognitive styles, communication styles, and interaction styles. Erickson (1987) pointed out that socio-linguistic approach takes a cultural determinist position in which cultural differences are seen as necessarily leading to trouble and conflict, and cultural similarities are seen necessarily leading to rapport and absence of conflict.

Ogbu (1981) argued that most of the earlier cultural transmission studies of formal education entirely ignored other societal institutions and focussed on school, classroom, home, and playground events. Thus, he called these studies as microethnographies, the unit of which was teacher-pupil interaction or communicative interchange during a given classroom activity. For him, the microethnographic approach (like socio-linguistics), that was preoccupied with home, school, and classroom events was inadequate as it was not comparative and ignores the forces of the wider ecological environment. In comparative research, according to him, the goal is to explain why different minorities adjust and perform differently in schools despite language and cultural differences, and why the problems created by the latter seem to persist among some but not among others (Ogbu, 1987). He also reinvigorated the fact that school ethnography should be holistic, which should show how education is linked with the economy, the political system, local social structure of the school and the belief system of the people (Ogbu, 1981). Against this backdrop, Ogbu advocated for a macroethnography and holistic study, and thus, followed a multilevel approach.

His theory, called as *cultural ecological theory*, considers the broad societal and school factors as well as the way minorities perceive and respond to schooling. His theory brought back the school, society and community forces into account to give a holistic explanation of minority school performances. He states that voluntary minority communities (such as immigrants from China, India, Japan etc.) and parents are optimistic about schooling. They see the cultural differences as barriers to overcome in order to achieve their long range goals of future employment. They trust white-controlled institutions and are willing to accommodate while still retaining their own culture and identity. At the community and family levels, children are encouraged to develop good academic work habits and perseverance.

In the case of involuntary groups (such as American Indians, Puerto Ricans, black Americans etc.) minorities have a negative dual frame of

reference; first is their position in the United States and the second is the status of white Americans. For them, the comparison is a negative one as they see their social and economic status as inferior to those of middle-class white Americans and they do not see opportunities for success in the United States. They distrust white-controlled institutions due to their long history of discrimination, racism, and conflict. They feel that learning white ways will result in losing their minority identity. Thus, Ogbu (1981) argues that as part of their survival strategy, they develop an 'oppositional culture' and oppositional social identity as they perceive their oppression as collective and enduring. Due to job and wage discrimination they know that school success does not lead to a good job. Thus, they convey to their children contradictory messages about education. They blame teachers and schools for poor academic performance of their children. They fear that mastering school curriculum, learning to speak and write Standard English, and other white society requirements will deprive them of their identities, and thus, distrust white institutions. These attitudes and beliefs lead to their poor academic performance (Ogbu and Simons, 1998).

However, this approach was also criticised by many scholars, especially by those who were ethnic minorities. They were not guided by Ogbu's objectivist notions of research and theory building, but they were primarily interested in documenting and producing ethnic school success rather than failure (Foley *et al*, 2001). Enrique Treuba (1988), a Chicano anthropologist and sociolinguist, indicated that many minorities succeed in school without losing their cultural identity. He further states that Ogbu's theory failed to explain why individuals subjected to the same oppression within the same ethnic group respond differently. Treuba also questions the overwhelming generalization of Ogbu who stated that 'caste-like' minorities are composed of individuals who live involuntarily in the United States and remain at the bottom of the education and economic ladder, failing to incorporate into mainstream American society. He emphasized that there is another reality where there is rapid upward

mobility of individuals and families to advance economically and educationally. Treuba advocated a socio-culturally based theory and practical approaches of academic success that recognize the significance of culture in specific instructional settings, prevent stereotyping of minorities, help resolve cultural conflicts in schools, integrate the home and the school cultures, and stimulate the development of communication and other skills. Foley (1991) argued Ogbu has excessively emphasized on racial oppression and its negative historical legacy. Erickson also criticized Ogbu's position on the grounds that: i) it does not explain the success of many "caste-like" minority students under similar settings ii) it takes a position of economic determinism iii) it questions the empirical validity of Ogbu's evidence. He advocated for a culturally responsive pedagogy that can reduce miscommunication by teachers and students, foster trust, and prevent the genesis of conflict (1987: 355).

Thus, the ethnographic research in educational ethnography in the United States and Canada is characterized by a common methodology and recurrent concerns. In the words of Delamont and Atkinson, "Research attention has been concentrated on groups who are a 'problem' in educational terms, because they are seen to be 'failing' (1980: 143, emphasis original). As is evident by the above reviewed literature even in the famous studies of Ogbu and Treuba, the research concern remains the same: explaining academic performances of ethnic minority groups.

Studies on education and class

In Britain, most of the studies focussed on how education contributes to social and cultural reproduction. Earlier studies in the anthropology and sociology of education discussed the role of schools in meritocracy, where upward mobility was assumed to be an outcome of talent and effort. Researchers described the institution and analyzed the educational outcomes (Levinson and Holland, 1996). This view of considering the role of schools in upward mobility was challenged by many scholars and critical approaches started emerging

in the mid-seventies. It started with Marx for whom education was a tool of ruling class interests. It was found that despite the schools' promises of upward mobility, most children of the subordinate working class ended up in the same class and had adopted the same values and meanings as the parental generation (Foley *et al*, 2001). Thus, there was the rise of 'new sociology of education' that elaborates on the role of schools in *social reproduction* (Levinson and Holland, 1996; Bourdieu, and Passeron, 1977, Bernstein, 1975, Young, 1971). Levinson and Holland, for instance, point out:

In particular, these scholars endeavored to show that schools were not "innocent" sites of cultural transmission, or places for the inculcation of consensual values. Nor could schools be understood as meritocratic springboards for upward mobility, the great leveling mechanism, according to dominant liberal ideology. Rather, critical scholars argued that schools actually served to exacerbate or perpetuate social inequalities. In their view, schooling responded less to popular impulses for advancement and empowerment, and more to the requirements of discipline and conformity demanded by capitalist production and the nation-state (1996:5).

The social reproduction approach threw light on the reproduction of structural inequalities in the schools. In relation to class inequalities in schools, Bernstein states:

The relative backwardness of many working-class children who live in areas of high population density or in rural areas may well be a culturally induced backwardness transmitted by the linguistic process. Such children's low performance on verbal IQ tests, their difficulty with 'abstract' concepts, their failures within the language area, their general inability to profit from the school, all may result from the limitations of a restricted code. For these children the school induces a change of code and with this a change in the way the children relate to their kin and community. At the same time we can offer these children grossly inadequate schools with less than able teachers. No wonder they often fail- for the 'more' tend to receive more and become more, while the socially defined 'less', receive less and become less (1975: 151).

Pierre Bourdieu and his associates made another important contribution by putting forward the theory of *cultural reproduction*. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) argue that the school system contributes to reproducing the structure of the distribution of cultural

capital among classes, apart from contributing to the social reproduction, defined as the reproduction of the relations of force between the classes. Only the cultural capital of the elites, that is, their tastes for certain cultural products (art, literature, film, music), their manner of deportment, speech, style of dress, consumption patterns, and the like were recognized as signs of intelligence by the schools. Bourdieu states:

The culture of the elite is so near to that of the school that children from the lower middle class (and *a fortiori* from the agricultural and industrial working class) can only acquire with great effort something which is *given* to the children of cultivated classes - style, taste, wit - in short, those attitudes and aptitudes which seem natural in members of the cultivated classes and naturally expected of them precisely because (in the ethnological sense) they are the *culture* of that class. Children from the lower middle classes, as they receive nothing from their family of any use to them in their academic activities except a sort of undefined enthusiasm to acquire culture, are obliged to expect and receive everything from school, even if it means accepting the school's criticism of them as 'poddlers' (Bourdieu, 1974: 39, emphasis original).

Taking a neo-marxist orientation, he views school as a socially conservative force rather than a liberating force and one of the most effective means of perpetuating the existing social pattern of inequalities instead of increasing social mobility. He shows that the academic failure of poor students has more to do with institutional bias or a mismatch between the culture of the school and the class culture of the students than the inherent cultural and linguistic deficiencies (Foley *et al*, 2001). In similar vein, Firth and Corrigan (cited in King, 1983) propose that uniforms, assemblies and games, all have an 'ideological' function in the 'reproduction' of the relations of production. For them, organization of school is part of 'hidden curriculum', the prime function of which is to serve capitalism.

Levinson and Holland (1996) view schools as sites of cultural production which provides a direction for understanding how human agency operates under powerful structural constraints and how collective struggles of cultural identity groups against race, class, and

gender dominance are conditioned in schools. A very influential work in this regard was that of Paul Willis (cited in Foley *et al*, 2001), who studied the British working class youth. He observed how middle-class schools and teachers systematically devalue the linguistic and cultural practices of working-class youth. The working-class youth rebel against the bourgeois norms of the school which ultimately results in their school failure, and thus, take up unskilled manual occupations. Another important work in critical ethnography of education was Bourgois' (1996) study of Puerto Ricans in the inner city of New York. Throwing light on the racial segregation of Puerto Ricans, he argues how aborted school experiences play a central role in shaping their future careers in the underground economy as drug peddlers, muggers, armed robbers, and single mothers.

Bourgois (1996) states that most school ethnographies in the 1970s and 1980s owed much of their critical perspective to some version of neo-marxism or to Bourdieu's theory of social reproduction and his concepts of 'cultural capital', 'habitus' and 'symbolic violence'. Sharma (2005) argues that the linguistic model of Bernstein, the observations of Mead with regard to cultural resources available to children in a family and such similar studies can be put under the broad category of 'cultural capital' and the availability or non-availability of such capital would determine the educability of the children. Many critics have pointed out that the reproduction literature was too deterministic, mainly concentrated on class inequality, and thus, had little to say about how race and gender articulate with class⁵.

III STUDIES ON EDUCATION IN INDIA

The diversity of the field of anthropology and sociology of education as witnessed in the west has not gained much prominence in India. From the very beginning, education was primarily equated with schooling. Thus, the vast body of research on education in India dealt with

⁵ An overview of studies on feminism and educational ethnography is given in Foley *et al* (2001), Goetz (1978), and Goetz and Grant (1988).

enrolment, retention and achievement levels of children. A number of reasons were cited for poor educational attainment that include economic deprivation, insufficient investment in education, gender bias, lack of infrastructure, lack of parental motivation and so on. An attempt has been made to present an overview of various issues in education and some of the significant empirical studies undertaken in India.

Since independence, the focus has always been on achieving Universalization of Elementary Education (henceforth, UEE) which still remains as a dream to be fulfilled. Many policies were implemented and many strategies were planned by the government to achieve UEE within the stipulated period. However, in every five year plan the target year of UEE was extended. Most of the studies concentrated on the reasons behind this slow achievement of UEE.

One study that highlighted the gaps between promise and performance as far as universalization of education is concerned was that of Sudarshanam (1991) who studied four schools located in three villages in Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh. He focused on four major dimensions: environment of education, administrative set-up, problems and perceptions of teachers, students, parents, and village elites. He found that unhelpful environmental set-up, unsuitable administrative system, inadequate infrastructure, unhappy teacher community, indifferent village elites are mainly responsible for the underdevelopment of rural education in India. Low enrolment and retention levels of children in schools were one among the many reasons cited for not being able to achieve UEE. Dreze (2003) observed that there are many causes for educational deprivation of children. According to him, there has to be money for school expenses, the child has to be freed from work, the parents have to be convinced that what the child learns is worthwhile and the child should have interest in sustained learning. He reasons that inadequate parental motivation, economic deprivation, and school quality are the major factors contributing to illiteracy in the country. He further points out

that the educational disparities which contribute in the persistence of massive inequalities are largely derived from fundamental inequalities like class, caste, and gender. Stressing the economic aspect Khasnabis and Chatterjee (2007), in their study in the eastern slums of Kolkata, also found that retaining students in formal schools is more difficult than enrolling them, particularly when the students belong to a poor economic background.

Apart from enrolment and retention, another major problem was dropping out of children before completing a particular stage of schooling. In order to increase the enrolment of children and to tackle the dropping out problem, almost all major states in India tried to make primary education mandatory and a number of acts have been passed to this effect. However, studies show that over ninety percent of officials dealing with the administration of education were unaware that their state had any law for compulsory education (Jha, 2007). In this regard, a macro study was undertaken by Seetharamu and Ushadevi (1985) on school drop outs covering 80 schools and 62 villages drawn from ten *talukas* (or blocks) of five different regions of Karnataka state. They found that drop out phenomenon is significantly high in the initial stages of schooling and specifically at the first standard stage. They cited many reasons that influence the premature withdrawal of children from school. Among these, the non-school factors include poor socio-economic background of parents, need for children to work at home (fetching water, looking after younger children, cooking, cleaning utensils, washing clothes, etc.), need for children to take up paid agricultural and non-agricultural labour (looking after cattle, pigs, poultry, collecting cow dung/firewood, shopping etc.), prospects of higher marriage expenses associated with education of girls and so forth. Scholars like Choudhury (2006) and Jayachandran (2007) in their studies pointed out that lack of interest on the part of the child is also an important predictor for dropout.

In many other studies, scholars argued that there are many loopholes in the policies which perpetuate the poor educational standards. Nambissan and Batra (1989), for instance, argue that poor enrolment, large number of drop outs, and inadequate learning skills are a product of policies, apart from the reasons like social and economic circumstances of families. Similarly, Dreze and Sen (1995) also point out that there are number of shortcomings in the field of basic education which include inconsistencies of official statistics, the inadequacy and poor use of educational expenditure, the mismanagement and lack of accountability of schooling establishment in rural areas. Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe population have been given many provisions in education like scholarships, free tuition fee at all stages, and so forth. However, several problems arise at implementation level. Faulty disbursement of the amount, unutilised funds, and students receiving the benefits late are only some of the many reasons to cite (Channa, 1996; Roy, 1998). Scholars like Zachariah (1972) are sceptical about the government actions for disadvantaged groups like separate schools and hostels as these actions will only delay the integration of scheduled castes with the rest of the society. He argues that those who are not economically very much better off, feel quite resentful of the privileges that Scheduled Castes receive.

It is believed that the high prevalence of child labour is considered to be a sign of underdevelopment of any country and the major reason for dropping out. On one hand, many activities like housekeeping, carpentry, weaving, working in family farms, working as trainees in workshops were lauded for their socializing and training aspects. On the other hand, these were felt to be largely exploitative. Schooling is considered as an antidote to child labour. Anthropologists argued that low value of children's work is related to gender and age i.e., who performs the work. Nieuwenhuys (1996) suggests that illness, lack of support at home, competition in the classroom that builds a sense of inferiority and high costs of schooling (need to look respectable in dress and appearance) incites poor children to engage in remunerative

work. The author cites the example of Kerala, where children spend much time earning cash for books, clothes, and food. On the contrary, Dreze (2003) is of the view that child labour as an obstacle to universal schooling has been overemphasized as many children work for the reason that schools are unattractive and teaching conditions are very poor.

Another major concern that gained attention of many scholars is the gender disparity in education. Robert McIver, a famous sociologist stated that 'when you educate a man you educate an individual; when you educate a woman you educate a whole family'. Despite such an importance attached to female education, the picture of female literacy is very disappointing in India and needs immediate attention⁶. Endemic female illiteracy in India is due to many reasons like early marriage, household responsibilities, parental apathy, dissonance between social role and perceived function of education, social practice such as secluding purdah, instruction in language other than the mother tongue, and indifference of the teachers towards girls (Channa, 1996). The gendered division of labour, patriarchal norms, practice of dowry and the ideology of hypergamous marriage further intensifies gender disparities (Dreze and Sen, 1995). Kumar and Gupta (2008) are of the view that removal of gender disparity in education demands overcoming the deep mental blocks in the minds of the adults that binds girls to limited traditional skills.

Moreover, many scholars (for example, Jayaweera, 1987; Dreze, 2003; Clemens, 2004; Kapadia, 2002) argued that expenditure on the education of girls is considered to be a poor investment in terms of future returns. Community and parents perceive boys as future income earners, heads of the household, and supporters of parents in their old age whereas girls are seen in the role of child bearers and child rearers, and are socialized accordingly. Female education is less valued due to low economic returns and no tangible benefits to the

⁶ A detailed picture on gender and education in South Asia is given in Jayaweera (1987); in India see Patel (1998).

parents during their old age. Thus, low parental motivation is also a major cause for a dismal picture of female education. However, some like Ramachandran (2006) noted that literary drives, which mechanically transfer reading skills, have little impact on the overall development of women. For her, collectivism, confidence building, organizational building and leadership development are more important than literacy. Clemens (2004) argues that any intervention in the field of women and education is almost inevitably confronted with the power of deep old structures of a society and hierarchy, and thus, one should be prepared not only for open as well as hidden resistances, but also for unexpected and unintended changes of the society, which in themselves call for new solutions.

Many studies have been undertaken on tribal education, and here too the focus was more on formal schooling and less on socialization and enculturation. This shows that the schools have penetrated almost everywhere in India and every attempt is being made to increase the educational attainment of tribal children. Tribal studies mostly reflected the constraints faced by the tribal children towards attainment of formal education and the reasons included both school and non-school factors. Stressing on the economic dimension in educational attainment, Rao (1986) in his study among the tribals of Visakhapatnam District of Andhra Pradesh found that tribal children drop out from schools as they are required in the family for economic pursuits. Other major reasons that were responsible for dropping out were failures in examinations, stagnation, failure to cope with the school atmosphere, irregular teachers, and so on. Similarly, based on his study among Bhils of Madhya Pradesh, Naik (1969) also observed that economic condition of the family is the major determinant for participation of Bhil children in school. He found that those families who have more earning members and where there is a regular source of income are sending their children to schools. However, poor economic conditions, absence of schools in the village, irregular payment of scholarships, absence of regular teachers, and lack of

proper knowledge regarding institutional facilities are some of the major reasons for not sending the children to school.

Apart from ecological and socio-economic constraints, Rathnaiah (1977) pointed out several internal constraints in tribal schools like poor quality of instruction, alien language and content, and loopholes in administration and supervision. On similar lines, Pathania *et al* (2005) portrayed physical facilities in classroom, non-availability of books, stress and fears experienced at school as the major constraints faced by the Bhot tribal community of Himachal Pradesh. Some studies like that of Toppo (1979) reflected on the changes among the tribal community due to the introduction of modern education. Her study among the Oraons of Bihar revealed that modern education has resulted in breaking of joint families and affected the community life and relationship with parents and relatives.

Such impact of formal schooling has also been pointed out by various other scholars who are sceptical about modern schooling. Historically, the education system in India was informal, and children were mostly taught at home by either relatives, or at learning centres. These indigenous learning centres thrived well as the locally perceived educational needs were rooted in community culture (Bapat and Karandikar, 1998). Saraswati (1998) is of the view that traditional education aims at expanding the spheres of existence by social awareness (forming kinship with the entire world), cosmological awareness (expanding of being by self-transformation) and technological awareness (relating creativity to the ritual enforcement of life). On the other hand, modern education teaches a way of life limited by self-centred consumerism, allows man's ego to establish itself as the conqueror of nature, and fragments people through competitive vocations and specialized technical professions (1998:2).

Through formal education, India has inherited: a) employment oriented education; b) Westernization of the content of education; c) public examinations to impose uniform curricula and textbooks; d) a class of persons educated in a foreign language; e) neglect of

indigenous system of education; and f) the withdrawal of religious education through direct educational enterprise (Saraswati *et al*, 1998: 62). Naik (1998) pointed out that in the present day education, the teachers are unfamiliar to the community to which they teach and they are accountable to a governmental or a private body which are different from people's aspirations and customs. Many scholars do not encourage this modern schooling system and prefer the traditional way of learning as they argue that formal education uproots the child from the culture to which he or she belongs, as the values inculcated are those of success, achievement, material progress of the little self in a competitive world. In this process of achievement, they are uprooted and unaligned with the very ground from which they are nurtured (Vatsyayan, 1998). On similar lines, Mathur (1998) argues that in the midst of empiricism, experimentation, and demonstrability that are reining the world, there is a deepening crisis in education marked by eroding wisdom, depleting values, and denuding self-knowledge. Patnaik (1998) views the present educational system as elitist and class-biased. Like other scholars, he too points out that it develops a plastic culture as the moral/ethical instruction has no place in the educational curriculum. Thus, the debate on the efficiency of traditional and modern education still continues.

There have not been enough studies on education in India that laid emphasis on theory or used the concepts or theories generated abroad in Indian context. One landmark study that uses Bourdieu's concepts is that of Jeffrey *et al* (2005) among the Chamars (dalits) of Uttar Pradesh. They try to draw attention to how Chamars link education to forms of embodied competence located in the young male *habitus*. They try to throw light on this by understanding how young people respond and perceive schooling in the face of a hostile employment market. They found that some unemployed men responded to this by establishing themselves as local political figures or *netas* (emulating the BSP model) while others are more ambivalent and speak of themselves as being 'trapped' by education. However, both continue to place value on education as a form of cultural capital, as a source of

cultural distinction that distinguishes them from illiterates, but not as a means for securing job, hence reproducing class inequalities. Another work that is worth mentioning is that of Thapan's (2006) case study of Rishi Valley School in South India run by Krishnamurti Foundation of India. It is an ethnographic study wherein the author gives an account of what life at school is all about. The study relies on symbolic interactionist approach and analyses the participants' perspectives and the meaning they bring to interaction in the daily activities.

Another detailed ethnographic study was undertaken by Sharma (1987) among Savaras in Srikakulam District of Andhra Pradesh. His study was based on home-school incongruities and he found that the culture of the Savara and the culture of the school to which Savara children go were not in harmony with each other. The values of Savaras like slow but steady approach, honesty, mutual help, their strategy of 'learning by doing' and working in a group do not find a place in the school. Thus, they face a conflict of values and problems in adjustments which results in their poor response to school education.

Reflections

From the above reviewed literature, it is evident that the field of education from anthropological and sociological point of view has been extensively researched in the west where anthropologists studied the learning process both inside and outside the classrooms. However, the literature clearly reflects that there has been a marked difference in studies undertaken in British and American anthropology of education. In the beginning, anthropologists were preoccupied with the studies on cultural transmission through the process of socialization. Anthropologists' entry into the field of formal education is only a recent phenomenon. In America and Canada, most of the studies dealt with the issue of the reasons behind differential school performances of ethnic minorities (Chicanos, Indians, Blacks, Puerto Ricans). The explanations regarding the academic performance of

ethnic minorities can be broadly classified into two categories: some dealt with classroom events, interactions, and communicative styles, whereas others focussed on the structure, process, and function of the school system, linked to other socio-cultural institutions. Many related theories emerged, the most prominent ones being - cultural deficit theory, cultural difference, socio-linguistics and cultural ecology. Each theory provided a critique of earlier ones, and in the process, put forth several new concepts like elaborated and restricted code, communicative competencies, caste-like minorities, and so on.

There has been more sociological work in education in Britain and explanations have typically adopted a Marxist orientation. These studies elaborated on how schools were not designed for upward social mobility, but were contributing in reproducing existing structural inequalities, and thus, formed the new sociology of education. Most of these studies revolved around the concepts of social reproduction, cultural reproduction, cultural capital and *habitus*. Levinson and Holland (1996) pointed out that in British studies, for example, issues of class, race and gender dynamics have been dominating in education, whereas in the United States, cultural differences based on race and ethnicity have gained more prominence. Even though the presence of schools is mentioned in most ethnographic works, little attention was paid to the ongoing effects of schools as powerful sites of intentional cultural transmission, thereby, structuring identities and power relations. Thus, Levinson argues:

The sense of schools as a pervasive product of modernity- as powerful sites of intentional cultural transmission within and against which identities are constantly being constructed- appears to have been lost (1999: 596).

The journey of anthropologists from cultural transmission through informal means to studies of formal education has been extensive. Some studies focussed on school factors while some others focussed on wider aspects outside the school. Some studies have taken classroom interactions as the unit of analysis whereas others have taken societal factors as their unit of analysis. Although there have

been many studies in the anthropology of education in the west, the common criticism is that schools have not attained wide recognition among anthropologists. Despite many new approaches and concepts some scholars argue that discourses of education in anthropology have not been able to carve their own niche and schools are understudied by anthropologists. Comitas and Dolgin (1978) and Delamont and Atkinson (1980) give an overall view of anthropology of education saying that it is best described as ethnographic with only limited links to theory. They point out that theoretical development in anthropological work in education has been rudimentary.

Their views are applicable in the present context too as put forth by Levinson (1999). He argues that even as formal schooling became regularized in the later part of 20th century, anthropologists continue to study a range of educational practices outside the school and the study of school was mostly left to sociologists. Hirschfeld (2002) further confirmed this by throwing light on the publications on child related topics. He found that between 1986 and 2001, there were only three articles on children in American Anthropologist journal. He is of the view that children are strikingly adept at acquiring adult culture and contribute in creating their own culture. However, a sustained, theoretically influential program of child focussed scholarship has not emerged due to an impoverished view of cultural learning that overestimates the role of adults in cultural learning and underestimates the contribution children make to their cultural reproduction and are conceived as mere appendages to adult society. Gonzalez (2004) also points out that issues relating to schools and schooling have been largely peripheral to what are taken as the central concerns of anthropology in issues relating to education.

The methods that anthropologists adopt in studying schools were also criticised. Sindell (1969), for instance, is very sceptical about the methods that anthropologists have utilized in obtaining and analysing data. He argues that they rarely interview students in depth about their feelings, attitudes and values, nor do they usually do participant

observation with children outside the classroom. Moreover, they do not specify where, when, and under what conditions research was done. The same was also reiterated by Delamont and Atkinson (1980) who argued that there is lack of field work in schools and classrooms and little ethnographic material on the classrooms themselves. Moreover, in the published documents it is often unclear how long the researcher was in the field, what roles were adopted, and how the data was collected and recorded.

In India, the sub-field did not gain much momentum as in the west. The inequalities in education were explained on the basis of caste, class and gender when compared to the explanations based on race and ethnicity in the west. The emphasis in India was always on reaching the target of UEE, and thus, the studies reflected on the barriers for the same. The empirical studies were either conducted through surveys or through extensive fieldwork, and were considered to have major policy implications. In these studies, several issues and debates like dropping out, absenteeism, enrolment and retention, school infrastructure, gender disparity, and the darker side of modern education have been discussed at length. Amidst these surveys, studies from anthropological standpoint did not receive much impetus. As a consequence, the concepts and theories generated in the west were not used in an Indian context. There have been many studies on tribal education in India, but these studies lacked conceptual models generated abroad while dealing with similar variables (Sharma, 2005). Thus, there had not been any theoretical breakthrough in the field of anthropology of education. This becomes more evident when one goes through the anthropology journals in India. One can find very few articles that focus on education from an anthropological perspective.

IV

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study addresses an ongoing debate between government and private schools in India. Privatization of education has invited

mixed responses from scholars and policy makers. Earlier studies that compared government and private schools pointed out various issues in government schools like decline in school quality, massive parental demand for schooling, lack of teacher accountability, poor infrastructural facilities, and so forth. As a consequence, private schools emerged as an answer to the problems in government schools and with certain promises like superior teaching quality, innovative curriculum, better infrastructural facilities, good performances of students, highly qualified teachers, and so on. Thus, the expansion of private schools has been appreciated by many who see it as a catalyst in achieving the long cherished dream of Education for All (EFA). However, the issue of privatization of education has been criticised by some whose studies revealed that access to private schools is a social privilege, catering to the urban upper classes, and more specifically to the boys. Moreover, increasing privatization has also been criticised for undermining the role of government in providing quality education.

Nevertheless, it is an indisputable fact that private schools have gained prominence in recent years and their presence is conspicuous almost everywhere. At this juncture, several important aspects are worth mentioning. Firstly, there are very few studies that dealt with the issue of privatisation of school education in detail. Studies like that of De *et al* (2002) and Kingdon (1996) give an overall picture of the extent of privatisation that has taken place in India. However, these studies were mostly quantitative and survey based. There is a paucity of research on the private sector in school education and crucial issues about the involvement of the private sector in school education remain under-researched (De *et al*, 2002; Kumar, 2004). Secondly, there have been studies on education from the perspective of class, caste and gender, but studying schools in their own right and the way these schools operate and decisions are made has not received much attention. Though Tooley and Dixon's (2003) study of low cost private schools in Hyderabad gives an account of how these schools function, but the study does not include the voices of teachers and pupils which form the essence of any ethnographic study.

Thirdly, the question regarding what actually happens inside the classrooms has also not been dealt in detail (Kumar, 2009). Fourthly, from the above reviewed literature in India, it is apparent that detailed ethnographies of schools are quite rare. There are few ethnographic studies (Sharma, 1987; Thapan, 2005; Sarangapani, 2003), but their research concerns were different from the present study which is primarily a comparative study of a government and a private school.

The present study attempts to reflect on the above mentioned shortcomings from an anthropological perspective. It views the school in its own right, as a separate institution with its own organization and culture and attempts to provide a detailed picture and precise description of 'what the system is and how it operates' (Wolcott, 1971). An ethnographic study permits observation of what actually happens inside the school and classrooms, what sort of social processes take place in the schools and how people organise and negotiate their everyday life at school and classrooms. It also helps in understanding the attitudes and perceptions of parents, teachers and students towards one another and towards the schools. Thus, the rationale of the present study is twofold. A detailed ethnographic and comparative study reflects on the educational experience of the child and teachers in each school. Moreover, since the debate between government and private schools largely revolves around the issue of quality, the present ethnographic study attempts to understand the same by studying the culture of a government and a private school at the micro level.

With this rationale, the following objectives were framed for the study which together forms the culture of the school:

- To study the organizational structure of the schools;
- To understand the teachers' work culture and their perspectives towards the school;
- To understand the students' world and their perceptions towards their teachers and the school;
- To examine the teaching-learning process in the school.

V

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In the present context, the approach used to study the schools is through their culture. School cultures are complex webs of traditions and rituals built up over time as teachers, students, parents, and administrators work together and deal with crises and accomplishments (Deal and Peterson, 2009). For the present context, the concept of 'school culture', which forms the basis for the present study, is derived from Jules Henry's notion regarding what do we mean by the culture of the school. Henry (1971: 284) asserts that the answer to the general question of what is the culture of the school lies in the answer to the following questions:

- What are the values, perceptions, and attitudes of the people in the school? What are the class position of pupils, teachers, and principal? Their values, their perceptions of one another, their attitudes towards the school? What are the general value orientations of school personnel as well as the values they use in judging one another and their pupils and vice-versa? How the pupils perceive the teachers, and vice versa, how the teachers perceive one another and the principal, and how he perceives them? What are the attitudes of all the members of the school culture toward the school itself?
- What is the internal structure of the school? What is the hierarchy of power in each school? Who are the pace setters, the cultural maximizers, the arbiters of value judgements? What are the roles of the teachers and the principal? How much freedom of choice is there for the teacher? What are the relative power positions of the newcomers and the old hands? What in general are the lines of formal and informal communication and organization? What are the patterns of recruitment into the school? What are the "quit" patterns? What processes determine turnover, advancement, and so on.

- What is the relationship between the parents and school system?
- What goes on in the classroom?

For Henry, the dynamic sum of answers to all the questions above constitute the ethnography of the school and this gives a general answer to the question: what is the culture of the (particular) school? In similar vein, Reid (1978) also talks about culture of schools and includes almost everything that happens in the school.

While this is the primary approach for the present study, two different paradigms are used to study the culture of each school. On one hand, schools are viewed as organisations having their own goals, hierarchy of power relations, decision-making process, and so on which are analysed in the present study. On the other hand, the study also uses interpretative approach at the micro level and views schools “through the eyes of the participants, the way in which they construct, interpret and negotiate the meaning of the social world they inhabit and the results of such activity” (Reid, 1978: 73). Both the approaches are not mutually exclusive, but inter-related and provide a holistic view of the schools.

VI RESEARCH METHODS

Fieldwork and rationale for selecting schools

In Andhra Pradesh, Ranga Reddy district has recorded highest urban growth rate among all other districts (Census, 2001). As privatization is more rapid in urban areas, Ranga Reddy district was selected for the study. In order to shortlist two schools, a preliminary survey was conducted to get an overview of the schooling system in the district. The initial survey helped in understanding the various types of government and private schools existing in the district, their management, functioning, fee structure, and so on. Two schools were then selected keeping in mind the facts that schools should not be very dissimilar in terms of homogeneity of student population and

should be comparable. The following parameters were adopted for short listing the two schools:

- Schools having almost similar socio-economic composition of students (i.e., a private school meant for the elites was not compared with a government school);
- Schools having almost similar year of establishment (i.e., an old school was not compared with a recently established one);
- Schools with necessary infrastructure (i.e., both the schools having basic amenities like drinking water, school building etc);
- Selection of a low to medium cost unaided private school (in order to compare it with a government school);
- Selection of co-educational upper primary schools (due to the fact that upper primary students can articulate better than the primary students);
- Both types of schools catering to the same locality (in order to understand why parents are opting for the private school).

Keeping these rationales in mind, a local body managed school, commonly referred as Zilla Parishad High School (ZPHS) was selected for the study as in Andhra Pradesh the percentage of local body run schools is much higher than the schools run by the State education department or the municipalities⁷. Zilla Parishad high schools are managed and funded by the Zilla Parishad, which is a local body at the district level. These schools are basically high schools and provide education to children from classes' six to ten. Among private schools, an unaided private school was selected for the study that entirely runs on fees. Private-aided schools were not considered for the study for the reason that even though they are run by the private management, they are largely funded by the government and are very similar to the government schools in many aspects like teachers' salaries, students' fees etc. The study area Nayapally (pseudonym) falls under Balanagar Mandal⁸ of Ranga Reddy district⁹. For the

⁷ Statistical details of the schools in the district are given in chapter 2.

⁸ A 'mandal' is the basic unit of the district which covers about 2 lakh population in a given geographical area.

present study, government school is referred as ZPHS while private school has been referred as NMHS. To protect the identities of the schools and to maintain confidentiality, all the names used here are pseudonyms.

Fieldwork for the present study was conducted in the academic year 2008-09 for nine months, i.e., from November 2008 to the end of July 2009. Initially, the fieldwork was started in ZPHS through informal conversations with the teachers and office staff of the school. It was followed by taking the socio-economic profile of the teachers. Gradually, interactions with the students were also initiated. After spending two months entirely in the ZPHS, fieldwork was started in the NMHS. It was essential to take up one school at a time in the beginning in order to get a detailed picture of the daily routine, interactions between students, teachers and parents, school rituals, hierarchies in the school, and so on. Once the rapport was established with the teachers and school authorities, field work was done simultaneously in both the schools. The visits to the schools were, to some extent, dependent on the events taking place in the school. This helped in observing various school events like ceremonies, examinations, results declaration, admissions, parent-teacher meetings and so forth. The summer vacation of the school was utilised for interviewing parents about their perceptions of the teachers, their attitudes towards the school, reasons behind enrolling their child in a private school, and so forth. Throughout the fieldwork, many duties of the teachers were undertaken which, in turn, helped in better understanding of both the schools.

Rapport Building

Gaining entry in the schools was an uphill task, especially in the private school. There were not many objections when the ZPHS was approached, although there were many questions raised regarding the study like what was I exactly doing, how long I will be visiting the school, what kind of questions will be asked, and so on. Nevertheless,

⁹ More details on the area and schools are given in chapter 2.

permission was granted in the government school and teachers as well as the office staff co-operated in the study.

The real difficulty was encountered while approaching private schools for getting permission into the school. The school authorities were apprehensive that the research may disturb their academic activities. Moreover, they were suspicious regarding the long duration of the visit to the school. Thus, the school personnel of a couple of schools refused me to conduct the study. Finally, the school authorities of Nalanda Model High School¹⁰ (NMHS) allowed proceeding with the study, though they ordered not to disturb the tenth grade students. The director of the NMHS also kept a condition that I have to take classes in the school since I am qualified to do teaching. Students, however, were not clear about the rationale behind my visit to the school. They used to enquire whether I was a regular teacher or a training teacher or regarding the purpose of the visit. Most of the teachers were also under the impression that I was undergoing B.Ed training¹¹ in the school. Throughout the fieldwork, many questions were asked by the teachers and students like: Why are you here? Why have you chosen only this school and not other schools? Who has sent you here? Why are you collecting all this information? Why do you want to speak to the parents, and so on.

In both ZPHS and NMHS, I worked as a ‘substitution teacher’, i.e., if a teacher remains absent for the day, his/her classes were allotted to me. This, in turn, facilitated me to interact with the students. Quite often, ZPHS teachers willingly used to give their classes to me. This trend was, however, completely absent in NMHS. Apart from taking substitutions, I also took ‘spoken English’¹² classes in NMHS as per the request of the director. I also used to evaluate the exam papers, make progress cards for the students, take attendance of the

¹⁰ A pseudonym.

¹¹ A one month internship in schools, the successful completion of which results in the attainment of formal degree of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed).

¹² A colloquial term used for improving communication skills in English among the students.

students, take computer classes, and so on. All this, in turn, helped in gaining the confidence of the teachers as well as the students.

Some of the teachers with whom informal and close relationships were established became key informants in course of time. Moreover, greater involvement in the school activities like visiting houses for new admissions in the NMHS and participation in the cooking of mid-day meals in government schools helped in better understanding of the school. Sharing meals with the students during lunch break helped in bonding well with the students. I was invited to school ceremonies like republic day, teacher's day, farewell party etc which gave a chance to observe these ceremonies closely and participate in them. Visiting students' houses after school hours and interacting with them as well as their parents helped in gaining their confidence. Continuous note-taking became like a norm throughout the field work and many times students and teachers were curious about what was being written. While interviewing, teachers were more interested in the notes rather than the questions being posed to them. On the whole, a relationship of mutual understanding and trust was developed with the teachers and students which helped in collecting in-depth data for the study.

Methods for data collection

Intensive fieldwork and sustained observation remain the essence of an ethnographic study. As this is an ethnographic study, the data primarily relied on the method of observation. Prolonged observation in its natural settings helped in acquiring data on various subtle and hidden aspects which the teachers or the management would not have revealed in the interviews. Classroom observations were done meticulously and every teacher in the high school was observed in the classes allotted to them for at least 3 to 4 times. While doing classroom observations, the researcher used to sit in the last bench which facilitated in uninterrupted observation, and at the same time, the entire teaching process was not disturbed.

To get a detailed picture of the socio-economic composition of students in ZPHS and their family background, detailed interviews of

71 students were conducted and this group of students constituted one section of each class from VI to IX. In NMHS too, detailed interviews of 40 students were taken which comprise 10 students from each class of VI to IX who were randomly selected.

Apart from this, structured interviews of the teachers with detailed standardized schedules, in-depth informal interviews with open-ended questions of the students, detailed case studies of students and teachers were also used for data collection. Questionnaires were used to collect data on the socio-economic profile of the teachers and the students. Questionnaires meant for the students were filled by the researcher as the latter had to translate and explain the questions in Telugu. Students were interviewed multiple times depending upon their interest and their ability to articulate their responses and experiences. The data was also collected from what Woods called as 'naturalistic or behavioural talk' which is heard and noted by the observer in the 'ordinary course of events' (cited in Thapan, 2006). The aim of using all these tools and techniques was to give a thick description of the selected government and private school. The details regarding various aspects focused under each method are as follows:

Observation

This was the primary method adopted during the fieldwork which was supplemented with other methods. It furnished data regarding the teaching methods (Teacher-centred, learner-centred, dominative, participatory), medium of instruction, participation of students, teacher-pupil interactions, classroom atmosphere, values inculcated in the class, teacher-student ratio, initiatives encouraged and rewarded or restricted, rewards and reprimands, and so on. This method was also used to collect data on infrastructural facilities, peer group relationships, examinations, teachers and students outside the classrooms, and so on. This method also furnished data regarding the daily school routine, morning assembly, co-curricular activities, and importance given to creativity, freedom, and play.

Structured Interviews

Structured interviews with the help of detailed standardized schedule were conducted with the MEO (Mandal Education Officer) regarding the profile of school education in the mandal. Principal and teachers of the schools were interviewed regarding internal structure of the school (administrative and academic system), vision/goal of the school, roles and responsibilities of principal and teachers, hierarchy of power and authority, teacher recruitment, processes that determine the advancement of the teachers, student admissions, examination system, opinions regarding differences in academic performance, importance given to co-curricular activities, and infrastructural facilities in the schools. The school personnel were also interviewed to collect data regarding their socio-economic profile.

In depth (Informal) Interviews

These interviews were conducted without any standardized schedule as the aim was to understand the viewpoints and attitudes of the informants, though a set of topics were chosen on which the data was to be gathered. The questions asked were mostly open-ended, and thus, resulted in many discussions. Teachers were interviewed regarding their freedom of choice in the school, decision making in the school, teaching load and duties of teachers, their attempts in making their teaching innovative, recognition of their work, their perceptions of the school, principal, students and their differential academic performances. Students were interviewed regarding their family background, daily routine, the difficulties they face while learning in the school, rewards and punishment, their perception of a good teacher and teaching, their career goals/choices, and their likes and dislikes about their school. Interviews with parents were conducted to understand their attitude towards the school, their involvement in school activities and the reasons behind enrolling their children in private or a government school.

Case Studies

Case studies proved to be very useful in collecting personal and intimate information like attitudes, awareness, opinions, intentions,

and past experiences. Case studies of some teachers were taken to understand specific dimensions like termination of teachers, reasons for continuing in the same school for a long time, and so on. Detailed case studies of students who were doing economic activities to support their families were taken into account. Apart from this, case studies of those children who showed gradual decline in their academic performance were also taken to understand the reasons behind it.

Focussed Group Discussion (FGD)

A couple of FGDs were conducted in the school which provided the data regarding the perceptions of teachers on students and on government and private schools. The discussions were also conducted on students to understand their likes and dislikes about their teachers, their school, and so on.

Secondary Sources

Secondary sources comprised of readily available studies and reports which includes Census 2001 reports, NCERT (2006) survey, PROBE team survey, DISE flash statistics (2008-09), books, published articles from various journals and anthologies. These sources proved important to draw certain reflections pertaining to the study.

VII

CHAPTERIZATION

The present study is organised into seven chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter starts with a brief note on the emergence of anthropology of education and discusses the major trends and debates in the sub-field in the west as well as in India. After mentioning the shortcomings in the existing literature, the research problem is discussed which reflects on the ongoing debate between government and private schools. This is followed by the objectives of the study and conceptual framework used for the analysis and interpretation of the data. A

detailed account of the methodology used in the research has been discussed and finally the chapterization is mentioned.

Chapter II: Education system in India

This chapter starts with a diachronic view of the education system and various policies introduced in pre-independence India. It then chronologically gives an account of the various educational policies and acts proposed and enacted right from the independence till date. The statistical overview of education in India is discussed next followed by the educational statistics of Andhra Pradesh and the mandal level statistics with special reference to the extent of privatisation that has taken place in the recent years.

Chapter III: Organisational structure: The physical reality of the schools

The third chapter discusses the internal structure of the school and how both ZPHS and NMHS operate. It also gives a detailed account of the hierarchy of power within the school, decision making, teacher and student recruitment, daily routine, fee structure in NMHS, teacher and student strength and the academic system in both the schools. Furthermore, it discusses the various government schemes that are being implemented in the ZPHS.

Chapter IV: Teachers' work culture and their perspectives: The social reality of the schools

This chapter brings out the teachers' voices, which is mostly lacking in earlier studies. It starts with the demographic and socio-economic background of the teachers which gives an idea of the social as well as educational background of the teachers. It then discusses about teachers attitudes towards the school management, the work culture and working conditions, freedom of choice, problems they face in the school, and their overall perception towards the school.

Chapter V: Negotiating between family, peers and school: Understanding the students' world

This chapter first discusses the socio-economic composition of the students in the studied schools. It then gives an in-depth account of

the changes which students experience during the transition from primary to the high school. Their perspectives on the school, the criteria they adopt for liking or disliking a teacher, their economic activity, their daily routine and the problems they face in the school are subsequently discussed. The chapter also gives an account of the parents' attitude towards the school and the reasons for admitting their child in a private school.

Chapter VI: Understanding the teaching-learning process

This chapter examines what exactly happens inside the classrooms of ZPHS and NMHS. It also reflects on the academic atmosphere, examinations, assessment, classroom practices, routine teaching procedures, disturbances in the academic calendar etc which form an integral part of teaching-learning process. Apart from these, it also discusses the way teachers perceive the students in both the schools.

Chapter VII: Summary and conclusion

This chapter provides a summary of the major findings by examining the kind of culture each school exhibits. It then attempts to understand the influence of school culture on the quality of education. Finally, it elaborates on the kind of education that children receive from their respective schools.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

Education has always received wide recognition around the world as a cardinal factor in the process of development for multifarious reasons. The importance of education was put forth by Nobel Laureate Theodore Schultz (1961) whose viewpoint acted as a watershed and attained immense popularity across many countries. He stated that expenditure on education is considered as an investment producing human capital, which is comparable with physical capital in production. In India, the relevance of education has been reiterated time and again in various five year plans and government policies. The relationship between education and development is not unidirectional as education contributes to development and development of economy further contributes to the development of education. Tilak (1994), for instance, suggests that education is a sub-system of the larger system, sustaining the latter and is, in turn, sustained by it. The functions of education are manifold - it contributes to economic growth, reduces poverty, improves income distribution, improves basic needs, health and nutritional status and has positive relationship with general social, political and economic development and overall quality of life (Tilak, 2002). Kuppuswamy (1982) views education as a social intervention, the aim of which is to make Indian society into an open status system in which people can move up or down on the status scale depending on their level of achievement, and not based on their caste. Given the multifarious functions of education, it is understandable that every country strives hard to attain hundred percent literacy.

In India, the onus has always been on achieving universal elementary education. Since independence, the vision of education was to attain certain specified goals and to reach the target of UEE within a timeframe. The essence of the UEE is that every 14-year old should have the ability to read and write with fluency, numeracy, comprehension, analysis, reasoning and social skills such as

teamwork. Nevertheless, the education scenario in India has witnessed many changes right from the colonial rule. Many policies, a large number of commissions, and numerous advisory bodies were appointed at various stages, but there has not been any significant and impressive breakthrough in the field. The cliché of 'educational revolution' still echoes in our country even after sixty three years of independence. The present chapter gives an overview of the major developments and policies being recommended and implemented in the field of education. Since the study was conducted in the state of Andhra Pradesh, the chapter discusses the educational scenario of the state, district and the area being studied with special reference to the privatisation of school education.

I

EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO IN COLONIAL AND POST-INDEPENDENT INDIA

India's quest for learning has its roots in the Vedic Age, however, with the onset of British period, the educational system in India underwent considerable changes. In the early years of the nineteenth century, two alternatives were available for those officially responsible for the education of the people: making indigenous systems the vehicle of new ideas and ideals or creating an altogether new system which was totally distinct and apart from the indigenous system (Mookerjee, 1944). The latter alternative was adopted, and thus, a country, with its learning through indigenous systems of education and through traditional scriptures came under the influence of colonial rule, and as a consequence, India came under an alien education system.

In British India, the educational inequalities were very stark which helped in sustaining social disparities. The rural poor and socially disadvantaged sections found it almost impossible to enter the educational institutions. The British government wanted to train a set of Indians who could occupy subordinate offices and help in the administration of the country, thereby, reducing the administration costs (ibid, 1944). The new system of education which made an alien

language the vehicle for new ideas and which was largely dissociated from the cultural and educational traditions of the people was only confined to the upper classes. Similarly, Naik (1976) too argued that when modern system of education was created in India, the only objective of the British government was to educate a class and leave it to this educated class to educate the masses at some future date.

One of the earliest British Acts was the East India Company Act of 1813 which passed a resolution that “a sum of not less than one lakh of rupees every year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of science” (Biswas and Agrawal, 1986: 37). The funds were mostly allotted for the promotion of English education and European knowledge in India which continued till 1905. During the same time, Christian missionaries also played a pivotal role in promoting western knowledge on Indian soils. In 1854, Sir Charles Wood, the then Secretary of the State, sent a despatch popularly known as Wood's Despatch to the Court of the Directors of the East India Company stating that the aim of education was the diffusion of the Arts, Science, Philosophy and Literature of Europe. It also stated that English languages should be taught wherever there was a demand for it and both English and the Indian languages were to be regarded as the media for the diffusion of European knowledge. It was the first authoritative declaration of the British Parliament about the educational policy to be followed in India and was considered to be the "Magna Carta of Education in India". Another important development was in the year 1882 when the Government of India appointed a Commission, known as the Hunter Commission to enquire about the results of the principles laid down in the Despatch of 1854. It also suggested measures for further carrying out the policy.

In 1905, the ‘Swadeshi Movement’ started picking up and it was realised that national education must inculcate love and reverence for the motherland and her glorious traditions, and should be imparted through the medium of languages of Indians. It was in 1911, when for

the first time, an effort of making elementary education free and compulsory throughout the country was proposed by Gokhale in front of the government. Although the bill was rejected, government promised to extend grants for the widest possible extension of primary education on a voluntary basis. National education received further impetus during 1920-22 and the thrust was on patriotism. In 1929, an Auxiliary Committee known as the Hartog Committee named after its Chairman Sir Philip Hartog, was appointed to review the position of education in the country. The Committee recommended that a large number of pupils who intend to follow certain auxiliary activities should stop at the middle school stage and to put this into effect there should be more diversified curricula in the schools¹.

The demand for universal, free, and compulsory primary education faced the problem of raising huge sums of money for its implementation. At that time, Mahatma Gandhi's proposal of integrating schooling with useful and productive work proved to be very practical and it acted as a revolution in the education field. This concept of basic education in India was to make school education self-reliant and the school as a productive institution (Kumar, 2009). For him, literary education and other kinds of learning were closely intertwined. In his *nai talim*, Gandhi proposed that both manual and cerebral skills should be in balance and the tools of education were through the use of hands and the utilisation of local resources. Apart from the functional aspect, Gandhi's proposal has a symbolic aspect since he was proposing a subtle plan to allocate a substantive place in the school curriculum to systems of knowledge associated with lower castes (ibid, 2009). It was proposed that seven years course of education beginning at the age of seven would be imparted through the medium of mother tongue and there should be a provision for training in a creative and productive craft. Thus, education to him comprised both formal schooling as well as a wide variety of non-

¹ Government of India. *Compilation of 50 years of Indian Education: 1947-1997*, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Accessed 14 January 2010. www.education.nic.in/cd50years

formal public and private educational activities offered to meet the defined basic learning needs of groups of people of all ages. This proposed idea was discussed in Wardha Conference in 1937 and the idea popularly came to be known as Wardha Scheme of basic education. A resolution was then passed that endorsed the principal put forth by Mahatma Gandhi.

Finally, before independence, a detailed report was prepared in 1944 on 'Post-War Educational Development in India', commonly known as Sargent Report. In the proposed plan, the principle of universal, compulsory, and free education for all boys and girls between the ages of six and fourteen was put forward, the target of achieving was set for not more than forty years (1944-84). Indian national leaders like Gokhale, Mahatma Gandhi, C. Rajagopalachari and others urged changes in the traditional model to make universal elementary education feasible. Their aim was to create a single education system for the country as a whole which will meet the needs of classes and the masses alike.

After independence, the first major task before the government was to provide universal, free and compulsory basic education for all. The Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in its report envisaged the provision of universal compulsory basic education within a period of sixteen years by two five-year and one six-year plan. It was intended that the first five year plan would provide such education for a major portion of children aged between 6 and 11, and in the second five year plan this would be extended to the remaining children of the same age group so that after ten years all the children of that age group were under compulsory education. It was proposed that in the next step, the six year plan would extend the scope of compulsory education to the children up to 14 years so that at the end of sixteen years the goal of universal, compulsory education would be completely realized. Further, article 45 of the Constitution of India laid down the importance of elementary education stating that "the state shall endeavour to promote within a period of ten years from the

commencement of Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children till they complete the age of 14 years.”

A major development after independence was the appointment of an education commission (1964-66) under the chairmanship of D.S. Kothari to have a comprehensive review of the entire educational system. Out of the many recommendations proposed by the committee, the major ones include the implementation of national pattern (10+2+3) for schools and colleges, adoption of a neighbourhood school concept at the elementary stage, non-formal education and the common school system (10+2). Following this, a resolution was issued in the form of National Policy of Education (NPE) in 1968 with some of the following principles:

- Free and compulsory education for children up to fourteen years;
- 10+2+3 pattern of education which implies ten years of schooling devoted to general education, with diversification into academic and vocational streams at the +2 level for two years followed by higher education stage having a course of three years;
- High priority for teacher education, particularly in-service education;
- Three language formula at the secondary stage;
- Correction of regional imbalances;
- Promotion of science education and research.

This policy was a significant landmark in the history of education in India. Although the principles formulated in NPE 1968 were quite impressive, most of them were not implemented. As a result, the problem of education penetrated deeper and deeper. Against this backdrop, NPE 1986, which declared education as a unique investment in the present and the future, was adopted. It gave highest priority to achieving free and compulsory elementary education for children by the end of the 20th century. It proposed a 10+2+3 national

system of education based on national curricular framework and had a common core along with other components. It emphasized the removal of disparities and equalization of SCs', STs', and women. It also gave greater importance to adult education and in the eradication of illiteracy. It also stressed reform in the examination system stating that it should be a more reliable measure of assessing student development.

However, it was soon realised that UEE cannot solely be achieved only through a formal education system. It was thought that a Non-Formal Education (NFE) scheme, introduced in 1988 could serve as a viable and alternative delivery system of education for non-starters and drop-outs in educationally backward states like Andhra Pradesh. The scheme was supported by the Central government with wide-spread participation by the State governments as well as voluntary agencies. The ultimate purpose of running NFE centres was to enrol, retain, guide, and support illiterate children so that they could be brought back in the main stream of formal education. Under this strategy, a condensed curriculum of about two years duration was introduced with part time instructions for 2 - 2.5 hours (Agrawal and Aggarwal, 1997).

Based on a comprehensive review of the educational situation, NPE also recognised the poor infrastructure of primary schools and unattractive school environment which acted as a stumbling block for enrolment and retention of children. Thus, 'Operation Blackboard' was introduced in 1987-88 by the Centre for substantial improvement in the quality of primary schools. Under this scheme, minimum standards of physical facilities were proposed that included at least two rooms with separate toilet facilities for boys and girls, at least two teachers, and essential teaching and learning materials (Agrawal and Aggarwal, 1997). Subsequently, the scheme was expanded to provide a third room/ teacher where enrolment exceeded 100 and was extended to upper primary as well from 1993-94 (Jha, 2007).

The 1990s emerged as a watershed in the field of education with the adoption of many new initiatives and strategies and making education a global concern. The decade also attracted many foreign aid agencies to India like World Bank, UNICEF, European Community, UNDP, SIDA, and so forth. Moreover, phrases like 'decentralised management', 'people's participation', 'effective mobilisation' started attaining popularity in the educational domain. The decade began with CAGE's recommendations on a few modifications in the policy, and thus, NPE PoA (Programme of Action), which outlines relevant strategies to be acted upon for UEE, came into force in 1992. The revised policy reiterated the importance of UEE and stated that free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality would be provided to all children up to 14 years of age before the twenty-first century. The PoA perceived the problem of universalization of elementary education as, in essence, the problem of the girl child, and thus, stressed the need to increase the participation of girls at all stages of education. It envisaged on national system of education with further break up of ten years of schooling into 5 years of primary education and 3 years of upper primary, followed by 2 years of high school.

The issue of curriculum came into the limelight with the 'Learning without Burden' report, popularly known as Yashpal Committee Report in 1992-93. The ministry of HRD set up a National Advisory Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Yashpal to advise the ways and means to reduce the load on school students at all levels. The report highlighted many observations, some of them being starting early, the weight of school bags, a child's daily hectic routine, examination system, joyless learning in schools and making learning an unpleasant and bitter experience. The committee recommended the involvement of teachers in curriculum and textbook framing, reducing the teacher pupil ratio to 1:30, emphasis on B.Ed (Bachelor of Education) programme, and so on.

In the 1990s, though many primary schools were established within a short period, this large-scale expansion resulted in dilution in terms

of institutional infrastructure, teaching-learning processes as well as the quality of students passing out of these institutions. Thus, it became imperative to lay down minimum levels of learning that all children completing different stages of education should achieve. Against this backdrop, Minimum Levels of Learning (MLL) programme for primary education was initiated in 1993 by the State government to combine equity and equality. The main features of the programme were to lighten the load of curriculum with specified terms of competencies expected to be mastered by every child by the end of a particular class (Agrawal and Aggarwal, 1997).

Another initiative to achieve UEE was the Education for All Summit (EFA) of nine high populated countries in 1993 held at New Delhi where a background paper for discussion was prepared by UNICEF. The target adopted for achieving UEE was the year 2000 through popular participation, mobilization, and decentralization. It reiterated the importance of meeting the basic learning needs of all the people by making primary education universal and expanding learning opportunities for children, youth and adults. It also emphasized eliminating disparities of access to basic education to improve the quality and relevance of basic education.

One more important development was the introduction of free mid-day meals programme which was put into effect from 1995 with a thought that educational development of primary children cannot take place without adequate attention to their health and nutritional status. It was proposed that malnutrition affects not only the health of children, but also their attendance and performance in the school. The ultimate vision was that this would induce poorer children to come to school and therefore, would result in increasing enrolment and retention of children at schools. This ongoing scheme provides lunch to about 120 million children every day and is considered as the largest meal scheme in the world (Kingdon, 2007).

Earlier, most of the programmes for UEE were planned at national or state level. However, in 1995, a programme titled District Primary

Education Programme (DPEP) was started. This programme sought to operationalise the strategy for UEE at district level through decentralized planning and disaggregated target setting in a mission mode. Almost eighty five percent of funding came from external agencies through the central budget and the remaining fifteen percent was given by the respective state governments. In this programme, Village Education Committees (VECs) were a key feature for localized participative management and played a key role in local school management. VECs comprised of representatives of local village panchayats, women activists, educators and guardians. The committee ensured people's participation for enhancing enrolment, retention and regular attendance of primary school children.

While implementing DPEP, another scheme called para teacher scheme that covers a wide range of recruitment for teaching in schools and alternative learning centres was introduced. This broadly refers to the large number of teachers (variously known as *shiksha karmi*, *vidya sahayak*, *guruji*, *vidya* volunteers²) recruited by the community at less than the regular teacher pay scale, for the formal as well as the alternative schools, to meet the demand for basic education within the limited financial resource available, in the shortest possible time.

With the onset of 21st century, India witnessed important developments in the field of education. In the year 2000, along with 159 countries, a commitment which is referred as Education for All (EFA) was made in which six goals were identified which were supposed to be fulfilled by 2015 and the goal of universal primary education was one among them. A new programme titled 'Sarva Siksha Abhiyan' (SSA) was also implemented in the same year with much rhetoric by the government and supported by DFID. It was started with a mission mode and a clear time frame for UEE by the year 2010. With the launch of SSA, DPEP has been merged with the SSA framework at the implementation level. The SSA pattern of

² Discussed in detail in subsequent chapters.

financing is in the ratio of 75:25 of sharing between the Centre and the States during the Tenth Five Year Plan, and 50:50 thereafter. The main objectives of SSA are³:

- All children in school through 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 elementary 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.

As the programme gives more priority to girls, two of its main components are National Programme of Education for Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV). NPEGEL was launched in 2003 for enhancing girls education by the development of a 'model school' in every cluster with more intense community mobilization and supervision of girls enrolment in schools. Gender sensitisation of teachers, development of gender-sensitive learning materials, and provision of need-based incentives like escorts, stationery, workbooks and uniforms were some of the endeavours under the programme. The Government of India has approved the scheme of KGBV to ensure access and quality education to the girls of disadvantaged groups (SC, ST, OBC and minorities) of society by setting up residential schools with boarding facilities at elementary level. Such residential schools were set up only in those backward blocks that do not have residential schools for elementary education of girls. Another important development in the twenty first century was the 86th Constitutional Amendment Act notified in 2002 that made education a fundamental right for children in the age group of 6-14 years. It states, "The State shall provide free and compulsory

³ Source: www.ssa.nic.in. Accessed 20 January 2010

education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.” This was operationalised through a landmark legislation which was made in 2009 with Parliament passing ‘The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill’ (RTE). Some of the salient features of this act are:

- Every child in the age group of 6-14 will have a right to free and compulsory education till class VIII;
- Schools must not fail children until class VIII;
- Schools must admit children without school leaving certificates
- Private schools must provide 25 per cent seats to weaker sections;
- Penalties for subjecting child or parents to screening procedure;
- Physical punishments and mental harassment will attract disciplinary action.

Thus, an overview of various schemes, policies, and legislations reveals that attempts have been made to achieve UEE since independence. However, even after five decades of development planning and umpteen strategies adopted to meet the deadlines, the goal of achieving UEE still remains elusive. Every year the target year has been extended. All the above mentioned schemes and initiatives like Operation Blackboard, DPEP, para teacher scheme are criticised by many scholars. Dreze and Sen (1995), for instance, pointed out that the basic problem of endemic illiteracy cannot be solved through such ad hoc schemes and campaigns. They suggest that the priority should be to ensure that every village in the country has a free, functioning, well-staffed, and well attended regular primary schools. In similar vein, Govinda (2002) argued that UEE goal is highly dependent on the traditions and values of the local people, commitment and enthusiasm of state-level educational leadership and capacity to adopt innovative approaches. He is of the view that mere funds and schemes from the centre will not guarantee the

achievement of UEE and their needs understanding of processes, problems and prospects of achieving UEE in every state independently. Eminent educationist J P Naik (1976) has argued that to be successful, “educational programmes need, not only funds but sustained hard work, an ethical atmosphere, and cultivation of proper values by the entire academic community” (1976:4).

II

SCHOOLING SYSTEM IN INDIA

Educational planning in the country is essentially the joint endeavour of the Central and the State governments. Prior to 1976, education was the sole responsibility of the State and was included in the ‘State List’ in the Indian Constitution. As a result, the Union government did not have any direct role in developing school education. However, the Constitutional Amendment of 1976 included education in the ‘concurrent list’⁴, and thus, sharing of responsibility between the Union government and the States emerged. Since then, UEE has become a shared responsibility of the Central and the State governments. Decisions regarding the organisation and structure of education are largely the concern of the States. The Centre is responsible for maintaining quality and standards of education (especially higher education) and the study and monitoring of the educational requirements of the country.

All levels of education, right from the primary to higher education are overseen by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MoHRD) which was established in 1985. The ministry is divided into two departments at the executive level⁵:

- Department of School Education and Literacy which oversees elementary education, secondary education, adult education and literacy.

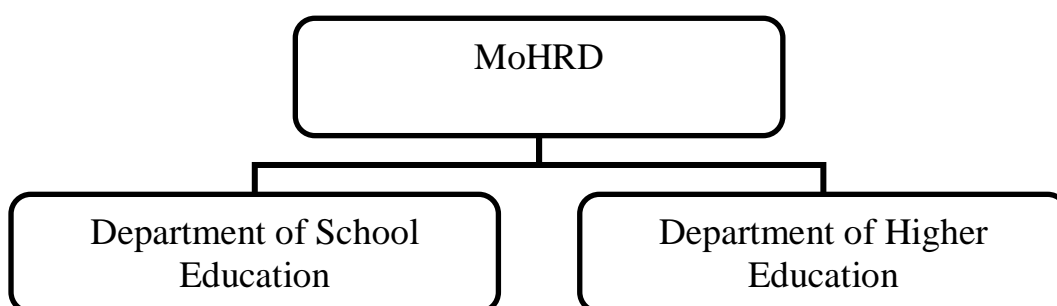
⁴ Areas that are supposed to be shared responsibilities of the Central and State governments.

⁵ Source: www.education.nic.in. Accessed 20 January 2010.

- Department of Higher Education which undertakes the responsibility of university and higher education, technical education, books promotion and copyrights, scholarships, languages and minority education.

The Human Resource Development minister is assisted by two ministers of State, one each for the two departments.

FIG. 2.1: ORGANIZATION OF THE MoHRD



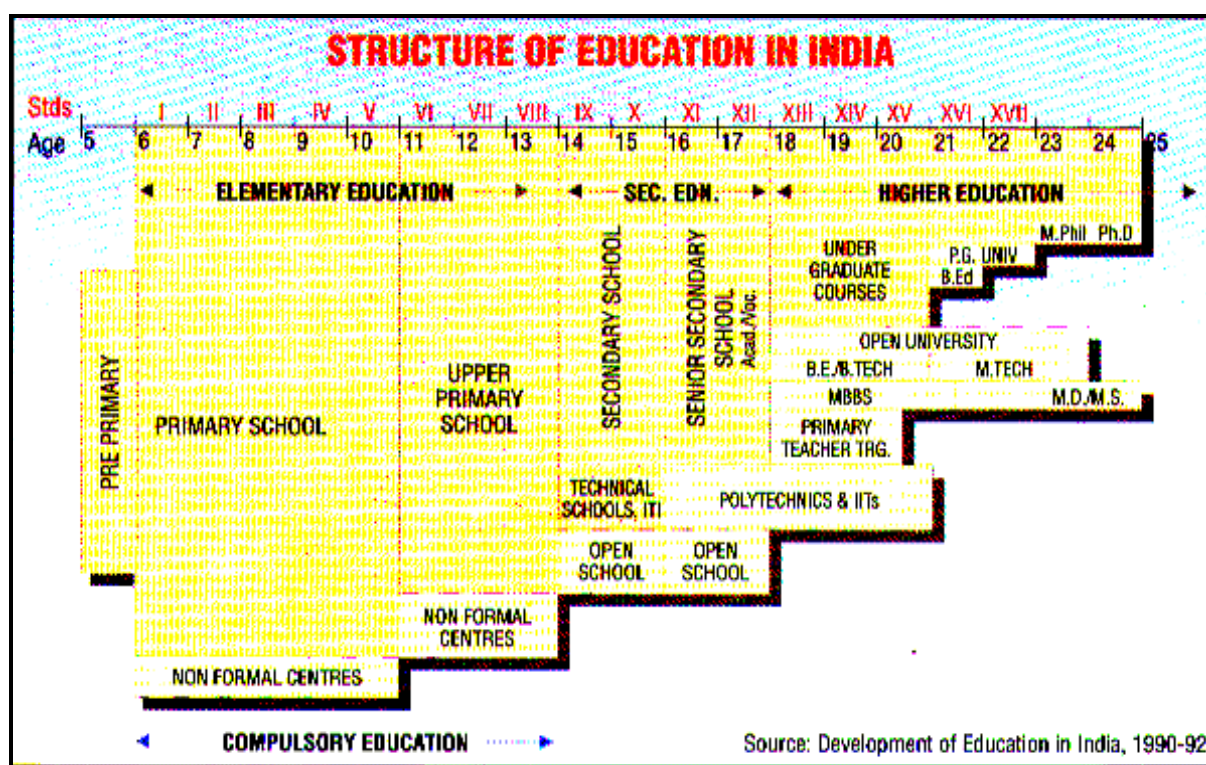
The Indian education system is divided into pre-primary (nursery), primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary levels. The lowest level i.e., pre-primary or nursery education is the same for all states and comprises of Lower Kindergarten (LKG) and Upper Kindergarten (UKG) where primary reading, writing, geometric shapes and arithmetic skills are developed. After the completion of this stage, the combination of classes for different levels of school education varies from state to state. Each State independently determines the educational structure to be adopted, particularly at the school stage⁶. In the state of Andhra Pradesh, the pre-primary stage is followed by the primary school stage which includes children between ages six to eleven organized into classes one to five. Primary level is followed by two years of upper primary stage which comprises of classes six and seven and includes children of ages twelve and thirteen. The secondary stage education is for three years where children are organised into three classes i.e., eight, nine and ten and fall under the

⁶ More details on the educational patterns of all the states are given in Singh and Raju (2006).

age group of fourteen to sixteen. The completion of schooling up to eighth standard marks the completion of the elementary level.

The higher secondary education comprises of classes eleven and twelve and includes children of ages seventeen through eighteen. This brings schooling to an end. This stage in Andhra Pradesh is also referred to as intermediate level and students join junior colleges instead of schools. Three years of further studies enable the student to obtain his/her first degree. Thus, a common structure of education is being followed in most States: i.e., the 10 + 2 + 3 system.

FIG 2.2: STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

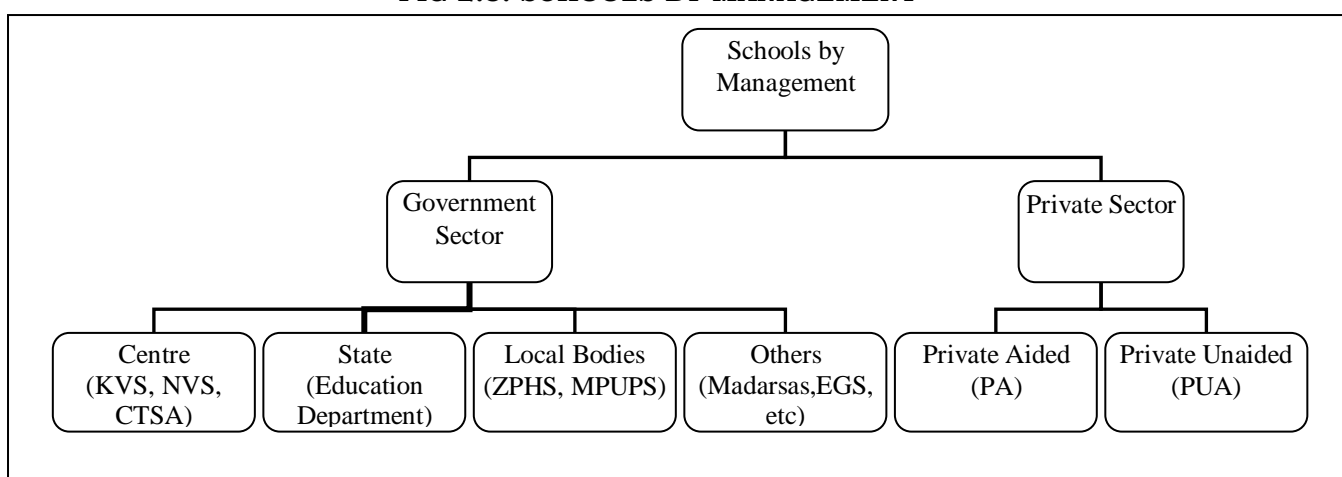


Source: Department of Education *Compilation of 50 years of Indian Education: 1947- 1997*, Ministry of Human Resource Development. Accessed 14 January 2010. www.education.nic.in/cd50years

There are broadly four types of schools in India based on the school management. The authority, which runs a school, determines its type of management (Singh and Raju, 2006). The *government* schools are managed and financed by Central/State governments or autonomous organisations set up by the Central/State governments. Education is said to be free in government schools. The second type comprises of local body schools which are managed and financed by Municipal

Corporation, District Board, Cantonment Board, Town Area Committee, *Panchayat Samiti*, *Zila Parishad* etc. The third type of schools are called as private aided schools and are managed by an individual, trust or a private organisation and receive regular maintenance grants and funds for teachers' salaries either from a local body or the Central/State governments⁷. Lastly, there are private unaided schools managed by an individual, trust or a private organisation which do not receive regular maintenance grants either from the local body or government (Central/State). Private unaided schools are again of two types: recognised and unrecognised schools. Recognised schools are those in which the course(s) of study is prescribed or recognised by the government (Central/State) or a University or a Board constituted by law. Unrecognised schools are those which are not recognised by the government, but run regular classes on the pattern of recognised schools. Monitoring and supervision of schools at the grass root level is carried out by the education departments of the State governments or local bodies. Examinations are conducted by 35 boards that include the State government boards, Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), or the Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) board. These boards prescribe the syllabus for each class and each school is affiliated to either of these boards. The diagram below sums up the types of school by management:

FIG 2.3: SCHOOLS BY MANAGEMENT



⁷ Now-a-days, even aided schools collect monthly fees and donations from the parents on the grounds of better infrastructure and quality education.

The centre's intervention in school education is through apex national level bodies which are autonomous organizations of the Ministry of Human Resource Development. These bodies are:

- Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), established in 1962, the primary aim of which is to provide, establish, endow, maintain, and manage the central schools (Kendriya Vidyalayas) located all over India and abroad.
- Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), established in 1986 as envisaged in NPE 1986. It manages the chain of residential schools called Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs) in each district, the aim of which is to provide quality education to rural children and to bring out the best of rural talent.
- Central Tibetan School Administration (CTSA), the objective of this organisation is to establish, manage and assist schools in India for the education of Tibetan children living in India while preserving and promoting their culture and heritage.
- National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) was established in 1989 in pursuance of NPE 1986 and provides education to those who have missed the opportunity to complete their schooling. It offers number of academic courses as well as vocational and community oriented courses.

A few national level institutions specializing in particular aspects of education assist and advise the Ministry of Human Resource Development at the Centre, and education departments of States/Union territories in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in their respective areas. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)⁸ is one such autonomous organization set up by the Government of India in 1961 to bring qualitative changes in school education and teacher preparation. Apart from research and training activities, NCERT undertakes various development activities in school education. These

⁸ Source: http://www.ncert.nic.in/html/prg_ncert.aspx. Accessed 22 January 2010.

activities include development and renewal of curricula and instructional materials for various levels of school education and making them relevant to changing needs of children and society. Developmental activities are also undertaken in the domains of educational technology, population education, and education of the disabled and other special groups. One of the prime responsibilities of NCERT includes curriculum designing. The 1986 National Policy of Education (NPE) and the 1992 Programme of Action (PoA) have assigned a special role to NCERT in preparing and promoting a National Curriculum Framework as a means of establishing a National System of Education, characterized by certain core values and transformative goals which are consistent with the constitutional vision of India.

The University Grants Commission (UGC)⁹ is another autonomous organisation established in 1953 by the Government of India. It has the unique distinction of being the only grant-giving agency in the country which has been vested with two responsibilities: that of providing funds and that of coordination, determination, and maintenance of standards in institutions of higher education. The National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA)¹⁰ has also been established by MoHRD in 1979 and it deals with capacity building and research in planning and management of education.

III

STATISTICAL OVERVIEW OF EDUCATION SCENARIO IN INDIA

India has one of the largest education systems in the world. It has 1.2 million schools, 6.3 million teachers and 290 million students in the age group of 6-18 which in itself is more than the population of every country in the world except United States, China and India. It has the dubious distinction that every third illiterate in the world is an Indian

⁹ Source: <http://www.ugc.ac.in/about/genesis.html>. Accessed 22 January 2010.

¹⁰ Source: <http://www.nuepa.org>. Accessed 22 January 2010.

and currently it houses the largest number of illiterates compared to any other country (Jha, 2007). Internationally, India's experiences are always being compared with China for various reasons (Sen, 1996). Firstly, both started from a state of much poverty and deprivation. Secondly, both have a long tradition of trade and commerce. Thirdly, both have large expatriate communities which could play an important role in integrating with the world of commerce and trade. In the late 1940s, the literacy levels of India and China were almost similar, but over the years China succeeded in moving ahead in literacy rates leaving India behind. When compared with countries other than China, India once again has not done particularly well in terms of literacy. In the recent 'EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010' by UNESCO, India was ranked 105 among 128 countries having low Educational Development Index (EDI). In 2007, India was behind several Latin American, African and Asian developing countries and some of them like Zambia, Kenya, Ghana, Bhutan, Maldives and Cambodia are economically poorer than India (Tilak, 2010). It also lags behind all other BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) countries and Sri Lanka. Before proceeding towards the education related statistics, an overview of the child population in various age groups is imperative. The table below shows the actual child population of the last two decades:

TABLE 2.1: CHILD POPULATION IN THE LAST TWO DECADES

ACTUAL CHILD POPULATION 1991, 2001 AND ESTIMATED CHILD POPULATION IN 2004								
(In thousand)								
Age-Group		1991 (Actual)	2001 (Actual)			2004 (Estimated)		
			Total	SC	ST	Total	SC	ST
6-11	Boys	60313	67391	11862	6118	62941	11161	5753
	Girls	56397	61989	10887	5804	58364	10312	5516
	Total	116700	129380	22749	11922	121305	21473	11269
11-14	Boys	27876	39712	6848	3382	38365	6545	3243
	Girls	25128	35928	6084	3101	34917	5847	2987
	Total	53004	75640	12932	6483	73282	12392	6230
14-18	Boys	34228	45948	7683	3601	49001	8119	3912
	Girls	29673	39591	6335	3283	43908	6928	3624
	Total	63901	85539	14018	6884	92909	15047	7536

SOURCE: Census of India

The table shows that India has more than 200 million (over 20 crores) children in the 6-14 age group. In the age group of 6-18, the total child population is over 290 million. Children in the age group of 6-11 are approximately 129 million, which is the maximum among all other groups. Thus, this age group needs maximum attention when compared to other age groups.

The education system in India shows a mixed picture. On one hand, the literacy rate¹¹ in 1901 was a mere 5.35% that shot up to 65% in 2001 which is quite encouraging. At the time of independence, only fourteen percent of the population was literate and only one child out of three had been enrolled in primary school. The first post-independence census of 1951 showed that only 18.33 % were literate of which 27 % of men and only 9 % of women were literate. The number of students enrolled in elementary education in 1951 was about 1.9 crore which and is now estimated at over 13 crores (Varma, 2008). The table below draws comparison of literacy rates from 1951 to 2004-05.

TABLE 2.2 COMPARISON OF LITERACY RATES IN INDIA*

Literacy Rate by Sex in India (1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 1997, 2001 and 2004-2005)			
Year	Literacy Rate (%)		
	Persons	Males	Females
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86
1961	28.30	40.40	15.35
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29
2001	64.84	75.26	53.67
2004-2005**	67.30	77.00	57.00

- Literacy rates of 1951, 1961 and 1971 relate to population aged five years and above.
- The rates for the years 1981 and 1991 relate to the population aged seven years and above.

**NSS 61st Round Survey Report No. 517, 2004-2005.

* Source: <http://www.indiastat.com/education>. Accessed 30 January 2010.

¹¹ According to the Census 2001, a literate person is 'a person aged 7 and above who can both read and write with understanding in any language'. An illiterate person is one 'who can neither read nor write or can only read but cannot write in any language'. All children of age 6 years or less, even if going to school and have picked up reading or writing are treated as illiterate.

The above table shows that there has been a constant increase in the literacy rate in both males and females which is an impressive trend. On the other hand, there are some very disturbing numbers which needs immediate attention. It has 46 percent of the world's illiterates and has a high proportion of the world's out-of-school children and youth (Kingdon, 2007). The population aged between 6 and 24 is 460 million of which 170 million are not in the education system and about 90% do not make it to the college. Furthermore, almost half of the 4.7 million teachers who teach between classes I and VIII have not studied beyond senior secondary level (Bose, 2008). Regarding the drop-out rates, the figures are again very disappointing. The table below gives the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)¹² at the primary and the upper primary level.

TABLE 2.3: GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO

Area	Primary Stage			Upper Primary Stage			Combined for Primary and Upper Primary		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Rural	94.88	90.36	92.72	56.25	46.20	51.47	80.45	74.05	77.39
Urban	96.05	94.37	95.25	79.74	76.56	78.22	89.54	87.25	88.45
Total	95.16	91.31	93.32	62.34	54.09	58.42	82.69	77.28	80.11

Source: NCERT Seventh All India Education Survey (2006)

Though the enrolment ratio in primary education is around 94%, only 66% of the children enrolled in class I survive to class V, i.e., 34% of the children enrolled in class I drop out before reaching class 5 (Tilak, 2010) and by class 8 nearly two-thirds of them no longer remain in the school (Varma, 2008). Of the total 200 million children in the age group of 6-14 years, only 120 million (60%) are enrolled in primary and upper primary schools (Jha, 2007). Infrastructural figures are even more troubling and the dilapidating structures in the schools have been echoed time and again in many literatures. The country

¹² GER is defined as the percentage of enrolment in classes I-V and VI-VIII and/or I-VIII to the estimated child population in the age group 6 to below 11 years and 11 to below 14 years and/or 6 to 14 years respectively.

still falls short of meeting the goal of UEE, although several milestones have been achieved.

In order to realize the long cherished dream of UEE, special attention was given to the weaker sections like SCs', STs' and women. Many strategies and programmes have been implemented for the educational development of SCs' and STs' and to bring them on par with other children. The table below presents the details of literacy rates of SCs' and STs' by area and sex over a period of four decades.

TABLE 2.4 LITERACY RATE OF SCHEDULED CASTE AND SCHEDULED TRIBE BY SEX AND AREA IN INDIA

Years/Area	Scheduled Castes			Scheduled Tribes		
	Male	Female	Persons	Male	Female	Persons
1961						
Rural	15.06	2.52	8.89	13.37	2.9	8.16
Urban	32.21	10.04	21.81	30.43	13.45	22.41
Total	16.96	3.29	10.27	13.83	3.16	8.53
1971						
Rural	20.04	5.06	12.77	16.92	4.36	10.64
Urban	38.93	16.99	28.65	37.09	19.64	28.84
Total	22.36	6.44	14.67	17.63	4.85	11.3
1981						
Rural	27.91	8.45	18.48	22.94	6.81	14.92
Urban	47.54	24.34	36.6	47.6	27.32	37.93
Total	31.12	10.93	21.38	24.52	8.04	16.35
1991						
Rural	45.95	19.45	33.25	38.45	16.02	27.38
Urban	66.6	42.29	55.11	66.56	45.66	56.6
Total	49.91	23.76	37.41	40.65	18.19	29.6
2001						
Rural	63.66	37.84	51.16	57.39	32.44	45.02
Urban	77.93	57.49	68.12	77.77	59.87	69.09
Total	66.64	41.9	54.69	59.17	34.76	47.1

Source: <http://www.indiastat.com/education>. Accessed 30 January 2010.

The table shows that there has been a steady increase in the literacy rates of SCs' and STs'. However, many scholars (Chitnis, 1972; Nambissan, 1996, to cite a few) argue that the programmes used by the government to improve the educational status of the

disadvantaged groups have only led to inequality and inequity within the formal system. Another often cited cause of not achieving the goal of UEE is the gender bias in education. The table below depicts that though there has been an increase in the female literacy, but still about half of the female population is illiterate.

TABLE 2.5 FEMALE LITERACY RATE IN INDIA

Year	Rural	Urban	Overall
1961*	10.1	40.5	15.35
1971*	15.5	48.8	21.97
1981**	21.7	56.3	29.76
1991**	30.6	64	39.29
2001**	46.7	73.2	54.16

* Relates to population 5 years and above.

** Relates to population 7 years and above.

Source: <http://www.indiastat.com/education>. Accessed 30 January 2010.

Many scholars argue that insufficient allocation of financial resources is one major reason due to which elementary education has suffered in this country. Public expenditure on education was only about 3.6% of GDP in 2006-07¹³ which is much less when compared to other countries like France and USA where the spending is 6% of their respective GDPs. Thus, it was suggested that investment in primary education and education of weaker sections, particularly women, should be expanded both from equity and efficiency points of view (Tilak, 1987; 1994). It not only reduces the inequality in human capital, but also reduces the discrimination against them in the labour market.

There also exists a north south divide in the educational attainment of children. The northern states, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh lag behind all other states in terms of educational achievements. These states together with their split-offs/bifurcated

¹³ Kothari Commission in 1964-66 argued that at least 6% GDP should be allocated in education, which is still not being implemented.

states have extreme gender inequality too. South Indian states fare much better and Kerala has surpassed all other states in the country. The state was declared fully literate in 1991. No other south Indian state has managed to replicate Kerala model and achieve this distinction. However, Andhra Pradesh lags behind all the southern states and is often equated with North Indian states in terms of educational achievements. Only a few north Indian states, namely, Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh are comparable to southern states. Dreze (2003) points out that Himachal Pradesh has virtually caught up with Kerala within forty years. He reasons that the divisions of caste, class and gender that have been so pernicious elsewhere in north India are less pronounced in this region. There is the absence of sharp inequalities of land ownership, narrow social distance between different castes and high participation of women in social life outside the household. The contrasts in education between Uttar Pradesh, a North Indian state and Kerala, a south Indian state give a very contrasting and dismal picture. All the children in the age group of 10-14 years are literate in Kerala whereas one-third of the Uttar Pradesh male children and more than three-fifths of the female children of that age group are illiterate (Sen, 1994). Thus, the regional contrasts in India are also very stark.

IV

MAGNITUDE AND OUTREACH OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Estimating the magnitude of private schooling in India is a difficult task. Kingdon (1996) points out that most of the official educational statistics are skewed as they exaggerate the size of free, government funded elementary school sector and greatly understate the size of the private fee-charging elementary school sector. Student enrolments in government and aided schools are often over-reported as the teachers in these schools have incentives to over-report their enrolments when there is low demand for their services as there are chances that schools with falling rolls would lose teachers. This results in the reduction of the apparent enrolment share of private schools on the

official documents. In similar vein, Dreze and Sen (1995) also point out that official school enrolment figures released by the Department of Education are known to be inflated. These highly “official” misleading figures are often reported in international publications that depend on government sources. The official figures usually do not tally with census and NSS data. Moreover, these statistics are inaccurate and unreliable as all the official school censuses are carried out only in the government and private ‘recognised’ schools, and thus, a high proportion of the private ‘unrecognised’ schools are left out (Kingdon, 1996). However, these unrecognised private schools form a significant share among private unaided schools. Muraleedhar and Kremer’s survey (cited in Kingdon, 2007) of 20 states revealed that 51 percent of all private rural primary schools were unrecognized. Nevertheless, the indisputable fact at the ground level is that private schools have gained prominence in both rural and urban areas. The spread of private schools has accelerated rapidly in urban areas where their presence is more conspicuous. The table below gives a comparison of enrolments by management in both rural and urban areas.

TABLE 2.6 MANAGEMENT-WISE ENROLMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

Category	School Management (in %)							
	Government		Local Body		Private Aided		Private Unaided	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Primary	54.42	22.9	32.21	20.62	5.79	19.15	7.56	38.02
Upper Primary	46.99	24.71	17.20	9.57	24.34	34.47	11.45	31.23
Secondary	37.59	25.94	8.34	5.24	38.11	42.49	15.95	26.31

Source: Researcher’s calculations from the Seventh All India Education Survey, NCERT, 2006

The above table shows interesting trends regarding enrolment of students in various types of managements. In rural areas, enrolment still remains highest in government schools, particularly in primary schools. On the contrary, the share of private schools in urban areas is much more than the government and local body managed schools. The table also depicts that the enrolment in primary schools is

highest in private unaided category in urban areas. In upper primary and secondary levels, the share of private unaided schools is less than private aided schools in urban areas.

The table below shows the increase in the share of recognized unaided private schools for various years by region and level of education.

TABLE 2.7 SHARE OF RECOGNIZED PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN TOTAL ENROLMENT INCREASE

	1978-86	1986-93	1993-2002
Rural			
Primary	2.8	18.5	24.4
Middle	7.2	12.8	23.2
Secondary	5.8	15.8	30.9
Urban			
Primary	56.8	60.5	95.7
Middle	35.7	31.8	71.7
Secondary	17.7	17.7	46.7
Rural and Urban			
Primary	13.5	35.3	38.9
Middle	15.0	21.4	37.8
Secondary	10.7	16.8	38.4

Source: Kingdon (2007:186)

The table shows that there has been a constant increase in the share of private recognized schools in both rural and urban areas at various levels of education. In urban India, recognized private schools' share of total enrolment at different levels of education in 2002 was between 30 and 40 percent. Furthermore, in the nine year period, i.e., 1993-2002, government and private aided schools together absorbed only 4.3% of the total urban increase in primary school enrolments whereas nearly 96% of the total increase in urban primary enrolment was due to the growth of private schooling (Kingdon, 2007). This shows that the growth of private schooling in urban areas is massive.

V

BRIEF PROFILE OF ANDHRA PRADESH AND RANGA REDDY DISTRICT

The state of Andhra Pradesh is bounded on the North by Maharashtra, on the North-East by Orissa and Chhatisgarh, on the East by Bay of Bengal, on the South by Tamilnadu and on the West

by Karnataka. It forms the major link between the north and the south. It is the 5th largest state in the India, both in terms of geographical area and population comprising of 23 districts, 1105 revenue mandals and 28,123 villages. Geographically, the state is categorised into three sub-divisions: Coastal Andhra which has nine districts, Rayalaseema which has four districts and Telangana region, which comprises of 10 districts of Andhra Pradesh.

The present study was conducted in Ranga Reddy district ¹⁴ which comes under Telangana region. It is located at the heart of the Deccan Plateau of the Indian sub continent and lies between 16° 19' and 18° 20' North latitude and 77°30' and 79°30' East by longitude. It is bounded by Medak district on the north, on the East by Nalgonda district, on the south by Mahaboob Nagar district and on the west by Gulbarga district of Karnataka state. It was formed on 15th August 1978 by carving out some portion of Hyderabad urban taluk and the merger of the entire rural and urban areas of the remaining taluks of erstwhile Hyderabad district. It was named after Late. Sri. K.V.Ranga Reddy, the then Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. There are 37 mandals and 3 Revenue divisions in the district. The three revenue divisions are: Ranga Reddy East, Chevalla and Vikarabad. The District has 982 inhabited villages and 73 un-inhabited villages forming into 705 gram Panchayats. There are 12 municipalities in the district, and thus, the urban population is more than that of the rural population.

The district is a mix of elite urban people with cosmopolitan culture to the down trodden and poverty driven rural population. In the recent past, there has been a tremendous development in the suburbs of the district due to the establishment of 'Hyderabad Information Technology and Engineering Consultancy City' (HITEC City) meant for the expansion of software industry. Thus, the employment potentiality increased to a great extent, which in turn, is contributing to the development of the district. This also resulted in increase in the

¹⁴ Source: <http://rangareddy.nic.in/content5.html>. Accessed 26 January 2010.

migration of people from different parts of India. The rural areas of Ranga Reddy district still retain the age old culture. Thus, the district is an amalgamation of traditional culture and a western 'hi-tech' culture. The common languages spoken here are Telugu and Urdu. Telugu language has imbibed many words and phrases from Urdu and Hindi languages. Most of the people in rural areas of the district are below the poverty line as they are landless labourers and small commuters. As a result, people from the western part of the district migrate to Mumbai in search of work in the off season. The demographic profile of Andhra Pradesh and Ranga Reddy district is given below:

TABLE 2.8 POPULATION IN ANDHRA PRADESH AND RANGA REDDY DISTRICT BY SEX AND AREA

Population	Andhra Pradesh	Ranga Reddy District
Total	76,210,007	3,575,064
Males	38,527,413 (50.55%)	1,839,227 (51.44%)
Females	37,682,594 (49.44%)	1,735,837 (48.55%)
Sex Ratio	978	944
% of urban population	27.30	54.20
% of rural Population	72.69	45.79

Source: Table derived from Census, 2001

The table shows that five percent of AP's population resides in Ranga Reddy district. The sex ratio of the district stands at 944 which is very dismal and less than that of the state. However, for the first time since the 1951 census, the sex ratio in the state has increased. The above table also shows that the urban population forms 27% of the total population of the state. Ranga Reddy district has shown highest urban growth rate of 60.79% in Andhra Pradesh (Census, 2001). The table shows that in Ranga Reddy district, the percentage of urban population is greater than the rural population.

Andhra Pradesh is an educationally backward state and is often clubbed with most backward north Indian states in terms of statistics on literacy and education. According to the Census 2001, the state with a literacy rate of 60.5% ranks 28th among all the states and Union Territories. Since Andhra Pradesh is an educationally backward state, the district too reflects the same. The table below gives a picture of the literacy rate in the state and the district:

TABLE 2.9 LITERACY RATE IN ANDHRA PRADESH AND RANGA REDDY DISTRICT

Literacy Rate	Andhra Pradesh (%)	Ranga Reddy (%)
Males	70.3	75.26
Females	50.4	56.49
Total	60.5	66.16

Source: Census 2001

The table clearly depicts that more than one-third of the total population in the district are illiterates. Moreover, the situation of female literacy is very dismal as little less than half of the females are illiterates. Recent statistics of DISE 2008-09 also reveals that the literacy rate of the district is 66.2% and the female literacy rate is 56.5%. Let us see the enrolment of children in the state according to the type of school management.

TABLE 2.10 ENROLMENT IN ANDHRA PRADESH ACCORDING TO THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

Category	Management		
	All Government Management	Private Aided	Private Unaided (recognised)
Primary Schools	50.57%	5.06%	35.37%
Upper Primary Schools	60.15%	5.60%	34.26%

Source: DISE Flash Statistics, 2008-2009

The above table clearly depicts that the children are primarily enrolled either in schools managed by the government or in private unaided schools. The percentage share of private aided sector in the state is

very low. However, as mentioned earlier, only recognised schools are taken into account in the private unaided sector. If unrecognised schools share is included, the percentage share of private schools will be much higher than what is being mentioned in the survey reports. The table below gives the number of schools according to the type of management in Ranga Reddy district.

TABLE 2.11 MANAGEMENT-WISE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN RANGA REDDY DISTRICT IN 2003-04

Category	Management					Total
	State	Local Body	Municipality	Private Aided	Private Unaided (recognised)	
Primary Schools	80 (3.41%)	1680 (71.76%)	-	13 (0.55%)	568 (24.26%)	2341
Upper Primary Schools	13 (1.63%)	365 (45.79%)	-	11 (1.38%)	408 (51.19%)	797
High Schools	22 (2.38%)	349 (37.77%)	-	20 (2.16%)	533 (57.68%)	924
Total	115 (2.83%)	2394 (58.93%)		44 (1.08%)	1509 (37.14%)	4062

Source: Table compiled from the data available on www.rangareddy.nic.in/content5.html. Accessed 1 February 2010.

The above table shows that majority of schools are managed by the local bodies or are private unaided schools. The share of schools managed by the state education department and private aided schools is very low. The table also shows that at the primary level, approximately 72% of the schools are local body managed schools. On the other hand, at the upper primary and high school level most schools are private unaided schools and their number surpasses all other government managed schools. The total share of private unaided schools at all levels is 37.14%, which is only for the recognised private unaided schools. Tooley and Dixon (2003) found that in Ranga Reddy district, out of the total student enrolment, 45% of them are in the private unaided sector (55% at upper primary and 61% at high school levels). They also found that 65% of the total numbers of teachers in this district are employed in the private unaided sector. Let us compare the same parameters with the data in 2006-07.

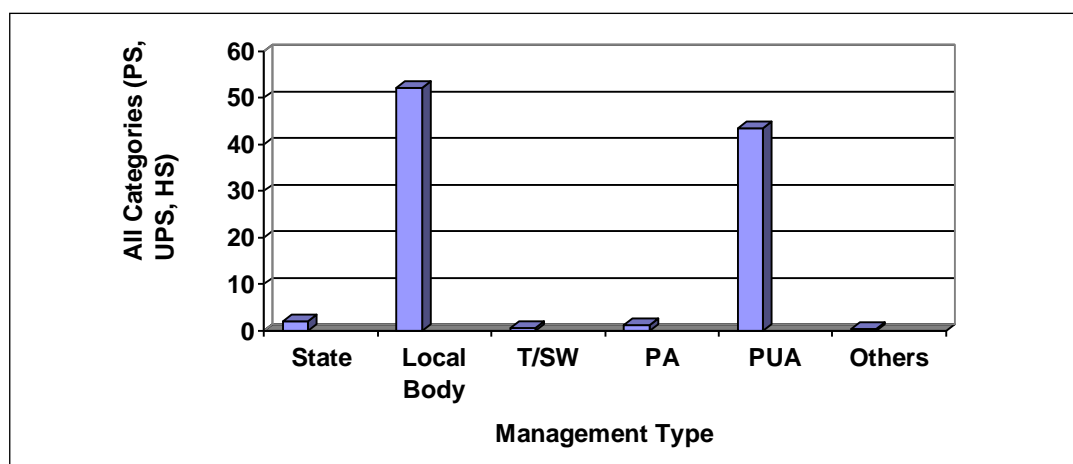
TABLE 2.12 MANAGEMENT-WISE NUMBER OF SCHOOLS IN RANGA REDDY DISTRICT IN 2006-07

Category	Management						Total
	State	Local Body	Tribal/Social Welfare	Private Aided	Private Unaided (recognised)	Others	
All (PS, UPS, HS)	92 (2.03%)	2360 (52.18%)	26 (0.57%)	56 (1.23%)	1971 (43.58%)	17 (0.37%)	4522

Source: Data collected by the researcher from the DEO, Ranga Reddy district

The trend here is similar to the one in the year 2003-04. The share of local body schools is the highest followed by the private unaided schools. The graphical representation of the number of schools according to the management is as follows:

FIG 2.4 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ACCORDING TO THE MANAGEMENT TYPE



Source: Chart derived from the above table

The chart above clearly depicts that in Ranga Reddy district, local body managed schools and private unaided schools are the predominant types of schools. However, the share of the private sector has increased from 37.14% to 43.58% in three years.

V

BALANAGAR AND NAYAPALLY: THE STUDY AREA

The present study was carried out in Balanagar Mandal of Ranga Reddy district. This mandal comes under the Chevalla administrative division. The table below gives the demographic profile of the mandal:

TABLE 2.13 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF BALANAGAR MANDAL

Population	Total	Males	Females
All	317, 345	166,327 (52.41%)	151, 018 (47.58%)
SC	17,308	8,894 (51.38%)	8,414 (48.61%)
ST	2,965	1,534 (51.73%)	1,431 (48.26%)

Source: Census 2001

In Ranga Reddy district, 8.87% of the population lives in Balanagar mandal. According to the Census 2001, hundred percent population in the mandal lives in urban areas and no one is declared as staying in rural areas. Thus, the mandal is a fully urban mandal. It has fourteen revenue villages and a statutory town, *Nayapally* (pseudonym) which is the study area of this research. Nayapally is located on the Hyderabad national highway around 8 Kms from the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. It is the only municipality of Balanagar Mandal and has recorded 56.33% of urban growth rate during 1991-2001. The demographic profile of Nayapally is given below:

TABLE 2.14 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF NAYAPALLY

Population	Total	Males	Females
All	292,289	153,331 (52.45%)	138,958 (47.54%)
SC	15,171	7,845 (51.71%)	7,326 (48.28%)
ST	2,891	1,491 (51.57%)	1,400 (48.42%)

Source: Census, 2001

The table shows that almost 92% of the population in the mandal reside in Nayapally. It is a middle-class dominated town with an eclectic mix of people - professionals, entrepreneurs, employees etc. The town also has a considerable share of slum dwellers and working class population. It is predominantly known for the large number of settlers from the Andhra region. With around three lakh people living

here, Nayapally has transformed itself from an erstwhile ordinary village to a self-sufficient and separate township. In the early 1980s, the biggest residential colony in South Asia, Nayapally Housing Board Colony was built here. The town is also considered a hub of educational institutions. It is surrounded by many temples and all basic facilities like medical facilities, transport, supermarkets, schools and colleges are easily available here. Its proximity to HITECH City, which is just 4 Kms away has witnessed the influx of many people from the software industry and also the entry of many shopping malls and international branded apparels.

The literacy rate of the town is 69.5%. The number of schools in the mandal according to the type of management is as follows:

TABLE 2.15 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT-WISE IN BALANAGAR MANDAL IN 2003-04

Category	School Management					Total
	State	Local Body	Municipality	Private Aided	Private Unaided (recognised)	
Primary Schools	11 (8.73%)	41 (32.53%)	-	01 (0.79%)	73 (57.93%)	126
Upper Primary Schools	2 (2.56%)	7 (8.97%)	-	02 (2.56%)	67 (85.89%)	78
High Schools	2 (2.38%)	4 (4.76%)	-	-	78 (92.85%)	84
Total	15 (5.20%)	52 (18.05%)	-	03 (1.04%)	218 (75.69%)	288

Source: Table compiled from the data available on www.rangareddy.nic.in/content5.html. Accessed 1 February 2010.

The table clearly depicts that most of the schools in Balanagar mandal are private unaided schools (75.69%) followed by the local body schools (18.05%). Like in the Ranga Reddy district, in the mandal too the number of state and private aided schools is very less.

Let us compare the same parameters for the year 2006-07. The table below gives the more recent and updated picture:

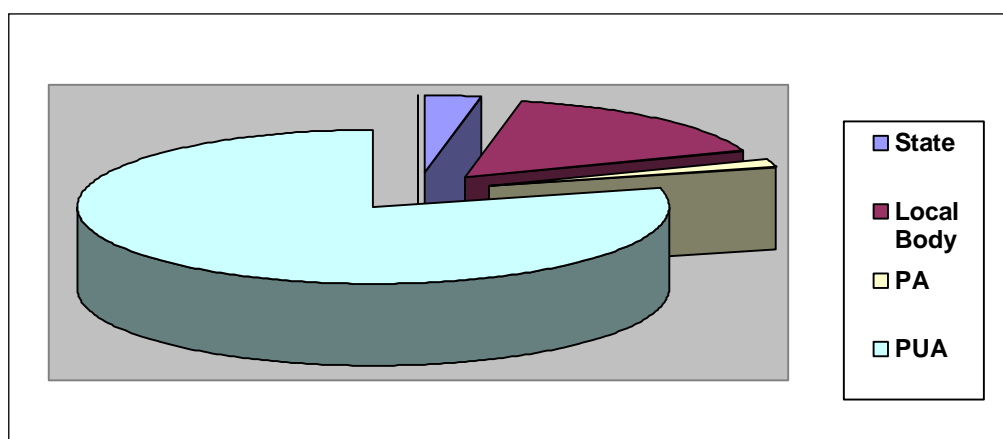
**TABLE 2.16 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS MANAGEMENT-WISE IN BALANAGAR
MANDAL IN 2006-07**

Category	School Management					Total
	State	Local Body	Municipality	Private Aided	Private Unaided (recognised)	
Primary Schools	7 (4.43%)	46 (29.11%)	-	1 (0.63%)	104 (65.82%)	158
Upper Primary Schools	1 (1.44%)	2 (2.89%)	-	4 (5.79%)	62 (89.85%)	69
High Schools	3 (2.47%)	9 (7.43%)	-	-	109 (90.08%)	121
Total	11 (3.16%)	57 (16.37%)	-	5 (1.43%)	275 (79.02%)	348

Source: Data collected by the researcher from the DEO, Ranga Reddy district

The table shows that when compared to 2003-04, there has been an increase in the number of schools in the private unaided sector. In 2003-04, this sector accounted for only 75.69% of the total schools whereas in 2006-07 it accounted for 79.02% of the total schools. However, there has been a decrease in the percentage of local body schools. In 2003-04, these schools accounted for 18.05% of the total schools whereas in 2006-07 these schools constituted 16.37% of the total schools. An overall picture regarding the share of schools according to the type of management in Balanagar mandal is as follows:

**FIG. 2.5 SHARE OF SCHOOLS ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF SCHOOL
MANAGEMENT IN BALANAGAR MANDAL**



When the Mandal Education Officer (MEO) was interviewed, he reported that there are 61 primary schools managed by both state and local bodies, and 13 high schools out of which 10 schools are managed by the local body and 3 schools are managed by the state education department. He was not sure about the number of private unaided schools, but reported that there are more than 250 private unaided schools in the mandal.

Summary

The present chapter attempts to give a detailed picture of the education system in India right from the colonial period. It shows that prior to independence, the British government did not do much to make the Indian masses literate. After independence, many schemes and policies were introduced and implemented in order to achieve universal elementary education, but the statistical figures reveal that much has to be done to realise this long-cherished goal. Since the government failed to provide quality education, private schools started increasing, especially in urban India.

The chapter shows that in Ranga Reddy district and in Balanagar mandal particularly, there are more private unaided schools and schools managed by the local bodies. Moreover, private unaided schools form a major share (79%) among the rest of the schools. Hence, a private unaided school and a local body managed school were selected for the study. There are no municipality-managed schools in the mandal. Even the share of state-managed and private-aided schools is very low. Thus, the mandal is witnessing an incredible increase in private unaided schools. In Nayapally, it was found that the presence of private unaided schools is so conspicuous that in the same street one can find at least three school buildings situated very close to one another, all strikingly very similar from outside, but functioning with different school names.

Since the private unaided schools are mushrooming in every street, it is important to examine how these schools function and in what ways they are different from a local body school. It is also worthwhile to

understand the perceptions of the actors inside the private schools and local body managed schools and the same has been discussed in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER III

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE: THE PHYSICAL REALITY OF THE SCHOOLS

As evident from chapter one, the interests of the anthropology and sociology of education are wide in scope: modes of education (formal and informal), cultural congruence or incongruence between home and school, culture of classrooms, education and social class and differential school achievement of various populations are only a few to cite. Thus, anthropologists and sociologists have explored the field of education from both inside as well as outside the classrooms. However, as mentioned earlier, there have not been many studies on schools as organisations having their own culture both in the west and in India. When schools are viewed as organisations, the features that are attributed to them are clear goals, identifiable personnel, relevant and explicit technology and relationships based on *positional* rather than personal factors (Bell, 1980). King makes a similar point and states that the organizational structure of a school consists of those relationships between the totality of members which are arranged or allowed by those with the power to do so, who in Weberian (cited in King, 1983:14) terms are the *bureaucratic authorities*. In fact, approach to organisations is largely derived from Weber's concept of bureaucracy. Highlighting the behaviour patterns of the people, King states:

Most people have experienced being organized at school, through rules, syllabuses and timetables controlling how they behave and what they should learn as pupils. Teachers usually implement this organization and are themselves organized, completing reports, mark sheets and registers at regular intervals (King, 1983: 10).

According to King, these repeated patterns of behaviour form the substance of the school organization. Wax (1971) also laid emphasis on the organisational structure of the school system with factors like organizational complexity, obligations, modalities of co-operation, power, integration and competition. Although schools as organisations and the various characteristics attributed to them have been

discussed in various literature, there are not many works that studied schools as organisations (Hoyle, 1965; Davies cited in Bell, 1980; King, 1983). Thus, the present chapter interprets schools in their own right as organisations having their own culture. It primarily focuses on what the system is, how it operates and how decisions are made i.e., the physical reality of the schools. In the present context, physical reality is defined as the structure and functioning of the schools, *minus* the attitudes, interactions and interpersonal relationships among the people of the school.

History and Goals/Vision of the Schools

The selected schools i.e., ZPHS and NMHS are amongst the oldest schools in Nayapally. The ZPHS was established when Nayapally was completely a village. Although the teachers were not able to recall the exact year of establishment of the government school, they stated that the school is more than fifty years old. While interviewing teachers, one teacher, aged 40, reported that her husband did his schooling at the same government school and the school existed prior to his schooling. During that time, there was no other school in the vicinity. Many residents of the locality also reported that this school was the first school to be established and gradually, other schools started getting established in the area. Most of the elderly educated people in the locality reported that they did their schooling at this school and proudly proclaim that they are the products of ZPHS.

The private school, i.e., NMHS was established in 1985 and is the second oldest amongst the private schools in the locality. There were only two schools in Nayapally when this school was established: one was ZPHS and the other was PNM school which was a private school run by a trust named Vivekananda Seva Samiti Trust. This school was functioning at the time of fieldwork, but had a higher fee structure than the NMHS and hence was selected for the study. The director of NMHS, who established the school, reported that in 1985 there were no other private schools in the area except these two schools. Most of the people living in this area at that time were

uneducated and those who were educated mostly belonged to the elite class.

The idea of setting up a school germinated when the principal was giving private tuitions with nominal tuition charges to those children who were in need of it. He was a trained teacher and was teaching in a school during that time. Since teaching has always been a passion for him, he opened a small school in the year 1985 jointly with his friend who was also a teacher at that time. The school initially started in a rented building with 5 to 6 rooms and with about 100 students in total from all classes. The fee structure of the school during those days was Rs 20-25 per month and it was increased by Rs 10 every year. Gradually, parents started enrolling their children in this school and the number of students in the school started increasing year by year. When the number of students reached around 400, they were forced to vacate the building as the space was insufficient to accommodate all the students. Thus, in the year 1992, they moved to their own school building with a few classrooms. Meanwhile, the director's friend and business partner left the school to set up his own venture. In the same year i.e., in 1992, the school got recognition from the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The school started attaining popularity, but unlike other private schools, this school does not have any branches till date and mostly caters to the children of the same locality. The school pamphlet of NMHS has a quotation which reflects the school's ideology:

*Your children are the gift of god,
Their future is your gift to them.*

This quotation seeks parents to provide education to their children and make their future secure and NMHS attempts to do exactly the same by providing literary skills to the children.

It is widely accepted that the main feature that distinguishes organisations from other social structures is their goal orientation (Etzioni cited in Bell, 1980). Schools are no exceptions to this as they are established to achieve definite ends. It was observed that the

ultimate goal of NMHS was to achieve ‘good results’ in X standard board exams. When NMHS was established, the vision of the founder was to impart education to the poor children who could not go to high-cost private schools. Gradually, when many private schools were established in the area, competition started rising, and as a consequence, ‘results’ became the ultimate goal. The school’s reputation now lies in students’ performance, particularly in the X class. The teachers of X class in NMHS work hard throughout the year and they are rewarded or removed based on the results of X standard students.

In ZPHS, even though there are no clear cut goals, the HM reported that improving the X results is a major concern at school level while at the departmental level, the priority is to increase the enrolment and retention rates.

School Management

ZPHS is managed and financed by the local body i.e., *Zilla Parishad*¹ that operates at the district level. The local body managed schools function in the same way as the schools run by the State education department. However, as evident in chapter 2, in AP and in RR district in particular, there are many more local body schools than the State run schools. Hence, a local body school was selected for the study.

The NMHS is entirely managed by the family of the present director of the school, who is the original founder of the school. Being managed by the family, this is a true private school in the sense that the school does not receive any financial aid from the government or the local body. NMHS is recognised by the GoAP i.e., the course(s) of study is prescribed or recognised by GoAP. The main reason behind getting a school recognised by the government is to issue a valid transfer certificate (TC) to students leaving the school which is required for a child to gain admission to another school or to a junior college. However, many schools do not get the recognition stamp or do not

¹ Zilla Parishad is the highest tier at district level and one of its many functions is to establish, maintain and expand high schools

even apply for it as certain conditions are to be fulfilled for achieving recognition from a competent authority. In Andhra Pradesh, some of these criteria include²:

- An endowment fund of Rs 25,000 for primary and upper primary and Rs 50,000 for secondary schools must be deposited in a specified bank by the school management in a joint account of the DEO concerned and the correspondent of the educational agency. This fund is later utilised for purchasing furniture, materials and equipment or in disbursing teachers' salaries, if the school goes bankrupt.
- A playground annexed to the school must be provided with a minimum of 1000 sq.m. for primary, 2000 sq.m for upper primary and 4000 sq.m for secondary schools.
- The teacher-pupil ratio must not exceed 1:40 in primary and upper primary categories, and in pre-primary it must not exceed 1:20.
- The school should have a library.
- All the teaching staff must have the qualifications laid out by the government, namely teacher training certificates or B.Ed degrees.
- Approximately 50% of the total revenue collected as fees from students should be earmarked for payment of regular salaries to the staff and 15% of the revenue should be earmarked for providing various benefits like Teacher's Provident Fund, Group Insurance and so on.

Even though such stringent regulations are laid down by the GoAP, many schools are far from fulfilling these criteria and NMHS is no exception to this. School infrastructure, staff salaries and qualifications, school facilities, curriculum, teacher-pupil ratio etc in the school were nowhere close to the prescribed conditions. When asked how they have succeeded in getting recognition, the school

² More details regarding conditions for attaining recognition are given in Tooley and Dixon (2003).

management of NMHS reported that payment of bribes to school inspectors and tax collectors is very common, and hence, it becomes very easy to attain recognition status. However, the school management also stated that recognised schools have more responsibilities as they have to follow government rules regarding exam dates, question papers, and so on. Those schools which are unrecognised conduct examinations in their own school up to ninth standard, and later seek the help of recognised private schools for tenth board exams.

Internal Structure and Responsibilities (administrative system)

In order to achieve the goals of the schools, the activities must be regulated by a consistent system of abstract rules, the duties of members of the staff must be officially prescribed, a division of labour maintained, and a hierarchy of authority resulting in a clear delineation of status and function between the various positions is established (Musgrove, cited in Bell, 1980). Thus, keeping these facets in mind, the internal structure, responsibilities and authority in both the schools is discussed below.

The internal structure of the ZPHS and NMHS is entirely different as the former is a bureaucratic system while the latter has a self-managed administrative system with its own set of rules and regulations. While the internal structure of government/local body schools remain the same and both types of schools function in a similar way, the internal structure of private schools vary. An overview of the structure of the school education department and the roles and responsibilities of the school personnel at each level gives a picture of the functioning of government/local body managed schools.

The Department of School Education is the largest among the 200 departments in the State. The structure of the education department remains constant and the individuals who are in-charge assume those duties that are allocated to that cadre/position. The department focuses on the primary and secondary education and also arranges to train the teachers. The Director of School Education (DSE) heads the

Directorate of School Education which, in turn, functions under the administrative control of the Education Department of GoAP. Of many functions of DSE, the major ones include: providing schooling facilities for all children under the age group of 6 to 14 years, providing teachers in the schools and giving pre-service and in-service training programmes to the teachers. The directorate also undertakes the requests to correct erroneous personal data in school certificates (SSC/HSC etc) and school records. For every five districts, there is one Regional Joint Director (RJD) for school education who monitors the quality of education, oversees HM promotions and so on. He/She is also responsible for recognition, opening or up gradation of high schools.

For every district, there is one District Education Officer (DEO) who heads the District Education Office. As far as the academic duties are concerned, the DEO is responsible for improving the quality of school education in the district and also for recognition, opening or up gradation of the primary and upper primary schools. The person should ensure 100 per cent enrolment and retention rates of children and also inspect and supervise the schools and offices of the Deputy DEO and the MEO. The Deputy DEO oversees upper primary and secondary education in the district whereas the MEO of every mandal oversee the primary education in the mandal. All the three - DEO, D.DEO and MEO - are responsible in planning and conducting the examinations. The HM (principal) of every school is responsible for the overall functioning of the school. He/she should implement the institutional plans in the school, and should be responsible for the improvement of enrolment and attendance in the school. It was observed that in ZPHS, the HM, who was a woman aged 50 years, used to take care of examinations, sanctioning leaves, teachers' salaries, checking attendance, MDMs, and the like.

Private schools (unaided), on the other hand, have their own internal structure which is not bureaucratic. The school functions as per the instructions of the management and teachers are accountable to the

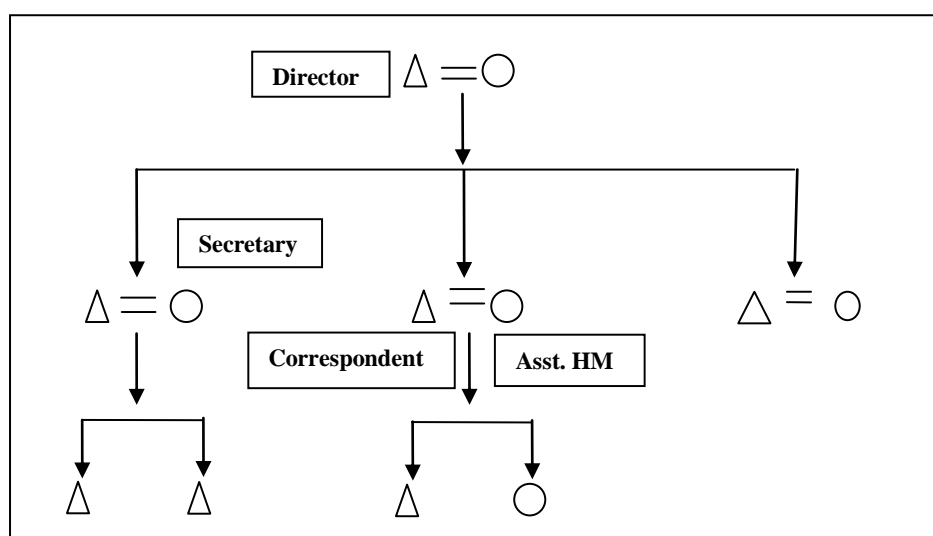
school management rather than to any government official. In NMHS, the major positions within the management are: the director, correspondent, HM (principal), asst. HM and secretary. The profile of the management (school personnel) of the school is as follows:

**TABLE 3.1 SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE SCHOOL
MANAGEMENT OF NMHS**

Designation	Sex	Age	Marital Status	Qualification	Caste	No. of years in school
Director	M	65	M	M.Sc B.Ed	OC	24 years
Correspondent	M	35	M	M.Sc, B.Ed, LLB	OC	2 years
Principal/HM	F	42	M	B.A, B.Ed.	OC	20 years
Asst. Principal/HM	F	37	M	B.Sc	OC	15 years
Secretary	F	31	M	M.A, B.Ed	OC	1 year

The director of the NMHS is a 65 year old man who belongs to an upper caste (*Reddy*). He always considered this school as his own child and had a progressive outlook towards the school. Though he is not involved in any teaching activity in the school, but he daily visits the school and monitors the school activities. Teachers stated that even though he is old, but his dedication towards the school and his punctuality is an example for the younger generation. He has three sons and his middle son is the correspondent of the school. His first daughter-in-law is the assistant HM while the second daughter-in-law is the secretary in the school. His grandchildren, i.e., children of his first son study in the same school. His second son has two children: one son studies in a private school that caters to upper middle classes whereas the daughter is in the nursery in NMHS. The management of NMHS is summed up through a genealogical tree:

FIG 3.1 GENEALOGICAL DIAGRAM OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT (NMHS)



The school correspondent (son of the director) was a lecturer in a junior college, but left that job to oversee the functioning of the school and is fully occupied with the school activities. As per the state government regulations, it is mandatory to have a ‘correspondent’ to report to the government about the functioning of the school. Since the director’s son was well qualified and had good communication skills, he was selected for undertaking this responsibility. Apart from being the in-charge of the school and outside activities, he was also involved in establishing a Montessori play school which started functioning from the academic year 2009. He was not involved in any teaching activity in the school, but he regularly used to come and inspect the classrooms.

The HM was the only person from the management who was not from the family of the founder of the school and involved in teaching activity too. She has been working in the school right from the beginning of the school’s establishment, and thus, gained twenty four years of teaching experience in the same school. She used to teach Hindi to secondary level students and also used to take care of the examinations, timetables, and leave of the teachers so that teaching activity can go on smoothly in the school without any disturbance. She was given full responsibility of the activities in the primary classes whereas the director or the correspondent used to take care of

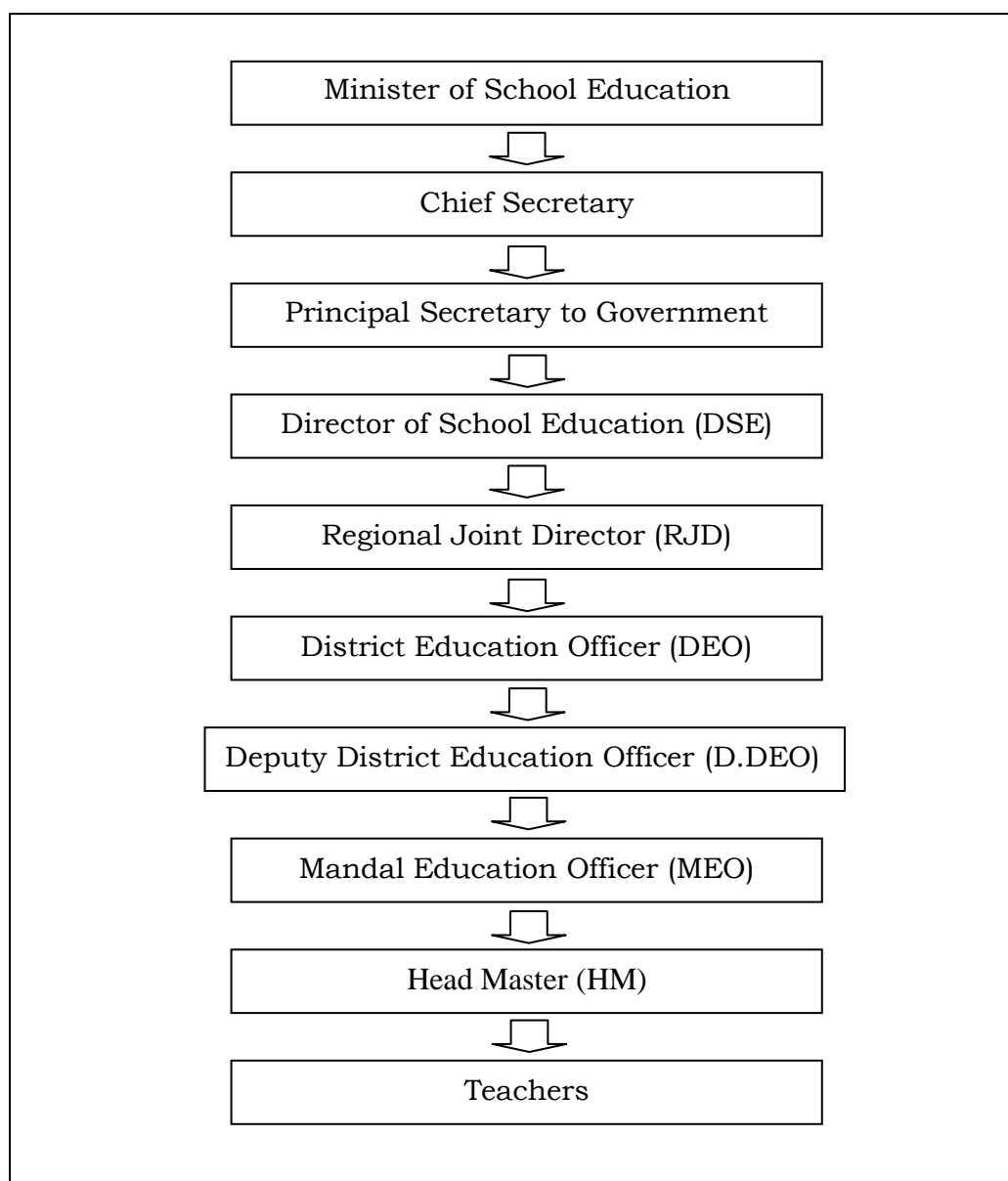
the teaching activities of the high school. The other two positions i.e., the assistant HM and the secretary were once again held by the members of the same family of the founder and they looked after the fees, admissions, books and uniforms of the students. They also used to interact with the parents when the latter come for queries regarding fees, admissions etc. Both of them are not involved in any teaching activity, but used to play a proactive role in the schools' financial matters. There was a female clerk, aged 37, who was qualified up to the 10th grade. She used to maintain records of the fee defaulters and looked after the admissions of students.

Authority and Decision Making

Previous section discussed the roles and responsibilities of the person at each level of the school education department. However, all government organisations have hierarchically arranged relationships that revolve around power and authority and the education department of the state is no exception to this.

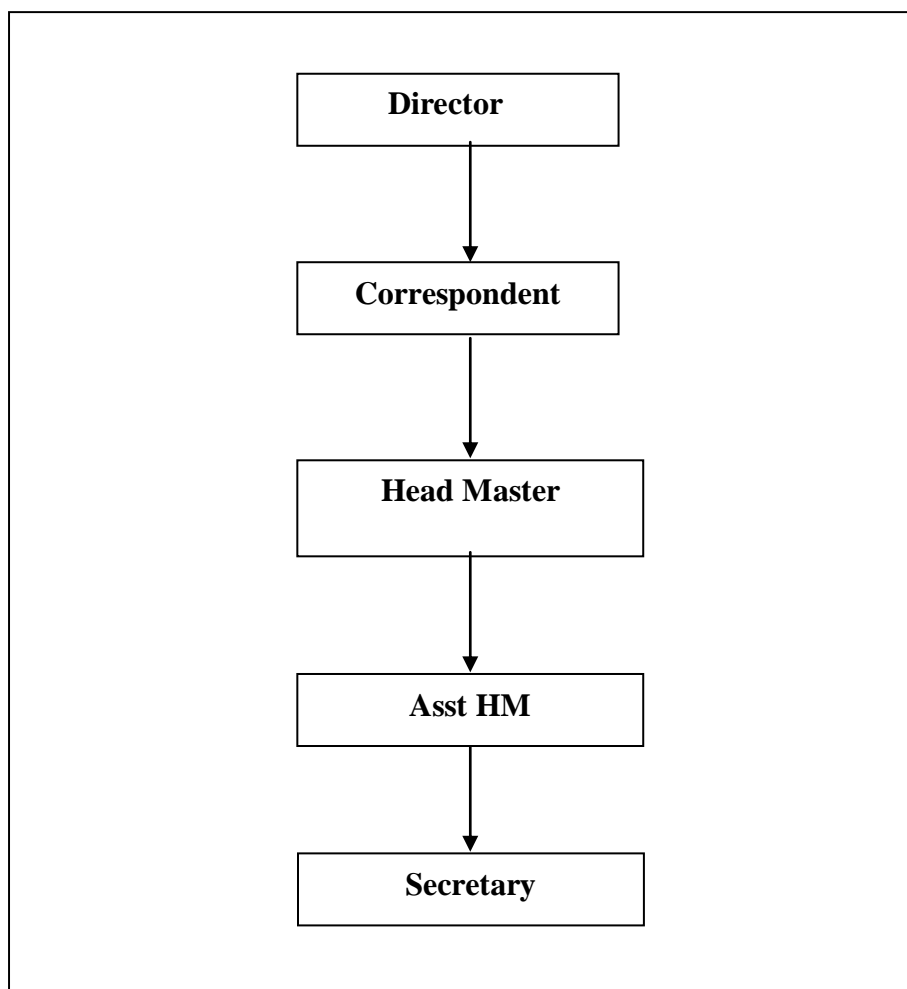
The education minister belongs to the highest cadre followed by the Chief and Principal Secretary. Next in rank is that of the Director who is in charge of the school education of the entire state. This is followed by the RJD who is in charge of five districts of the state. Then there is DEO and under him there is the deputy DEO in every district. This is followed by the MEO, HM and the teachers. While doing fieldwork, it was observed that the high school teachers and HM were in direct contact with DEO and the D.DE0 whereas primary school teachers were accountable to the MEO. Both HM and teachers follow the orders coming from the higher authorities (D.DE0/DEO). The diagram below shows the hierarchical chain of command in the State education department:

**FIG 3.2 HIERARCHY OF POWER IN DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION,
ANDHRA PRADESH**



This long hierarchical chain of command was lacking in NMHS. The director of the school had the utmost authority followed by the correspondent, HM, assistant HM and the secretary. The following diagram summarizes the chain of hierarchy in NMHS:

FIG 3.3_HIERARCHY OF POWER IN NMHS



As far as decision making is concerned, it was observed that decision making in both the schools takes place only at the higher levels i.e., at the DSE and DEO levels in ZPHS and at the level of the director at NMHS. In NMHS, in particular, decision making had always been autocratic and restricted only at the management level. All the major decisions regarding the school were always made by the director and not democratically by consultation with the teachers. These decisions were concerned with recruiting and removing the teachers, examinations, time table, salaries, and so on. Even though there was an HM position, the person in this position did not have the power to make decisions and had to follow the instructions of the director or the correspondent. However, if the HM found any teacher not performing well in the class, she used to inform the management and

accordingly a decision was made. The management within the school was responsible for the overall functioning of the school and had the maximum authority. An atmosphere of consensus and co-operation was lacking in the school. Thus, in both the schools, teachers and pupils obeyed and followed whatever was coming from above.

Academic System

In common parlance, the term education is equated with schooling and school is considered to be an academic arena where the main aim is to teach children the three R's: *Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic*. When this academic side is taken into consideration, the functioning of a local body school is strikingly different from a private school as in the former government programmes and schemes are constantly implemented and experimented to achieve hundred percent enrolment and retention levels. Both ZPHS and NMHS are co-educational schools, but they differ in various other parameters like school category (primary/UP/HS), syllabus followed, medium of instruction, and so on, the details of which is discussed below.

ZPHS is a secondary/high school where the lowest grade is VI and the highest is the X grade. Primary stage is not attached to the school as it comes under a separate administration (*mandal parishad*)³. However, within the same premises there is one *mandal parishad* managed primary school functioning in a separate building. The essential feature that sets apart ZPHS from various other government/local body schools is that the school runs both English and Telugu medium classes simultaneously. Following English medium in government/local body schools is quite rare, but this was made possible in this school four years ago due to the orders from the then DEO. In the year 2005-06, a committee was appointed by the school education department to review the education scenario in AP

³ Apart from many other functions, the function of mandal parishad is to establish and maintain the primary schools. Staff of the mandal parishad is under the administrative control and supervision of the Mandal Parishad Development Officer (MPDO).

and to find out the reasons behind parents sending their children to private schools. It was found that parents had a strong desire for English-medium education for their children, something which was lacking in government schools. Thus, a pilot project was initiated wherein it was proposed that in every district, four or five government/local body managed English medium schools should be started. In Ranga Reddy district, there are four such schools and ZPHS is one of them.

Teachers reported that for any initiative to be implemented, the HM should play a proactive role in it. The HM at that time was very dedicated, had a vision for the improvement of the school, and thus, encouraged English-medium in ZPHS. In 2005-06, it was first introduced in one section of grade VI and the same batch which was promoted every year has reached to grade X in the year 2009-10. For English medium classes, textbooks and question papers were printed in English, though the syllabus followed was the state-prescribed syllabus. The other sections of the same class followed Telugu medium textbooks and had Telugu as the medium of instruction. Thus, the classes were arranged into three sections, all 'A' and 'B' sections were Telugu medium whereas all 'C' sections followed an English-medium curriculum. However, the HM reported that this pilot project was not very successful, and as a result, it was not extended to the entire district. She reasoned that there were some inherent difficulties in the project. Separate staff was supposed to be appointed to teach in English, but this did not happen. As a consequence, it was taken up by Telugu-medium teachers who were not very competent to teach in English. Moreover, teachers also reported that students faced lot of difficulties in understanding the subject in English as they were in Telugu-medium till grade V.

In the academic year 2008-09, the government launched another initiative in which English, instead of Telugu, was made the medium of instruction and the state syllabus was replaced with the Central Board of School Education (CBSE) syllabus. This was introduced from

class VI in 6,500 government-run high schools covering over 250,000 high schools in Andhra Pradesh. The move was part of the World Bank-aided 'Strengthening and Universalisation of Quality and Access to Secondary Schools' project, hence the commonly used term 'SUCCESS Schools'. The aim was to improve the standards in school education, to prepare students to strengthen their base in English medium, and to face the competitive world. Thus, in ZPHS, the SUCCESS programme was introduced in grade VI in one section while the other two sections followed state syllabus in Telugu-medium. Thus, ZPHS had both CBSE and state syllabus and the medium of instruction was English as well as Telugu.

NMHS, on the other hand, is an entirely English- medium school. The school has classes right from pre-primary to grade X and is affiliated to the State government board which prescribes the syllabus and conducts a major examination in grade X, commonly known as Senior Secondary Certificate (SSC) exam. Apart from this, other books which are not prescribed by the government, popularly called as 'private books' are used for teaching which are neither CBSE nor ICSE prescribed textbooks. These private books are used only for the primary sections whereas for the upper primary and secondary sections, the state board syllabus is taught. The correspondent reported that as the school is recognized, they are not supposed to use private books. However, these books are being used to improve the fundamentals of the primary children. He further reasoned that getting state syllabus textbooks is very difficult as there is always the problem of shortage of books.

As far as languages are concerned, a three language formula is followed in many schools in India which has a combination of the local, the national and the English language. In Andhra Pradesh, Telugu, the mother tongue is taken as the first language, Hindi is taken as the second language and English as the third language. Telugu is taught right from the beginning of the schooling. Hindi is introduced from grade VI as a second language and they are taught

varnamala (alphabets), reading and writing small paragraphs. In those government schools where Telugu is the only medium of instruction, all the subjects are in Telugu, and English is mere a language subject.

Fee Structure

School fee is one of the determining factors for the parents in deciding the choice of schools for their children. In government/local body schools, there is no tuition fee *per se*, thus the popular notion that in government schools education is free. However, the real question is: how free is this 'free education'? Teachers in ZPHS reported that though tuition fee is not charged from the students, small amount is charged from the students in other ways as per the government rules. The school HM reported that every year, District Common Examination Board (DCEB) fee of Rs 12 is collected from the students of classes 6th and 7th and Rs 15 from the students of 8th, 9th and 10th standards. The function of DCEB is to publish the question papers and distribute it to the schools. This fee is taken from the students in order to print quarterly, half yearly and annual examination question papers. The fee is collected by the class teachers of every class in the beginning of the academic year, which is later submitted to the DCEB by the office assistants. In addition, 10th grade students pay Rs 125 every year as exam fees for appearing in the board exams. Moreover, 'special fees' is collected from the students during admission time for organising school functions like republic day, independence day, and so on. For this, Rs 40 from the students of grades VI and VII and Rs 50 from the students belonging to VIII, IX, and X grades is collected at the time of admission. Apart from all this, parents have to shell out money for school uniforms, notebooks and other necessary school related stationary items. Textbooks, however, are provided free of cost to the students by the GoAP.

All the above mentioned expenses for a child studying in government school seem to be very nominal when it is compared with even a low-medium cost private school. NMHS charges the lowest fees when

compared to all other private unaided schools in Nayapally. The fee varies for different classes and increases as the child goes to higher classes. The management, however, was reluctant to reveal how much fee was charged throughout a year on different occasions and for what reasons. When the teachers were asked about it they reported that the fee was not restricted to just tuition fee, but money is collected from the students on various grounds.

To start with, in the academic year 2008-09, the monthly tuition fee ranged between Rs 300-Rs 700 depending upon the classes. However, it was difficult to get information regarding the break up details of the monthly fees. On one hand, school management was reluctant to reveal the details, and on the other hand, teachers were not sure about the various components that were included in the fee as it was not collected by them. Only after repeated probing of the management and through conversations with the students the information was attained. For nursery, LKG, and UKG, the monthly tuition fee was Rs 300 and from I standard onwards various components were added to the basic fee. For primary sections i.e., I to V, the fee was Rs 350 of which Rs 50 was the computer fee. For the VI and VII grade students, the monthly fee was Rs 500 of which the basic fee was Rs 400 (Rs 50 added for upper primary sections), Rs 50 towards the computer fee and another Rs 50 was charged for study hours. In the secondary classes i.e., VIII, IX and X, the basic fee was increased by Rs 50 for each class and besides this, computer and study hour fee of Rs 100 (Rs 50 each) was added to the basic fee. In addition to this, an extra sum of Rs 50 is added towards IIT-JEE/EAMCET coaching⁴. Thus, for a X standard student, the monthly tuition fee structure with the break up details is like this:

⁴ IIT-JEE (Indian Institute of Technology-Joint Entrance Examination) and EAMCET (Engineering and Medicine Common Entrance Test) are the two competitive examination which for engineering and medicine courses and most of the students appear in Andhra Pradesh prepare for these exams.

TABLE 3.2 MONTHLY FEE OF A X STANDARD STUDENT IN NMHS

Fee Component	Amount (in Rs)
Basic Fee	550
Computer Fee	50
Study Hour Fee	50
IIT coaching	50
Total Monthly Fee	700

In the guidelines given to the parents, it was mentioned that the fee has to be paid regularly or a fine of Rs 5 will be charged every month. However, it was observed that there were many defaulters and many students used to pay two or three months fees at a time. Parents are given fee-card which is brought to the school when the monthly fee is paid by the parents or the students. On this card, payment for the month is entered by the school secretary or the clerk. Since in the month of May, schools have summer vacations, the fee of April and May has to be paid in the month of April itself as per the rules. The school management employs many strategies to encourage the payment of fees during this time like not issuing hall tickets for annual exams, not giving report cards to the students, and the like. In the academic year 2009-10, the monthly fee was increased by Rs 50 for every class which the school secretary justified by referring to much higher fee hike in other schools.

Expenditure other than fees

In NMHS, apart from the monthly fees, there are several other expenditures every year. A sum of Rs 1,000 is collected from the parents as donation at the time of admission. In addition to this, in the beginning of every academic year, a special fee of Rs 400 for LKG to class V, Rs 500 for VI to IX and Rs 600 for X grade is charged for examinations, report cards, files, identity cards, games equipment, and so on. Apart from this, books are to be purchased by the students from the school in the beginning of every academic year which costs between Rs 1500 to Rs 2000 for the upper primary classes. These books are in the form of study materials and workbooks for all the subjects which are necessary to buy. It was

observed that teachers mostly focus on these study materials rather than the prescribed text books. The detailed costs of books for each class are as follows:

TABLE 3.3 EXPENDITURE ON TEXTBOOKS IN NMHS

Sl. No.	Class	Textbooks Amount
1	Nursery	1717 (with uniforms)
2	LKG	944
3	UKG	1072
4	I	1714
5	II	1660
6	III	1658
7	IV	1784
8	V	1878
9	VI	1565
10	VII	1620
11	VIII	1621
12	IX	1975
13	X	1748

In the above table, government textbooks are not included for the upper primary classes which are again additional expenditure for the parents. It was noted that the government textbooks are very affordable and cost between Rs 100 to Rs 200 for all subjects for the upper primary classes. The real expenditure is the study materials prescribed by the private schools which are very expensive and students are forced to buy them. It was observed that in the beginning of the new academic year, parents were complaining about the amount they have to pay for the books. In a family of two children, the amount for the textbooks was around Rs 4,000 and many parents reported that it is very difficult for them to pay in one installment. They stated that government books are cheap, but study materials are very expensive and they have no other option but to purchase them as teachers teach only with the study material.

At the end of every academic year, a publishing agency approaches the school and takes the order of the study materials with the school's name printed on the text books. These books are then sold from the beginning of the summer vacations of the school. Teachers teaching in the primary sections reported that in the primary classes, private books are solely introduced to make profit and not with any good intention of improving the basics. This is one way through which private schools make huge profits. Since government books are very cheap, the school management cannot incur profit from them. Thus, if only the monthly tuition fee is taken into account, the fee ranges between Rs 3,600 to Rs 7,200 per annum depending on the grade in which a child is studying. However, when other expenditures like special fee, textbooks etc are added, the amount ranges between Rs 8,100 to Rs 11,000 per annum for the upper primary and secondary classes. For example, the yearly expenditure for a student in VIII grade is as follows:

TABLE 3.4 ANNUAL EXPENDITURE OF A VIII STANDARD STUDENT IN NMHS

Expenditure (per annum)	Amount (in Rs)
Tuition fee	7,200 (600 per month)
Special fee	500
Textbooks (both govt. and study material)	1,800 (approx.)
Total	9500

Moreover, in this amount, uniforms, shoes and other stationary items are not included, which when added exceeds the amount to a much higher level. These components are common in all private schools, but the amount varies depending on the economic class of the students to which the school is catering to. The expenditure mentioned above is for NMHS which is the cheapest in Nayapally. The monthly fees seem to be manageable, but when various other components are added to it, the expenditure towards the schooling of a child becomes quite expensive for the parents. The correspondent reported that all the private unaided schools thrive mostly on the school fees and all the

high cost private schools meant for the elites make huge profits from the students' fees which are in lakhs per annum.

All these expenditures like donations, special fee, textbooks, etc are lacking for the students of government/local body schools. They only have to spend money on the school uniforms, notebooks and other necessary stationary items. Parents of government school children reported that their annual expenditure for their child comes around Rs 400 to Rs 500 and most of the expenses are met in the beginning of the academic year.

Teacher Recruitment

The recruitment of teachers in government, mandal parishad, zilla parishad or municipality schools and the schools under the control of project officers in I.T.D.A in Andhra Pradesh takes place through a statewide recruitment process conducted by the Director of School Education. This recruitment process is for the posts of teachers as School Assistants (SAs) for the high schools, Secondary Grade Teachers (SGTs) for the primary schools, Language Pundits and Physical Education Teachers (PETs). The SAs' and SGTs' are the subject teachers and the language pundits are the teachers for teaching language subjects like Telugu or Hindi. For the selection of teachers, a written test is conducted in every district, popularly called as District Selection Committee (DSC) exam. This exam is based on general knowledge, current affairs, English, main subject and educational psychology. The requirement for appearing in this written test for SAs' and Language Pundits is a Bachelor's Degree with one subject as the main subject for which the candidate has applied, and a B.Ed degree with the main subject taken as a methodology subject. For SGTs', the candidate must possess an Intermediate Certificate issued by the Board of Intermediate Education, Andhra Pradesh and D.Ed (Diploma in Education) certificate issued by the Director of Government Examinations, Andhra Pradesh. For PETs', apart from possessing an Intermediate Certificate, an Undergraduate Diploma in Physical Education (U.G.D.P.Ed) is essential. For every district, the

number of vacancies is specified and the candidate should mention the district in which he/she would like to seek selection. Accordingly, the candidates submit their applications to the District Education Officer (DEO) of the concerned district. Usually, candidates opt for their own native district.

After clearing the DSC exam, district wise interviews (referred as counseling in AP) are held for filling the posts. The entire selection process is very long. Teachers reported that the promotions of teachers from SGT to SA depend on the number of vacancies available at that time. They reasoned that for English, Physical Science and Maths there are more vacancies, so teachers are promoted to SAs' after six to seven years of experience. However, this is not the case with Social Studies and other languages. Their promotion to SA takes much longer time as there are not many vacancies. As a result, they remain in the primary school for 12 to 14 years and only then they get promoted to SA.

In Andhra Pradesh, the DSC exam is very popular and there are many coaching institutes that train people for the exam. After a gap of four years and for the first time in Congress tenure, DSC 2008 notification came out and a record number of over 5.47 lakh candidates appeared for the examination. There were many vacancies in every district as old teachers were retiring and fresh appointments were not made for a long time. For recruitment in Ranga Reddy district, a total of 2831 vacancies for SA, SGT, Language Pundits and PETs' were announced and all the vacancies (except one for SGT in ITDA), were for government/local body schools. Thus, it is clear that teachers face tough competition for the teaching job in government/local body schools. In ZPHS, there were eleven SAs, two Telugu Pundits, one Hindi Pundit and one PET teacher.

In order to meet the requirement of regular teachers and to fill the vacant positions, *para- teacher* scheme was introduced wherein these teachers substitute the vacant posts of regular teachers. A para teacher is a full time employee in the school who is not necessarily

professionally qualified but is generally from amongst the same population/community. The person is usually appointed on a fixed salary/honorarium, which is much lesser than the salary of a full time teacher (Singh and Raju, 2006). A severe shortage of teachers exist in the government schools partly as a result of the retirement of teachers and partly due to the increase in enrolment. State governments are finding it difficult to fill these vacancies with teachers in regular pay scales. Therefore, para teachers are being appointed to meet the requirement of the teachers because it does not require any significant increase in financial allocation, especially when the state governments are faced with the paucity of funds. Moreover, there are many single teacher schools in India and para teachers fill the gap of the required teachers, thus reducing the pupil-teacher ratio too. In Andhra Pradesh, these para teachers are called *Vidya* Volunteers (V.Vs') and are more than fifty thousand in number (Jha, 2007).

In ZPHS, there are eight such volunteers working as full time teachers. Usually, in every school there are four or five such volunteers, but since there are more students at ZPHS and there are English as well as Telugu-medium classes, eight volunteers were appointed. For primary school, candidates who passed X class were eligible to apply whereas for the high school, the minimum qualification was a pass in the Intermediate level. When asked about the recruitment of V.Vs', the HM stated that there is no formal recruitment process for their appointment. Their selection is based on the qualifications and experience. New applicants are asked for their complete Curriculum Vitae (CV) along with their contact numbers. When they are required, they are called by the HM. The applicants bring their original certificates and are interviewed about their qualifications and experience in various schools. The HM in ZPHS reasoned that strict rules are not usually followed for recruiting V.Vs' as it is difficult to get such volunteers since the salary given is very less (initially appointed with Rs 1,000 in the beginning of the scheme) when compared to the regular teachers.

The long process of recruiting regular teachers is entirely absent in private schools. The recruitment of teachers in private schools starts just before the beginning of the academic year i.e., in the month of May to ensure that at the start of the new academic year the school has good number of teachers. In NMHS, the management does not advertise vacancies in the newspapers as many schools do. The candidates submit their CV to the school management and are accordingly called to give a demo of their teaching. If the management is satisfied, the candidate is appointed. Teachers are mostly recruited based on the demo, their experience and competency to teach in English, especially for the higher classes. From time to time, students' opinions and parents' complaints are taken into consideration when assessing the performance of the teacher. If the performance of the teacher is not good, they are removed from the school. Thus, in NMHS, the hiring and firing of the teachers is at the sole discretion of the school management.

Number of Teachers

Shortage of teachers in India has been one of the major concerns since independence. Several states in the country have shortage of qualified teachers in schools. As mentioned in the previous section, to overcome this drawback, vidya volunteers were appointed as para teachers. The table below gives a comparative picture of the number of teachers in both the schools.

TABLE 3.5 NUMBER OF TEACHERS IN ZPHS AND NMHS

Teachers	Males	Females	Total
ZPHS			
Regular Teachers	02	12	14
Vidya Volunteers	-	08	08
Computer Teachers	-	02	02
NMHS			
Teachers in Primary	-	16	16
Teachers in High School	02	11	13

The above table clearly shows that ZPHS has more number of teachers than NMHS. In the academic year 2008-09, there were fourteen regular teachers and eight *vidya* volunteers in ZPHS. Apart from this, there were two computer teachers for imparting computer education to the students. Altogether, there were twenty four teachers in ZPHS which include both regular and para-teachers, i.e., *vidya* volunteers. Out of these twenty four teachers, two were males and the rest of them were females. Teachers reported that this school has good reputation as the number of the teachers is greater than other government schools. Usually, in other government schools, only five or six V.Vs' are appointed. But since this school has both English and Telugu medium classes, and good number of students⁵, eight V.Vs' were sanctioned for ZPHS. At the time of field work, there were four vacancies for permanent teachers: two for Hindi, one for Telugu, and one for Social Science. Apart from the teaching staff, there were five non-teaching staff members in the school. Of these, one was appointed as Junior Assistant and two as Record Assistants. Their duties include maintenance of all kinds of accounts, making arrangements for examinations, admissions, salaries of teachers, issuing Transfer Certificates (T.Cs) and so on. Apart from these, there was one attender and a night watchman in the school. The duty of the attender was to note down the number of students opting for mid-day meals, putting official stamps on the examination answer sheets and the like.

In NMHS, there were twenty nine teachers altogether right from the nursery to the X class. Of these, thirteen teachers were for upper primary and secondary sections while sixteen teachers were for pre-primary and primary sections. In the primary section, all the teachers were females whereas in the high school there were only two male teachers. Apart from the teaching staff, there were five non-teaching staff members who form the management committee of the school⁶.

⁵ The actual number of students in each school is discussed in the next section.

⁶ The details regarding the members of the school management have been discussed in the beginning of the chapter.

There were three *ayahs* (care takers) in the school for taking care of pre-primary children.

Students' Admissions

Students' admissions are an important event in almost all the schools, irrespective of the type of school management. It is the time when the non-teaching staff in government/local body schools and the management in private schools are fully engaged and occupied. This time overlaps with those students who want T.Cs' to get admitted to other schools or junior colleges. Thus, the office room remains crowded with children and parents. It was observed that sometimes parents come twice or thrice to get their work done.

For admission of a child in ZPHS and in any other government/local body school, TC is required from the previous school with caste specification and the MEO or the DEO's signature on it. If the child wants to shift from a private to a government school, a forwarding letter from the MEO is essential. For new admissions, a register is maintained in which the child's name, father's name and admission number are entered by the non-teaching staff. A special fee of Rs 40 for grade VI and VII, and Rs 50 for grade VIII, IX and X is charged for admission. With this, the admission process of the child is completed and he/she is admitted in the school. In government schools, whoever comes for admission is admitted, provided the child has TC from the previous school where he/she has studied earlier. Every year, there are around 150 admissions and most of the admissions take place in VI standard as the children move from primary to upper primary level, and thus, have to change their schools.

It is pertinent to highlight that parents with children in ZPHS did not know about CBSE or State board syllabus as most of them were working class illiterates. They just knew that the school had English and Telugu medium. In one instance, a father came to the school for the admission of his son in the English-medium in VI grade. The office staff informed him that English medium would be very tough for the child as he had been in Telugu-medium classes in the primary stage.

However, the father insisted that he wanted his son to be admitted into the English-medium class. Therefore, to test the child's competency in English, one office assistant asked the child to recite the English alphabets which the child did with ease, but the child was later unable to spell the word 'Student'. The father said that he would send his child to private tuitions, and was adamant about his son's admission into the English-medium section. Finally, the child was admitted into the English-medium VI class. There are no formal procedures if the child wanted to shift from Telugu to English medium and vice-versa. The child informs the office staff and the entries in the register are changed. Some parents wanted double promotions for their children which were explicitly rejected by the office staff. They informed the parents that such things happen only in private schools and it is against the rules in government schools. When the student wants to leave the school, the office staff first enquires whether the student has passed or failed and asks him/her to get it in writing from the class teacher along with the admission number of the student. Based on this, TC is issued to the student with the HM's signature.

In NMHS on the other hand, the process of admission starts from the month of March. Though the actual admissions take place in May and June, from March onwards the first cycle of admission known as 'canvassing' starts. This is a kind of campaigning about the school, invariably done by the school teachers right from the pre-primary to the high school. Every day, two teachers are assigned the duty of canvassing which involves going to the houses of residents of Nayapally, distributing pamphlets and tell the residents about the school. The researcher went for canvassing for a few days and observed that most of the time it is done in slums and low-income areas so that as many children as possible can be drawn for admissions since this is the cheapest school in the locality. The pamphlets are printed in both English and Telugu and has information about the school, facilities available and X results of the last year. The salient features of NMHS are stated in the pamphlets

and some of them are: play ground with good sports facilities, spacious well-ventilated classrooms, complete English-speaking environment, world class computer education with latest software and multimedia lab from NIIT, music, dance and creative activity with karate, and so on. Undoubtedly, whatever is written on the pamphlets is exaggeration.

The canvassing is usually done in the morning i.e., from 9am-11am. Teachers reported that since it is done during the school hours, no incentives or monetary benefits are given to the teachers. Furthermore, this task is very tiring as March and April are peak summer months and they have to cover every street in Nayapally. In these two months, canvassing is restricted to two hours. However, intensive canvassing starts from the month of May when summer vacations start for the students. Every day, at least 4 to 5 teachers have the duty of campaigning. Each teacher is asked to bring at least two children for admission. Teachers reported that they went to the same house two to three times because of which parents get annoyed. They reasoned that as there is a private school in every street and all the schools follow the same procedure, it is difficult to get children for new admissions. As a result, most of the teachers bring small kids from nearby houses for admission into the nursery. This is the reason that every year the number crosses 80 for nursery class (age 3+). For the rest of the classes, only 5 to 6 new admissions take place every year.

At the time of new admission, a deposit of Rs 1,000 is collected from each student which is refundable. Unlike government schools, teachers in private schools play a major role during admissions. With X students leaving the school and small children joining nursery, the number of students in the school more or less remain the same. However, since NMHS is a medium cost private school, it does not have funds to promote the school by advertising in newspapers or putting hoardings for publicity or designing a school website. The director reported that every year they distribute pamphlets to the

parents during admission time and since this is the oldest private school in the area, parents have trust in it, and thus, they get good number of students.

Number of Students

In ZPHS, there are three sections for each class in which sections 'A' and 'B' follow Telugu medium state syllabus and section 'C' follows English medium state syllabus. However, VI 'C' is an exception which follows English medium CBSE syllabus under the SUCCESS school project. All 'A' sections are 'all-girls' sections, 'B' sections are 'all- boys' sections and 'C' sections have a mix of both boys and girls. The total number of students in the school is 677, which is only for the high school. Teachers stated that there are more students in this school than in other similar schools as there are good numbers of teachers, both regular as well as contractual. Moreover, the school is easily accessible to all as it is located on the main road and very near to the bus stop. The details regarding the number of students in the school are as follows:

TABLE 3.6 TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN ZPHS

Class	Boys	Girls	Total
VI A	-	76	76
VI B	64	-	64
VI C (SUCCESS School)	23	05	28
VII A	-	67	67
VII B	65	-	65
VII C (EM)	15	05	20
VIII A	-	58	58
VIII B	49	-	49
VIII C (EM)	13	04	17
IX A	-	57	57
IX B	53	-	53
IX C (EM)	07	04	11
X A	-	65	65
XB	47	-	47
Total	336	341	677

It was observed that at least 5 to 10 students were absent from each class everyday. In every section, there were at least two students who had enrolled, but never came to the school.

In NMHS, on the other hand, there were two sections for each class and the total number of students of the school was 878 which include pre-primary, primary, upper primary and secondary sections. In all the sections, boys and girls were clubbed together unlike the government school. The details of the number of students in the school are as follows:

TABLE 3.7 TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN NMHS

Class (both sections combined)	Boys	Girls	Total
Nursery	47	33	80
LKG	48	42	90
UKG	50	46	96
I	37	37	74
II	43	35	78
III	39	24	63
IV	32	27	59
V	36	30	66
VI	42	19	61
VII	28	22	50
VIII	36	24	60
IX	22	29	51
X	25	25	50
Total	485	393	878

If only upper primary and secondary sections are taken into consideration i.e., classes VI to X, the total number of students in NMHS is only 272 as compared to ZPHS where it is 677. It is clear from the above table that in the private school, the number of students is highest in the pre-primary stage, reduces in primary stage and becomes very low in upper primary and secondary stages. The number of boys is greater than that of girls in NMHS and they comprise 55% of the total strength whereas approximately 45% of the

girls are enrolled in the school. In ZPHS, the total number of boys and girls was almost the same.

Physical and Human Resources

Physical resources and pupil-teacher ratio are two important indicators of quality of education provided in the school. As rightly pointed out by Tilak (2010), good quality teachers in sufficient numbers and well equipped schools are a pre-requisite for quality education. These indicators are not only crucial for increasing enrolment and retention levels, but some scholars (for instance, Govinda and Varghese, 1992) argue that they also determine the achievement levels of the children.

In ZPHS, the school building was a pucca building with cemented walls and roof. The school had twelve classrooms against the requirement of fourteen. Thus, two classes were sitting in open spaces. There were four newly constructed classrooms and these were well-ventilated, spacious and could easily accommodate 50-60 students. However, rest of the old classrooms were dilapidating, very cramped and had dim lighting. In these classrooms, there was no furniture too and students used to sit on the floor. When students were asked whether they like to sit inside the classroom or outside, most of the students reported that they like to have classes outside in the open space, under the shade of the trees rather than in a closed and cramped classrooms with no ventilation. Only when the weather is too hot or rainy, students preferred to sit inside the classroom. The furniture in the classrooms include a writing desk attached to benches which seemed very old and outdated. A blackboard was attached to the wall, which teachers rarely used. The school had drinking water facility and a playground (400 sq. yards), but there were no girls' toilets, no medical facility and no electricity connection in the classrooms. For the teachers, there was a separate staffroom which had electricity facility and separate cupboards to keep their belongings. They had a separate toilet too, which was constructed after teachers pooled their money (Rs 200 each) for its construction.

In NMHS, the school building was an own semi-pucca three floor building with cemented walls and roof was made of asbestos sheet so that more floors can be constructed in future. The furniture in the classrooms was exactly similar to that of government school. No class was without a classroom, and each class was facing each other on the corridor. Therefore, whenever a class was in progress, one can easily hear the disturbances from the opposite classroom. This kind of disturbance was absent in ZPHS where classrooms were constructed in one line rather than opposite to each other. It was noted that the classrooms of NMHS were smaller than that of the government school with no sunshine and ventilation. Though the school had electricity connection, students and teachers were not allowed to use fans and lights. The school had separate toilets for boys and girls, drinking water facility and a small playground. Unlike ZPHS, teachers had no staffroom and no chairs in the classrooms. They were not given a separate space to sit and do their own work in the leisure periods. In both the schools, there was no library and laboratory. Thus, the popular assumption that all private schools are well equipped is not true as in some aspects like classrooms and facilities given to the teachers, ZPHS were better than the NMHS.

Teacher-pupil ratio is considered to be an important indicator for the quality of teaching as it is understood that optimum teacher-pupil ratio leads to better teaching and gives more attention to individual students. The national norm for teacher pupil ratio is 1:35 for upper primary classes⁷. In ZPHS, the pupil-teacher ratio in Telugu medium classes is 1:60 whereas in English medium classes it is 1:20. Almost all the teachers reported that in Telugu medium sections there are 50 to 60 students in every section and it becomes very difficult to manage the class. They reason that half of the time is wasted in controlling the students. Only two teachers, both regular teachers in ZPHS, reported that though in Telugu medium classes teacher pupil ratio is more, they never face any problem as they are used to it. They argue that earlier there were 80 to 100 students in each class as there were not

⁷ For primary classes, the ideal teacher-pupil ratio has been set as 1:40.

many high schools nearby. Now many primary schools near by have been upgraded, so parents have many options, and thus, teacher-pupil ratio has reduced. In NMHS, on the other hand, the average teacher-pupil ratio is 1:27 in every section. Here, teachers never complained about many students in the class. The retention of students in government schools, to some extent, depends on the school infrastructure and quality teaching can only take place in a low teacher pupil ratio. Therefore, as far as teacher-pupil ratio is concerned, NMHS was better than the ZPHS.

Rituals and Ceremonies

Rituals are periodic meaning-filled interactions that are key to reinforcing, renewing, and reenergizing cultures. Ceremonies are larger, more complex social gatherings that build meaning and purpose in a more elaborate way (Deal and Peterson, 2009). Observing rituals in a school is the first step towards understanding the overall ideology of the school. Rituals have a symbolic meaning embedded in them. Morning assembly is one such important ritual that marks the beginning of the day in a school. Students are an indispensable part of this assembly and invariably any usual school day commences with it. Let us see the various components of the assembly which not only reflects the overall ideology of the school, but more importantly, the kind of values that the school wants to inculcate among the students.

In ZPHS, as soon as the second bell rings, all students gather near the playground and stand in lines according to their classes. Students stand in exactly ten lines, five are meant for the boys while the other five are exclusively for the girls. It is the Physical Education Teacher's (PET) responsibility to organise the prayer properly, thus, most of the time he was present during the assembly and instructed the students to stand in line and warning them with a whistle. The teachers who are present during the assembly stand separately from the students and their participation is restricted to mere watching the assembly in progress.

In the assembly, a group of 4 to 5 girls from classes IX and X stand on the corridor to sing the prayer song and to present other assembly components. The prayer commences with a command from a student of X standard. The national song, *Vande Mataram*, is sung by all the school students. This is immediately followed by a salutation command given with a whistle. Subsequently, the national pledge is recited either in Telugu or in English by a girl from the group and repeated by the students. The pledge is followed by a patriotic Telugu song “*Maa Telugu Talli*” which is sung in chorus by all the students and goes like this:

*Maa Telugu talli ki mallepudanda
Maa kanna talli ki mangala haratulu.....(2)
Kadupulo bangaru, kanachupulo karuna,
Chirunavvulo sirulu, doralinchu maa talli
Maa Telugu talli ki.....
Gala gala godari kadalipotuntenu,
Bira bira krushnamma paruguladu tuntenu,
Bangaru pantale pandutayi,
Muripala mutyalu doralutayi,
Maa Telugu Talli Ki.....
Amaravati nagara apurupa shilpalu,
Tyagayya gontulo taradu nadalu,
Tikkayya kalamulo tiyyandanalu,
Nityamayyi, nikhilamayyi nilichi undedaka,
Rudramma bhujashakti, mallamma patibhakti,
Tirumala dhiyukti, krishnadevaraayuni keerti,
Maa chevalo ringumani maarumroge daka,
Nee atele adutam, nee patale paadutam,
Jai Telugu Talli, Jai Telugu Talli, Jai Telugu Talli*

This song is the official song of Andhra Pradesh written by Sri. Sankarambadi Sundarachari. *Telugu Talli* denotes Telugu mother and the song is about admiring her rich diversity. It symbolizes love and

reverence towards one's native land and its people⁸. The assembly is culminated with this song and the gathering is dispersed after a long whistle. The assembly lasts for 5-10 minutes, after which the students go back to their respective classes in a line. Meanwhile, many students come late and stand in a separate line near to the gate. After the assembly, they too join their respective lines and go to their classes. It was observed that every day morning assembly is attended by only 80 to 100 students while other students come very late. However, no strict action was taken for latecomers. Through these components, the school wants to inculcate the values of nationalism, equality of sexes, egalitarianism and service for the country and for one's own native land.

The morning assembly in NMHS is in stark contrast to that in ZPHS and has many components in it. The day starts at sharp 8.30am with meditation which lasts for about fifteen minutes. This not only helps in controlling the initial disorder, but also marks a fresh beginning of the day by offering prayers to god. During meditation, *gayatri mantram* is being played on a tape recorder. It is a Hindu chant that praises the goddess and invokes her with respect to enter into the soul of the one who is chanting the mantra to guide him/her in the right direction. It goes like this:

*Om bhur bhuva svaha, tat savitur varenyam,
Bhargo devasya dheemahi, dheeyo yo naha prachodayat.*

When asked about So, for the first fifteen minutes all the students sit in a line, close their eyes, fold their hands and sing *gayatri mantram* in chorus. At 8.45am, the bell rings and all the students immediately stand up for the morning assembly. In the assembly, there is a choir comprising of girls and a boy who leads and gives the command. All these students belong to the secondary classes i.e., VIII, IX and X. All

⁸ Recently there was a debate on this song when the minister of secondary education ordered all English Medium schools to include this song in the morning assembly following an incident in an English medium school where a teacher punished a child for speaking in Telugu. However, this soon became a political issue when few political parties started protesting it and hence the implementation of the order has been kept aside.

the teachers stand behind or in between the lines in contrast to ZPHS where teachers stand separately. They constantly monitor the students' conduct in the assembly. The leader gives the command of 'attention' and 'stand at ease' twice and then the prayer is started with a *shloka* (hymn):

*Guru bramha, guru vishnu, guru devo, maheshwarha,
Guru sakshat, parabrahma, tasmaisri, guruven namaha.⁹*

The shloka is first recited by the choir which is repeated by the rest of the students. This is immediately followed by the school prayer in English:

*We are as an army
Courageous and stay
Ever ready to fight against evils and for values,
Within us honestly enable life of sacrifice and service
Producing more than what we consume,
And giving more than what we take,
Father, keep us all along with virtues of courage and wisdom.*

It was noted that although students say this school prayer in the assembly in chorus, when asked individually none of the students were able to recite it correctly. All the students mechanically repeat what the choir was saying. Even the choir have learnt the whole prayer song incorrectly. Usually, the school prayer is supposed to be written in the school diaries, but this was absent in NMHS school diary. After the school prayer, the pledge is recited and *Vande Mataram* is sung as in ZPHS. Immediately after the song, all the students greet the teachers by saying 'Good Morning Teachers' in chorus. The assembly culminates with important announcements made by the director like exam dates, any functions etc. It was observed that he constantly motivates the students to work hard and study well. In ZPHS, it was very rare to see the HM addressing the students in the morning assembly.

⁹ This shloka says 'guru is the representative of lord Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He creates and sustains knowledge and destroys the weeds of ignorance. My salutation to such a guru who is the supreme god.'

Occasionally, the director recites a chapter from the Hindu epic Bhagvad Gita in the assembly. After recitation, he tells the meaning of the whole chapter in Telugu. He is of the view that the overall development of the child is not possible without imparting religious/spiritual consciousness among the students. Thus, he takes utmost care in inculcating such awareness among the students whenever possible. However, it is pertinent to highlight that schools are supposed to be secular and NMHS is not a religious school to impart knowledge of Hindu religion. Moreover, there are non-Hindu students studying in the school. When this question was raised, the director argued that more than ninety percent children in the school are Hindus, who form the majority, whereas very few students are Christians and Muslims.

After the morning assembly, all the students go to their classrooms in a line and they are accompanied by their class teachers. In the classroom, a small prayer is conducted by the class teacher every morning. This ritual is again in accordance with the instruction of the director and has been taking place for many years. As soon as the class teacher enters the class, students stand up and wish their teacher 'good morning' and start the prayer with folded hands. This prayer comprises of 4 to 5 *shlokas* recited by the students one after the other. Some teachers ask the children to do meditation for 5 to 10 minutes wherein students sit quietly keeping their eyes closed. The class is commenced by the class teacher only after the meditation or prayer.

Thus, in NMHS, the school management in their own way try to inculcate spiritual consciousness and the values of respect for the teachers and elders, and reverence to the god. It was noted that students recite all the *shlokas* at ease as they are taught this right from their entry to the school. The school management has been successful in this regard, however, reciting *shlokas* in the morning assembly and in the classroom prayer has been reduced to a mere routine procedure.

Apart from the morning assembly ritual, there are many ceremonies celebrated in both the schools. These include independence day, republic day, teacher's day, children's day and farewell party for the school leaving batch. However, like morning assembly, these ceremonies have also been reduced to a routine practice and the spirit and fervor was lacking in both teachers and students. When compared to NMHS students, ZPHS students were more excited and active during such occasions and the school had full attendance.

Daily Routine/Timetable

All the members of the school - the management, teachers and pupils - follow a daily routine which, in turn, helps the organisation to run in an ordered way. Both students and teachers have timetables to follow which is not just a chart on the wall, but in social terms, patterns of behaviour concerning who teaches what, to whom, where, when and for how long (King, 1983). When the daily routine of a government and private school is compared, the differences are very stark. In ZPHS, the routine is flexible whereas in NMHS it is marked by stringent rules and restraints.

A usual day in ZPHS starts at 8 am when slowly, one by one, students start coming to the school. First bell rings at 8.15 am and by this time, around fifty to seventy five students arrive at the school. They either play in the playground or are engaged in chit-chatting with friends and are scattered all over the school. At around the same time, *vidya* volunteers and PET teacher also reach the school. At around 8.20am, second bell rings and everyone gathers for the morning assembly in front of the headmaster's room that faces the playground. The assembly lasts for five to ten minutes after which the students head towards their classrooms. It was observed that most of the regular teachers (and many times the HM too) used to come only after the assembly. Even most of the students turn up only after 8.30 am and keep coming till 9am. Teachers reasoned that since students are involved in part-time economic activities, they usually come late to the school and this is especially true for the boys.

In NMHS, on the other hand, it was observed that all the students and teachers reach the school by sharp 8.30am. Unlike ZPHS, where students remain scattered all over the school before the assembly, in NMHS students gather near the space provided for the morning assembly and sit on the floor forming a neat line according to their classes. This behaviour was developed among the students to control the initial disorder before the assembly. From 8.30am to 8.45am, students meditate and whoever comes in during this time joins their class and meditates. By 8.45am, the full strength of the school, including teachers and students arrive, and then, morning assembly starts. The assembly lasts for fifteen minutes and from sharp 9am, regular classes commence and teachers and students follow their daily timetable.

ZPHS functions from 9am to 3.30pm and the entire day is organised into seven periods of forty five minutes each and has two intervals - one short interval for ten minutes and another lunch break for one hour. During peak summers, half day school starts and as a result thirty five minutes' time is allotted for each period. Earlier, the first period used to start at 8.30am, but it was observed that most of the students come only after 9am. Teachers reported that almost all the government schools start at 9am so in the academic year 2009-10 new school timings were announced and the school used to start at 9am.

In NMHS, the school timings are from 8.30am to 4pm which remains constant throughout the year, except during the X board exams. The entire day is organised into eight periods and one lunch break of half an hour. Like ZPHS, here too each period, on an average, is of forty five minutes duration. During X board exams, there is a change in the timing and students come in the afternoon as X exam is conducted in the morning. Thus, during those days, the school functions for four hours in the afternoon and each period is of thirty five minutes duration. After the school, study hour is conducted from 5pm to 7pm without any break.

Apart from this, there are many other things added to the daily routine of NMHS depending on the class. After 4pm, students of classes I to V leave the school. However, from 4pm-4.30pm, subject teachers sit with the slow learners of the upper primary classes in the classroom and clarify their doubts. The rest of the students from VI to X go back to their houses at 4 pm and return to the school at 4.30 pm for 'study hours'. The study hours are conducted under a teacher's supervision and last till 7 pm. It was observed that almost every student comes for the study hours with their school bags. Although the school boasts about having evening study hours, it was noticed that students do not learn anything. They are asked to sit with their books in front of them and read. The teacher who supervises the study hours does not know anything about any subject other than Telugu. Thus, even if students had any doubts, they could not clarify them as the subject teacher was not present. Most of the time, it was observed that students were quietly chatting with one another. They come for the study hours as they are paying extra money for it.

Similarly, in the morning, there is IIT/EAMCET coaching for VIII, IX and X students from 7am to 9am which was started from the academic year 2008-09. Even for this coaching, there were no proper teachers and as such no coaching was given to the students. One teacher was appointed for this, but he left after a few months. As a consequence, an upper primary Maths teacher started taking Maths classes with the help of CDs meant for preparing students for competitive exams. But the teacher reported that there was no one appointed for Physics and Chemistry subjects. Ultimately, the coaching was stopped and the allotted time was changed as study hours. As a result, most of the time it was noticed that students end up preparing for their internal school exams which is a routine procedure in the school.

Other Government Schemes in ZPHS

Apart from SUCCESS school and para teacher scheme, two other schemes operate in ZPHS and invariably in any other

government/local body school: Mid-Day Meals (MDM), and distribution of free textbooks. MDMs were started to increase the enrolment and retention rates in government schools and to provide nutritious food to the children. Earlier, this scheme was implemented only in primary schools but from the academic year 2008-09, this scheme has been extended to high schools as well. In ZPHS, this scheme was launched in the month of October, 2009. There was a separate kitchen shed in the school and the meals were cooked by three Self Help Group (SHG) women¹⁰. The government gives Rs 3 per plate if there are more than 100 students opting for the MDMs and Rs 3.25 per plate for less than 100 students. The money is calculated depending on the number of students eating daily. The woman in-charge of MDMs reported that government provides only rice and the rest of the items like pulses, spices and cooking gas are to be bought from her own expenses. Under her supervision, there were two cooks who were paid Rs 600 each per month.

Initially, about 200 to 250 students opted for the MDMs and daily 25 kgs of rice was used for cooking. Gradually, the number reduced to 80-100 students. Both teachers and students were not satisfied with the quality of food being served. It was observed that the food was in no way near to the requirements of a nutritious food. Teachers reported that for 200 students, only 250 gms of pulses were used to which two or three buckets of water was added. Teachers complained repeatedly, but in vain. The in-charge, on the other hand, stated that with increasing prices of all the essential commodities, it is difficult to buy the required food items. She reasoned that as only rice was supplied by the government, she was not able to make any profit. She further stated that if 200 students were opting for the MDM, rice for only 100 students was supplied to her by the HM. The HM, in response, stated that the cook intentionally prepared extra rice which

¹⁰ SHG is a group of 15-20 women from a homogenous economic class who are encouraged to make voluntary thrifts on a regular basis and pool the resources to make small interest bearing loans to their members. Andhra Pradesh reportedly has the maximum number of SHGs and the task of preparing MDMs has been assigned to SHG women.

was taken home by all the three women. Thus, this blame game regarding MDMs has almost become a norm in the school.

Students too were well aware of the quality of food being served to them. They complained that daily they were eating only rice and *pappu charu*¹¹ (which was very watery in consistency) and never a curry made of vegetables or eggs. They reported that the starchy water (which is supposed to be thrown after the rice is cooked) was mixed in the *pappu charu* to make it appear thick. The rice used was also of very poor quality, but since it is supplied by the government nobody can act against it. As a consequence, many students preferred to go back to their home during lunch time. Some bring *dal* or curry from home and have it with rice given in the school¹². Hence, the intention with which the scheme was started, i.e., to increase the enrolment and retention rates and to provide nutritious food has become futile as students are not opting for it in this school.

Apart from the MDMs, another scheme i.e., distribution of free textbooks is practiced in the school in which all the textbooks in English and Telugu medium are distributed to the students free of cost by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The non-teaching staff reported that apart from this, the government gives School Improvement Fund (SIF) under which Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000 is sanctioned every year for improving the infrastructure of the school and undertaking minor repairs.

The table below summarizes the various government schemes that are operating in ZPHS:

¹¹ *Pappu Charu* is a Telugu preparation in which good quantity of water is added to a little quantity of yellow gram and tamarind and seasoned with roasted mustard seeds and red chillies.

¹² While doing fieldwork in ZPHS, I bought all the necessary items required for making a curry and *dal* and prepared it in the school with the help of the cooks for a couple of times. On those days, around 300 students opted for the meals in the school. Thus, it is clear that if the food is properly prepared, many students will opt for it on a regular basis.

TABLE 3.8 GOVERNMENT SCHEMES IN ZPHS

Government Schemes	Year of Commencement	Aim
Mid-Day Meals	2008-2009	To increase the enrolment and retention rates
SUCCESS (CBSE) School	2008-2009	Improve the education standard and to strengthen the base in English medium
State Syllabus in English medium (pilot project)	2005-2006	To increase the enrolment rates in government schools
Computer Aided Learning Programme (CALP)*	2003-2004	To impart computer education among government school children
Para Teacher Scheme	2000-2001	To fill the vacant teaching positions

*Discussed in detail in chapter six

Conclusion

Schools are well-ordered systems having a well-defined institutional structure and normative system. Thus, all the parts must be understood before any of the parts can be systematically developed (Ianni, 1971). In this chapter, an attempt has been made to understand the internal structure of the schools through the visible and tangible aspects. Understanding the internal structure or physical reality of both the schools was imperative to understand how exactly the government and private school operate. The school education department, under which ZPHS functions, has all the characteristics of bureaucracy which was listed out by Weber: official tasks are specialized and organized on a continuous regulated basis; the offices are arranged hierarchically; the rules of work have a technical or legal basis and are administered by full-time, qualified, specialized staff; the resources of the organization are not owned by the staff; the official cannot appropriate his (her) office; administrative acts, decisions and rules are formulated and recorded in writing (cited in King, 1983:61). It was observed that the long chain of bureaucracy that governs the government school makes the organisation (school) more flexible. On the other hand, NMHS was very rigid. It was more like a self-contained institution and had the freedom to act as and

when situation arises without waiting for the decisions to come from above. It was noted that in both the schools, only the top officials had the authority for making decisions and teachers were mere mute spectators and obeyed whatever was coming from above. Teachers' opinion was never considered worth taking whenever decisions were made pertaining to the school. This was particularly true in NMHS.

As far as the expenditure on education is concerned, what parents spend on their child's education every month in NMHS is much more than what parents spend on their child's education every year in ZPHS. This is despite of the fact that NMHS is located in a low-income area and is the cheapest school in the locality. As discussed in this chapter, monthly fee is just one way of taking money from the parents. The huge amount of expenditure in the form of uniforms, textbooks and other stationary items in the beginning of every academic year poses a lot of burden on the working class parents. This also depicts that school education in even a low-medium cost private school is quite expensive. Fake promises like study hours, IIT coaching, spoken English are the strategies devised by the school to lure the parents and increasing the intake of the students every year. The following table sums up the internal structure of the two schools:

TABLE 3.9 COMPARATIVE TABLE OF THE INTERNAL STRUCTURE OF ZPHS AND NMHS

Features	ZPHS	NMHS
Type	High School	Nursery to High School
Intake	Working class	Lower to middle class
Goal	No clear cut goal	Result-oriented
Size	Medium-Large	Medium-Large
Management	Local Body	Private unaided
Decision making	Autocratic	Highly autocratic
Expenditure	Nominal	High
Infrastructure	Average	Average
Medium of Instruction	Telugu and English	English
Teacher-Pupil Ratio	1:60 in Telugu medium 1:20 in English medium	1:27

Having discussed about the internal dynamics of the school, it is worth mentioning that most of the aspects discussed in this chapter like hierarchy of power, roles and responsibilities of school personnel, teacher recruitment, student admissions, daily routine etc. are repeated patterns of behaviour and remain constant every year. They do not undergo any drastic changes except that the actors who are participating in the organisation change from time to time. Nevertheless, they contribute in maintaining the overall structure of the school. However, what is important is to understand what the actors inside the school feel about the whole system. Teachers and students together form the social reality of the school and their voices are crucial to understand the relationships, their perceptions towards one another and towards the school. The following two chapters attempt to provide deeper insights on these aspects.

CHAPTER IV

TEACHERS' WORK CULTURE AND THEIR PERSPECTIVES: THE SOCIAL REALITY OF THE SCHOOLS

The essence of an ethnographic study lies in the incorporation of participants' point of view without which the study remains incomplete. In the context of schools, these participants include school personnel and students and their relationships, perceptions and attitudes towards one another and towards the school. In the present context, this network of relationships between various actors in the school and their perspectives regarding one another and the school is taken to be the social reality of the school. For King, the social reality is also considered to be the social structure of the school and consists of the patterns of social relationships occurring between those defined as members of the school, that is, principally, pupils and teachers (1983:13). It is only through understanding the actors' perceptions and their reactions to situations that one can get an in-depth subjective view of the social reality of the school.

The previous chapter dealt with the physical reality of the schools and analysed the organisational structure and the repeated patterns of behaviour in it. The present chapter attempts to bring out the tacit elements of the school culture which are not visible in the everyday interactions between the members of the school. The chapter examines one aspect of the social reality of the school, i.e., the perspectives of the teachers, their interactions, relationships, and the underlying feelings. Without understanding the subjective meanings of the teachers, an ethnographic study of the schools remains futile. Furthermore, though smooth functioning of the organization of a school suggests consensus among its members at the functional level, conflict is most likely to be an element in the relationships (Weber cited in King, 1983). Thus, the chapter also addresses the issue of what causes conflict and disagreements amongst the school personnel in this apparently smooth running organisation.

I

Demographic and Social Composition of Teachers

Before examining the work culture, the relationships among the teachers, the perspectives and attitudes of the teachers towards the school, it is imperative to examine the socio-demographic composition of teachers in both the schools to understand who these teachers are. This section attempts to analyse the socio-demographic composition of the teachers by the following parameters:

Teachers by age

The demographic detail of the teachers in both the schools, which reflects on the predominant age-group of the teaching staff, is discussed below.

TABLE 4.1 TEACHERS BY AGE IN ZPHS AND NMHS

Age-Group	ZPHS		NMHS	
	Regular	V.Vs’*	Primary	High School
20-30	02	04	05	05
31-40	04	06	10	01
41-50	04	-	01	07
51-60	04	-	-	-
Sub-Total	14	10	16	13
Total	24		29	

*The strength of ten V.Vs’ includes two contractual computer teachers too, though they are not V.Vs’.

The above table shows that in ZPHS, teachers are scattered across all age groups and no one age group predominates in the work force. Only 14% of the teachers were found to be under the age group of 20-30 as qualifying the DSC exam and getting a regular appointment is a long process. Among V.Vs’, it is observed that all the volunteers are below forty years old. Furthermore, sixty per cent of the teaching force comes under the age group of 31-40.

In NMHS, 62.5% of the primary school teachers are in the age group of 31-40 whereas in the high school, only one teacher (7%) is found to be in this age group. Teachers in the high school are either in the 20-30 age group constituting 38.4% of the work force or they are in the 41-50 age group that comprises 53.8% of the total teaching staff. It was observed that the young teachers are newly joined ones and are not very experienced. All the teachers in the school are full time teachers.

Teachers by sex

This is an important parameter that gives a picture of gender division in both the schools. The following table gives the number of teachers in either of the two categories:

TABLE 4.2 TEACHERS BY SEX IN ZPHS AND NMHS

Sex	ZPHS		NMHS	
	Regular	V.Vs'	Primary	High School
Males	02	-	-	02
Females	12	10	16	11
Sub-Total	14	10	16	13
Total	24		29	

The above table clearly shows that in both ZPHS and NMHS, females are predominant in the workforce. In ZPHS, 86% of the regular teachers and hundred percent of the volunteers are females. Altogether, 92% of the staff in ZPHS comprises of females. In NMHS also, the same trend is repeated and, here too, the percentage of females is much greater than the males. They account for 93% of the workforce (both primary and high school). There are no male teachers as *vidya* volunteers in ZPHS and as primary school teachers in NMHS.

Teachers by caste

The tables given below provide the caste composition of teachers in the studied schools. The overall caste profile of teachers that include

regular teachers and V.Vs' in ZPHS and primary and high school teachers in NMHS is as follows:

TABLE 4.3 CASTE PROFILE OF THE TEACHERS IN ZPHS AND NMHS

Caste	ZPHS	NMHS
SC	04 (16.66%)	02 (6.89%)
BC	11 (45.83%)	09 (31.03%)
OC	09 (37.5%)	18 (62.06%)
Total	24	29

The above table depicts that in ZPHS, approximately 46% of the teachers belong to the BC category followed by approximately 38% of OCs and the least percentage of teachers belong to the SC category (17%). In NMHS, on the other hand, more than half of the teachers i.e., 62% belong to the OC category followed by the BC (31%) and the SC (7%) categories. A detailed picture of the caste profile of the teachers is as follows:

TABLE 4.4 BREAK-UP DETAILS OF THE CASTE PROFILE

Caste	ZPHS				NMHS			
	Regular		V.Vs'		Primary		High School	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
SC	-	03	-	01	-	-	01	01
BC	01	05	-	05	-	06	01	02
OC	01	04	-	04	-	10	-	08

The above two tables show that in NMHS, most of the teachers belong to the upper caste whereas in ZPHS, there is a mix of all castes, but their proportion varies.

Academic Background of Teachers:

The academic qualification of teachers is an important dimension which gives an idea of their competency in teaching. The table below

gives an overall picture of the academic qualifications of teachers in both the schools.

TABLE 4.5 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TEACHERS

Level of Education	ZPHS (Regular and V.Vs')	NMHS (Primary and High school)
SSC	01 (4.16%)	-
Intermediate	02 (8.33%)	02 (6.89%)
Graduation	01 (4.16%)	17 (58.62%)
Graduation + Training*	15 (62.5%)	08 (27.58%)
Post Graduation	-	02 (6.89%)
PG +Training*	05 (20.83%)	-
Total	24	29

*Training includes B.Ed, HPT, TPT, PED

The above table shows that in ZPHS, 62.5% of the teachers (both regular and V.Vs') completed their graduation along with a teacher training degree. In NMHS, on the other hand, 58.62% of the teachers have a graduation degree, but do not have a teacher training degree. Moreover, in ZPHS 20.83% of the teachers possess a post graduation with a teacher training degree, but in NMHS none of the teachers have this qualification. Thus, it is very evident that teachers are more qualified in ZPHS than in NMHS. The table below gives a detailed picture of educational profile of the teachers.

TABLE 4.6 DETAILED EDUCATIONAL PROFILE OF THE TEACHERS

Education	ZPHS				NMHS			
	Regular		V.Vs'		Primary		High School	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
SSC	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	-
Intermediate	-	-	-	02	-	02	-	-
Graduation	-	-	-	01	-	12	-	05
Graduation + Training	01	09	-	05	-	02	02	04
Post Graduation	-	-	-		-	-	-	02
PG + Training	01	03	-	01	-	-	-	-

The above table depicts that in ZPHS, apart from the regular teachers who invariably have a teacher training degree (which is a pre-requisite for teacher recruitment), five V.Vs' were also trained with degrees like HPT, TPT and B.Ed. It was observed that these V.Vs' were very young (below 30), completed their teacher training course and were waiting for the DSC recruitment. All of them aspire to become regular teachers in government schools. One V.V was qualified only up to the SSC level whereas two out of ten V.Vs' were qualified up to the intermediate level.

In NMHS, there were no SSC or intermediate qualified teachers in the high school. However, there were two teachers in the primary sections who were qualified only up to the intermediate level. About 46% of the teachers (six out of thirteen) were trained in the high school. The table below gives the details regarding educational qualifications of teachers by caste.

TABLE 4.7 EDUCATION BY CASTE

Education	ZPHS						NMHS					
	Regular			V.Vs'			Primary			High School		
	SC	BC	OC	SC	BC	OC	SC	BC	OC	SC	BC	OC
SSC	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	-	-	-	-	-
Intermediate	-	-	-	01	01	-	-	01	01	-	-	-
Graduation	-	-	-	-	-	01	-	04	08	01	02	02
Graduation + Training	03	03	04	-	04	01	-	01	01	01	01	04
Post Graduation	-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	-	-	02
PG+ Training	-	03	01	-	-	01	-	-	-	-	-	-

The above table depicts that in ZPHS there is an interesting mix of castes at different levels of education. The least qualified teacher, who is a V.V, belongs to the OC category and 41.6% of the trained teachers (both regular and the V.Vs') are from BC category followed by teachers belonging to the OC and the SC categories. In NMHS, most of the trained teachers belong to the OC category. The correspondent of the school reported that there is always a demand for trained teachers in private schools, but there is an acute shortage of such teachers.

Those who have a teacher training degree prepare for DSC and get recruited, or they apply in schools where they get good salaries.

Thus, the above two tables show that 83.3% of the teachers in ZPHS are teacher-trained and hence more qualified than those in NMHS where only 27.5% are qualified with a teacher training degree.

Professional experience

The experience of the teacher in the teaching profession is very important, especially in private schools as teachers' experience, to some extent, determines the person's ability to teach in the classroom. Teacher recruitment also depends a lot on the professional experience of the teacher in private schools. The table below gives a picture of the experience of teachers in their profession.

TABLE 4.8 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE OF THE TEACHERS

Experience (in years)	ZPHS			NMHS		
	Regular	V.Vs'	Total	Primary	High School	Total
0-5	01	07	08	09	05	14
6-10	06	01	07	06	03	09
11-15	01	01	02	01	02	03
16-20	02	01	03	-	01	01
21-25	02	-	02	-	02	02
26-30	02	-	02	-	-	-

The table shows that in ZPHS, though the teaching experience ranges from few months to thirty years, approximately 43% of the regular teachers had experience of 6-10 years. Among the V.Vs', 70% of them had 0-5 years of experience and it was noted that most of these teachers come in the 20-30 age-group. A similar observation was made in NMHS where 48% of the teachers had 0-5 years of experience and all of them were in the age group of 20-30. However, in NMHS, no teacher had more than twenty five years of professional experience whereas in ZPHS two regular teachers (14%) had more than twenty five years of experience. Thus, the teachers in ZPHS were not only more qualified than NMHS, but have more teaching experience when compared to their counterparts.

II

Teachers' Work Culture

The work culture of any organisation comprises of many elements: the work environment, hierarchies and power relationships, shared institutional values, rewards are just few to mention and schools are no exception to this. Every school has its own work atmosphere, norms, sanctions and rewards. The present section attempts to reflect on the work culture in ZPHS and NMHS. Simultaneously, it tries to understand their perspectives towards one another and their attitude towards the school. It also attempts to put forth the internal conflicts among the school personnel in ZPHS and NMHS.

Work atmosphere: Flexibility vs. Rigidity

The work atmosphere in ZPHS is flexible and stress-free. Teachers never seemed stressed and had a care-free attitude. As discussed elsewhere, teachers here are more relaxed than the private school teachers since they are not under supervision. The staffroom is an important arena in the school and a perfect place for the teachers to interact, to share food, to discuss things, to relax and to enjoy all the gossip. In fact, teachers prefer to sit leisurely in the staffroom and chat with one another or read newspaper to sitting in the classrooms. It was observed that most of the time, teachers discuss government orders, meetings, increments, and the like. Teachers were never seen correcting notebooks in the staffroom. Their other topics of interest include discussions of clothing, their children, and so on. They also purchase garments in the staffroom which is again another way of unwinding for them. This is a routine practice and gives an idea of the freedom and flexibility enjoyed by the teachers in the government school.

It is pertinent to highlight that in ZPHS, teachers receive their salaries irrespective of their performance in the school. Thus, they are not particularly bothered about how students are studying and are least concerned with what they can do to make their teaching more innovative and interesting to the students. They do not like to do any

work which is not of their concern. Moreover, it was observed that they go to the classes five to ten minutes late and leave early. Nobody comes to supervise teachers' performance on a regular basis. During the fieldwork, the Deputy DEO visited the school twice. In his first visit, he enquired about the Mid Day Meals as he was getting lot of complaints about the poor quality of food being served to the students. In his second visit in the last week of December, he scolded the teachers as most of the classes were without teachers and students were playing outside. Moreover, very few regular teachers were present in the school. He gave warnings to both teachers as well as to the head master. Teachers, on the other hand, complained and one teacher reported:

Since this is year end, all the left over E.L¹ are being used by the teachers, which is why the attendance of the teachers is very thin. Who wants to leave their E.Ls'? Even D.DEO will not leave his E.Ls'. After all, we all are working here for better salaries and benefits.

When compared to the work atmosphere of ZPHS, the work atmosphere in NMHS is appalling. Teachers were not given a staffroom. Since there was no staffroom, there was no space exclusively meant for the teachers to keep their belongings. Thus, unlike ZPHS where there was a staffroom that accommodated both the regular teachers as well as the volunteers, teachers in NMHS used to keep their belongings in the class in which they are assigned the role of a class teacher. Moreover, teachers were not allowed to sit in the class. In fact, chairs were not provided to the teachers in the classrooms as the management feels that by providing chairs teachers will start relaxing and their focus on teaching will be reduced. Since chairs were not provided, teachers were relatively mobile and were not restricted to one place like ZPHS teachers². There was a small space provided near the reception area where four to five chairs and a table were placed. If teachers had a leisure period, they used to sit there

¹ E.L stands for Earned Leave

² In ZPHS, it was observed that if a chair is not there for the teacher in the classroom, teachers ask students to bring a chair from the staffroom and only then they start teaching.

and do corrections. Furthermore, though the school has electricity, the school management strictly ordered the teachers and students not to switch on the lights and fans in the classrooms. Thus, classrooms are dark and gloomy and students manage to read and write in the class with the help of sunlight. If the weather is cloudy or when it rains, it becomes very difficult to read and write in the class. Since there are many buildings close to one another, there is insufficient ventilation in the classrooms. During summers, both the students and the teachers face difficulties in the class without fans. Students say:

If we switch on the fans, sir (director) scolds as he feels that he has to pay more electricity bill, so we are strictly given orders not to put on lights and fans.

The awful work culture of teachers in NMHS is even more apparent during lunch time. All the teachers had to eat their lunch in the classrooms in which they were assigned as the class teachers and not with their fellow teachers. Hence, the chance of interactions between the teachers was very low. In fact, this is what the management wanted in the school: teachers should not talk with one another in the school. All the teachers were very afraid of the school management. It was observed that as soon as the teachers saw someone from the school management, they immediately stopped talking among themselves and started doing school related tasks like correcting note books. The whole work atmosphere of NMHS is very rigid and teachers rarely get a chance to unwind. On the other hand, in ZPHS, during lunch time, all the *Vidya* volunteers used to go to their respective houses for having lunch as all of them stay very near to the school. All the regular teachers remained in the school and used to take lunch in the staffroom.

The school management in NMHS used to keep a record of what teachers have done in each and every period. Teachers were given a diary which had to be updated everyday. After 4pm, when school finishes, teachers have to write what work they did in every period and what they taught in each class in the diary. This is to ensure that

teachers have not sat leisurely in any period. They have to get the diary signed by the HM and only then they were allowed to leave the school. Before leaving, teachers should wish the director and the head master 'good afternoon' and this gesture symbolises that the teacher has completed all the assigned work and is leaving the school. In contrast, at the government school, it was observed that teachers were the first ones to leave as soon as the bell rings.

In the academic year 2009-10, cameras were installed in X classrooms and also in the corridors of NMHS so that the management can keep an eye on students and teachers all the time. Thus, both teachers and students were always under scrutiny. Teachers, particularly females, were very sceptical about this and reported that there was no privacy for teachers and they were always very self-conscious in the class. However, they did not inform the management of their uneasiness as they reasoned that this was not the first school to install cameras and there were many other private schools that have already done this in their schools. However, all the teachers unanimously reported that they lack privacy in the school, basic infrastructure like a staffroom is not provided, they have to eat their lunch in the class and only one day's leave per month is permitted to the teachers.

Every year, firing the teachers is another routine procedure in NMHS which is completely lacking in ZPHS. In ZPHS, the jobs of the teachers are secured while in NMHS, teachers are removed if they are not punctual, not hardworking, not teaching well or if they do not have the ability to control the class. When the school reopened after summer vacations, eight teachers were missing in the staff. Of these eight, four were removed by the school while the other four left for their own reasons. Management cited many reasons for removing them: a Hindi teacher was removed as the management got better and more qualified Hindi teacher, two other teachers were removed as they could not control the class properly and parents were complaining against them, PET teacher was also removed as management felt that

her conduct in the school was improper. Among these, the case of Rekha, a Hindi teacher is worth mentioning.

Rekha was a Hindi teacher in the school who joined the school in the year 2006. She completed her B.A-B.Ed from Nizamabad³ in Hindi medium. She used to teach Hindi to classes V, VI and VII and she was drawing Rs 3,300 per month. A Brahmin by caste, she was in her mid-40s and her financial position was not very sound. Her husband had no job and two of her sons were studying: one son was pursuing an engineering course while the other was doing MCA (Master of Computer Applications). Both her sons take tuitions in the evening and somehow manage to pay the fees. Rekha was the only source of regular income in the family and was struggling hard for survival. She used to tell that her life is going on with too many adversities and income from this school was her only hope.

During summer vacations, a candidate who completed M.A-B.Ed applied for the post of Hindi teacher in the school and management recruited that candidate. Immediately, Rekha was called and informed that her services are no more required in the school even though she was hard working and had good command in Hindi. She cried and pleaded in front of the management, but in vain. Later, she applied in another private school in Nayapally and she was selected there with a better salary. Meanwhile, the new candidate rejected the offer as the management offered Rs 5,000 per month while the candidate demanded much more than that as his qualification was high. When this new candidate declined the offer, Rekha was contacted again by the management to come back and join the school, but she rejected as she already joined another school with a better salary.

Instances like this clearly depict the job insecurity of the teachers in NMHS and the ruthless attitude of the school management towards the teachers. In this context, ZPHS teachers are undoubtedly in an advantageous position as their jobs are secured.

³ A city in Nizamabad district of Andhra Pradesh.

Work load

In NMHS, all the teachers are invariably timetabled to teach for a minimum of six out of the total eight periods everyday and on some days they even teach for seven periods. Apart from this, if some teachers are on leave, other teachers have to act as a substitute in their leisure periods. Every morning, arranging substitution is a kind of a ritual, usually done by the school HM. Management tries to make sure that no class is without a teacher. Thus, if a teacher is absent, another teacher who has a leisure period is substituted for that period. Teachers complain that they have very few leisure periods in a week and these often are used for substitutions. Though they said that they were quite used to it, they never seemed to be happy when they get substitution classes. All the teachers reported that management wants to extract as much as possible from the teachers for less salaries.

In ZPHS, on the other hand, regular teachers have comparatively less workload. Everyday, out of the total seven periods, regular teachers have only five teaching periods and two leisure periods whereas V.Vs' have five or six teaching periods. Teachers here were more relaxed and were not time-bound. Higher classes, i.e., IX and X, were taken by the regular teachers whereas V.Vs' manage VI, VII and VIII classes. It is pertinent to highlight that though at least two teachers remain absent every day, nobody cares to arrange a substitution for the class in the government school. If teachers are absent, the class goes without a teacher and as a result, students sit idle in the class. The V.Vs' have comparatively more work load than regular teachers in the sense that apart from taking classes, they perform several other functions like keeping the school open when the regular teachers go for X standard exam invigilation, conducting examinations in the school if the school is one of the centers for the examination, managing the school when regular teachers are called for a meeting, and the like.

It was observed that in their leisure period, NMHS teachers utilise their leisure periods in correcting notebooks while teachers in ZPHS

truly enjoy the 'leisure time' in their leisure period. They prefer to talk and chat in the staffroom and always do their corrections in the classroom. Furthermore, when it comes to corrections of notebooks, there is a lot of difference between ZPHS and NMHS teachers. In NMHS, the teachers have to be very careful and extra cautious while correcting students' notebooks because if the school director or anyone from the school management finds any fault or if a parent complains, teachers are scolded, ridiculed and warned. Thus, leisure period in NMHS is also a kind of 'working period' for the teachers. Unlike NMHS, teachers' corrections in ZPHS are mostly in the form of putting tick marks without reading what student has actually written in the notebooks. The number of teachers' in both the schools also reflects the work load of the teachers. In ZPHS, twenty four teachers handle the high school classes whereas in NMHS, only thirteen teachers are recruited for the high school and work for longer hours than the ZPHS teachers.

Salary structure, incentives and other facilities

Given the huge workload of private teachers and tensed work atmosphere, the salary of teachers in NMHS is very less. The salary structure of teachers in NMHS is as follows:

TABLE 4.9 SALARY STRUCTURE OF TEACHERS IN NMHS

Category	Salary Structure
Pre-Primary	Rs 1000-Rs 2000
Primary	Rs 2000-Rs 4000
High School	Rs 4000-Rs 6500

The above table shows that primary teachers get their salaries in the range of Rs 2,000-Rs 4000 per month whereas high school teachers draw salaries between Rs 4,000-6,500. The highest salary i.e., Rs 6,500 is given to a Maths teacher who is a post-graduate and fluent in English. The HM of the school also gets Rs 6,500 per month. The lowest salary is Rs 1000 given to a nursery teacher who is the least

qualified (up to intermediate level) in the school. The table below gives a detailed picture of the teachers' salaries⁴:

TABLE 4.10 DETAILED SALARY STRUCTURE IN NMHS

Salary (in Rs)	Pre-primary and primary	High School
1,000-2,000	05	-
2,001-3,000	08	-
3,001-4,000	03	2
4,001-5000	-	8
5,001-6,000	-	1
6,001-7,000	-	2

The above table depicts that half of the pre-primary and primary teachers' salaries were in the range of Rs 2,001-Rs 3000. It was observed that these teachers were either newly joined or had one or two years of teaching experience. Those who were drawing their pay in the range of Rs 3,001-Rs 4,000 in the primary were working in the same school for the last eight to ten years. In the high school, approximately 62% of the teachers' salary was in between Rs 4,001-5,000. Thus, one can notice a clear demarcation in the salaries of primary and high school teachers. Discussions regarding salaries amongst the teachers were strictly prohibited by the management. However, teachers reported that there were disparities in fixing salaries. Old and experienced teachers complained that young teachers are paid more even though they are not as experienced as the old teachers.

When asked about other incentives given to the teachers, the director stated:

Every month we give one C.L⁵ to the teachers. If a teacher takes more than one C.L, there is loss of pay. We also give PF (provident fund) facility to the teachers and most of them have opted for it. Apart from this, if the performance of the teacher is good, we give an increment of Rs 300-Rs 500 every year.

⁴ In the beginning, teachers were not very comfortable and reluctant in revealing their salaries as this was not allowed in the school. It was only after establishing good rapport with the teachers that they started disclosing their salaries.

⁵ C.L stands for Casual Leave

The director explained that if teachers take more than one day's leave in a month, they have to lose their wages. It was observed that if a teacher has taken a day's leave on Saturday and remains absent on Monday, all the three days wages are deducted. Moreover, if teachers are not present at 8.30am sharp in the morning, a late remark is written against their name in the attendance register. If there are three such late remarks, teachers have to lose their one day's wages. The school correspondent further reported:

Salaries are better here than many other schools despite low fees. In other corporate schools teachers have lot of workload but are paid very less. In those schools teachers are harassed, but here it is not like that.

However, it was noted that most of the teachers were not contented with their salaries. Almost 77% of the teachers reported that their work load is more compared to their salaries. All those teachers who were not satisfied with their salaries were mostly young teachers in the age-group of 21-30. Those teachers who were quite old and were working in the same school for more than ten years were somewhat used to their salaries and stated that management does not give more than the prescribed salaries. Nevertheless, all the teachers unanimously reported that one good thing about the management is that they give salaries on time without fail. In the first week of every month, salaries are withdrawn from the bank and disbursed to the teachers. In fact, teachers who were continuing in the same school for many years stated that this was one of the reasons to continue in the school. They reported that there are irregularities in giving salaries to teachers in other private schools which is completely lacking in NMHS and the director is quite considerate in this matter.

When one compares the salaries of private school teachers with that of regular teachers of government schools, there is a stark difference. Even if private school teachers in NMHS put in their entire life in the school, they can never reach the pay scale of a newly appointed government teacher. It was noticed that even the attendants in government school were getting much higher pay than the HM of

NMHS. The table below gives the pay scale of regular teachers in ZPHS.

TABLE 4.11 GRADE AND PAY OF REGULAR TEACHERS IN ZPHS

Designation	Grade	No. of Teachers
SA (School Assistant)	9285-21550	01
SA	7385-17475	03
SA	7200-16195	07
Language Pundit (Grade I)	7200-16195	02
Language Pundit (Grade II)	5470-12325	01

It was noted that except Telugu Pundit Grade II, whose gross salary was around Rs 13,000, all other teachers' gross salaries were between Rs 15,000-Rs 30,000⁶ depending on the experience. Unlike NMHS, here there are no hierarchies among the teachers based on salaries as the salary structure is fixed and based on the experience of the teachers. Apart from lucrative salaries, government school teachers have many other benefits. There are altogether 27 Casual Leave (CL) for females and 22 Casual Leave for males. Apart from this, there are also earned leave and medical leave for the teachers. The break-up details of the leave pattern of ZPHS teachers as reported by the HM is as follows:

TABLE 4.12 LEAVE PATTERN OF ZPHS TEACHERS

Leave	No. of days in an year
Casual Leave	15
Special Leave	07
Ladies Leave	05
Earned Leave	06
Medical Leave	20

⁶ The gross salary is calculated after adding various components to the Basic Pay like Dearness Allowance, House Rent Allowance, and City Allowance which are common components in any government run institutions.

When compared to the salaries of regular teachers, para teachers get a consolidated amount which is too little, though their work load is more than the regular teachers. As mentioned elsewhere, para teachers (in AP called as Vidya Volunteers) are appointed for several reasons like unavailability of qualified persons, to fill up large vacancies, shortage of funds and inadequate resources to spend on regular teachers and the like. These teachers are paid consolidated salaries which vary between one-tenth or one-fifth the salary of a regular elementary school teacher, across different regions of India (Seetharamu, 2002).

In the academic year 2007-08, there were not many V.Vs' in ZPHS. About five V.Vs' used to work with Rs 1500 per month as their honorarium. In the academic year 2008-09, the pay of V.Vs' was revised and the new salary structure was as follows:

TABLE 4.13 SALARIES OF V.Vs' IN 2008-09

Qualification	Consolidated amount per month
SSC	Rs 1500
Intermediate	Rs 2000
Graduate	Rs 2500
Graduate with B.Ed	Rs 3000

As a consequence of this revised pay structure, more V.Vs' joined in the 2008-09 academic year. While doing fieldwork, it was found that from February 2008 onwards, *Vidya* volunteers were not given their salaries. In the month of December, these volunteers went for a one day strike demanding disbursement of their salaries. Yadamma, a V.V, reported that the HM and the non-teaching staff should constantly pursue the issue to the DEO for disbursing their salaries, but nobody is bothered about it. All the V.Vs' unanimously reported that even though it is being delayed, they were sure of getting the entire amount one day and with this hope they are working in the school. They feel that their money is safe with the government and they say that it is like keeping their money safely in a bank. Their hope turned into a

reality in the month of February 2009, the salaries of V.Vs' were sanctioned for one year, i.e., from February 2008 to January 2009. V.Vs' reported that till June 2008 government has sanctioned Rs 1500 per month and from July 2008 onwards Rs 2,500 was sanctioned to all V.Vs' irrespective of their qualification.

Apart from meagre salaries, V.V.s' are denied of the leave and perks for which government teachers are entitled and they always have this apprehension that if they remain absent, their wages will be deducted. So, as far as possible, they try to come to the school regularly without fail. They take more number of periods every day and are more punctual and prompt than the regular teachers. On the other hand, regular teachers have less work load, can take leave and are never on time, but their salaries are lucrative with many perks and incentives.

III

Teachers' Perspectives towards the School and its Ethos

The work culture of the school is a reality which teachers confront on a day to day basis. This work culture has been understood through teachers' work load, salary structure, work atmosphere and freedom of choice in earlier sections. Understanding the work culture of the teachers was necessary as this shapes the attitude of the teachers towards the school. Teachers' perspectives towards the management and their fellow teachers, as well as the relationships among the teachers are imperative as these are the important components in the construction of social reality. Thus, the attempt here is to understand teachers' perspectives towards one another and towards the school. It also attempts to reflect on the internal dynamics, the conflicts and the disagreements within the school, which otherwise appears to be running smoothly from outside.

As mentioned earlier, in ZPHS, there were two groups among the teachers: regular teachers and the V.Vs'. Among V.Vs' too, there were two smaller groups, one of young teachers (all aged below 30) who joined the school in the 2008-09 academic year and another of middle

aged group (all between 30-40) who had been working in the school for more than five years. Though the relationship between regular teachers and V.Vs' appeared cordial from outside, internally there were many tussles. Regular teachers were more authoritative and commanding. The superiority and authoritative attitude of regular teachers towards V.Vs' was quite explicit in the school. In the staffroom, they have their own fixed places to sit comfortably whereas V.Vs' have to adjust themselves in the students' benches placed in the staffroom. No volunteer sits on the chairs of regular teachers. Teachers prefer to sit, chat, and go out only with their own groups expressing solidarity. Their solidarity is reflected in their seating arrangements, exchange of food during lunch, their conversations, and the like. Even though regular teachers interact with V.Vs', they do so in a very formal way showing their superiority over the volunteers. Volunteers are not involved in many of the regular teachers' activities. For instance, every month all regular teachers pool their money (this practice is called as 'chits') and this accumulated thrift is given to a teacher whose name comes out in the lucky draw or to a teacher who is in utmost need of it. V.Vs' were not included in this monthly practice. Likewise, in the month of January, an excursion was organised for government teachers and students of IX and X. In this excursion, V.Vs' were not included as government teachers asked them to manage the school for rest of the classes. The volunteers complained, but were happy later because the excursion was cancelled as most of the students were unable to pay Rs 200 for the tour.

Regular teachers were very sceptical of the volunteers. All the regular teachers and the HM reported that V.Vs' were less qualified and not competent in the subject, and thus, the quality in teaching is lacking. According to them, the volunteers were working at the school as they were not capable and competent to teach in private schools. Rajakumari, for instance, reported that a good Maths and Science teacher could easily get Rs 8000-10,000 per month in a good private school. Since government schools do not have a choice due to

shortage of regular teachers, whoever comes as V.V is appointed as it is felt that any teacher is better than no teacher in the class. Christiana, another regular teacher, reported that though V.Vs' teach classes, complete portions and engage students in the classrooms, the quality of teaching is greatly affected. This is the reason for allotting lower classes, i.e., VI, VII and VIII to V.Vs' whereas higher classes were taken by regular teachers so that X class students do not suffer. Thus, regular teachers felt that though V.Vs' help in easing the burden of government, their teaching lacks quality.

V.Vs', on the other hand, always had a bitterness and resentment towards regular teachers. They argue that regular teachers do not deserve the fat salaries and incentives they receive as they do not have any dedication towards teaching and the school. Yadamma, a V.V stated:

What for they are getting this much salaries? They are never on time, never go to the classes and are not concerned with how students are studying. We have more work load than regular teachers, but our salaries are lower than the clerical staff.

V.Vs' informed that despite getting a lucrative salary and many incentives, government teachers went on a ten day strike in the month of October demanding an increase in their pay structure. Rani, another V.V, out of resentment stated:

If regular teachers' salaries are stopped for one month, they will understand what it means to be working without salaries. If at all there is a little bit of delay in disbursing their salaries in the bank, they get restless, so what about us?

Despite having a greater work load than government teachers and irregular and meagre salaries and incentives, V.Vs' prefer to continue in the same school rather than going to a private school, the reasons for which are discussed below.

All the V.Vs' unanimously reported that this school is very close to their house and it takes less than five minutes walk to reach to the school from their house. However, this was not a very genuine reason as in Nayapally there are private schools in almost every street. When

it was probed further, more authentic reasons started coming out. Out of ten V.Vs', eight reported that they were not competent to teach in English since they studied in Telugu medium, hence they feel that they cannot get into private schools where a good command in English is a prerequisite. Two teachers have educational qualifications only up to the intermediate level whereas one teacher is qualified only up to the SSC level. These teachers reasoned that in any private school, graduation is the minimum requirement to be appointed, which they do not possess. Furthermore, all the teachers stated that in private schools, there is too much work and long school hours. Jyothi, a V.V who teaches Hindi, stated that since she has a small child she prefers working in ZPHS as the working hours are shorter which makes it easy for her to take care of her child. She can go back to her house in the one hour lunch break to attend her child, which is not possible in a private school. Another volunteer, Rani, had previously worked in a private school and then joined ZPHS. She shared her experience in the private school and argued that in private schools teachers are harassed all the time. They are assigned almost every task of the school, but their dedication is never recognised. There are no holidays on the second Saturday of the month (as there is in ZPHS), vacations are shorter and less frequent and sometimes the school functions on state declared holidays too. Praneetha, another V.V stated that teachers are not given leave in private schools, but in ZPHS V.Vs' have this flexibility and leave is granted by the HM for genuine reasons. It was observed that V.Vs' had the same freedom as the regular government teachers. Furthermore, though V.Vs' take classes, nobody supervises them, and thus, they are not answerable to anyone. NMHS teachers lacked these kinds of flexibilities.

Apart from all these reasons, there were other interesting facts which came out during informal conversations with the volunteers. Vani, a computer teacher in the school, reported that except for two V.Vs', all other volunteers were from economically sound backgrounds, which is why they were able to work at the school even without pay. She

pointed out two volunteers who come to the school only to while away time with their friends. According to her, Jyothi (a V.V.) was living in a joint family and was not on good terms with her in-laws. She comes to the school to avoid family disputes as this gives a diversion from her family atmosphere. Likewise, Praneetha (another V.V.), came to the school to pass the time as both her children were in the hostel and she does not have any thing else to do after her husband leaves for the office.

Some of the V.Vs' in the school are qualified and could easily get jobs in private schools, but as mentioned earlier, they worked at ZPHS because they aspire to become regular teachers in government schools. For example, Rani was a DSC aspirant and working in ZPHS gave her ample time to prepare for the exam. Sadalaxmi and Krishnaveni are two more teachers who were pursuing their B.Ed training and also working as V.V.s'. They reported that working in the school gave them the flexibility to do two things simultaneously (working and studying), since in B.Ed colleges, attendance of only 80 out of 180 days is sufficient. Usharani was one V.V who was in need of a monthly salary as her husband had an irregular job. She was not satisfied at the school as she said that the work load is high, but there are no regular salaries. However, she cannot go elsewhere as she is qualified only up to the tenth grade.

Besides the internal conflicts among the teachers, all the teachers (both regular and V.Vs') were very sceptical about the HM. They stated that a school is in the hands of the HM and it is the responsibility of the HM to take care of it. However, teachers argued that HM never comes on time and never goes to her classes. Usharani, for instance sceptically stated that HM does not even know where class IX and X students are sitting in the school. It was noticed that the HM gave all her classes to a volunteer and was rarely present in the school. None of the teachers appreciated her and openly made fun of her in the staffroom. They complained of HM's dodging and shirking attitude.

Thus, in ZPHS, the relationship between teachers and the HM was not a healthy and cordial relationship.

In NMHS, since the work atmosphere is very rigid, teachers were not allowed to interact with one another, and hence, the chance of developing intimate interpersonal relationships was minimal. As discussed earlier, this kind of work atmosphere is imposed from above. Lunch break is the only breather in the eight hour work schedule when teachers finish their lunch in the classroom and come out to interact with other teachers for five to ten minutes. All the teachers were very cynical about the management, especially the director. They reported that teachers are never consulted when a decision is made by the director or the school correspondent. All the decisions like planning the academic calendar, organising ceremonies, teaching methods, and the like were made by the management. There was no participative management system and teachers simply abide and follow whatever instructions come from above. No teacher had the courage to speak up in front of the school management. The director scolded, warned and insulted the teachers in front of the students and parents. Teachers always felt offended and said that there remains no self-respect if they are scolded in front of parents and students. If a teacher spoke to the management about a problem, the director said, "This is how the school functions, if you want you work, otherwise you can always leave the school."

As a result, it was observed that teachers did not have a sense of belongingness, commitment and a feeling of ownership in the school. Since decision making was autocratic rather than democratic, they had to blindly follow whatever decision was made by the management. They lacked any power to make decisions or to express their viewpoint in front of the management. Teachers often expressed their dissatisfaction in the school as there was no freedom of choice given to the teachers. Furthermore, school management keeps finding ways to deduct daily wages from the teachers' monthly salary which was disliked by all the teachers. Teachers stated that even in genuine

cases, their situation was not considered by the management. They further reported that after a year's of hard work, an increment of only Rs 200 to 300 is given which is nothing when compared to the hard work they put in throughout the year.

Apart from flexible work atmosphere, lucrative salaries and incentives, ZPHS teachers have one more advantage over NMHS teachers. In ZPHS, there is a clear demarcation between primary and high school teachers as well as the subject which they are supposed to teach and for which they are appointed. They teach only that subject in which they have qualified in the DSC exam. In NMHS, on the other hand, teachers constantly move back and forth between primary, upper primary and secondary classes depending on their competency and performance. Moreover, they also have to teach those subjects in which they do not have an academic degree. Shabana, who teaches Maths in the school for classes V, VI and VII, was very disappointed as she had to teach computers in the next academic year because a new Maths teacher was appointed in her place. She stated that she was neither competent nor interested in computers. She said she felt cheated as the recruitment process for the next academic year was finished in all the schools and she could not apply elsewhere. Similarly, Mallesh was given English to teach though he had more competency in teaching Science. He was not very comfortable in teaching English grammar and had to prepare a lot before taking an English class. He stated that English can only be taught by an experienced teacher and felt that he was not able to do justice to the subject.

Those teachers who were solely dependent on the school's salary were afraid to express their opinions over any issue as they feared losing their jobs. However, some teachers were totally against the school management (especially the newly joined teachers) and explicitly expressed their anger and dissatisfaction. Pullaih, a male Telugu teacher was very sceptical about the school and said:

There is no short break for the teachers and students except lunch break. In every school, at least minimum refreshment like tea is provided to the teachers. But here teachers are just looked like labourers. Management wants to extract maximum work from the teachers. The entire school is run by the family so that the finance remains within the family itself. Director does not want any suggestions from the teachers and only does whatever he feels like. He is a very stingy person too. Though fans and lights are there in the classroom, he does not allow switching them on just to save the electricity bill. If by mistake any student uses fans or lights, he scolds them by saying 'waste fellow', 'dirty fellow', and the like. Moreover, since there is no staffroom, I have to roam here and there in my leisure periods.

He joined the school in 2008 as his son got an engineering seat in Hyderabad and eventually the entire family shifted. But by the time he approached various schools in Hyderabad in June, the recruitment process was over. So, with no other option left, he joined NMHS, but he was determined to leave the school soon.

Mallesh is another male Science teacher who joined the school in 2007. He feels that since the school predominantly has female teachers and only two male teachers, there is no discipline. He states:

There should be a good number of male teachers in a school to maintain the discipline of the school. Schools mostly prefer women as they do not change the school as frequently as men do. If there are married women, there is always an assumption by the management that they will not leave the school. Women are content with what they get and continue in the same school as it is near to their house. But, men have to support their families, so they keep changing wherever they get a higher salary. When schools behave commercially, men too have to be commercial.

Shabana is a Maths teacher who joined the school in 2008. She argued that if this school is imitating other schools in terms of work load of teachers, the management should also imitate the facilities that are given to the teachers in other schools. She stated:

In other schools, invariably there is a staffroom. Also, teachers are given a chance to speak and express their opinion. Here, whenever sir calls for a meeting, it is mainly for humiliating and ridiculing teachers and to say in front of everyone that this particular teacher is not working well. He never seeks suggestions from the teachers. Here, teachers are treated like robots. We are not allowed to speak to our fellow teachers. If at

all we do, we do it with a fear that nobody from the management is looking at us.

Jyothi, out of resentment complains that in NMHS, the work of clerks is also done by the teachers like looking after admissions, maintaining fees register and so on. They are also assigned tasks of selling books, canvassing and the like. Teachers always expressed an aversion to do such tasks. She says that in other corporate schools this is not the case as separate people are hired for looking after these kinds of work. Ultimately, she feels that even government schools are better than this type of private schools. Usha Rani, a Hindi teacher who has been working in the same school for more than twenty years reported that if one wants to progress and reach to a good position professionally, one should never work at this school. Only those who are not well qualified, or do not have command in spoken and written English, or have health or family problems work at NMHS.

At this juncture, the question that is worth raising is when the work atmosphere and working conditions are so appalling, why do teachers continue to work in the school? It has been said that the field of teaching attracts a disproportionate number of late-deciding males who resort to teaching profession when other plans fail to materialize and a disproportionate number of females who prefer to combine work with marriage and household responsibilities (Lortie cited in Boocock, 1978). The same was found to be true to some extent for the female teachers. Some teachers reported that they chose to work in this school as it was very close to their house and they take care of their families and children. Those who were qualified only up to the intermediate level do not look for work elsewhere and remain confined to the vicinity as they are not well-qualified. Others reported that they were educated in Telugu medium, so they were not confident enough to face good English medium schools. These reasons are similar to those cited by V.Vs', but high workload in private schools was also one of the reasons cited by V.Vs' to work in ZPHS. Only young, unmarried and confident people do not work in NMHS for long as they aspire for career advancement. However, old and experienced teachers

report that even young female teachers at some point of time get married and get settled in one school which is convenient to them in all aspects.

The director, on the other hand, was not very happy with the young teachers. He stated that young teachers in their early twenties join this school for gaining experience. They leave the school after working there for one or two years and join other schools for better salaries. He also argued that if unmarried females were appointed, they often leave the school after their marriage which disturbs the academic activity in the school. He cited a recent instance wherein a Physics teacher for class IX and X left in the month of December as her marriage was fixed. The director reasoned that if teachers leave in the middle of the academic year, it is difficult to find new ones as new teachers are available only in the beginning of the academic year. Thus, young teachers keep coming and going whereas the old teachers stay in the same school for years. Teachers, on the other hand, argue that the director is not considerate and sensitive at all and does not even try to understand the problems of the teachers⁷. Most of the teachers argue that in private schools, teachers never get recognition, even if they put everything in the school. They are neither appreciated for their good work nor is their hard work acknowledged or publicly rewarded.

Apart from the cynical attitude of teachers towards the management, there are many tussles between the members of the management. Since the entire family is running the school, there was a rift between the young and the old generation. There was no common consensus within the management whenever a decision was made. The school's secretary (director's first daughter-in-law) says that she told the

⁷ Teachers who were working in the same school for many years reported that earlier the director was quite easy-going, but some instances in the past made him very strict and harsh. He used to recruit teachers without taking their certificates. But four to five years ago, two teachers left the school in the mid academic year and joined another school for better salaries. That academic year, the students faced lot of problems and the director was also very disappointed. From then onwards, he became very stern and takes the original certificates of the candidate after appointment so that teachers can not leave in the middle of the academic year.

director many times to allot a separate period and a separate teacher for 'spoken English' (which many schools in the locality have) but he does not listen to anybody. According to her, he still follows the old 'chalk-and-blackboard' method which is not applicable in the age of computers and other technologies. She further states that the HM post in the school is just namesake meaningless title as the HM does not look after the school, except for the timetable and examinations. She says:

Here, admissions, fees, textbooks, teachers teaching, everything is taken care of by us. We are doing more work than the HM. In other schools, the entire school responsibility is shouldered by an HM.

The school's assistant HM who is also the director's daughter-in-law does not like his humanitarian attitude. For instance, if a student is very poor and not able to pay the fees, he asks the teachers to promote the student to the next higher class without taking fees from the student. Moreover, there are three *aayahs* (caretakers) in the school who are working for Rs 1,300 per month. Their work includes taking care of nursery, LKG and UKG kids, and doing lot of other work as well. The director has allowed all their children to study in the school without any fees. Thus, the humanitarian attitude of the director is not liked by his family members. His daughter-in-law feels that if this 'social service' continues, they cannot make profit from the school.

Teachers argue that the school correspondent (director's son) is more profit-minded while the director is more concerned with academics⁸. Janaki Devi, a Telugu teacher in the school for IX and X joined the school in 1990 with a salary of Rs 500 and now she was drawing Rs 5,000 per month. She says that teachers are paid less, but management is making huge profits from the school. She states:

⁸ Though while interviewing, the correspondent stated, "*Business was never in mind while running the school. Now-a-days if one wants to make money, he/she opens a school. But we have not started it from business point of view, otherwise we would have opened several branches by now. The school was started to impart education to the poor children.*"

Earlier there were only 2-3 rooms in the school. Now, there are three floors, they bought the nearby land for playground, and now constructing a play school. If this is not profit, then what is it?

Most of the teachers stated that the school's reputation was slowly fading away with the involvement of family members in the school. In any school, management makes the school strong and helps in upholding the reputation of the school, but when there are conflicts within the management itself, the consequences can be quite serious.

Conclusion

In general, it is said that in India, teachers are lowly paid, their promotion opportunities are limited, they lack autonomy and their status is low (Seetharamu, 2002). Through understanding the teachers' educational background and work culture, we try to understand the status of teachers in both the schools. In the present context, teachers' status is analysed at two levels: at individual level and at school level. At individual level, status is examined through various parameters like a teacher's educational qualification, certification obtained for teaching, professional experience, salary received at the point of entry and over time, and other incentives like leave, retirement benefits etc. Status of teachers is also examined at school level through the work atmosphere of the school, teachers' autonomy, freedom of choice and flexibility provided by the school.

As discussed in the chapter, when compared to NMHS teachers, regular teachers in ZPHS were more qualified, experienced, and received lucrative salaries and benefits from the government. Apart from this, they have social security, autonomy and comfortable professional life which were completely lacking among NMHS teachers. In NMHS, it was observed that the hectic work schedule of teachers and stringent rules make the work atmosphere very rigid and unfriendly. The decision making was not democratic which leads to a cynical attitude towards the management. There was no co-ordination with the school management and no close communication among the staff. Teachers lacked autonomy and their self-respect was always at

stake. Meagre salaries, lack of rewards and disagreements with the school's norms lead to dissatisfaction among the teachers.

In both the schools, it was observed that teachers were working for financial gain rather than for prestige or emotional satisfaction. They were working in the schools as their subjectively defined interest was largely economic, i.e., they were paid for their work. However, government teachers had psychological gratification since their jobs were secured. This was completely lacking in NMHS teachers where hiring and firing was a routine procedure every year. Hence, working for economic gain was very explicit among NMHS teachers who always complained about being paid less for what they work. They were against the school norms, they did not have any commitment and belongingness towards the school.

Given the flexibility and autonomy of ZPHS teachers, the major drawback lies in their shirking attitude. Apart from this, since their jobs are secured and their salaries are irrespective of their performance in the school and classrooms, they lack dedication towards teaching. The shirking attitude of teachers was not found in NMHS, but their participation in various school related activities was forced. It was imposed from above (the school management) and refraining from any additional task was to put their job under risk. Therefore, the relationship between the school management and the teachers was not congenial, mutually respecting and understanding. When compared to NMHS teachers, the position of even volunteers in ZPHS seems to be much better and more dignified, though their salaries were lower. They are not ridiculed in front of everyone by the higher authorities as happens in NMHS.

Through understanding the attitudes of the teachers in ZPHS, it was noted that internally, there are tussles between the regular teachers and the volunteers. The attitude of regular teachers towards V.Vs' was that of suspicion towards V.V's teaching as they felt that the volunteers lacked competency in teaching. The attitude of V.Vs' towards regular teachers is that of resentment and jealousy because

of salaries and incentives given to the regular teachers for the same work load. However, these differences are not readily observable, and do not affect the overall functioning of the school.

Taking all the above mentioned parameters into consideration, it is argued that the status of ZPHS is far superior to that of the NMHS teachers. Moreover, ZPHS teachers are psychologically satisfied with their jobs as their job is secured whereas the job security of teachers in NMHS is always questionable. The norms of the school were laid down by the management and any violation of these norms by the teachers resulted in sanctions, the degree of which may vary from mild to harsh like expulsion from the school. The following chapter analyses the other side of the social reality of school, i.e., the students.

CHAPTER V

NEGOTIATING BETWEEN FAMILY, PEERS AND SCHOOL: UNDERSTANDING THE STUDENTS' WORLD

Student life constantly negotiates between two realities or contexts: one is the school and classrooms while the other is the family. Both these contexts contribute in their own way in shaping up a child's life. In the school, undoubtedly students form the core component and most of the activities in the school revolve around them. School as an institution attempts to impart knowledge and skills among the students which is primarily curriculum-based. At the same time, apart from learning curriculum-based knowledge, school also acts as a perfect site where students develop peer relationships, new identities, and take up new responsibilities which is again another social reality of the school. In fact, these subtler aspects of schooling, which though school may not consciously transmit, plays a pivotal role in preparing a child for adult roles. Despite so much importance given to the relationship between students and the school, there are not many studies undertaken on the students. Teachers' being more amenable to investigate than the students is one major reason often cited for this neglect (Reid 1978, for instance).

The previous chapter attempted to highlight teachers' voices on various school related aspects which was one half of the social reality of the schools. The present chapter focuses on the other half of the social reality i.e., the students' perspectives. It attempts to reflect on the students' world through understanding their family background, their attitude towards the school, their teachers and the peer groups. It also tries to examine the parents' reasons behind enrolling their child in ZPHS or NMHS and their opinion towards the schools.

I

Socio-Economic Background Of The Students and Parents' Responses

The often cited criticism in the debate between the government and the private schools is that private schools cater to the needs of the upper caste and class, especially to the boys whereas government

schools are mostly for the children who belong to lower socio-economic strata. As discussed in chapter three, the present study found that in NMHS, the percentage of boys is greater than that of girls. The present section analyses the other components, i.e., the caste and class dimension in ZPHS and NMHS. It also elaborates on the reasons behind parents' inclination towards the private school.

Social composition of the students

The class-wise caste composition of all the students in ZPHS is as follows:

TABLE 5.1 CASTE COMPOSITION OF THE STUDENTS IN ZPHS

Class	ST	SC	BC	OC
VI	05	46	106	11
VII	09	44	85	14
VIII	03	43	60	18
IX	05	29	72	15
X	06	20	74	12
Total	28	182	397	70
%	4.13	26.88	58.64	10.33

The percentage is calculated from the total number of students (677) in the school

In ZPHS, the percentage of BC students is the highest followed by the SCs', OCs' and STs'. Now let us see the caste composition of all the students in NMHS:

TABLE 5.2 CASTE COMPOSITION OF THE STUDENTS IN NMHS

Class	ST	SC	BC	OC
VI	01	06	34	20
VII	-	05	33	12
VIII	01	10	31	18
IX	-	10	25	16
X	01	11	25	13
Total	03	42	148	79
%	1.10	15.44	54.41	29.04

The percentage is calculated from the total number of students (272) in the high school

Like ZPHS, here too the percentage of the BC students is the highest, but the percentage of OCs' is comparatively more than that of ZPHS and the percentage of SCs' is lower than that of OCs'. Thus, the notion that private schools are mostly for upper castes does not hold good here as more than half of the students belong to backward castes.

During detailed interviews of 71 students in ZPHS, it was found that 52 students (73%) were Hindus, followed by 13 Christians (18%) and 06 Muslims (8.5%). Thus, the religion of majority of the students was Hinduism. The mother tongue of 60 students (84.5%) was Telugu which forms the majority, followed by 06 Urdu speaking students (8.5%) and 07 students' (7%) mother tongue was Kannada as their parents migrated to Andhra Pradesh from Karnataka. All the students unanimously reported that they stay very near to the school and it takes only 5 to 10 minutes walk to reach the school. Thus, most of them come by walk whereas very few students (three of them) stated that they come in a bicycle. The siblings of majority of the students are studying in government school. In the sample, 61 students, i.e., 86% of them did their primary schooling in a government school whereas 10 students studied in a private school up to the primary level. These students then left the private school and joined government school as they were unable to pay the fees.

In NMHS, out of 40 detailed interviews, it was found that 02 were Muslims, 02 were Christians and the rest, which form the majority, were Hindus. Like ZPHS, here too the mother tongue of most of the students was Telugu, followed by Kannada, Urdu and Marathi. All the students reported that they stay near to the school, and hence, come by walk or on a cycle which is again similar to ZPHS students. Since most of the school children are from the same locality, there is no transport facility (school buses). More than ninety five percent children reported that right from nursery onwards they are studying in the same school.

Students' family background:

For the present study, the family background of the students is analysed through parents' educational level and their economic activity. The table below gives the educational qualifications of the parents from the sample group of 71 students of ZPHS.

TABLE 5.3 EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF THE PARENTS OF ZPHS STUDENTS

Education level	Fathers	Mothers
Illiterate	37 (52 %)	51 (72%)
Primary	07 (10%)	09 (13%)
Upper primary	10 (14%)	06 (8%)
SSC (10th)	10 (14%)	04 (6%)
Intermediate	05 (7%)	-
Graduation	01 (1.4%)	-
Total	70	70

*Two children are raised by a single parent.

The table shows that 72% of the mothers were illiterate whereas little more than half i.e., 52% of the fathers were illiterate. One of the mothers reported to be qualified up to the intermediate level whereas the same was reported by 7% of the fathers. Only one father (1.4%) reported to be qualified up to the graduation level. On the whole, the table shows that more than half of the parents were illiterate. Thus, most of the children studying in ZPHS were first generation learners.

Let us compare the family background of ZPHS students with that of NMHS students in terms of educational level and economic activity of the parents. The table below gives the educational background of the parents of NMHS students.

TABLE 5.4 EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PARENTS OF NMHS STUDENTS

Education level	Fathers	Mothers
Illiterate	10 (25%)	15 (37.5%)
Primary	05 (12.5%)	14 (35%)
Upper primary	12 (30%)	10 (25%)
SSC (10th)	10 (25%)	01 (2.5%)
Intermediate	02 (5%)	-
Graduation	-	-
Total	39	40

*One student is reared by a single parent.

The table shows that the percentage of illiterate parents is comparatively lesser than that of ZPHS parents. Almost one-fourth of the fathers and 37% of the mothers are illiterate, and thus, their children are the first generation learners. There was not a single parent who was qualified up to the graduation level. Like ZPHS, very few fathers (5%) were qualified up to the intermediate level. Most of the other parents come under the upper primary and SSC educational categories. The overall picture of the educational level of parents of both the schools reveals that the percentage of illiterate parents in ZPHS is more than NMHS.

It was found that almost all the parents in ZPHS were involved in blue-collared jobs. The fathers were employed as auto/lorry/car drivers, watchmen, carpenters, plumbers, launderers, or workers in a company and printing press. Only one parent (who is qualified up to graduation level) in ZPHS reported that he works in a primary school as a teacher. Among females, 15 (21.4%) mothers were housewives while the rest i.e., 56 (80%) were found to be working. Their occupations include selling flowers, vegetables, sugarcane juice,

tailoring, working as a housemaid, or as a worker in a company. It was found that the average monthly income of a family was around Rs 4,000 to Rs 5,000 when pooled together from various sources. Most of them reported that they have migrated here in search of jobs and were staying in rented houses. It was observed that all the houses of the children were strikingly similar with one room and a small kitchen and with basic furniture like cot, television and the like. Since most of the parents were staying in a rented house, they had to spend around Rs 1500-2000 per month for their house rent. The rest of the money was spent in consumption and other necessary expenditures. It was noted that most of the children in ZPHS come from a similar background. In such a situation, it was very difficult for them to pay for their child's education every month.

In ZPHS, majority of the students were studying in government school for one single reason: unaffordable fees in private schools and free education in government schools. They were not able to send their children in private school as the latter charge fees which they cannot afford. Nevertheless, parents of the sample group enrolled their children in English medium sections in ZPHS as they feel that familiarity in English will be very useful in future for a better job.

In NMHS, it was found that parents were mostly engaged in blue collared jobs and employed as auto drivers, electricians, carpenters, company workers, or were engaged in small businesses. However, it was noted that two-thirds of the mothers here were housewives, which is quite opposite to the mothers of ZPHS students. One of the many differences between parents of ZPHS and that of NMHS is that a perceptible number of parents of the government school children are migrants whereas in this private school, most of the parents have settled in the locality. Parents of NMHS were slightly in a better economic position than ZPHS parents as the average income was found to be around Rs 6,000 to Rs 7,000 per month. Here, monthly fee is an important expenditure for the parents and on an average they spend about Rs 1,000 per month for the education of two

children. Nevertheless, it was observed that there were good numbers of defaulters every month and whenever they had money they paid two-three months fees at a time.

As discussed earlier, in both the schools, parents are either illiterate or have studied in Telugu medium. Thus, parents' contribution in their child's education (which is in English medium) is very minimal, and in private schools, it is only confined to paying the fees. In ZPHS, both the parents work outside from morning 9am to evening 7pm. Moreover, since majority of them are illiterates, they do not devote time and interest in their child's education. Parents too stated that they don't have any account of how their child is studying as they cannot read and write or can do it only in Telugu. Since the involvement of parents in teaching the child at home is very less, they send their children for tuitions which is a common practice even among children of other schools. In ZPHS, among 71 students, 20 students go for private tuitions in the evening and pay Rs 150 per month for all the subjects. In NMHS, the school has arranged study hours in the evening from 4.30pm - 7pm for which Rs 50 is charged from each student¹. Since tuitions are arranged in the school itself, parents do not send their children anywhere else for studying.

Parents' responses towards enrolling their child in NMHS/ZPHS

There are many reasons for the parents to pay the fees and admit their children in NMHS despite knowing the fact that there is no fee in government schools. The first and foremost reason is an *optimistic attitude towards education* and a desire to see their children in a good position. There are parents who are not financially very sound, but still are ready to spend on their child's education. Laxmi is one such parent who's one child studies in VIII standard and the other child in V standard. She is a housemaid and earns around Rs 3,000 per month whereas her husband is a plumber in the near by apartments and earns Rs 3,000 per month. Since both the parents are illiterate, she wishes that at least their children should study well. Such

¹ More details are discussed in chapter 3.

parents though illiterate, are optimistic and have dreams and aspirations for their children. They look at education as an investment which will help in securing the life of their children in future.

Another very important reason for admitting children in NMHS is an *inclination towards English medium* on which private schools are thriving whereas the regional language, Telugu is the medium of instruction in most of the government schools. Parents expressed the desire that their children should be able to read, write and speak in English. Since they are admitting their children in private school, they do not compromise on 'Spoken English'. In fact, utmost emphasis is laid on spoken English as a child communicating in English has become a *status symbol* among the parents as they proudly say that their children are studying in an English medium school.

When it was asked that even in the government school there is English medium, parents responded by saying: *Government school lo pattinchukune valu yavaru undaru* (in government school nobody is concerned about teaching). In fact, this impression of government school was held by all the parents as well as the school management of NMHS. Even the director of NMHS laughingly said:

There is absolutely no teaching in a government school. I always notice students roaming here and there. Students are coming to the school only for MDMs. They stand in a line with their plates and after having lunch they go back to their home again. Students are just promoted every year, though their academic standard is very poor.

Parents stated that in government school, teachers neither teach well nor take care of the children properly. Since in private school they are paying fees, they can question the teachers and the school management if there are any inadequacies as both are accountable and act according to the parental demand, which is lacking in government school. So, *accountability of the teachers* was also one reason for the parents to admit their child in private school. Some parents further reported that government schools are for very poor children where students make a line for food with plates in hand

(referring to mid day meals). They were of the opinion that their situation is much better and their children need not form a line for food. Thus, educating children in private schools was also seen as a *sign of prestige* among the parents.

There are many private schools in Nayapally that function more or less similarly like NMHS. All the schools are competitors of one another and try to woo the parents by claiming to have special 'spoken English classes', 'teaching labs', 'engineering and medicine coaching' and the like. Then why did the parents opt for NMHS? When asked for the reason, majority of the parents (75%) stated that NMHS is the oldest school in Nayapally and they have faith (*nammakam*) in the school director. The director, who has been the resident of the area for the past sixty years, is a known person in the locality and can be very easily approachable. Thus, parents know him very well and have trust in him. They also reasoned that NMHS is the cheapest and an affordable private school in the locality. Rest of the private schools charge more fees which does not fit into their budget. Apart from these two reasons, 37% of the parents reported that this school is very close to their house, hence they have not opted for other schools². Surprisingly, only 13% of the parents reported that good teachers were the reason for admitting their child in NMHS as they reasoned that every year new teachers keep joining the school, and thus, they are not very familiar with those teachers.

However, while interviewing the parents, it was observed that some of them were not very happy and satisfied with the school. Parents were complaining about lack of good English teachers. They even informed the management about this and asked them to appoint good English teachers as their children were not able to speak well in English. The director, however, reasons:

Here, parents only look for spoken English. If their child is not able to speak well, they admit him/her in a different school.

² It was noted that the national highway road, which has a heavy flow of traffic, makes it very difficult to cross the road. Therefore, parents residing on one side of the road preferred a school which was on the same side as they are always afraid of their children crossing the road daily.

But it is very difficult to get good English teachers as our salaries are very less. A teacher who is fluent in English can get into a corporate school with a much better salary. Since our fee is less, we cannot give lucrative salaries to teachers. If a candidate is well qualified and is competent to teach in English, he/she goes to other schools where they get better salaries.

Apart from this, one parent who did MA in English and whose child studies in grade IV was very sceptical about this school. She was an exception amongst all the other parents as she was well qualified, worked as a teacher in a reputed school and has 8 to 10 years of experience. When asked for the reason for enrolling her child in this school she reported that she is having a small baby to take care of. As this school is just in front of her house, it is easy for her to take back her kid after school hours. However, she was very determined to change the school next year. She feels that when parents are not educated, it becomes the duty of the teacher to tell the children about hygiene, manners, etc, but teachers never do that. She says:

Many times I have noticed students using foul language, which teachers never correct. I informed the director and teachers, but in vain and this shows their negligence attitude.

Even though parents spend on their child's education, when private school education becomes beyond their reach or when they are not satisfied, they admit their child in a government school. Mahesh is one such student in ZPHS who did his primary schooling in an English medium private school, but joined in ZPHS in grade VI. His parents, who were educated up to the 10th reported that in the private school, teachers were not teaching properly and were repeatedly beating the students because of which they withdrew their child and admitted him in ZPHS. Few other parents reported that they were unable to pay the fees of private school due to unfavourable circumstances (*paristhitulu baagaleka fees kattalekapoyemu*) and thus, admitted their children in the government school. Parents also reported that when a child does not study well in private school, they withdraw the child from the private school and admit him/her in a government school. They reasoned that it is wasting their hard earned money when the child is not interested in studies. Few parents who

were in favour of government schools stated that in private schools it is all '*daabu*' and '*goppa*' (hype and showy) with uniforms, tie, belt etc., but teachers are not good at all. Thus, school fee is the determining factor for school education among the parents of lower socio-economic strata and they move back and forth between government and private schools. Parents of lower income groups fall back on government schools when private school education becomes dearer.

II

Students' World and Their Perceptions

The transition from primary to the high school is an important development that also coincides with the transition from childhood to adolescence. In ZPHS, this transition is marked by increased household responsibilities among the children whereas in NMHS, it is marked by more academic responsibilities as they have a pressure to fulfil school and parental expectations. This transition also brings many changes among the students in terms of behaviour and relationships. The peer relationships become stronger, and gradually, there is a change in the behaviour of the students as they move to higher classes. All these changes, in turn, influence the way students think and perceive the world around them. The same has been discussed in detail in this section.

Increased household and academic responsibilities

In order to survive and to ensure that the basic needs like food, shelter and clothing are met, people devise number of survival strategies and strive hard to pool money from different resources. In this process, children also contribute in their own way and support their families. Interviews with students of ZPHS revealed that 32 out of 71 students, i.e., 45% of the students were involved in some kind of economic occupation. Out of these 32 students, 29 students were boys and the rest three were girls. Thus, it is very evident that the percentage of boys working outside is much greater (91%) than the

girls. The type of economic activity and the number of boys in each category is as follows:

TABLE 5.5 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF ZPHS STUDENTS

Type of Economic activity	Number of boys
Delivering newspapers	15
Delivering milk packets	05
Both milk and newspapers	03
Bakery/canteen	03
Others (printing press, company worker etc)	03

It is very apparent from the above table that the predominant occupation among the boys is delivering newspapers followed by milk. Most of the boys reported that they started this economic activity when they were in VI standard while very few (3 students) reported that they have started working from V standard onwards. These boys earn anywhere between Rs 300 to Rs 1,000 per month depending on the number of papers and quantity of milk supplied or the nature of work in a factory or a company. For instance, a student delivers 150 newspapers and earns Rs 1,000 whereas for 80 copies of newspapers, a child is paid Rs 500 per month. Most of the students reported that they take Rs 100 from their earnings for their own expenses and give the rest of the money to their parents. Some students remain absent in the school throughout the year as they take up a full time job. In every class, there are two such students and this happens till the IX standard. During exams time, they come and bring a medical certificate based on which they are promoted to the next higher class. Long and informal conversations with the boys of IX and X standard revealed that they are also involved in selling movie tickets in the evening and charge Rs 100 for every Rs 30 ticket. It was observed that boys do not hesitate to reveal that they are working and earning for their family. In fact, they reveal it with pride and confidence.

Girls, on the other hand, were quite reluctant to disclose their economic activity. The percentage of girls working outside was very

less and only three girls reported that they do some work after school hours. Two of the three girls stated that they sell flowers in the evening while the third girl informed that she does book binding work after the school. However, teachers reported that there will be more number of girls who are involved in some kind of economic pursuits. They stated that girls work as maids in the houses, but they do not reveal it outside. Furthermore, whenever any exhibition is organised in Nayapally area, government school girls go there and work as salesgirls for which they are paid Rs 50 per day.

Nevertheless, all the girls right from VI standard onwards reported that household chores keep them busy all the day. As both parents are working, girls do the entire household chores like washing clothes, cleaning utensils, cooking, sweeping and mopping the house. In fact, some girls stated that they like coming to the school as it gives a diversion from their home atmosphere. Since at home they have to do household related work, they come to school as they can interact with their peers. Thus, in the households of ZPHS children, marked division of labour is a survival strategy, with boys involved in economic activities and girls taking care of the household chores and helping their mothers, thus contributing in their own way in the sustenance of their family.

The mental development and maturity which ZPHS students show at a very young age is noteworthy. They develop this maturity and understanding of the wider society and intricate problems not only through school, but they learn it through their process of socialization and their negotiation with everyday life. For instance, students of grade VI who are in the age group of 12 to 13 years can easily judge which economic activity is easier for them and can fetch more money. As mentioned earlier, the number of students delivering newspapers was more than those delivering milk packets. When asked for the reasons, students stated that delivering milk packets is tougher than newspapers as one has to carry at least 40-50L of milk on a bicycle very early in the morning which is a very laborious task. Students

reported that those who started their economic activity with delivering milk packets initially fell sick and got fever in the first few days. Moreover, if somebody steals the milk packets, the money is deducted from their salary. On the other hand, delivering newspapers is comparatively easier as one need not get up very early in the morning. Furthermore, carrying newspapers is less arduous compared to carrying milk packets.

Apart from the maturity among the students regarding the economic activities, it was observed that interactions with friends influences the way students think and act upon. When those students who are not involved in any kind of economic work see their friends working and earning, they get influenced and wish to work and contribute in their own way to their family earnings. Rajkumar, a twelve year old boy who studies in grade VI, expressed his desire to work so that he can help his mother. His father expired and his mother was the only breadwinner of the family. He wanted to deliver newspapers or milk like his friends to ease the burden of his mother. His mother, however, does not allow him to do so and wants him to concentrate only on studies as he is her only child and she wants him to study well do a good job later. Shyam, a student of VII stanadard too wanted to work, but his parents are against the notion of children working and earning for their family. When the researcher met Shyam's parents, his father said:

I left my schooling and started working after VIII standard. But I will not allow the same thing to happen with my child as I realised that once in money, always in money.

Mahesh, a student of grade VII was not working till December and was concentrating only on his studies. Both his parents were illiterates and do masonry work. He was a good student and teachers always appreciated him. However, due to financial problems at home, he was unable to pay his three months tuition fees (Rs 450) to his tuition teacher. As a consequence, he stopped going to tuition classes. Since he saw his friends working, he too decided to work so that he can repay the pending amount and join the tuitions once again. Thus,

from January 2009 he started working in a bakery. In the morning, he used to come to the school and in the evening from 4pm to 10pm, he used to work in the bakery. His tasks include sweeping the shop, taking orders, making parcels etc and for this he was paid Rs 800 per month. In the first month of his work, he told the researcher that he will work only for one month and will repay the tuition amount so that he can again join the tuition classes. Accordingly, he repaid his three months tuition fee with his first month salary and gave the rest of the amount to his mother. Notably, his tuition teacher, who is a vidya volunteer in the school, never expressed any concern for the student who was entering into the world of work, despite knowing beforehand that her student has started working to repay the tuition amount. He worked for the second month too and stated that he is liking the job as his master, who is the shop owner, is very kind to him and allows him to eat whatever he feels like. So, Mahesh decided to work for another month.

Gradually, three four months passed by but Mahesh did not leave his bakery job. In fact, during summer vacations, he took it as a full time job and did not go to his native village to enjoy his vacations. After summer vacations, when the school reopened, Mahesh was still continuing in the same bakery to support his family. Initially, he liked the job as he was getting many things to eat, but slowly he started losing interest and stated that he is bored of seeing the bakery items daily in front of his eyes and does not feel like eating those things. Thus, it is very evident that lack of financial resource is one major impediment for the parents which forces children to enter into the world of work.

In NMHS, none of the student reported to be engaged in any economic activity. In fact, there is no scope left for the students to work as they remain in the school for twelve hours, especially the higher class students for whom it is all work and no play. Moreover, parents of NMHS students have a positive attitude towards education which is

another reason for not allowing their children to work. When asked about their aspirations in life, students' responses were as follows:

TABLE 5.6 ASPIRATIONS OF THE STUDENTS OF NMHS

Ambition	No. of Students
Engineers	24
Doctors	10
Sportsmen	03
Others (Teacher, Astronaut, Army)	03

The above table clearly depicts that most of the students reported that they wish to become engineers, followed by doctors, sportsmen and others. Even in ZPHS, students reported similar ambitions in life. Though these students work in the morning or evening, they have a vision for their future and want to be in a good position because of which they have taken English medium. All the students in English medium classes reported that they have taken English medium as it is required for a better future. They stated that they did not go to private schools as their parents cannot afford the fees in private schools. In every class, there were at least one or two students who left private school and joined government school as their parents were unable to pay the fees. Sireesha, a student of grade VIII, was earlier studying in a private school, but left the school as the hike in the fees was unaffordable to her parents. Her father was a watchman and her mother does ironing of clothes. Her elder brother studied up to 10th standard and took up a full time job as a worker in a near by factory. She likes the government school and says:

Earlier when I was in a private school I always used to feel that my parents are working and struggling hard for my education since they had to pay the fees from their hard earned money. My entire concentration was there only. Now that there is no fee in government school, I am not tensed at all.

All those students who left private schools expressed their liking for ZPHS and reported that though private schools charge fees, teachers do not teach properly. They feel that in ZPHS the teachers are good,

teach well and there is no fee as well. During informal conversations, some of the students said: *Manamu manchiga chaduvute ae school aina parvaledu* (If we are studying well, it doesn't matter whether the school is government or private). Students from higher classes like VIII and IX stated that in the beginning, they faced lot of problems in English medium textbooks as their primary schooling was in Telugu medium, but gradually they have learned it. However, students of classes VI and VII face lot of problems but they do not regret their decision of taking English medium. Prameela, a student of class VII said: *English nerchukunte America vellachu, Hindi nerchukoni emi cheyyali, manamu telugu valam kada* (If we learn English we can go to America, what's the use of learning Hindi? After all, we are Telugu people).

Thus, students were confident and stated that initially everyone faces problems but gradually they cope up after some time.

Increased peer-group relationships

One striking difference between the students of ZPHS and NMHS is the liberty which government school children enjoy and which private school children are deprived of. It was observed that students in ZPHS are allowed to do whatever they feel like during break time. For students, there are no rules that they have to take their lunch in the school. Many go back to their home while others eat in the school. Since the lunch break is for one hour, students get ample time to play. During short intervals and lunch-break time, students are scattered almost everywhere, inside the school and outside the gate. This is the time when they are not afraid of the teachers and do whatever they feel like.

A common practice amongst the students is that most of them bring two to five rupees from their house everyday. During lunch time and short breaks, they buy cut fruits like pineapple or raw mango pieces, guavas, ice creams, etc. that are sold outside the school gate. It was noted that teachers never care to tell the students not to eat the cut fruits or ice creams sold outside. As no restrictions are imposed on

students during break time, friendship bonds are able to grow among the students. It was noted that the atmosphere in ZPHS was more conducive to develop intimate peer relationships. Since here there is no practice of substituting teachers if the concerned teacher is on leave, students get ample time to interact and understand one another.

One quality which students develop through peer relationships is that of giving and sharing. This is very evident through many practices among the students in ZPHS. For instance, it was observed that in a class, all the students do not purchase the reference books (called as guide books in the school) for all the subjects as these books are quite expensive and not affordable for their families. Students pool the money to buy the guide books for each subject, which are shared by all the students in the class. In some other classes, it was noted that if one student had a guide book for one subject, another student bought the guide for a different subject. In this way, they used to share their books among themselves. Even in writing notes or asking questions, students help one another without any hesitation. Students often take turns bringing *pappu or dal* (a preparation made from lentils) or a curry from home or outside to supplement the mid-day meals. They share the *dal* and curry, as well as any food brought to eat during break time, with their friends. After school hours, most of the students meet again in the evening either to play or in the tuitions. Almost all the students' knew their friends' houses as all of them reside close to one another. The friendships in ZPHS were found to be quite strong and sharing was quite explicit among the students.

This quality of giving and sharing was not that explicit among the students of NMHS. Since they are always brought up in a competitive atmosphere in the school where individual achievement is appreciated, the habit of giving and sharing with others and collective behaviour is not cultivated among them. Due to stringent rules and a rigid school atmosphere, students of NMHS are deprived of enjoyment with friends. At 9am, the gate is closed for the students and teachers

and opens only at 4pm. Moreover, the lunch break is only for thirty minutes and there is no short interval during the day. Even during the lunch break, students have to remain in the class and eat lunch quietly with their class teachers without making any noise. Thus, when compared to students of ZPHS, students in NMHS are socialized amidst many rules and regulations.

Nevertheless, students in both the schools find their own ways to resist the school rules or to something in which they are not interested. This resistance is either in the form of withdrawal technique or it is quiet resistance (Ray, 1988). Quiet resistance is done covertly so that one should not be caught unlike withdrawal, which is very straight. It was observed that students in NMHS showed *quiet resistance* whereas in ZPHS students adapted to *withdrawal technique*. One example of showing quiet resistance by the students of NMHS is a game devised by them in the class when they feel bored. Whenever a teacher comes for a substitution in their class, students are asked to read among themselves. During this time, they play a game popularly known as *bommalu aata* (picture game). In this game, students open their study books and one student describes a *bomma* (picture) in the book which others have to find in the book. Students reported that this game is exciting as it gives an impression to the teacher that they are studying. Students too pretend that they are studying as their books are open on the desk, but actually they enjoy among themselves without the knowledge of the teacher. Thus, they carved their own strategies to unwind themselves amidst the hectic schedule.

In ZPHS, students exhibit more overt behaviour than NMHS students. One instance of withdrawal technique is mentioned here. One day, all the VII grade students bunked their Telugu teacher's class which was immediately after the lunch hour. The students went to their home for lunch and did not come back for her period. When asked for the reason, they reported that she always abuses, scolds and beats the students and they are very afraid of her. They also reasoned that

though her class is in the 6th period, she takes 7th period too, which is their games period and students did not want to miss their games period. This kind of resistance is very open and is done with the intention of being found and to show that students can break the rules if they dislike something/someone in the school. Like NMHS, students in ZPHS also play many games in their leisure time³.

It was noted that teachers of ZPHS are against intimate peer group relationships, particularly relationships with the opposite sex. They argue that in co-educational schools, boys and girls develop intimate relationships at a very young age. Rajakumari, a Science teacher for the high school, narrated an incident which took place in the year 2008. She stated that there was a girl in grade VIII who was very fond of a boy in grade X. Initially, teachers were under the impression that the boy was harassing the girl and gave him strict warnings. Later, they came to know that it was the other way round when the boy came to the teachers with a bunch of letters written to him by the girl. Meanwhile, the girl's parents came to know about this and got her married to one of their relative. However, this did not solve the problem and, in turn, made it more complicated. The girl lodged a police complaint saying that her husband was not treating her properly. She again started writing letters to this boy, but in vain. When the boy did not respond even after her repeated attempts, the girl committed suicide by pouring kerosene on herself. The teacher (Rajakumari) then asked with anxiety, "these children are only 14-15 years old and taking such extreme steps. So who is to be blamed here?"

³ First is the 'Statue/Stop' game played by the students whenever students have leisure time or during intervals wherein if a student shouts 'statue' at another student, the latter has to stay in the same position without any movement until the other student says 'stop'. Another game played is called as 'BM aata (game)' in which these two letters of the alphabet are supposed to be written on hands all the time. If a student asks the other to show BM and if the other student does not have it written on his hand, then he/she has to give them something in return like a chocolate, ice cream etc. Through these games, it was noted that both seniors and juniors interact together.

Teachers stated that in the school they can keep an eye on the students but it is not possible to check their behaviour after school hours. Ramalaxmi, another teacher says:

Most of the students, both boys and girls meet at the tuition classes in the evening and get spoiled there. As girls and boys are deprived of many things at home like proper food, vehicles etc, they look up to their friends to fulfil their desires. The main problem is that parents don't devote time for their children.

Thus, teachers in ZPHS preferred only-boys or only-girls schools rather than a co-educational school as they feel that teenage attractions poses lot of problems for everyone: teachers, parents and students. Teachers further argued that in single-sex schools, it is easier to control the students whereas in co-educational schools it becomes very difficult. For this reason, it was observed that though ZPHS is a co-educational school, boys' and girls' sections were separated to check and control their behaviour. Sex differences were also ritualised in the morning assembly where boys and girls stood separately. Similar incidents were also reported by teachers in NMHS and though both boys and girls were present in one classroom, they used to sit separately with two separate rows for boys and girls.

Behavioural changes

The transition from the primary to high school is also marked by many behavioural changes. All the teachers in both the schools unanimously reported that students become more and more confident and at the same time undisciplined as they move to higher classes. According to them, in class VI, when students enter the high school, they have some fear and listen to their teachers. But gradually, students overcome that fear and this is especially true for the boys who become naughtier year by year. Teachers stated that boys just don't listen to them and most of the time they feel as if they are talking to walls rather than students. Students do not have any fear of teachers. Sujata, a V.V, narrated one incident:

Today, during invigilation, a X standard boy was writing only questions in the answer sheet and leaving one page blank in between two questions. Then he stood up and started asking for

additional sheets. I said I will not give extra answer sheets unless you write something on the main answer sheet. Then the boy replied within no time: Why you will not give teacher? We are paying money for this.

Syamaladevi started narrating another incident describing how 'naughty' the students are:

Today I went to class VIII for invigilation. A boy was turning back and asking answers to his friends. When I warned him, he immediately replied: teacher, you have studied this much without cheating? I will copy, you go and complain to whomever you want.

The teacher again said, "We too studied in government schools, but we never gave rude replies to our teachers. These students do not have any respect for us". During the invigilation in grade IX, it was observed that most of the students were just sitting and not writing anything. One of the students was asked, "Why are you sitting for the exam when you are not prepared?" The student replied without any hesitation, "Teacher, at home we get bored. Here at least we can spend some time."

As the students move towards higher classes, they also start comparing their own actions with that of their teachers. One day, Chakravarthi, a student of grade VIII in ZPHS was beaten as he was coming to the school after the prayer for several days. He came to the researcher and said:

Rani teacher (his class teacher) comes to the class at 9am everyday and I am coming at 8.45am. So what is wrong in this? Nobody is telling her anything for coming late, why I am punished?

In NMHS too, teachers had similar opinions about higher class students. In fact, teachers stated that rowdiness, smoking and consuming alcohol among the higher class boys is very common. Janakidevi narrated one incident:

One day, a X standard boy was teasing a girl from IX standard. The girl came to Venkataih sir crying and complained. The sir called that boy and slapped him. Immediately, the boy replied,

‘There are many others who did the same. Then why you are slapping only me’.

In both the schools, teachers felt that experience in primary classes was much better than high school experience. For them, teaching primary sections was more rewarding and satisfying as small children listen to whatever teachers say and give them a lot of respect. They don’t ask unnecessary questions to bully teachers. They are disciplined and greet teachers whenever they enter and leave the class. They get very attached to the teachers, which is totally lacking in high school. Students in high school become withdrawn and give more importance to their peers than teachers. Moreover, teachers also reported that in the same class, students of different age-groups sit and mingle together. This also influences the thinking of younger classmates.

Child’s daily routine at school

A usual day for children of ZPHS is very arduous and physically tiring. Boys who work everyday reported that they get up at around 4am or 5am in the morning to deliver newspapers or milk packets and finish their duty in two hours. Afterwards, they go back home, get ready and come to the school. Most of the students reported that they come to the school with empty stomach. During break time, some students go back to their house, have breakfast and again come back to the school. In the school, apart from being engaged in learning, students are assigned many teachers’ tasks which was completely absent in NMHS. These tasks include bringing tea/coffee/breakfast for the teachers from outside, filling their bottles with drinking water, photocopying their documents, recharging their mobile phones, and the like. Apart from this, boys also perform other labour intensive tasks like unloading rice bags meant for the mid day meals from the vehicle, storing water in the tanker (as water comes every alternate day), lifting huge cooking utensils filled with cooked rice, and so forth, which they do with ease in a group. It was observed that school personnel never hesitate to allocate difficult tasks to students and reasoned that these children are used to doing such tasks at home or

at work. Students never say 'no' to teachers as they are very used to the work and dutifully do the given tasks. Apart from this, students also do many other tasks on a daily basis like sweeping their own classrooms when the classroom is dirty, putting official seals on examination answer sheets, ringing the school bell, and other tasks during school functions like republic day, independence day, and the like. It was noticed that after school hours, students go back home, change their school uniforms and after some time leave the house again either to play or to go to tuitions or to work. Those students who work in the evening in the nearby factories or printing press work from 4pm to 10pm and come to the school again the next morning. Girls mostly remain indoors doing household chores and helping their mothers in cooking and other related tasks.

In contrast to the physical strain of ZPHS students, students in NMHS undergo more mental stress. Teachers do not assign any tasks as there are separate *aayahs* (caretakers) appointed for doing such tasks. Students always study under the pressure of the school and parents. Even if a teacher comes late to the class or in any leisure period, it is very unusual to see disorder in the classroom. Students were found either reading their school books or doing their homework.

Students' views on the school and the teachers

Schools are the arenas where children spend a considerable amount of time every day and interact with friends and teachers. The discourses between them facilitate students in generating an opinion about the teachers and the school. The way in which students see and react to their teachers and the basis on which they do are important for understanding what goes on in the schools and classrooms (Reid, 1978). Thus, it is worthwhile to understand the perceptions of students towards their teachers and their teaching, relationships between pupils and teachers, aspects seen by pupils in ranking the teachers, and their likes and dislikes about their school.

In ZPHS, the relationship between regular teachers and the students was formal and reserved. Students were afraid of some of the regular

teachers and were under control or acted in a disciplined way when regular teachers took the class. These teachers were guiding and encouraging, but at the same time were very authoritative. On the other hand, in the case of V.Vs', the relationship between them and students was very informal and friendly. The volunteers belonged to the same community as the students and also resided in the same locality. So, both volunteers and students had frequent interactions after school hours, either in the tuitions or in the evening while playing. It was found that three *vidya* volunteers used to take tuitions in the evening and many students preferred going to the school volunteers for tuitions. Students always considered V.Vs' as one among them, and hence, shared a cordial relationship with them. Thus, social distance between the volunteers and students was less when compared to the social distance between regular teachers and the students. Thus, it helped in building a friendly relationship between the volunteers and the students.

In NMHS, the relationship between teachers and students was mostly based on the age of the teacher. Students shared a friendly relationship with teachers who were aged between 20 and 25. Students never hesitated to tell their problems to these teachers despite getting punishments from them either for not doing homework or not studying properly. Teachers too were not very harsh with the students. However, the relationship with old and experienced teachers was more formal and restricted only to the classrooms. The striking difference between the relationship in ZPHS and NMHS is that since English language is imposed on the students in the latter, they cannot express their views and problems well to the teachers unlike in the government school where students have the liberty to speak in their mother tongue.

When asked about what do they like most in their school, a spontaneous reply from the students of both the schools was that teachers in the school are good. While interviewing students it was found that students adopt their own criteria for liking or disliking a

particular teacher. Most of the students in both the schools reported similar criteria for ranking their teachers:

- *Effective/Ineffective teaching*: This was the most important factor reported by the students in liking a particular teacher. They stated that a teacher should explain well and make them understand the lesson in a simpler way. They further stated that even if a teacher is strict, if she or he teaches well, they start liking that particular teacher.
- *Strict/Soft*: This was another factor of the students for liking or disliking a particular teacher. They reported that if the teacher is very strict and rigid, they hesitate to ask questions or raise any doubts. Punishments and abusive language of teachers was outright rejected by the students. Students expressed fear and hatred towards teachers who were very impolite, gave harsh punishments, and do not teach properly. For instance, Madhavalatha, a Telugu teacher (V.V.) in ZPHS is disliked by all the students in the school as she gives harsh punishments and is very rude and impolite towards the students. As soon as she enters the classroom, students open their textbooks and are all set for the class.
- *Friendly/Unfriendly*: This was the third important criterion for ranking a teacher. A friendly teacher was well-received by the students. They reasoned that if the teacher is friendly, they can interact and share their problems with the teacher without any fear or restraints which cannot happen with an unfriendly teacher.

Apart from these criteria, it was observed that those teachers who used humour in class quite frequently were very popular among the students. It was also observed that when students liked a particular teacher, they also liked the subject that the teacher taught. For instance, Sumathi in NMHS teaches English to class VI students for whom studying in English medium is a new experience. All the students reported that the teacher made English easier for them,

explained well and was very polite and friendly. The students in higher classes reported that it was only because of her that they had developed an interest in learning English. It was also noted that students were very much attached to their class teacher. Among their favourite teachers list, their class teacher's name was invariably mentioned. Thus, when a teacher meets all the above mentioned criteria, that particular teacher becomes a 'favourite teacher' of the students.

Apart from the teachers, the other thing that ZPHS students liked about their school was the playground. Students were very much attached to the playground which is approximately 4000 square yards. They say that even private schools do not have such a large playground which was quite true (of low-medium cost private schools). In NMHS, students do not have a huge playground. There is a common playground in the area which is shared by some other private schools in the locality. In both ZPHS and NMHS, students have three periods for games and three periods for computers every week. Students in both the schools usually play *kabaddi* or *kho-kho* in their games periods as in both the schools there are no sports equipment. In NMHS, though fee is collected towards sports equipment every year, it was observed that even the basic equipment like a football or volleyball was missing in the school. Children were well aware of the extraction of money from their parents. One IX standard student angrily said:

Not even a single cricket bat is there in the school. Even football is also not there. So, we end up playing kabaddi as there is no other option. This is the only game that does not require any sports equipment. Many times even in games period we are forced to study.

Apart from this, students in both the schools expressed their aversion towards loads of homework. In ZPHS, teachers do not give much homework, but in NMHS students are burdened with homework. Every subject teacher gives homework every day, which students hate doing. However, homework is imposed on the students and they are

punished if they do not do their homework. Students say that even during exams they get homework from other subject teachers and during those times they cannot decide whether to read for the exam or to complete their homework. It was observed that many times students expressed their dislike for the homework to their teacher and tried to negotiate, but in vain.

Thus, students' reactions on their teachers and the school are not something vague and spontaneous responses, but the reactions are the result of repeated encounters and interactions with their teachers in the school and classrooms and are also based on their past experiences.

Conclusion

Students are the most vital part of any school that form the majority, and understanding their world and perceptions towards their school and teachers is an important aspect in any ethnographic research on schools. The first step towards understanding the students' world was through their family background.

From the present study, it was found that most of the students in ZPHS and one-third in NMHS were first generation learners. Their parents belonged to working class and mostly involved in blue-collared jobs. Thus, there is very little contribution of parents in their child's education. Since students come from a working class background, they receive similar treatment at school by the teachers and the school staff, particularly the ZPHS students. However, there is a difference in the upbringing of a child of ZPHS and NMHS at home as they move from childhood to adolescence which coincides with the transition from the primary to the high school.

Among ZPHS students, household survival strategies become more important when they move to the high school and they have increased household responsibilities. They take up an economic activity (especially boys) and contribute in their family's earnings. Girls take care of the household chores (cooking, cleaning, washing clothes) and

act as a helping hand to their working mother. Since students enter the world of work at an early age, their studies take a backseat. Thus, most of the students take up a regular job after they finish their schooling.

On the contrary, in NMHS, despite the parents being illiterate or less literate, they are more optimistic towards English medium education. Thus, there is an increased academic responsibility for the students. They strive hard to bring good marks and grades in the exams and aspire to become successful professionals in future. Thus, they continue their studies to fulfil the parental and societal expectations and to climb up the economic ladder.

One common strand that connects the ZPHS and NMHS students is the behavioural changes as they move towards the high school. It was noted that students become more withdrawn from their teachers. Peer groups relationships influence the way they think and act upon. It was noted that ZPHS provides more conducive atmosphere in developing intimate peer relationships.

Thus, students of the ZPHS and NMHS have two different worlds and are socialised differently. They constantly negotiate between family, school and peer groups. In this chapter, it is demonstrated that family, peers and school are not distinct arenas, but inter-related and together influence students' engagement in learning. As students move from primary to the high school, the transition is accompanied by increased cognitive maturity, responsibilities, behavioural changes, and so on. At home, socio-economic status, parental educational levels, family atmosphere, household survival strategies influences the way these children perceive the world. At school, peer-group relationships play a pivotal role in moulding a child. As discussed earlier, students adopt their own criteria in judging or ranking a particular teacher.

It is often said that the performance of government school children is poor than the private school children. Through this chapter it is

argued that behind the poor performance of the students there is interplay of several factors. Through understanding students' world it was found that economic stability, educational level of the parents and educationally supportive and nurturing environment at home were found to be some of the major determinants in a child's education.

Apart from these, the teaching in the school plays a major role in stimulating interest in a child towards education. The following chapter elaborates on the teaching-learning activities and classroom discourses in ZPHS and NMHS.

CHAPTER VI

UNDERSTANDING THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

In the previous chapters, it was demonstrated that there are internal conflicts between the teachers and disagreements within the school management. Despite the conflicts and disagreements, the structure of the school is maintained in order to serve the function of imparting knowledge/literary skills to the students. This takes place through the teaching-learning process which is an important facet of school culture. It is primarily concerned with learning and achievement of the students. Teaching is a series of interactions between someone in the role of a teacher and someone in the role of a learner, with the explicit goal of changing the learner's cognitive or affective states (Bidwell cited in Boocock, 1978). Learning, on the other hand, is a process of construction of knowledge and learners actively construct their own knowledge on the basis of materials/activities presented to them (NCERT, 2005).

The present chapter is not just confined to the classroom discourses but focuses on various aspects that are an inevitable part of the teaching-learning process i.e., the academic atmosphere, examinations, assessment, classroom practices, routine teaching procedures, disturbances in the academic calendar, and so on. Through discussing these facets, the chapter attempts to draw attention to what exactly happens in the process of teaching and learning in general, and inside the classrooms in particular. Apart from this, the chapter also focuses on teachers' perceptions of students' academic performances.

Academic atmosphere

In the present context, academic atmosphere refers to the overall atmosphere pertaining to the educational process in which both students and teachers work. In ZPHS, it was observed that the academic atmosphere is more relaxed, teachers are not under any kind of stress. Students are stress-free and without any pressure from the teachers or the parents. Even during exams, it was observed that

they never seemed tensed and faced the exam without any kind of fear.

In NMHS, on the other hand, teachers are always under tremendous pressure and abide by whatever the management says. Students spend most of their time in school and they are forced to study for longer hours. Thus, from 7.30am to 7.30pm, high school students remain in the school under the supervision of their teachers. The way students rank and judge their teachers based on certain criteria was discussed in the previous chapter. Likewise, teachers also label the students in NMHS. Students are divided into two categories by the teachers and the school management:

- ‘Clevsers’ who perform well in the exams and secure good marks, and
- ‘Dullers’ (literally, dullards) who constantly perform badly or fail in the exams.

These two categories of students are not segregated, but combined and made to sit in one class with an intention that the doubts of ‘dullers’ can be clarified by the ‘clevsers’. For the ‘dullers’, extra classes are held daily from 4pm to 4.30pm where one subject teacher clarifies the doubts and gives homework related to the subject. Students strive to come under the ‘clevsers’ category or try to remain in it. It was noted that teaching of the X standard syllabus is started from IX onwards so that students can score well in the exams. By December, IX standard syllabus is completed and from January onwards X standard course work is started so that X students can get ample time to revise before the exams. Teachers reported that this is a common practice in private schools and is followed with the intention that ‘dullers’ can improve and perform better in the exam. In private schools, there are no regulatory bodies to monitor such steps. It was observed that students of X standard are put under tremendous pressure as their results in the board exams is a determining factor for upholding the school’s reputation. They are not given any leisure time and co-curricular activities like games and sports are completely ruled out for

them. Right from the beginning of the academic year, exams are conducted for the students to test their understanding. In ZPHS or in any other government school, no such practice takes place since this is against the government rules. Here, teaching of X standard syllabus is started only from the beginning of the academic year and only when students of IX grade are promoted to grade X.

Like students, teachers in NMHS also work under tremendous stress as their continuation in the school depends on their teaching and students performance. Teachers of X class reported that both students and teachers work under pressure throughout the year and when students bring poor results, teachers are blamed by the management. They pointed out that it is more like a test for the teachers than for the students. Unlike in ZPHS, teachers are constantly supervised by the school correspondent or assistant HM. Every morning and afternoon, one person from the school management comes to monitor whether all the teachers are present in their respective classrooms. However, it was noted that the management never sees how a teacher is teaching inside the class, how the students are responding or the kind of problems that both students and teachers are facing.

It was observed that in both the schools, the main concern of the high school teachers was to complete the syllabus by December or January and start revision from February onwards. Teachers reported that since question papers for quarterly, half yearly and annual examinations come from the government, the required portions have to be completed within the stipulated time. Therefore, teachers were not concerned whether the child was learning or not. Though teachers complete the syllabus, the real problem arises when the medium of instruction is a hindrance in the teaching-learning process, which is discussed below.

Academic Calendar

The academic calendar of any school gives the details of the ways in which the school operates in an academic year. Since all the activities

and events taking place in an academic year were observed, the same is presented below in detail.

There is a lot of difference between the academic calendar of ZPHS and NMHS. If one meticulously goes through the academic calendar of government/local body schools, one can notice that the actual teaching duration is very short in these schools. During the fieldwork, it was observed that the academic year started on June 12th which is the first working day and all the regular teachers, *vidya* volunteers and non-teaching staff reported on that day without fail. In the first two weeks of this month, there was no teaching activity for many reasons. Most of the students did not turn up, textbooks were not distributed to all the students and teachers were also found to be in a relaxed mood. Only X standard classes (for students who were promoted from IX standard) started right from the beginning of the academic year as the students have to sit the board exams. Although a tentative timetable was prepared by the HM, it was observed that except for X class, almost all the other classes were without teachers. In the last week of June, X supplementary exams were conducted for those who failed their board exams. This continued till the first week of July and during this time school functioned from 1pm - 5pm as X supplementary exams were being held in the morning. Most of the regular teachers were assigned the duty of invigilation in other schools, and hence, the school was managed by the V.Vs'. It was observed that all the classes were clubbed together and made to sit in the corridors as examinations were conducted in the classrooms. There was no teaching activity at all. In fact, it was not possible to teach when all the classes were mixed and made to sit together.

It was only from the second week of July that academic activity started which is almost one month after the school reopened. There is a preplanned calendar written in the state syllabus textbooks regarding the syllabus to be completed in every month, which teachers take as a yardstick and follow. The school functioned for three months regularly (till October) and during this time quarterly

exams were conducted in the month of September. Afterwards, ten days holidays were declared in the month of October for Dussera festival. In December, half yearly exams were conducted and two days holidays were given for Christmas followed by another long vacation of ten days in January for Sankranthi festival. After Sankranthi, B.Ed training teachers joined the school for one month for their internship, which is a routine practice every year. Both teachers and students gave a negative opinion on these training teachers. Teachers take this as a disturbance as they feel that neither training teachers nor the students are serious in the class. However, it was observed that teachers get a lot of leisure time during this one month. Regular teachers assign each training teacher a specified portion to be completed in one month. Training teachers have to abide by whatever the regular subject teachers say as ultimately regular teachers have to sign the registers of the training teachers, which is a testimony that these training teachers have completed their internship successfully. It was observed that though training teachers come with teaching aids, students do not listen to them or pay attention as they know that these teachers are in the school only for a short span. The only benefit of this internship period which regular teachers reported is that they give some material thing which is an essential requirement for the school like a wooden closet (*almirah*), electric bell, mike system and so on. In the same month i.e., January, first pre-final exams of X students were held for ten days.

From February onwards, there were a lot of changes in the academic calendar of government/local body schools. In this month, HPT (Hindi Pandit Training) and TPT (Telugu Pandit Training) final exams were held in the school as ZPHS was one of the centres. Teachers reported that this exam is conducted every year in the school. Thus, for one week, most of the rooms had to be vacated as more than 100 candidates appeared for the exam. As a result, the school students had to sit in the sun or on the verandahs for the whole day and with virtually no teaching activity. The invigilation duty for this exam was assigned to the *vidya* volunteers while regular teachers were trying to

manage the classes. In the last week of this month, second pre-final of X exam was held for ten days. From mid-March, 'half day school' started wherein the school functioned only till 12 pm due to peak summers. Every year, this routine continues till the X board exam commences. Once X board exams start, the school functions for only two hours daily i.e., from 1 pm-3 pm. It was observed that during this time, the school was entirely managed by the volunteers as all regular teachers had X exam invigilation duty in the morning in other schools. In ZPHS, nine classrooms were allotted for writing X exam and everyday after the exam, the rooms were locked so that the roll numbers written on the desks and the seating arrangement were not disturbed. As a result, once again, all the students who come at 1 pm were made to sit either on the verandah or in the sun once again. There was no teaching at all and very few students turned up. Finally, annual examinations were held in the month of April and subsequently 23rd of April was declared as the last working day of the school.

It was observed that whenever the school acts as a centre to conduct any examination or whenever teachers have invigilation duty within or outside the school, the academic activity gets disturbed and no teaching takes place. Regular teachers get invigilation duty during X board exams wherein each teacher is paid Rs 12 per day. They also go for Inter I and II year exams which again disturbs the academic activity. During those times, the entire school is managed by *vidya* volunteers. More importantly, since classrooms are engaged for the exams, students are made to sit in the hot sun and they are the ones who suffer the most. The table below summarizes the various interruptions in an academic year:

TABLE 6.3 INTERRUPTIONS IN AN ACADEMIC YEAR IN ZPHS

Purpose	Month	Duration	Teaching activity
X standard supplementary exam	June-July	Two weeks	Nil, regular teachers were assigned invigilation duty
B.Ed Internship	January-February	One month	Classes taken by the training teachers
HPT and TPT final exam	February	10 days	Nil, classrooms are to be vacated for the exam
X Board Exam	March-April	Two weeks	Nil, classrooms given for the exam

When teachers were asked why the school functions on such days rather than giving a holiday, they reported that the school should work for not less than 220 working days in an academic year. Thus, one cannot declare ten days holidays just because examinations are being conducted. So, even though the schools remain open, no academic activity takes place. Apart from all this, retirement functions in the school, assigning teachers for elections duty and other tasks like census counting also disturb the academic atmosphere. In the academic year 2008-09, the school was open for 226 working days.

All these disturbances are totally lacking in NMHS. Here also, around ten training teachers came for internship, but they were assigned more deskwork rather than taking classes. Invigilation for X board exam was done in the school itself by the school teachers as it was one of the many centres. The dates of quarterly, half yearly and annual examinations in NMHS overlap with that of ZPHS as the former is a recognized private school. Unlike ZPHS, there are not many disturbances in the teaching activities. The academic year commenced from the first week of June, a little earlier than the government schools. However, teachers had to come right from the first day of the month. Unlike ZPHS, teachers here have to write year plans i.e., a detailed plan about the academic activity and the syllabus to be completed in each month. This year plan has to be submitted to the management in the beginning of the academic year. On the reopening day, very few students came, hence there was no teaching

activity. Students were clubbed together and were made to sit in three to four classrooms. The school's HM was busy in preparing timetable for the teachers and students. The next day, the timetable was ready and the classes started in full swing without any delay. As is expected from private schools, teachers started informing the students about the first exam to be conducted. From June to March, there is intense academic activity except in January when B.Ed training teachers came for one month internship. During this time, some of the classes were taken by the training teachers.

It was found that X grade students were coming right from the beginning of the month of June. They even came in the month of May for fifteen days from 9.30 am to 12.30 am as they had classes. Thus, for X students, the summer vacations were only for two weeks while in ZPHS the summer vacation was for approximately fifty days even for X grade students. Accordingly, all the teachers who teach X grade students also came during the month of May. Conducting classes in summer vacations does not take place in government schools as it is against the rules. Thus, both teachers and students come only on the reopening day. Apart from the X standard teachers, other teachers who wanted the salary for the month of May also came for canvassing duty and for making other arrangements for admissions like sorting out textbooks for each class, arranging notebooks, and so on. Therefore, the school is never closed and remains open throughout the year.

Unlike ZPHS, the school functions for the full day throughout the year, even in peak summers. However, during X board exams, the school functions from 1pm to 5pm for the students as in the morning the school conducts X examinations. It was observed that only four rooms were allotted for the exam and hence students were not sitting on the corridors or verandahs like in ZPHS, but in the classrooms. However, the 'half day school' was meant only for the students whereas teachers were assigned canvassing duty in the morning. So, teachers come at 9am, do their canvassing duty and take classes in

the afternoon. In the annual exam timetable prescribed by the government, one day holiday was given after every exam. Though ZPHS was closed, NMHS functioned even on those days and most of the students and all the teachers were present. Students were asked to study and revise for the next day's exam and teachers were asked to supervise. It was observed that even on national holidays like Good Friday and Ambedkar Jayanti, the school was open for the teachers as well as the students. The director reasons that if students come to the school, they will study a bit and write something in the exam, if they are at home, they will not study and will not have the zeal to do well in the exam. In the academic year 2008-09, the school functioned for 247 working days.

Thus, it is very evident that there are more working days and the workload of teachers is much greater in NMHS than the ZPHS. In ZPHS, there are many disturbances in an academic year when compared to NMHS which hinders the teaching activity.

English medium: The bone of contention

Language serves as an important vehicle through which the information is communicated. Within the context of school, all the activities in the teaching-learning process revolve around language. However, problems begin when the actors (here, teachers and students) of the school do not have competency in the language other than their mother tongue but are forced to teach and learn in that language due to outside demand (especially from the parents). In the present context, English is the language which is the bone of contention. It is pertinent to highlight that teachers and students in both the schools lack competency in English, but still forced to teach and learn in English medium as the society and job market demands fluency in English.

In ZPHS, teachers reported that students face lot of problems in VI standard when all of a sudden they are taught in English medium text books. Up to V standard i.e., till the primary stage, students study in Telugu medium. So, in the first year of upper primary stage, they find

it very difficult to understand (especially in subjects like Science and Social Studies) and the terminologies used in the text are entirely different from what they learned in Telugu medium in primary classes. Moreover, teachers also reported that students are not taught the basic grammar in English in their primary classes. Given this situation, it is an arduous task for the students to cope up with English medium. This is especially true for those children who have opted for CBSE syllabus in VI standard. For instance, it was observed that in Social Studies half yearly question paper there were questions like: ‘What do you understand by the word government?’ ‘List five ways in which you think it affects your daily life’ and ‘Why do you think the government needs to make rules for everyone in the form of laws?’ Students were finding it difficult to understand the question, so writing is undoubtedly an uphill task for them. As a result, most of the students submitted blank papers in the exam. When compared to Science and Social Studies, Mathematics subject is comparatively easier as the numeric system is the same in both mediums. In languages, Hindi and Telugu textbooks remain the same for both mediums, but English textbooks are different and difficult when compared to the English textbook for Telugu medium students.

The problems are not only confined to the students as language efficiency of teachers play a pivotal role when it comes to teaching in English medium in schools. The table below gives the details of the medium in which teachers have completed their education, and which reflects their competency in teaching in that particular medium.

TABLE 6.1 LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY OF THE TEACHERS

Medium	ZPHS			NMHS		
	Regular	V.Vs'	Total	Primary	High School	Total
Telugu/ Hindi	08	08	16 (66.66%)	13	09	22 (75.86%)
English	06	02	08 (33.33%)	03	04	07 (24.13%)
Total	14	10	24	16	13	29

It is very evident from the above table that more than two-thirds of the teachers in ZPHS (67%) and NMHS (76%) had completed their education in Telugu/Hindi medium. Teachers in both the schools reported that since their entire education was in a regional language, they were not competent to teach in English medium. In ZPHS, teachers were facing lot of difficulties in teaching state syllabus in English medium. As they were not trained in English medium, they felt that they were not doing justice to the subject. In such a situation, teaching CBSE in English medium, which requires more proficiency in English, was a difficult task for them.

All the teachers in ZPHS were very sceptical about the 'SUCCESS School' project. They reasoned that separate teachers should be appointed for 'CBSE SUCCESS School' which was not done. As a result, regular teachers were given the responsibility to teach CBSE English medium classes. Teachers were not competent as they were used to teach the state prescribed syllabus in Telugu medium. They reported that they need to prepare a lot before taking a CBSE class. Moreover, as the CBSE textbooks reached the school after two months of the commencement of the academic year, teachers had to be quick in completing the syllabus. Interview with the MEO revealed that in Balanagar mandal, out of the total twelve government/local body schools, SUCCESS project was introduced in eleven schools in the academic year 2008-09. Out of these eleven, nine schools did not have regular staff for teaching state prescribed syllabus, so having a separate staff for CBSE classes was quite arduous.

Time and again it has been reiterated that change should be introduced after studying the local needs and not through centralised planning (Mead, 1955 for instance). It is pertinent to highlight that when G.O (Government Order) regarding SUCCESS schools was issued, teachers were neither consulted nor any meetings were held with them¹. A two week training programme was conducted in the

¹ Kumar (2009) argues that curriculum designing should be an act of deliberation in which teachers should be included but in India, teachers are

beginning, but without the prescribed textbooks. Teachers reported that they did not have any idea regarding how the textbooks would be. The state government somehow wanted to introduce CBSE English medium syllabus as this was a World Bank funded project. Under this project, each school was allotted one crore rupees to improve the school infrastructure, computer lab, teaching aids etc. However, schools did not receive the funds as these were diverted to other state projects like irrigation. Teachers further argued that even if schools received the funds, 10 to 20 computers would be installed and it would be declared that educational programmes were being shown and taught to the children. According to the teachers, this was not the correct way to raise the standard of government school teaching. One teacher stated:

CBSE syllabus is a very innovative and project based syllabus and government school children cannot compete as they lack fundamentals in every subject. Moreover, as the children were from economically poor background, they cannot afford to buy project related materials.

Unanimously, all the teachers reported that SUCCESS school project should be introduced from grade one onwards with competent English medium teachers. They stated that studying in Telugu medium till the primary and introducing English in upper primary is illogical. They also pointed out that before taking any decision by the government, teachers should be consulted to understand the ground level realities and the feasibility of any new initiative. While having a group discussion with the teachers, one teacher reported that all the government schemes are introduced only for political benefits. This academic year i.e., 2008-09, the ruling party i.e., Congress has introduced the SUCCESS school concept. If some other political party becomes the ruling party, then CBSE syllabus would be changed and the focus might shift to state syllabus and Telugu medium. Thus, the school system in AP is in complete chaos and needs consistency so that students' future is not at stake.

subordinate functionaries, who are not expected to have a voice but only the skill to teach.

It was observed that in ZPHS, the number of students in English medium sections was very less when compared to Telugu medium students. For example, in class VI, the strength of Telugu medium sections was 140 whereas in English medium classes, there were mere 28 students. This shows that even though English medium has been introduced in government school, Telugu medium classrooms were more crowded than English medium classrooms. In IX grade English medium section, there were only eleven students whereas in the beginning when these children were in grade VI, their strength was around 25 in the class. When asked for the reason, teachers reported that parents have more confidence in Telugu medium as they can teach their children and guide them to some extent if they are literate. They further reported that students can also cope up and have self-confidence when they read Telugu textbooks. For English medium, since parents do not know the language, they have to send the children to private tuitions which is again an extra expenditure for them. Moreover, Telugu medium is always advisable for those parents who constantly migrate as Telugu medium government schools can be found across the state. Keeping all these reasons in mind, good number of parents and students opt for Telugu medium. Only those parents who feel that English medium education will be useful for their child in future enrol their children in English medium classes.

Teachers also reported that Telugu medium students are much better than English medium students in academic performance as from primary onwards they learn in the same language. Thus, they can read, write and understand well in Telugu. In English medium, students struggle for each and every word especially in grade VI as till primary they were in Telugu medium. Teachers also stated that just understanding in the class is not sufficient as students need to read and write in English in examinations which they cannot do. From this point of view, teachers reported that Telugu medium students perform well in the exams than English medium students.

One of the major reasons for parents' inclination towards private schools is the desire that their children can read, write and speak in English. However, it was found that in NMHS, both teachers and students were not well-versed in English. The school management boasts of running an 'English Medium School', but paradoxically the situation here was even worse than ZPHS as the percentage of Telugu medium teachers in this school was more (75.66%) than the government school teachers. Teachers were given strict instructions to teach in English, but teachers tend to negotiate between English and Telugu. Most of the primary teachers lacked fluency in English and teachers in high school lacked competency to teach in English. Thus, teachers were unable to teach, express, and explain the students properly in English. They made many mistakes when they used to interact with students or teach in English. It was noted that the emphasis on English was so much that even language teachers (Hindi and Telugu) were forced to speak in English in the class when they were not teaching the lesson. The pronunciation and accent of teachers in English was appalling.

Students, however, spoke in Telugu among themselves though they were strictly instructed to speak in English. Asharani, an English teacher in NMHS stated that there were some students in X standard to whom they were teaching English alphabets. She argues that students are somehow managing in the school, but when they go out in search of jobs later in life, they stand nowhere. The director states that what students speak is 'butter English' i.e., they speak those words which are absent in the dictionary or those sentences which are grammatically incorrect like 'fastly', 'I did not went there' and the like. It was observed that in the morning assembly, he repeatedly insists the students to speak correct English. He further argues that since the salaries are less in the school, it becomes difficult to get good teachers who have fluency in English.

Parents admit their children to private schools with a desire that their children can speak in English and to fulfil this desire they pay the fees

to the school. The job market outside demands English speaking people and accordingly parents aspire for their children to speak in English. It was observed that NMHS is no better than ZPHS when it comes to English as the medium of instruction. Teachers speak incorrect English, they have Telugu accent which makes their pronunciation wrong, and their sentence framing is grammatically incorrect. In fact, it was noted that Telugu medium students and teachers in ZPHS had an edge over English medium students as they feel free to express, read and write in Telugu which was their mother tongue.

Textbook analysis

The state government prescribed textbooks are based on the NCERT guidelines regarding the goals and objectives of the NPE 1986 for achieving national system of education. The earlier curriculum and textbooks were revised and the present textbooks are prepared based on the revised curriculum and syllabus by the government. The SCERT of Andhra Pradesh undertook the responsibility of revising the syllabus from grade I to X in all subjects. The GoAP also ordered that the teaching of Hindi as a second language shall begin from grade VI and extended up to grade X starting from academic year 1990-91. From then onwards, textbooks are neither updated nor revised. Since children are reading the state prescribed books from the beginning, they are quite used to it, though there are many grammatical errors in the English medium textbooks. The books appear very outdated, dull and do not generate interest among the students to read. The state government continues to follow the same syllabi with no change either in the content or in the way it is being presented to the students.

The real problem comes when these children are made to read CBSE syllabus textbooks from grade VI as was done in 'SUCCESS schools'. The textbooks are based on NCF 2005, with the principle that children's life at school must be linked to their life outside the school. These books are developed by the NCERT, the apex body responsible for curriculum designing. A look at these textbooks clearly indicates

that the books are very innovative and activity-oriented. A child who has studied in English medium right from the beginning of schooling may not find it that difficult to understand. However, there are inherent difficulties when these textbooks are given to those children who have studied state syllabus textbooks in Telugu medium till V standard. For instance, in Science textbook, there are words like 'translucent', 'deficiency', 'rectilinear motion', 'sedimentation', 'decantation' etc. which students find very difficult to write. It is pertinent to highlight that when students face problems in writing simple English words and sentences like 'I am studying in sixth class', 'I like my school very much', then understanding technical words and writing it in exams is an uphill task for them. The situation in Social Studies subject is even worse as there are three textbooks namely, 'Social and Political Life', 'Geography' and 'History', and in each book there are 8-10 chapters. There are words like 'archaeologists', 'deciduous', 'celestial bodies', 'hunter-gatherers' and the like, which the students cannot even pronounce, so writing in the exam is completely ruled out. Throughout the textbook there are two comic characters '*paheli*' and '*boojho*' which have been used to make the text interactive. When children were asked about these characters, they were unaware of it and unable to tell what for these characters are used. Social teacher argues that for VI grade students, the syllabus is very vast and students from Telugu medium, who have just shifted to English medium, cannot learn this vast syllabus. Such experiments are usually absent in private schools as they follow a uniform syllabus, textbooks and medium of instruction for all the students every year. Thus, students need not shift between the textbooks and languages, and are in an advantageous position when compared to the government school children.

Computer education

Under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), it was proposed that imparting computer education in government schools would help in achieving the objectives of UEE, reduction in drop out rates and enhancement in achievement levels. Thus, Computer Aided Learning Programme

(CALP) became an important intervention in SSA. Under this component, there is a provision of Rs 15 lakh per district per year available to the States where CALP is being implemented. In this initiative, training of teachers, creation of infrastructure, and development of e-teaching and learning material were very important. To fulfill these requirements, public-private partnership became very essential not only for the implementation but also for mobilizing additional resources. As a result, a large number of private sector firms are associated with CALP like Azim Premji Foundation, NIIT, Aptech computer education etc.

In ZPHS, the CALP initiative is being implemented by 'Terrasoft' private firm. It was introduced in the school in the year 2003 as part of the "1000 schools project". The Government of AP handed over this project to some software firms and Terrasoft is one among them. The company got four districts for the implementation of this initiative: Chitoor, Nalgonda, Hyderabad, and Ranga Reddy. This project was initially planned for five years and later extended for one more year in 2008. The books are prepared by NIIT for each class in Telugu medium. Students learn paint and clip art in the initial stages and MS-Word, Excel and PowerPoint in IX and X standards². There are two instructors in the school, both females, who teach computers to the students from classes VI to X. The senior instructor, aged 36, joined the school right from the implementation of the project. The junior instructor, aged 19, joined in the academic year 2008. Both senior and junior instructors are paid Rs 1900 and Rs 1800 respectively by the implementing agency. Both of them are trained by the private firm and have a diploma in computers.

There are many problems in implementing CALP initiative. In ZPHS, there is a separate computer lab in which there are 11 computers, but only three were working. The lab was in a very dilapidated condition

² In computers, students have to write only quarterly, half yearly and annual examinations and there are no other monthly tests. The question papers come from the private firm and handed over to the instructors.

with seepage of water from almost everywhere as there is a water tank just above its roof. During the rainy season, the situation becomes worse and buckets are kept inside the lab for checking rain water. Many computers have stopped working due to improper maintenance of the lab. Instructors argue that with only three working computers it is very difficult to take the class. Thus, whenever there is a computer class, only half of the strength is called to the lab by one instructor and the rest of the class sit in the classroom and are taught theory by another instructor. About five students sit in front of each computer and follow whatever the instructor teaches them. The instructors argue that most of the government funds are misused by the company. Most of the computers are not working and even after repeated complaining no one from the company came to fix the problem. Moreover, there are no back ups for the computers. The co-ordinator turns up only once in a month to give salaries to the instructors and never visits the school thereafter. Moreover, instructors reported that the salaries are also not given on time. It was observed that only after repeated calling the co-ordinator comes and gives salaries to the two instructors.

In NMHS, there is another programme named “NIIT @school” which started in the 2008-2009 academic year. NIIT@School is an initiative of NIIT, which is considered to be among the top fifteen IT companies worldwide. NIIT's computer education movement was introduced for the first time in 371 government schools in Tamil Nadu in 1999. It has rapidly spread to other states and to private schools as well. The institute supports the schools with the drawing up of schedules, course material, training of teachers and providing all necessary input material for teachers to handle classes.

In NMHS, this programme is for all the classes i.e., from class I to X, and each student is charged Rs 50 for computer education. A computer lab was constructed with 10 computers, but here too only five were working properly. There were two computer teachers, one teaching the primary and the other teaching the upper primary

classes. Both theory and practical classes were taken in the lab itself. NIIT has designed and distributed textbooks for all the students. Every class has three days computer periods in a week. The question papers come from NIIT Chennai and, as a result, the exam dates do not tally with the usual exam schedule. The final exam is conducted in March so that all the certificates are disbursed from Chennai in the month of April. These certificates are then given to the parents on the day of result declaration.

The entire course material is designed by the NIIT. All the classes are divided into four groups: Group A comprises of class I and II and they are taught computer basics, Microsoft Paint, Word Pad and Logic games. Under Group B, classes III, IV and V are included and in this stage Microsoft PowerPoint and Windows XP are introduced. Group C consists of classes VI, VII and VIII and the topics covered in this level are Microsoft Excel, Internet, programming logic and techniques, and QBasic. The last group is the D group which includes classes IX and X and they are taught Microsoft Access and C++. Both the instructors reported that the syllabus is very difficult and school students need not learn this extensive syllabus in school going age. Even the teachers did not know many things in this syllabus. The teacher for primary classes reported that teaching computers is very difficult for small children like those in standard I and II. In these classes, various parts of the computer is taught. Though they can understand and point out various parts, when it comes to writing children face difficulties as for their level computer language is not easy. They cannot write big words like 'Central Processing Unit' or even 'keyboard'. The teacher feels that computer education should be imparted from upper primary classes. The other teacher for higher classes reported that students need not learn C++ and Linux in schools as this is learned only in the professional courses at graduation level.

It was observed that in both the schools, students show a lot of interest in computers when compared to other subjects. With the help

of 'paint' option they draw pictures and save their document or make a slide in power point with animations and save it. They also show a lot of enthusiasm in learning new things. They never showed any interest in the theory part. Teachers also reported that showing things on computer and students doing it by themselves are more useful, interesting, and easily understood.

However, it was observed that in both the schools, there are lots of setbacks in computer education. Getting computers into schools is easier than keeping them in working condition. In both ZPHS and NMHS, most of the computers were either poorly maintained or were not functioning. This problem is coupled with the problems of erratic power supplies, lack of back up power and the like. As a result, teachers either end up taking theory classes or only a group of 5 to 8 students have to satisfy themselves with working on a single computer. Whenever there are practical exams, batch wise students are called to enter into the lab. Thus, imparting computer education is easier said than done.

Classroom teaching discourses

Students go to school to learn to read, write, compute and master the content of subjects (Mehan, 1980). This is one of the prime goals of schools that take place inside the classrooms. Classrooms are the places where deliberate instruction takes place and where students spend most of their time. The conventional classroom contains one teacher and multiple students and ZPHS and NMHS are no exception to this. In both the schools, students were assigned to a specific seat throughout the year by the teacher, and girls and boys were made to sit in separate rows. However, the seating arrangement has nothing to do with the performance of students. The crux lies in the discourses between students and teachers which, in turn, affect the participation of the students in the class. This section attempts to reflect on this issue by examining what exactly happens inside the classrooms of a government and a private school.

As discussed earlier, in ZPHS, there are two categories of teachers officially: regular teachers and Vidya Volunteers (V.Vs') or para teachers. The higher classes i.e., IX and X were invariably taken by the regular teachers while VI, VII, and VIII classes were shared by regular teachers and volunteers. While doing classroom observations, it was noted that there is a clear difference in the teaching practices of regular teachers and V.Vs'. Students were more attentive, quieter and disciplined when regular teachers used to take the class. It was noted that most of the V.Vs' were not found to be very competent in teaching. Though half of them had a teacher training degree, they attained that professional degree with the intention of DSC recruitment in mind. It was observed that some V.Vs' were enrolled in a B.Ed college, but worked in ZPHS as volunteers and in this way they completed their teacher training course. Moreover, since they were not getting their salaries regularly, they showed less dedication towards teaching in the classroom. They did not have teaching skills and lacked the ability to control the class. The only V.V who was liked by all the students was Yadamma who taught English and Social Studies to classes VII and VIII and studied only up to the intermediate level. Many of her classes were observed to find out why students are so fond of her despite having the lowest academic qualification amongst all the volunteers. One classroom observation is mentioned below.

One day she was teaching a chapter titled "The Colourful People: Mizoram" from the English textbook of class VII. Her method of teaching was not teacher-centred (where teacher is the authoritative person in the classroom), but participatory as she gave primacy to students' voices. The classroom atmosphere was very quiet, but a bit tense too because if a student was not studying properly or was irregular or inattentive in the class, she becomes very strict and harsh towards the student and gives strict punishments. There was no use of blackboard at all and the teacher was restricted to just one place throughout the class. She read every sentence from the textbook and then explained it in Telugu. Although the class is an English medium class, her medium of instruction was mostly Telugu. However, what

makes her teaching stand apart from other V.Vs' is that she makes her teaching more interesting to the students by setting examples from outside the textbook. This, in turn, enables the students to understand better and attain more clarity. In between, she used to ask questions to see whether students understood the lesson or not. Students were quite attentive and were answering in chorus. She also used reinforcing words like 'good', 'very good' many times in her class. Repetition and drawing comparisons from the textbook was very much evident in her teaching method. Students' initiatives (like responding, asking questions) were encouraged by the teacher. In between her teaching, she used humour to make the learning joyful. At the end of the lesson, she once again revised the whole chapter to ensure that students had grasped the chapter fully. Usually, before leaving the class, she gives one question from the textbook to the students to learn everyday. Next day, she asks the same question to each student in the beginning of the class. If students were not able to give the answer the next day, she used to punish them (like beating with a stick/slapping).

Nevertheless, students always liked her. She has been working in this school for the past four years and students are very much attached to her and respect her a lot. Students reported, "she only becomes harsh if we do not study properly, which is our mistake. But her way of teaching is really good and she is very friendly to us". There was no discrimination against students by the teacher. She treated everyone equally in the classroom. She never used foul language even while scolding the students. She showed care and concern towards the students and this is reflected in her queries like asking them whether they are eating their midday meals, why a particular student is not coming to the school and so on. She is encouraging, friendly and always interacts with students affectionately.

Another V.V who is liked by the IX and X students is Rani who used to teach Maths to them. Despite being a V.V she was given higher classes as she was very competent and qualified up to the M.Sc in

English medium and also had a B.Ed degree from Osmania University. After Yadamma, she is the one admired by both students as well as the teachers. She was working in ZPHS to gain experience in Telugu medium teaching as she was preparing for DSC and wanted to become a permanent teacher in government schools. The principal allowed her to come only in the first half of the school day, after which she used to leave the school to prepare for the DSC exam. Her teaching and students participation in IX standard English medium class was observed and mentioned below.

She was teaching 'number line system' to the students. She started the class with revising the lesson taught in the previous class. She asked questions and answers, which some students were unable to respond. So, she explained it once again in detail on the blackboard. Her writing was neat, legible and her behaviour was very polite. Students were obediently noting down from the blackboard. Then she gave a question from the exercise and the students started doing it. Throughout her class, she did not sit and was moving in between the aisles of the classroom and checking whether the students were doing the question or not. Questions from the students were encouraged and the teacher was clarifying all the doubts with patience. Notably, she never used guide books in her class, which is a common practice among most of the teachers in the school. When all the students finished the question, she explained one more similar question on the blackboard. Then, she called one student to the blackboard and asked him to do a numerical problem given in the exercise. The student did it correctly and she praised him. Everyone in the class clapped with appreciation. Next, she slightly twisted the same question so that students could have better understanding and conceptual clarity. She called another student to do it on the blackboard. He made some mistakes, but instead of scolding, she patiently explained it in an easier way. Subsequently, she gave similar problems to the students, which they were doing without making any noise. Lastly, she gave homework, took attendance and left the class.

The classroom atmosphere in her class was quiet, relaxed and full of enthusiasm. Students never expressed fear for the teacher as she seldom punishes the students. She allows all the students to participate in the class. Students' initiatives and responses are always welcomed and appreciated. Her recent teacher training is clearly reflected in her teaching techniques which is mostly participatory. Her blackboard skills, reinforcement skills, mobility in the class, and paying individual attention to each and every student make her a very efficient teacher in the school.

It was observed that except these two, rest of the V.Vs' were not efficient and were not much liked by the students. They were neither competent nor had the ability to control the whole class. It was noted that students never pay attention when these teachers teach the students. Amongst these, a V.V named Madhavi is disliked by all the students. She teaches Telugu to classes VI and VII and joined the school in the academic year 2008-09. It was observed that she is not a very interacting person, does not mingle with other teachers and never sits in the staffroom. Even in her leisure period, she sits in the back rows of the classrooms and does corrections. Her teaching method and students' participation in class VI which has 64 students is discussed here.

She started her class by telling the students that she would ask questions from a lesson in the Telugu textbook which she had finished two days ago. She gave them five minutes time to read question and answers from the textbook. After five to ten minutes, she started asking questions to the students. Those students who knew the answers started raising their hands with enthusiasm and calling 'teacher, teacher' with a hope that they would be asked to answer. But the teacher, in turn, immediately discouraged this initiative and scolded them by telling not to shout and to only raise their hands. She started pointing at individual students to give the answers. She knew the names of some students while she was addressing other students as '*ammayi*' (girl) or '*abbayi*' (boy). There were no reinforcements by

the teacher if students gave correct answers. However, if students were unable to give the right answer, the teacher scolded and shouted at them saying 'you are coming to the school only for gossiping' or 'you better sit at home, studying is not your job' and so on. She never gave any positive reinforcements to the students. Once question-answer part was completed, she asked each student to read one paragraph aloud from the next lesson which the students obediently did. Once the reading was done, she did not explain the lesson, rather she started with the questions given at the end of each lesson. She told the answers to the questions and students accordingly marked them in their textbooks. She asked them to write these in their notebooks and informed them that she would correct their work in her next class. She remained very serious throughout the class. So, the chance of humour either from the teacher's side or from the student's side was out of question. Before leaving, she took the attendance and then left the class. Her teaching method was very teacher-centred and dominating and there was no chance for the students to participate.

It was observed that the classroom atmosphere becomes very tense whenever she enters any class. The teacher is very impolite, never smiles and students are very much afraid of her. Unlike Yamma and Rani, the teacher-student interaction is not friendly at all. When she was teaching, students never dare to ask questions or raise doubts. Most of the times, she accused and demoralised the students by calling 'lazy', 'useless', 'I will beat your head to the wall', 'I will break your hands' and the like. She threatened those who did not study or replied to her questions by saying "*mee sangati tarvata cheptanu*" (I will see you later). She turned towards the researcher and said:

Shouting at them is waste of our energy as it is almost like shouting at the walls. As we are not supposed to give severe punishments, we give warnings that if they remain undisciplined, T.C will be issued. Even then, students do not listen as they do not have fear for the HM or teachers.

When students were talking among themselves, she got up and started slapping them. Due to her rude behaviour towards the students, she is not liked by anyone in the school.

It is pertinent to highlight that when compared to regular government teachers, V.Vs' were more punctual, reached the school on time, always used to go to the classes and were prompt in corrections and making progress reports. On the other hand, most of the regular teachers were found to be lethargic and had shirking attitude though they had good teaching skills. Among them, one teacher was Christiana who was a permanent social teacher in the school for IX and X grades. She was also given VI CBSE class as she was a very experienced teacher. Students always used to say that she is very lazy, comes fifteen minutes late and leaves the class five-ten minutes early. Her teaching and participation of students in VI CBSE class is mentioned below.

As discussed earlier, there are three textbooks for Social Studies in grade VI and it was noted that the teacher did not even complete one book by January. As usual, the teacher arrived fifteen minutes late to the class. She sat on the chair and asked the students to take out their notebooks for corrections. The teacher then turned to the researcher and complained that in this class half of the time is wasted in teaching them English. She gave difficult words to the students from the textbook and asked them to write down ten times in their class notes. Students were making mistakes and were unable to write the words correctly despite copying them from the textbook. The teacher then started discouraging the students by calling them 'useless', '*gadida*' (donkey), "*Goppa ki English medium teesukunnaru, kani emi radu*" (taken English medium to show off, but do not know anything) and so on. As mentioned earlier, all the students in this class have come from Telugu medium. Therefore, the teacher was teaching them where to write capital and small letters when writing a sentence in English. Students were not afraid of her as she never

beats or slaps the children. The teacher again turned to the researcher and said:

They should have started CBSE from primary onwards. The problem is teachers are not consulted before taking decisions. All of a sudden how can we expect Telugu medium children to pronounce words like 'citadel', 'megaliths', 'burial', 'archaeologists'?

Then the teacher turned to one student and asked the meaning of the word 'burial'. The student out of hesitation replied "*teacher burial ante barri kada teacher*" (teacher, burial means buffalo³). Everyone started laughing, but no one knew the exact meaning of burial. The teacher stated that she has lost interest in teaching the class, not because of the students, but because of the experiments being done on the children for the sake of funds. She then reasoned that the Kothari Commission gave utmost priority to the mother tongue, but now English has become more fashionable. Amidst all this English and Telugu medium issue, students ultimately suffer as they cannot learn the subject properly. She herself admitted that by the half yearly exams her students had learned virtually nothing in Social Studies. The bell rang and the teacher left the class.

Among regular government teachers, one teacher who is liked by all the students is Sumathi who teaches English to VI CBSE, VIII and IX classes. She speaks very fluently in English and did her schooling in a missionary school. One day she was taking English class in VI standard. The researcher entered and as usual sat in the last row of the classroom. She started the class by asking each student to tell the story (which she was teaching on the previous day) of 'The crocodile and the monkey' in English without looking at the textbook. Students tried hard, but could not tell the story correctly in English. Then the teacher, turn by turn, asked each student to read one paragraph aloud. When students were reading, she was patiently correcting the pronunciation of the students and explaining the meaning of difficult words in Telugu. In between, she was asking questions to make the

³ In Telugu, the word *barri* (buffalo) is, to some extent, pronounced similarly to the first four letters of English word 'burial'.

students understand well and to come out with answers by themselves. She was trying to raise the inquisitiveness of the students. She was even making the atmosphere humorous by cracking jokes in between. To make her teaching more interesting, she gave many examples from real life on how friends behave with one another. Throughout the period, she was very polite and there was no need of scolding, discouraging or beating the students to control them as all the students were fully immersed in her teaching. After she finished her lesson, she asked the moral of the story. The students did not know the meaning of the term moral. So, she asked in Telugu, “*ee story neeti emiti?*” (What is the moral of the story?). The students attempted to reply in English, which the teacher dutifully corrected. She turned to the researcher and said, “This is the age when students can learn quickly. Only thing required is dedication from the teacher”. Her teaching method was student-centred and she gave a lot of room for the students to participate. Her dedication is very much reflected in her teaching because of which students are very fond of her.

On the whole, from many classroom observations, it was found that regular government teachers are more competent than the V.Vs’. However, both these categories of teachers have some things in common. It was observed that almost all the teachers use the conventional ‘chalk and talk’ method and do not take any initiatives to make their teaching practices innovative to the students. None of them use teaching aids to explain the things in easier ways to the students. Most of the teachers (both regular and V.Vs’) use guide books while teaching and encourage the students to read from the guide books. Thus, students, especially from classes VIII, IX and X, depend a lot on guide books. Only Maths and Science teachers were seen using the blackboard, others used to sit on the chair and teach the lessons. Their mobility in the class was very restricted.

It was noted that in ZPHS, most of the time allotted for the first period, which is of fifty minutes duration, is wasted for many reasons. Firstly, since this period is just after the morning assembly, both

students and teachers take time to settle down. Teachers go to their classes after 5 to 10 minutes as they reason that even after the assembly many students keep coming to the school. Secondly, teachers take attendance of the class and as noted in chapter three, in some classes there are more than sixty students, and thus, they take some time to finish it. Thirdly, the attender comes to every class and takes note of the number of children opting for midday meals. The attender also brings a register in which the class teacher has to write the number of boys and girls present on that particular day. All these formalities take another 5-10 minutes of the period. Thus, half of the time of first period is spent in managing the initial disorder of the students and doing the paperwork.

It was also observed that often teachers conduct their classes in open space despite having a classroom. Students sit either on the ground or on the cemented corridors while the teacher sits on a chair maintaining his/her authoritative position. Sometimes, it was observed that classes are held outside the classrooms for the entire day depending on the weather conditions.

In NMHS, on the other hand, there was no open space as the school runs in a three-storey building. Thus, invariably teachers have to take the classes in the classrooms. Only during exams, it was found that some students go outside the classrooms and sit on the corridors which are more spacious with enough sunlight and convenient for writing an exam. Also, if a class is without a teacher and substitution could not have been arranged for that class, students are called to the ground floor where morning assembly is usually conducted and asked to sit there and study. Otherwise, regular classes invariably take place inside the classrooms. Moreover, unlike ZPHS, the first period starts sharply at 9am as there are no formalities except taking attendance. This is finished very quickly as there are less students in every class than in ZPHS. It was observed that the common practice among the teachers and students is that all of them depend on the study material provided by the school in the beginning of every academic

year. The study material is nothing but a kind of guide book for every subject in which there are multiple choice questions, short answer questions and essay type long questions from every chapter. The drawback is that with complete dependency on the study material, the prescribed textbooks became secondary and less important. Another common practice among the students here is that they reply in chorus whenever teacher asks any question. Teachers too, most of the time, ask questions to the whole class instead of asking individual students. Thus, the teacher is under the impression that everyone is replying, but the voices of only those who know the answers are heard whereas other students remain silent.

Bharathi is one among many teachers who follows the same teaching practices. She teaches English to grades V, VI, and VII standard. In order to observe her teaching method and students' participation, the researcher reached class VII before the teacher arrived and sat in the last row of the class. As this was the first period, as soon as the teacher entered, all the students stood up and started their classroom prayer. As mentioned in chapter three, this is a ritual and is done everyday in the beginning of the first period in every class. She started her class by giving a summary of a chapter from the English textbook. Students listened to her carefully and the atmosphere was very quiet and not tensed at all. The teacher had the ability to manage the class well and at the same time used to beat the students with a cane stick if they were not doing homework or studying properly.

After she finished giving the summary of the lesson, she started reading the chapter aloud from the textbook. She remained serious throughout the class. She was reading each sentence aloud and students were obediently repeating the same. This kind of repetition is very common in the school, especially while teaching languages. After one paragraph was read, teacher asked short questions to all, and accordingly, students repeated in chorus. She was not asking questions to individual students. The same procedure was followed throughout the period and finally teacher finished the lesson. This

was followed by writing 'hard words' (difficult words) on the blackboard which students obediently copied in their rough note books. She gave them homework of writing each of these words for five times in their home work copy, which students noted down in their school diary. The teacher then left the class. Next day, some of the students came without doing their home work. Therefore, the teacher started beating each student on both their hands with a cane stick. She was also scolding the students with words like 'stupid fellow', 'idiot' etc. Students were not looking nervous as they were very much used to the teacher's thrashing. She then started telling the answers of the questions given at the end of the lesson and students were marking the answers in their textbooks. She told the students "Write these answers in your homework notebooks and show for me tomorrow". The bell rang and the teacher left the classroom.

There are some teachers in the school who are neither competent in the subject nor is their teaching interesting. It was observed that in these teachers' classes, students make lot of noise and there is utter chaos in the class. One among these teachers is Shiva Nagulu who teaches Science to IV, V and VI standard. Her teaching in VI standard was observed. The teacher was explaining 'Parts of a flower' from the Science textbook. The teacher started with drawing the diagram of a flower on the blackboard. All the students opened their books in front of them, but none of them was focussing on the board. Instead all of them were talking among themselves. The atmosphere was very relaxed and students were not at all afraid of the teacher. In between, teacher turned once or twice and asked the students to remain quiet and focus on the diagram.

After finishing the diagram, she started reading the text from the book and explaining the parts. Since she was not fluent in English, she was switching to Telugu quite often. She was very soft spoken and her voice was not audible at all if one sits in the last bench. She does not have the ability to manage the students in the class. In between, she was asking questions to the students to make them attentive and to

make the atmosphere livelier, but students were yawning and felt quite bored. The teacher started beating, twisting their ears and caning the fingers of those who were not listening to her. She was also scolding the students by calling them 'stupid boy', 'buffalo', 'shut your mouth', 'I will break your hands' and the like. She finished explaining the parts of flower, but none of the students understood. Nobody raised any kind of doubts or questions. In fact, they were not listening to what the teacher was saying.

The teacher then asked the students to open their study material, and accordingly, all the students opened it. The teacher started reading aloud the answers given in the study material for the same lesson. As usual, students were mechanically repeating the same without understanding. Later, she asked the students to learn twenty question and answers from the study material which was their homework. Students were unwilling to do as they were having computer exam the next day. However, the teacher did not listen to them, and as a result, all the students were very annoyed. During informal conversations, the teacher admitted that she is very poor in English and most of the time speaks incorrect English which is why she has been given primary classes. She wanted to enrol in a 'Spoken English' course so that she can teach the students more confidently.

Teachers in this private school are given standing instructions of teaching only in English. One day a Social teacher in class VII was explaining in Telugu which was observed by the correspondent while he was supervising. The next day, in the morning assembly the director targeted the teacher in front of everyone saying that the teacher is not focussing on teaching in English and told her not to repeat it in future. The teacher later told that most of the time she attempts to teach only in English. However, when she is not able to explain certain things properly in English she does it in Telugu, but only on rare occasions. She then justified her action saying, "after all Telugu is our mother tongue and everyone is attached to their mother tongue. So, it is quite obvious to switch to our mother tongue once in

a while in between teaching". She states that even students understand better if teachers teach in Telugu as they also face problems in English.

An example of the proficiency level of teachers in English is mentioned here which gives a picture of the kind of teachers recruited by the school management. This classroom observation was done just after the school reopened following the summer vacations. A teacher named Shabana teaches Maths and Computers to V, VI and VII standard and is liked by the students as she never beats them. Students are of the opinion that she teaches well. She has been working in this school for the past two years. Since this was just the beginning of the academic year, she was teaching students about how to maintain the first page i.e., the index page and how to write neatly.

Teacher: *All of you take out your class note books.*

Students started taking out their notebooks, however some students did not bring their class-work notebooks.

Teacher: *Those who did not brought write in rough note books.*

The teacher turned to the blackboard and started drawing lines with a chalk.

Teacher: *Keep Index, Sl. No, keep line, then Chapters, again keep line and then Page Numbers.*

One student was unable to draw the lines neatly. The teacher immediately tore his paper.

Teacher (angrily): *So much dirty hand writing yours, write neatly.*

Then she turned to the researcher and said: There are many dullers in the class.

Teacher (to the students): *First chapter what there?*

Students (in chorus): *Number System.*

The teacher then wrote it under the chapter heading. She then started moving in between the aisles of the classroom to see how the students were writing. She stopped near to one student:

Teacher: *Show Bhaskar*

Bhaskar obediently showed his note book to the teacher.

Teacher (in an annoying voice): *Don't keep as your wish date, write today's date.*

The atmosphere in the class was quite relaxed and students' queries were encouraged. As some students did not bring their ruler and pencil, they were asking one another.

Teacher: *Bring your own things, asking for others time waste.*

In one student's copy, the lines were not drawn straight. The teacher angrily shouted at the student:

Teacher: *Why cross line? Draw with scale.*

Student: *I am drawing with scale only teacher.*

Teacher: *With scale draw, cross why came then?*

It was observed that throughout the class not even a single sentence was correctly framed by the teacher. It is pertinent to highlight that almost all the teachers' converse in a similar way and the students have learned the same. Both teachers and students use unnecessary prepositions while talking like, 'show for me', 'give for me', 'ask to me', and the like.

The only competent and capable teacher in the school was Ayesha who teaches maths to classes VIII, IX and X. She joined the school last year and is very energetic and enthusiastic. She is a very jovial, fun-loving young teacher and students are very candid in front of her. Her teaching in IX grade was observed. As soon as she entered the class, she asked about the previous day's homework. Those who did not do their homework were beaten with a stick on both the hands. The atmosphere became quite tense. She started teaching about "Groups and their Properties". She started explaining what four properties make a 'group'. Her blackboard skills were good, writing legible, and voice audible to the whole class. She explained the various types of groups by giving many examples. Students were quietly listening to her and writing notes in their class work notebooks. She was trying to elicit responses from the students and those who gave correct answers received good reinforcement from the

teacher. The teacher never discouraged those who gave wrong answers. Instead she explained the whole thing once again so that they can understand the lesson better. This teacher was an exception in the school as she discouraged group answering from the students. She was pointing at individual students to reply so that she could check whether all the students are able to understand. Then she dictated various definitions, which students started writing in their notebooks. The class was well controlled and pin-drop silence was maintained by the students.

She is a very efficient, highest paid and the most qualified teacher (M.Sc) in the school. She could easily join any good and reputed school with a better salary. When asked for the reason for her continuation in this school she stated that since she is a Muslim, her parents do not allow her to go to distant places to work. As this school is very near to her house, her parents have allowed her to work here. She argues that Muslim women have lot of restrictions and lack the liberty to do what they want.

Thus, from the above discussion it is very apparent that in most of the cases, students' participation was reduced to merely answering the questions of teachers. The NCF document elucidates that children learn in variety of ways like making and doing things, experimentation, discussion, asking, through experience and expressing oneself in speech, movement or writing. However, it was observed that students were expected to memorise whatever was informed by the teacher and were neither allowed to raise questions nor to clarify their doubts.

Lack of co-curricular activities

Co-curricular activities are those activities which are in addition to the classroom instruction and do not result in a grade nor credit. The incorporation of co-curricular activities in the school is as significant as the textbooks and contributes in the overall development of the child. Sports, National Cadet Corps (NCC), yoga, debates and performing arts not only help in physical development, but also aids

in enhancing the creativity, imagination and character formation among the students. The long term benefits include developing leadership qualities, discharging adult roles and responsibilities, learning to accept defeat, and so on.

Despite having such vast potential of co-curricular activities, they get only a passive response in schools. With over-emphasis on exams and marks, these co-curricular activities have taken a backseat. In the studied schools, it was observed that there were no co-curricular activities like sports, yoga, music, art, dance, and the like. It is a well known fact that these activities not only helps in the physical development of the children, but also facilitate in the psycho-social development of the children. However, in the studied schools, performing arts were totally absent. Students had a games period thrice a week, but with no sports equipment in the school. The physical education teacher of the government school stated that until four-five years back, the school had good reputation in sports and students participated in state level competitions. But of late, parents are not interested to send their children to distant places for participation in sports. Moreover, there is neither sufficient sports equipment in the school and nor any encouragement from the DEO.

The school, however, organises NCC which was started in the school in year 2003. The troupe consists of 100 students comprising of boys and girls, fifty taken from class VIII and another fifty chosen from class IX. The required materials like uniforms, belts, shoes are provided by the government. Every year, twenty days residential camp is organised for the students and they are taught about the motto of NCC, different ranks and cadres in army, physical fitness, parade, and the like. After the completion of two years in NCC, students are awarded with an 'A' certificate. The teacher in-charge of NCC says that the main aim is to develop the values of patriotism, human service and discipline among the students.

In NMHS too, students had a period allotted for games thrice a week, but from January onwards they were not allowed to play as the

management feels that since exams are approaching, students should read rather than wasting their time in playing. Once again, government school children have an advantage over the NMHS children as they have the liberty to come out of the classroom during games period and play whatever they feel like (It was observed that children mostly play kabaddi). The correspondent of the private school admits:

Here we harass and grind the students like anything. We don't have music, dance etc. All these activities will be there in corporate and international schools, not in this type of schools.

One event which was common in both government and private school is that students of class VIII and IX participate in mandal level science fair organised every year in which the participating students display models in the exhibition. This gives them a chance to interact with students from other schools, develop confidence and also in upholding the reputation of the school. Barring this event, there was no other activity organised for the students in the school. It was observed that some students in the school were very good at drawing, but their creative expression was not being nurtured properly in the exams-marks-ranks atmosphere. In both the schools, teachers considered co-curricular activities as peripheral, unimportant and waste of time and assessed a student's intelligence through standardised testing.

Evaluation system

In both ZPHS and NMHS, a student is assessed continuously throughout the academic year through various tests and examinations. Tests, namely Unit Tests (U.Ts') and Assignment Tests (A.Ts') are conducted internally four times in a year, and for 25 marks each. The question papers for these tests are prepared by the teachers of the school. In assignment tests, marks are given based on class notes, reading, weekly tests etc and usually teachers give passing marks in the assignment tests. Apart from these, three term exams are held for 100 marks each namely, quarterly, half yearly and annual examinations and question papers for these exams come from the

government. All the examination papers are evaluated by the school teachers. The examination system in both the schools is as follows:

TABLE 6.2 ASSESSMENT PATTERN IN ZPHS AND NMHS

Test/Exam	Month	Marks
1st U.T	July	25
1st A.T	July	25
2nd U.T	August	25
2nd A.T	August	25
Quarterly Exam	September	100
<i>1st Term Holidays</i>		
3rd U.T	November	25
3rd A.T	November	25
Half Yearly Exam	December	100
<i>2nd Term Holidays</i>		
4th U.T	February	25
4th A.T	February	25
Annual Exam	April	100
		Total: 500

In quarterly, half yearly, and annual exams, out of 100 marks, 70 marks are assigned for theory paper and 30 marks are allotted for the multiple choice question paper, referred as 'bit paper' which is distributed separately after one and half hour of the exam. The weight age for the annual exam is 50% which is the maximum followed by half yearly and quarterly together for 25% and another 25% for all A.Ts' and U.Ts'.

In ZPHS and NMHS, exam invigilation was done in both half yearly and annual exams. In ZPHS, it was observed that as the classrooms were very overcrowded, there were insufficient desks and some students were made to sit on the floor. In fact, students are so used to sitting on the floor that it has become a part of their daily routine. Even teachers do not hesitate to make students sit on the floor. The interesting fact is that most of the students submit blank papers and start leaving the classroom once the 'bit paper' is distributed. They do

not even fill the first page of their answer sheet. When students come for doubts clarification, the concerned subject teacher sometimes discourages students for asking too many doubts and says, “anyhow you are not going to write anything, so don’t ask questions”. Most of the students seem to be unprepared and were without any exam fear or tension. It was observed that during these examinations, neither the exam in-charge nor the HM visited the classes for supervision.

In NMHS, on the other hand, it was found that students read vigorously even on the exam day and do not seem to part with their textbooks. They put their books aside only when the invigilator enters the class. They appeared much tensed and tried to attempt as many questions as they can. However, even here some students in every class just submitted blank papers.

Conduct control: Rewards, reprimands and punishments

Discipline and maintaining order is considered to be very important in ZPHS and NMHS, and when these are not met, punishments are given to the students. It was observed that reprimands and punishments are very frequent and became a norm whereas students are seldom rewarded. Punishments are given with a belief that instilling fear and pain will prevent a child from repeating the action again. In both the schools, teachers go to the classrooms with a cane stick in their hands. Students are beaten, slapped, caned, and made to kneel down in the sun, which are the common acts of punishing. Using abusive and derogatory language by the teachers has become so usual that students are very used to it and they seldom retaliate. Use of English words like ‘pig’, ‘buffalo’, ‘rascal’, ‘stupid fellow’, ‘useless’ etc by the teachers are so rampant that students have learned these words from the teachers and they use such words among themselves in their day to day activities. These punishments and reprimands are given to the students when they misbehave in the class or irregular in their studies. In both the schools it was observed that students are very afraid of the Physical Education Teacher (PET) as the duty of the PET is to maintain discipline in the school and they do this by giving

corporal punishments. If students do not listen to the teachers, they are taken to the PET who, in turn, either beat them or ask them to come to the school with parents.

Teachers in ZPHS are of the view that though corporal punishments are banned to keep students under control, they have to use it. They stated that a few years ago these corporal punishments were even more severe in the school, but one boy of VIII standard was admitted to a hospital when a teacher severely slapped him for misbehaving in the class. From then onwards, teachers are a bit frightened to give harsh punishments. Teachers further stated that parents too react when students are severely beaten. Shalini, a student in VI grade neither comes to the school nor studies properly. Her class teacher says she is not interested in studies at all. One day, the teacher slapped her and the next day, the student came to the school with her mother who angrily started shouting at the teacher. Later, her mother told the researcher, “being parents we have never beaten our children, so who are the teachers to beat them? It’s up to my child whether she studies or not”.

In NMHS, the director of the school invariably sits with a stick in his hand. When the founder of the school has this sort of behaviour, teachers too follow the same. Every teacher enters with a stick in their hand and even wrote their names on it so that it is not lost. It was found that students are so used to the beating that they feel teachers are beating for their benefit so that they can study well. One parent was very upset when her son was beaten by a teacher because he was not attentive in the class. She complained to the management and also expressed her annoyance in front of the researcher saying, “Children are not cows and buffaloes to be beaten with a stick all the time.” In both the schools, it was observed that students are never rewarded or reinforced properly.

Performance, promotions and failures

The reputation of any school depends a lot on the performance of the students in X board exams. Good performance of the students results

in upholding the schools reputation while poor performance of the students brings ill fame to the school. In the year 2008-09, 106 students appeared for the tenth board exams in ZPHS out of which only 36 students qualified the exam i.e., only 34 % of the students passed and the highest marks was secured by a girl who got 457/600 (76%). Teachers reported that every year, the pass percentage is usually between 25-35% and it never crosses the forty per cent mark. As more than seventy percent fail in class ten, they take up a full time economic activity after they leave the school. In Nayapally, there are many small companies (manufacturing plastic bottles, electric appliances, and the like) that require labourers who can work from morning to evening for meagre salaries. These companies do not require educated labourers. Most of the students take up a full time job after X standard in these companies. Among girls, some get married while others work in these companies. They are paid between Rs 1800 to Rs 2000 per month.

In NMHS, on the other hand, 54 students appeared for the board exam out of which 49 students passed and five students failed. In contrast to 34% pass percentage in ZPHS, here 95% students qualified the exam. Here also, a girl secured 552/600 i.e., 92% which was the highest for that academic year. The school boasts of having ten students who got more than 500 marks, and 32 students who passed in the first division. As soon as the results were declared, they were written on the signboards, brochures etc. as done by the other private schools. However, the management was not happy with the results of X standard students. The school director said that last academic year there were no failures and the highest mark was 565/600. It was observed that after the declaration of X results, the concerned teachers were called and were reprimanded saying that it was the teachers fault that five students had failed. When parents come and complain about the failures of the students, the issue is dodged saying that the corrections are done outside and not by school teachers, and hence, the school is not responsible for the results.

For the rest of the classes (i.e., till IX standard), the way the children are promoted and results are declared is strikingly different in a government and private school. Promotion to higher classes as mentioned in the progress report cards of NMHS is strictly based on:

- Class work and home assignments
- Periodical tests
- Term examinations
- Annual examinations

The marks and grades system adopted by the teachers in NMHS is as follows:

TABLE 6.4 GRADING SYSTEM IN NMHS

Percentage	Grades	Remarks
80-89% and above	A+	Excellent
70-79%	A	Very Good
60-69%	B	Good
50-59%	C	Very Fair
40-49%	D	Fair
35-39%	E	Poor
Below 35%	F	Fail

In ZPHS, students till IX standard are promoted based on attendance and not on the marks. However, there is a grading system and grading of students is made on the following basis: A-70% and above, B- 55% to 69%, C- 40% to 54%, D-30% to 39%, E-29% and below. In the progress reports of students, it is clearly mentioned that though there are no failures, attendance in the unit tests and terminal examination is compulsory. The student is promoted to the next higher class only when this condition is satisfied. This is one of the reasons why students in ZPHS do not take their exams seriously and do not appear stressed before the exams. They have this confidence that if their attendance is good they will be promoted to the higher class. Teachers reported that if only marks are taken into consideration for promoting the students, most of them would fail. Only in X standard, their actual academic performance is assessed through board exams.

In NMHS on the other hand, the results are not based on the attendance of the student but entirely on the exams and tests conducted throughout the year. Since the school is having study hours, parents are under the impression that their child is studying well in the school. Usharani, a Hindi teacher admits:

Parents feel that their children are studying here as children spend most of the time in school. But in study hours i.e., from 4.30 pm-7 pm, all students are just made to sit together with no proper guidance. Sir wants to give only Rs 500 for study hours. Who wants to join for this much salary?

Some teachers even requested the director to appoint separate subject teachers during study hours, but he did not listen to anyone as he has to pay extra money for the appointed teachers. Pullaih, a Telugu teacher reports that the standard of students is very poor and parents too look for marks and not for quality. Narrating one incident, he states:

Initially, when I came here I evaluated papers honestly and discovered that most of the students wrote wrong answers and there were many mistakes in every sentence. As a consequence, most of them either failed or got very less marks. During that time almost fifty percent of the parents came to the school complaining that how their children can get less marks. The director then called me and asked me to correct leniently. So, in the next exam I gave pass marks to all and then none of the parents turned up.

He is of the opinion that if this kind of evaluation system is adopted then the standard of the student will come down. Though students will be studying and writing exams, there will be no quality and they will never be able to know the value of marks. Teachers argue that if a student is detained, parents put the blame on the teachers and the school saying that the teachers are not teaching properly.

After the annual examination, it was the time for declaration of results in both the schools. In ZPHS, the annual exams ended on 21st April and results were announced on 23rd April. On the result declaration day, the teachers reported in the school at 9am. Students were scattered almost everywhere in the school: playground, classrooms, corridors etc. They were very curious about their results, but not

nervous or stressed. The class teacher for each class was busy preparing report cards, but all the subject marks were not available to them as corrections were not completed by some teachers. Moreover, many regular teachers were not present in the school as they were given X standard 'Spot Evaluation' in which they had to evaluate X standard answer sheets.

Results were declared based on students' attendance. As per the government rules, a minimum of 80% of attendance for primary classes and 90% for secondary classes is essential for promotion to higher classes. In the report card, it is mentioned that the shortage of attendance may be condoned by DEO up to 70%, DSE up to 60% and the State Government up to 60%. In ZPHS, it was observed that if a student had more than 60% attendance, he/she was declared as promoted. If students do not have 60% attendance then a medical certificate was required from the students based on which they were promoted. It is pertinent to highlight that teachers were deliberately inflating the attendance and marks in the report cards. Teachers reported that if they do not do such things then students will remain in the same class for years. Only those students who enrolled, but never attended the school were detained. Thus, in every class there were one or two such detentions. Students were asked to sit in their respective classes and class teacher verbally declared whether the child was promoted or detained. There were no report cards and parents were nowhere in the vicinity of the school. After knowing their result, students were dispersed, and some of them continued to play while others went to their houses.

The school reopened on 12th June, and some teachers' (mostly regular) corrections were still incomplete. They were correcting answer sheets in the staffroom. It was observed that only two weeks after the school reopened, report cards were given to the students, but it was not of much significance as students had already been promoted. When asked the reason behind conducting exams and correcting papers when students are promoted based on attendance, teachers

reported that if there is a surprise inspection by the DEO or any other higher official, one can always show the marks register to them. Thus, exams are conducted and papers are corrected even though the final result does not depend on it.

In NMHS too, the exams concluded on 21st April, but results were declared on the 27th of April. Thus, a gap of one week was given to the teachers so that they can correct all the papers and prepare report cards. On the day of result declaration, all the class teachers were ready with the progress reports of their students by 8.30 am. The class teachers were made to sit on the chairs arranged in the open space of the school. They were sitting with report cards and answer sheets of all the three main exams which were arranged in files. The interesting point is that the teachers were given a list in which the names of those students were written who did not pay their school fees. The list was prepared by the school clerk and the management strictly ordered all the teachers that if the fee defaulter students come with their parents, report cards should not be given to them. In NMHS, it was mandatory for the parents to come and collect the progress report of their child.

From 9am onwards, one by one, parents started coming along with the student. As soon as parents arrived, they were welcomed by the teachers and asked to sit. Then the class teacher took out the students' report card and read the total marks, grades and rank of the student. The teacher also tells the parent whether the child has improved or deteriorated, his/her behaviour in the class etc. It was observed that parents were mostly concerned with marks. From every class, only 4 or 5 parents came to collect the report cards. Although it is mentioned that a student failing twice in the same class will be asked to leave the school like at ZPHS, here too there were no detentions⁴. The teachers reported that the management has ordered them to promote everyone by giving extra marks. Unlike ZPHS, here

⁴ In fact, from the year 2010, the RTE act made it mandatory that no child can be detained or expelled till the completion of elementary education, i.e., until class VIII.

the emphasis is on fees and marks, which form the crux of private schools. Teachers say, "Parents only want marks and nothing else. They will not see whether the child is able to understand the subject or not". If there are detentions, parents blame the school saying that despite paying fees and sending their children to school for 12 hours they are detained. So, to avoid such hassles all the students are promoted to the next higher class. Tired of the pressure from the parents on marks, the school correspondent said, "Next academic year onwards we are planning to forgo marks and introduce grading system for the students. Parents complaints will be less and things will be easier to manage."

Teachers' perceptions towards students' learning and performance

It is pertinent to highlight that teachers in both the schools, particularly in ZPHS, have comprehensive understanding of students' lives. However, their understanding of students and their family background is class and caste based. Teachers always feel that there is a social class and status difference between teachers and students, and accordingly, they form their opinion on the students and their parents. In both the schools, teachers belonged to higher socio-economic class than the students and working class poor parents, which influence the way teachers understand children and their parents.

In ZPHS, the school personnel's attitude towards their students was very pessimistic and discouraging. All the school teachers unanimously reported that most of the students in ZPHS are economically and socially backward. They stated that most of the parents are illiterate and work as labourers, have migrated from other districts and settled here for work. According to them, only those parents who could not afford fees were sending their children to government schools which corroborated with parents' views too. All the teachers once again unanimously reported that more than 75% of the students were below average in their performance and were not interested in studies. Nevertheless, students are being promoted every

year based on their attendance and not on their performance. Teachers further stated that since most of the girls get married after X standard, they are less interested in studies. Only a few boys go for further studies after X standard whereas others quit studies and take up a full time job.

While having group discussions, teachers reported many reasons for poor performance of children which also reflected their attitude towards the students and their families. They say that the most important aspect is the family background of the students which influences their performance at school. According to them, students do not have proper guidance at home. Most of the times, parents are not at home since both the parents work. They come home late in the evening, have food, consume liquor and go to sleep. They are not bothered whether their child is studying or going to school regularly. Students also go home and either play or watch TV or go for work. Lack of proper parental guidance further aggravates the problem. Christiana, for instance, argues:

First thing is that the parents should be blamed. They themselves do not have any proper values, so what students will learn? Students come to us saying that their stepfather or stepmother is not taking good care of them when we ask them why they are not studying properly. Some students live in broken families too. When their family background is like that what children will learn?

Teachers feel that since parents are illiterate, they do not know the value of education and do not take any responsibility towards their child's education. They never come and enquire about their child's performance in the school. In fact, they do not have time as they work for meagre wages day and night. If parents come to the school, their daily wages will be lost, which they do not want to lose. As a result, there are no parent-teacher meetings held in the school as nobody turns up. A few parents, once in a while come and enquire about their child's education, but such cases are very rare. It was observed that throughout field work, parents were nowhere near the vicinity of the school. Even on the result declaration day, their absence was very

conspicuous. Teachers argue that only when a TC is required or when a student is detained, parents come immediately to argue about why their child has been detained. Sridevi, an English teacher in the school argues:

Whenever they come, they try to find fault with the teachers. They blame the teachers that we are not teaching and taking care of the children properly. Parents think that teachers should teach everything to the students. But how is this possible? In the school the child spends only six hours. Rest of the eighteen hours the child is not in the school, but at home. So, where the child is spending maximum time? It is parents' responsibility to take care of their child after school hours.

Despite having a negative attitude towards the parents it was observed that whenever parents come to the school, they were well received by the teachers. Teachers meet them and inform them about how their child is studying, whether the child is improving or deteriorating in studies.

Teachers also compared ZPHS parents with the parents of those children who are studying in private schools. They were all praise for the parents of private school going children and stated that in private schools, parents take good care of their children. Parents come and ask the teachers about their child's progress as they pay fees to the school. They further reported that in government schools, if students' performance is below average, neither the parents nor the students care for their performance. Thus, teachers reported that lack of proper parental guidance is one major factor for the students' poor performance in the school.

The second reason identified by the teachers for poor academic performance is the economic activity of the child. They argue that a child's early entry into wage labour affects the performance in the school. Teachers say that most of the children work outside and earn their own money. They work in provisional stores, gift shops and bakeries as well as deliver newspapers, milk, etc. Thus, they develop confidence that without education they can also earn. As a

consequence, they are frequently absent from school. In SSC exams, only 30-40% of students pass every year. Christiana says:

Whether students like it or not, they are forced to do the economic activity for their living. They do not know the true value of education as they are under the notion that they can earn without proper education. But after leaving the school students realise that what teachers used to say was correct⁵. They come to us and say that college teachers are not like school teachers. Not as good and friendly as school teachers.

Apart from family background and students' economic activity, all the teachers unanimously feel that there is a lot of media influence on students which also affects their performance in the school. Vedavathi, for instance, says:

Television, movies etc are spoiling the kids like anything. As students have money, they go and watch all kinds of movies. If not movies, they go to the internet cafes where they pay just Rs 10 per hour and have unrestricted access of all kinds of websites. They spend lavishly on drinking and on movies. For these children studies are secondary.

Teachers also state that the peer group also has a lot of bearing on child's performance. Students get influenced and carried away with peers and only listen to them. If one does something, others too follow the same. As one teacher stated, "Students of junior classes learn many things from their seniors". They further reported that learning only takes place inside the classrooms. Those who are attentive in the class are able to get pass marks in the exams. Once students reach home, they don't study.

Thus, teachers mostly put the blame on students, their upbringing and their family background for poor academic performance of children. When asked what factors inside the school affects students' learning, teachers reasoned that students lack sound primary school experience which is very important. They stated that the foundation in primary school is not strong, hence most of the students lack

⁵ During the farewell party, a few X grade students were called to share their experiences in the school. Students expressed their regret for not studying from the beginning of the academic year and not listening to their teachers. Nevertheless, they advised IX grade students to study right from the beginning and always listen to the teachers and follow their advice.

fundamentals in the subjects. They stated that when students come to the high school, they do not even know the alphabet (which was also observed by the researcher).

Thus, all the teachers were very sceptical of the students in ZPHS. They compare their experience in rural schools and argue that in rural areas the situation is very different. Ramadevi says:

In the villages, there is a lot of respect for the teacher from the students irrespective of primary or high school. Parents also have a high regard for the teachers and co-operate a lot. They come and enquire about their children and their involvement is more. When villagers migrate to urban areas, they are not accountable or answerable to anyone. Since most of the parents are migrated here, parents and children do whatever they feel like. Students neither respect their teachers, nor care for their parents. If they are in their own village they will have some fear, but in cities nobody is there to warn them.

Teachers in ZPHS had a very positive attitude towards the private schools. But in NMHS too, teachers had a very similar opinion about students and their family background like in ZPHS. The director as well as the teachers reported that in this school students belong to socially and economically backward families. The correspondent of the school who was very sceptical of government schools stated:

Those families who cannot afford even minimum amount of fees send their children to a government school. Those families for whom fees is not a problem send their children to elite and corporate schools. So, those parents who do not belong to a very sound financial background, but aspire for better future for their children and can afford minimum school fees are opting for low-cost schools like NMHS⁶.

Like ZPHS, here also the teachers reported that most of the students are below average in academic performance. Janaki Devi, a Telugu teacher states:

Parents do not take care of the children at home. Students are not at all good in Telugu which is their mother tongue, so forget about learning English. They learn that Telugu which parents

⁶ Only one teacher, however, gave a contrary response saying that there is a mix of class background among the students and even children of sound financial background also study in the school. Their parents do not want to spend much on their child's school education as they feel that anyhow they have to spend a lot on higher education.

Speak at home, which is not polished or literary. Even we cannot understand the Telugu they speak. They do not have anyone to guide at home. Ultimately, they are neither able to learn English nor Telugu.

Bharati, an English teacher reported that whoever comes to the school is admitted without any entrance test since management only wants fees from the students⁷. She feels that this is not the correct way as the quality of the school and the students will be reduced. She says, "Management cannot expect good results when they are taking children without any preliminary screening". Teachers further reported that parents admit their children in an English Medium school for *goppa* (prestige), but never look after the child's progress or never come to school. For this reason, there are no parent-teacher meetings in the school because, as at ZPHS, it is believed that parents would not attend the meeting. There are guidelines mentioned for the parents in the school diaries like 'parents are requested to attend the parent-teacher meeting without fail', 'parents are requested to do their part in enforcing regularity and discipline on children' etc but teachers reported that nobody follows these guidelines. Parents come either for depositing the fees or when their child is detained. Unanimously, all the teachers and the director reported that apart from English, parents are very much concerned with marks of the students and not concerned with whether the child is understanding the subject and grasping the fundamentals. The director stated:

If the marks of their child are less, they put the entire fault on the teachers and the school. As parents are either illiterate or educated only up to the school level, they only look for marks and nothing else. Since parents are very result-oriented, schools also function accordingly to meet the parental demand.

Thus, the attitude of teachers towards the students and their parents is very similar in both the schools.

⁷ In the recent RTE Act, it was proposed that no school can subject children or their parents to any form of screening procedures, and if tests or interviews are conducted, schools can be fined.

Conclusion

It is often said that teaching in private schools is superior to government schools. The present study contradicts this notion and attempts to put forth what exactly happens inside the school and classrooms of ZPHS and NMHS.

The kind of education which students in both the schools receive is 'banking education' (Freire, 1970) where the task of the educator is to 'fill' the students by making deposits of information which he considers constitute true knowledge (1970: 49). His work, which laid the foundation for critical pedagogy, attacks this kind of 'banking education' where education becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. He states, "it transforms students into receiving objects. It attempts to control thinking and action, leads men and women to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power" (ibid: 77). As observed in the classrooms, the conventional teaching practices in both the schools do not leave any scope for the child to participate in the classroom. Children are never encouraged to raise doubts or to answer in their own words. In NMHS, utmost importance is laid on marks, and thus, rote-learning became a convention. Students memorise the lesson without actually understanding it. There are no innovative methods like group discussions, conducting experiments, group projects and the like. When asked why there are no contemporary teaching methods, the director of the private school sceptically said:

Excursions, tours, projects, and the like take place in highly commercial schools. If the teachers want to tell their students that the colour of an apple is red, they do it by taking students to an apple orchard and taught that these are the apples, the colour of which is red. For this, extra money is charged from the parents, which is again another way of making money.

Students in NMHS are overburdened with studies and stressed all the time, which was completely lacking in ZPHS. If students have not memorised the answer well, they are given corporal punishment as teachers feel that this is an apt method for instilling fear among the students for their teachers. Students are spoon-fed right from the

beginning of the academic year. They are socialised amidst punishments, guilt and ridicule. Since parents are mostly illiterate and do not contribute anything in their child's education except fees, and thus, they have a sketchy idea of what goes on in the school.

In both the schools, information is mostly communicated by 'telling' rather than by 'doing'. The ideal teaching-learning process takes an altogether different form in reality where the role of the teacher is to teach as much as possible irrespective of the child's age. Likewise, the duty of the student is to learn whatever is being taught in the school by the teachers irrespective of his ability to understand. Thus, this kind of narrative education turns students into "containers," into "receptacles" to be "filled" by the teacher. The more completely he fills the receptacles, the better a teacher he is. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are (Freire, 1970)⁸.

As far as academic system is concerned, ZPHS has its own drawbacks which are lacking in NMHS. In ZPHS, students are constantly experimented with various government schemes and pilot projects like State syllabus in English medium, SUCCESS schools, CALP etc. These schemes undergo change with change in the ruling government. Amidst these political moves, the worst sufferers are the students as they are the ones on whom new initiatives are tried out. Apart from this, the academic year in ZPHS witnesses many disturbances (like school acting as exam centre, teachers getting duty for exam invigilation, internship period of training teachers etc.) which interrupts the teaching-learning activities. In NMHS, there are no such disturbances. Moreover, there is uniformity in the curriculum and medium of instruction. Students do not constantly negotiate between State/CBSE syllabus and English/Telugu medium.

⁸ An ethnographic study by Lewis (1995) on Japan's pre an elementary schools points out that students in Japan have high academic achievement as Japanese pre-schools and elementary schools create community by minimizing competition, involving all children in leadership of the school and emphasizing kindness, collaboration and persistence and not test scores.

Private schools are mushrooming with the promise of English medium education, but only in the classrooms one can notice how competent the teachers are. Classroom observations revealed that ZPHS regular teachers were more competent, experienced and were adept in managing the class than the volunteers and the NMHS teachers. Most of the teachers in NMHS lacked efficiency in English. Many years ago, Mead pointed out that vernacular is the most effective and the most emotionally satisfying medium of instruction (Mead, 1955). She says, "Learning to read and write can be experienced within the security of the known, and the hurdle of a new medium need not be surmounted." (ibid: 262). However, with increasing parental demand for English medium and the competitive job market outside, even government schools have started experimenting with English medium education, but it has its own limitations as discussed earlier.

The teachers in both the schools have a caste and class centric view of students and their families. They bring these notions to the school and classrooms and label the students as 'inferior', 'dullers' and accordingly construct their attitudes towards them. Thus, apart from family background and influence of peer group (as discussed in the previous chapter), teachers' views on the students and their teaching practices affect a child's engagement with learning. There is interplay between all these factors and together they contribute to a child's academic performance.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the era of globalisation and privatisation, the responsibilities which were earlier shouldered by the state alone are now increasingly shared by or taken over by the private sector and the schools are no exception to this trend. The increase in the growth of private schools has been possible due to the fact that they have the right to exist and parents have the right to choose the kind of education which they desire for their children. Since parents are now-a-days ready to spend on their children's education, it is implicit that privatisation of school education is here to stay. The fact that the poor parents are not opting for free lunch and textbooks in government schools and moving towards private schools, particularly in the urban areas shows the demand of private schools and English medium education. However, private schools are also criticised for being more accessible to upper castes, elites and to the boys.

The present study addresses the ongoing debate between government and private schools and attempts to study two schools via their culture. The term 'school culture' is as elusive as the term 'culture' itself. It includes tangible and visible aspects as well as the tacit assumptions, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of the people. The school culture, seems to permeate almost everything: the way people act, what they talk about or consider taboo, whether they seek out colleagues or isolate themselves, and how teachers feel about their work and their students (Deal and Peterson, 2009). This aspect of school culture is something which is not given, but evolved and created by the members of the school through interactions, interpersonal relationships, perceptions, and through the school norms.

I

Differential 'School Culture'

The school culture, in the present context, is viewed as the existence of the interplay between various factors – the organizational structure,

power relationships, cultural norms of the school, attitudes and beliefs of the teachers, students and parents, the relationships between the persons in the school and the teaching learning process (Henry, 1971). In this regard, the framework of school culture is holistic in the sense that it brings out the reality (both superficial and embedded) of the school and provides deeper understanding of what exactly happens inside the school and classrooms. The whole (culture) is present in the parts and the parts (the structure, norms, attitudes of the people) become microcosms of the whole. All the components included in the school make up the whole.

The discussion so far in the preceding chapters reveals that the culture of the ZPHS and NMHS is distinct. The culture of ZPHS is marked with flexibility, autonomy of teachers, freedom to make choices, strong peer-relationships, and stress free academic atmosphere. On the other hand, the NMHS has an entirely different culture discernable by its rigidity, autocracy, result-oriented, inflexible norms, lack of liberty for the teachers, over-burdened and exhausted students and stressed academic atmosphere.

Thus, these two distinct cultures can be classified based on Handy's (1985) typology of cultures as:

Power culture: In this kind of culture, power is concentrated among a few people. Control radiates from the center like a web. Power and influence spread out from a central figure or group. Power derives from the top person and personal relationships with that individual matters more than any formal title of position. Power cultures have little bureaucracy and swift decisions can ensue. The culture of NMHS is closer to the power culture where the school management and more specifically, the school director is the most powerful person. His decisions are the ultimate and everyone abides by them.

Role culture: In this type of culture, people have clearly delegated authorities within a highly defined structure. Organizations form hierarchical bureaucracies and are controlled by procedures, role

descriptions and authority definitions. Power derives from a person's position and little scope exists for expert power. These are predictable and consistent systems and procedures are highly valued. The culture of ZPHS exhibits role culture where there is a hierarchical chain of command and relationships are highly formalized. The roles and responsibilities at each level are clearly defined. It is bound with regulations and paperwork, and authority and hierarchy dominate the relationships.

Despite being two distinct cultures, there is a commonality between ZPHS and NMHS – the relationship between teachers, students and parents. Social class constantly pervades between the relationships of teachers, students and parents, and shapes everyday interactions. Parents' social class impacts their involvement in school. Moreover, the relationship between teachers and parents also revolves around the social class. Government school teachers are in higher status positions relative to working class parents whereas in NMHS they are either higher, parallel or in some cases even lower-status positions than the parents. The social distance between the teachers and parents impacts on how teachers and parents understand each other and each others' roles and responsibilities. As discussed in the chapters, in both the schools, teachers had a very class and caste specific view of the parents and students.

II

Implications of School Culture on Quality of Education

In the discourses about education in general and privatisation of education in particular, we often hear the issue of *quality* of education in both the categories of schools. The debate between government and private schools often revolves around the issue of quality. We frequently come across people saying that the quality of education in private schools is better than the government schools or the quality of education should be improved in the government schools. Kumar (2004) argues that the notion of quality implies two or more versions of the same thing, arranged in a hierarchical order implying the

relative presence of a valued characteristic. According to him, privately run institutions thrive on the popular assumption that whatever is not under state control must be of some quality. For parents and students, quality in education is primarily related to the performance of the student measured through standardized tests. However, there is no common consensus among the researchers regarding how to define the 'quality' or what attributes constitute quality in education.

UNICEF states that every child has a right to quality education and recognizes five dimensions of quality which includes:

- "Learners who are healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities;
- Environments that are healthy, safe, protective and gender-sensitive, and provide adequate resources and facilities;
- Content that is reflected in relevant curricula and materials for the acquisition of basic skills, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and skills for life, and knowledge in such areas as gender, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS prevention and peace.
- Processes through which trained teachers use child-centered teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.
- Outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes, and are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society" (UNICEF, 2000:1).

Thus, its dimensions of learners, environments, contents, processes and outcomes are mostly taken as the desirable dimensions of quality. Similar set of issues were highlighted by Chapman and Adams (2002) and for them education quality refers to inputs (numbers of teachers, amount of teacher training, number of textbooks), processes (amount of direct instructional time, extent of active learning), outputs (test

scores, graduation rates), and outcomes (performance in subsequent employment)¹. They further argue that all developing countries have reported dissatisfaction with the quality of their education systems. Often mentioned causes are the inputs such as teacher training, the lack of teacher motivation, the need for curriculum revision, inadequate facilities, and insufficient textbooks.

In India the usage of the term 'quality' began from mid-1990s (Sarangapani, 2010). Kumar and Sarangapani (2004) gave two different meanings of quality. One refers to the essential character property or attribute by which a thing may be identified or described and the other refers to the superiority or rank of one thing over the other. Researchers like Govinda and Varghese (1992) analysed the quality of education through four dimensions: infrastructural facilities, teachers' qualifications, teaching-learning process and learner achievement. Khaparde *et al* (2004) consider decentralisation of management responsibilities as an important indicator of quality of education. The Quality Council of India (2000) reports that merely providing adequate infrastructure, teaching-learning material, adequate teaching and non-teaching staff, providing conducive atmosphere in the school for learning are not sufficient requirements towards the quality education. Along with this, components of the curriculum, viz. syllabus, pedagogy, examination, affiliation and accreditation standards are also important factors which need to be addressed while dealing with quality issues in education.

Kumar (2009) argues that educational quality requires that the learner retains some control in his or her own growth and the teacher remains autonomous to respond to the learner rather than to demands that emanate from parents or the market. Thus, quality in

¹ Quality as outputs or outcomes involves the consequences of education. "Outputs" refer to the short-term consequences of schooling, e.g., students' cognitive achievement, completion rates, certification, individual skills, attitudes, and behaviors', while "outcomes" refer to longer-term, often socially significant, consequences of education, e.g., employment, earnings, health, civic engagement, and the like, as well as social attitudes, behaviors, and skills (Chapman and Adams, 2002).

education has been interpreted by him as a comprehensive and holistic view of education. But of late, the debate on quality has been confined to the instrumentalist view of education (Kumar, 2010). J.P. Naik (1975) rightly describes equality, quality and quantity as the elusive triangle of Indian education.

Thus, the above discussion shows that it is difficult to define what constitutes quality in education due to its complexity and multifaceted nature. The argument here is that both 'school culture' and 'quality' are inter-related to a large extent. Quality is a multi-dimensional concept and each of its dimensions is influenced from one or the other factors present in the school. If dimensions like inputs, content, environment, processes and outputs are studied, but student-teacher interactions, values inculcated in the school and classrooms, sanctions, perceptions of teachers and students etc are not taken into account (which can be studied only using the concept of school culture), then it becomes a very narrow approach towards understanding the quality. School culture provides a holistic framework to study these different factors/dynamics (present in the schools). Only through understanding the school culture, we can understand what kind of education is being provided and in what ways. Thus, one can understand the multi-dimensional aspects of quality of education from a holistic framework of school culture.

Going by this argument, let us see the various factors that are rooted in its culture and affect the quality of education in NMHS and ZPHS:

Dominance of 'Textbook-Culture'

School textbooks, undoubtedly, are the storehouse of information and give a direction to the teacher in the process of teaching. However, when teachers take textbooks as the sole source of information and teaching material, the repercussions are quite understandable. Learning becomes a monotonous and tedious journey for the students. It was observed that teachers take the textbooks (in government school) and study materials (in private school) as the one and only available resource, and thus, neither involve students in any

activities nor attempt to teach in an innovative way. Unlike the ‘textbook culture’ in ZPHS, it is entirely ‘study material culture’ in NMHS wherein the study materials/guidebooks have almost replaced the textbooks.

Teachers do not move beyond the textbooks and do not attempt to link information to real life experiences². The load of school bag depicts the adherence and dependency on the school textbooks. Moreover, the emphasis was always on syllabus completion and teachers hastily try to finish the prescribed syllabus as soon as they can without actually knowing whether the child is able to understand the concepts or grasp the fundamentals. As a consequence, students end up with having very ‘bookish information’ and do not have the scope to think beyond their textbooks. They are not given a chance to construct knowledge from their own experiences and with the available resources from their surroundings. This is especially true of the NMHS children who are kind of insulated and confined within the school building for longer duration every day. ZPHS children, on the other hand, remain in the school for a shorter duration which gives them a chance to experience and enjoy the life outside the school. Time and again, it has been reiterated in various reports (for instance, Learning without Burden Report and National Curriculum Framework 2005) and by the intelligentsia that learning at school should be a joyful experience at school rather than being a burden, but in vain. In reality, school education boils down to textbooks and syllabus completion. Both students and teachers tend to think that whatever information is given in the textbook/study material is the ultimate knowledge, and thus, students are not given a chance to reflect and use their own experiences or ideas. Thus, there is only *reproduction of information* rather than construction of knowledge.

² Kumar (2009) argues that the roots of textbook culture can be traced to the early nineteenth century in Wood’s Despatch wherein it was decided that the aim of the education system was to acculturate Indian children and youth in European ideas and perceptions through English as a medium of instruction

Teacher-centred pedagogy

With utmost emphasis on syllabus completion and reliance on textbooks, teacher becomes an authoritative person and children are mute spectators rather than active participants in the class. In both ZPHS and NMHS, their participation was very restricted and as mentioned earlier, whenever they participated, it was always in a group and in the form of answering the questions posed by the teachers. From the classroom observations it was very apparent that the teachers have inculcated this habit among the students. Most of the time, teachers ask questions to the students and rarely the other way round. Questions that are posed by the teachers are mostly closed-ended for which there is only one word reply which is answered in a group. Children's experiences and their voices were literally absent in the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, in both the schools, all the teachers use conventional teaching method with no activities or teaching aids.

Mehan (1980) argues that for an effective participation of the students in the classroom, they must accumulate a stock of academic knowledge as well as they should learn the interactionally appropriate ways to cast their academic knowledge. Thus, *what* students know during lessons i.e., the academic content and *how* to display what they know i.e., the interactional form is necessary to analyse any classroom discourse. In this context, interactional form is referred as the competence of the student to use language appropriately in different contexts. Since there is no construction of knowledge by the students and they are not brought up in an academically stimulating atmosphere, they lack proper academic content. Moreover, the demand for English medium education is growing leaps and bounds, but students in low-medium cost private schools face difficulties in using the language as there is a difference in the language favoured in school and that which is learned at home. Thus, students are neither good in academic content nor do they have competence to use language appropriately in different contexts. As a consequence, there is *no effective participation of students* in the classrooms. The situation

becomes even worse as the teachers too lack competency in displaying both academic content and language which, in turn, disrupts the flow of classroom interaction. Teaching in both the schools was a one-way process where students were passive recipients rather than active participants. All these inherent deficiencies do not allow the classroom discourses to proceed smoothly.

Exam-oriented Learning

What educationists and policy makers say about holistic development through education becomes redundant for a common man for whom everything boils down to marks and ranks which his child has secured in the exams. Schools (especially, private schools) too strive hard to meet parental demands through conducting numerous exams in a year and constantly assessing students through marks. Examinations in the form of unit tests, assignment tests have become a routine procedure in schools and ZPHS and NMHS are no exception to this.

Teachers tend to teach from the examination point of view so that students can score well in the exams. This trend is even more evident in NMHS as parents expect good results from their children since they are paying fees for it. The teacher's prime responsibility is to prepare children to take the exams. Those teachers in NMHS who see beyond the exam based vision of teaching quickly become demoralized by the school management. Thus, these teachers lack institutional support if they want to do something innovative. A major drawback in the studied private school is that study materials have replaced the textbooks. However, the worse thing is that even in study materials, students are taught only selected 'important' questions and the rest, which according to the teachers are 'unimportant' and not relevant for the exams are left out. Thus, students not only learn bookish information, but what they learn is very superficial and only marks-centred. It was observed that if the question is slightly twisted or if some other question is asked which is not there in the study material, students fail to reply.

Amidst the pressure of exams and the struggle for scoring well, *rote-learning has become a convention* and invariably all the students mechanically repeat and memorise whatever is written in the study material without understanding what the lesson is all about. It was found that teachers further encourage this trend and make students memorise the answers through repetition ignoring the comprehension level of students.

Teachers' subjective interest

With increasing commercialisation and privatisation of school education, teachers too have started thinking commercially. It is pertinent to highlight that teachers in ZPHS and NMHS mostly work for a subjective interest which is predominantly economic. The remuneration and perks given to the teachers plays a very crucial role in determining the dedication of teachers in the school. On one hand, government teachers are paid lucrative salaries with many benefits (as discussed in chapter 5) which, in turn, provides them with social security. On the other hand, teachers in NMHS are paid meagre wages with no job security. It was noticed that the quality of teaching is affected both ways. In the case of government teachers, the salary is unrelated to their performance in the school. Whether they go to the classes or not, whether they are punctual or not, they receive their salaries. Since there is no accountability, supervision and monitoring of teachers, they develop lethargic and shirking attitude which has almost become a way of life in this profession. With secured jobs and lucrative salary structure, teachers lack dedication towards children and teaching.

In NMHS, meagre earnings, rigid atmosphere and imposed regulations makes the teacher work in a much stressed atmosphere exactly like the students. They are constantly accountable to the school management and parents. There is always a mental strain which is reflected in their teaching. The work culture and disagreements with the school management leads to dissatisfaction among the teachers. Low salaries and lack of recognition for their hard work and devotion

further aggravates the problem. As a consequence, teachers do not have the motivation and zeal to see whether students are able to understand the chapters well. Teachers hastily try to finish the syllabus to meet the deadlines. It appears that they are actively participating in the process of teaching, but in reality, their participation is imposed. Thus, when the school management and school ethos are not attractive to the teachers, the repercussions are reflected in their teaching. The following table summarises the positive and negative aspects related to the teachers in both the schools:

	ZPHS Teachers	NMHS Teachers
Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Psychological satisfaction ▪ Autonomy ▪ Lucrative salaries ▪ Social Security ▪ Social Status ▪ Flexible work atmosphere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salaries given on time ▪ School in proximity to the house
Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shirking attitude ▪ Lack of accountability ▪ Lack of dedication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Immense mental stress ▪ Long work hours ▪ Incompetent and less qualified ▪ Meagre salaries ▪ Job insecurity ▪ Autocratic decision-making ▪ Lack of psychological satisfaction ▪ Rigid work atmosphere

Values inculcated through schooling

In the present scenario, where the task of socialisation is, to a major extent, being handed over to schools by the parents, the former shoulders a huge responsibility of inculcating the right kind of values among the students like equality, secularism, nationalism and the like. The NCF-2005 document states that apart from participating in

economic and social change, education should build a commitment to the values of equality, justice, freedom, secularism, respect for human rights and dignity, and sensitivity to others feeling and well being. It also states that education should enhance the creative expression and the capacity for aesthetic appreciation. Kumar and Sarangapani (2004) argue that quality is implicit in education and its aims.

However, with increasing commercialisation, individual achievement and competitiveness have become predominant values and schools are no exception to this. This is particularly true for the NMHS where students are nurtured in a competitive atmosphere and individual achievement is always appreciated. Pupils compete among themselves for marks and success in examinations for better job prospects in future. Thus, students are socialised amidst the values of competition, achievement, meritocracy, and individualism. In ZPHS, competitive atmosphere was not as stark as in the NMHS and students always loved to give and share with their friends which undoubtedly reflect elementary forms of collective behaviour. The values of co-operation and togetherness were very evident among the children. This quality was lacking completely among NMHS children who always feared that sharing with friends would make others surpass and score well in exams. Due to this reason, peer group relationships were not strong and there was no feeling of helpfulness and togetherness. This is exactly opposite to the ZPHS children where peer relationships were very intense. Through the morning assembly, NMHS tries to impart the values of equality, spiritualism and respect to elders and teachers, but amidst the exam and marks centric atmosphere this becomes secondary and reduced to a mere routine procedure which is done for 5 to 10 minutes everyday.

It is pertinent to highlight here that when teachers themselves do not have the values of equality and equity, it is futile to think of children learning the right qualities through education. Teachers' perceptions of students in both the schools are rooted in the child's family background. As mentioned earlier, they have a caste and class centric

view of the students and the cause for the poor performance of students is attributed to their family background. Hence, they always demoralise and denigrate the students and have a very pessimistic attitude towards them³. They identify parents as labourers, migrants, alcoholics with no proper values and students are socialised in such kind of atmosphere.

Bourdieu (1974) stresses the fact that each family, indirectly rather than directly, transmits to its children a certain *cultural capital*, defined as a range of cultural goods, titles or forms of behaviour that one has acquired through socialization and enables the person to succeed. This, in turn, gets internalized and converted into an integral part of the person, i.e., *habitus*. This includes embodied cultural capital (a person's demeanor, clothing, taste, speech and manners), objectified cultural capital (material possessions) and institutionalized cultural capital (academic qualifications). It is pertinent to highlight that the cultural capital which is transmitted to the children by the family is considered as inferior by the teachers. This is particularly true to the embodied cultural capital which is characterised by clothing, speech, manners, deportment, and the like which according to teachers is not a proper attribute to move ahead in the present day circumstances. Moreover, since the parents are less educated, the institutionalised cultural capital is lacking among the children. This is one major reason because of which children of all the government teachers and volunteers are not studying in government school. Teachers feel that government schools are for economically and socially backward children. Enrolling their children in good private schools is a status symbol for them. Besides this, there are other reasons for not admitting their children in government school like inadequate infrastructure, incompetent teachers to teach in English and the like. The attitude of NMHS teachers towards the children is

³Only two teachers in ZPHS, however, reported that students of ZPHS have '*dhairyam*' (courage) to face any situation. They are matured and know the difficulties in real life and struggle a lot. They can do well at school, only thing is they have to listen what is taught in the class.

also very negative and the *habitus* with which children come to the school is seen as substandard. Teachers perceive the students as having subnormal intelligence and improper family background which is not congenial for academic success. Thus, though equality is an important aspect of quality (Kumar, 2010), it was found that the notion that every child matters and deserved good education, irrespective of caste, class and gender divisions was lacking among the teachers.

Learners' background

As discussed in the previous chapters, family background and the way children are reared at home are very crucial factors in a child's engagement with learning. Kumar (2010) argues that quality of education at school cannot be viewed in isolation from the larger universe in which a child's growth unfolds. As discussed in chapter six, most of the children in government school and one third in the private school are first generation learners. Another major impediment which affects the learning of the child is the fact that parents who are literate have studied in Telugu medium which has totally become redundant in the present scenario with increasing demand of English medium education. Parents are well aware of the fact that competence in English is one possible door to move to better opportunities and acquiring higher status in the society. Since parents are not familiar with English language, helping the child with studies is not feasible at home and as a result students' learning takes place only at school. Students are entirely dependent on the school for learning, reading, writing, and arithmetic skills. Apart from this, the involvement of government school children in economic activities to support their families also has a bearing on the way they perform at school. However, these children are the ones who struggle hard for survival. While the children of private school are predominantly immersed into studies, government school children experience the work life as well as school life on a day to day basis. Since children are not from sound financial background they work for at least two hours daily to support their families in their own way.

Thus, all these facets like lack of knowledge construction, marks centred teaching, minimal participation of child in the classroom, lack of dedication among ZPHS teachers, unhappy teacher community in NMHS, improper values inculcated in the school, caste-class centric view of teachers towards the students and other factors like appalling infrastructure, lack of co-curricular activities (discussed in previous chapters), etc are responsible for diluting the quality of education.

Factors affecting child's performance

Time and again, it has been said that the performance of government school children is very poor. A layperson views government schools as all play and no studies. However, as Henry (1971) asserts, the outcome of the schooling depends upon a complex of factors. In his model of outcome of a child's experience with the formal educational system, he identifies three factors:

$$O = f(E + S + P) T$$

Where O stands for the outcome of the total educational experience of the child, E for experience at home, S for the influence of school culture, P for the peer-group experience, and T for time.

He argues that any one factor alone cannot explain why some children fail and others succeed. He further suggests that the longer any process continues the greater effect it will have on the outcome of the educational experience.

In the present study, all the three factors - home, school culture and peer group experiences – have been taken into consideration while understanding a child's engagement with learning. Apart from these, fourth factor i.e., child's interest in studies is also crucial for the academic performance of the child. It is argued that interplay between all these factors: home environment and parental motivation at family level, competent and dedicated teachers and innovative teaching methods at school level, attentive and responsible peer group and child's own interest in studies are responsible for the academic performance of the child. Absence of any one factor leads to poor

performance and this is applicable to both government as well as private school and not to government school alone. If the school wants to inculcate certain skills or qualities in the child, there are other non-school factors like family and peer group which may mould the child differently.

III

Differential Education In ZPHS and NMHS

One common strand that connects both government and private school is the overall ideology of the schools, which in Bernstein's terms is closer to the 'instrumental order' than the 'expressive order'. Instrumental order of the school is that complex of behaviour and activities which have to do with the acquisition of specific skills assessed by relatively objective means such as tests and examinations while expressive order has to do with conduct, character and manner (Bernstein, 1975)⁴. Bernstein further argues that the instrumental order is potentially divisive and distinguishes between groups and individual pupils according to their assessed performance and conferring eligibility for certain occupations while the purpose of the expressive is consensual in the creation of a common moral collectivity (ibid: 38)⁵.

Although both the schools, ZPHS and NMHS, exhibit 'instrumental order', in NMHS it is very explicit. Students strive to learn as much as they can and try their level best to score well and succeed in examinations. This would satisfy not only the teachers and parents, but students could also find a place in the competitive world. Parents view English medium education as a tool to economic mobility. Thus, the expressive order takes a backseat in the light of parental and

⁴ Similarly, Thapan (2006) too distinguishes between local order and transcendental order of the school. 'Local' orders constitute the actual schooling process and tend to function independent of the transcendental orders which provides guidelines on how the school ought to function. (2006: 28).

⁵ Durkheim (1961) views schools as setting for moral education and teacher's task is to create a social, moral being. According to him, moral education comprises of three elements: discipline, attachment to the social group and autonomy. He argues that schools are capable of inducing in the child the habits of group life and the need to tie into collective forces.

market demand which ultimately judges the students with marks and grades.

The NMHS boasts of trained English medium teachers, better infrastructure, small pupil-teacher ratio, IIT and medicine foundation and so on, but it does not deliver to the promises with which it was established. Since everything revolves around fee and results, the management resorts to exploitative practices for students and teachers. When these basic requirements itself are not met, it is dubious to imagine how children are shaping up in the school. The actual goals of education are found only in the pamphlets or brochures which are distributed at the time of admission. For instance, a quotation of Swami Vivekananda is written on the school pamphlet of NMHS which reads:

“We want that kind of education by which character is formed, the strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on ones feet”.

Likewise, the report card of the school elaborates on the conduct and behaviour of the child and states:

We stress on character building which is very much essential for our social set-up. We expect that our students behave with others on equality basis and pay regard to elders. We also expect our students that they should follow all social set up and manners and keep away from bad habits like fighting, abusing, smoking and other bad habits. We allot marks for behaviour and also are strict to remove the student if he proves moral-less in spite of our warnings.

Such quotations and messages which are usually written on the brochures or on the report cards remain confined there while in reality, the goal of education entirely changes into a different form in which schools strive to meet the societal demands. In both ZPHS and NMHS, ‘banking education’ (discussed in chapter 6) is predominant, but with a difference. The difference in the kind of education that a student receives in ZPHS and NMHS can be described as:

‘Cramming’ education in NMHS: In NMHS, marks and ranks are deeply internalised in the minds of the children and there is constant grinding of children and regurgitating the information for the exams. They are over-burdened with studies and have very bookish knowledge. Mechanical reading and rote-learning are very predominant in the learning process. From their childhood, students are tuned to study for the competitive exams meant for engineering and medicine. The true potentialities and capabilities of a child are judged through these exams. They are under tremendous pressure from the school and parents for better marks, and thus, the stress and anxiety increases as the child moves towards higher classes. Based on the marks and performance, students are branded as high/low/below average, dullards, brilliant etc. However, intelligence is something which is not static and fixed at birth. It occurs in all social strata and as Mead (1971) rightly points out that “the absence of a nurturing environment stunts and stultifies the mind of a child so that in most cases high natural intelligence is never realised” (1971:75). Children are forced to cram and memorise all the time and do not find time to play or to nurture their creative pursuits.

‘Stress-free’ education in ZPHS: For an outsider, an overall look of government school children may appear tattered, but looking at schools and children from outside gives a very superficial understanding of it. The stress and anxiety under which students of NMHS study was not noticed among the students of ZPHS. Although here too, students dealt with the ritual of exams and marks through rote-learning, they never appeared stressed before exams. In fact, meticulous observation reveals that the students of ZPHS enjoy their childhood with no pressure from any sides whereas children of NMHS are brought up in a strained school atmosphere and with expectations from parents as well as the teachers. However, ZPHS has its own limitations like undedicated and lethargic teachers, high pupil-teacher ratio, government experiments on students, interruptions in academic year, inadequate infrastructure, and the like.

This study attempts to break certain assumptions regarding private schools. Through studying the school culture, it was found that schools like NMHS have evolved to meet the demands of the working class parents and revolve around the 'instrumental' order. The thrust is on:

How the schools can teach better, faster and more: how can kids be taught Russian at three, calculus at four, and nuclear physics at five-and neglect to ask a far more important questions: what is happening to our children as human beings? (Wax and Wax, 1971: 16)

However, as discussed earlier, such kind of schools are more like cramming schools and the education given to the students is nowhere near to the quality education. Thus, the notion that all private schools provide quality education which is superior to government schools is fallacious romanticism.

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PHOTOGRAPHS



SCHOOL BUILDING OF ZPHS



SCHOOL BUILDING OF NMHS



MORNING ASSEMBLY IN ZPHS



MORNING ASSEMBLY IN NMHS



A CLASS IN PROGRESS IN ZPHS



A CLASS IN PROGRESS IN NMHS



STUDENTS HAVING THEIR MID-DAY MEALS WITH FRIENDS IN OPEN SPACE IN ZPHS



**STUDENTS HAVING THEIR LUNCH IN CLASSROOM ALONG WITH THEIR CLASS
TEACHER IN NMHS**



A COMPUTER CLASS IN PROGRESS IN ZPHS



A COMPUTER CLASS IN PROGRESS IN NMHS



STUDENTS WRITING EXAM IN ZPHS



STUDENTS WRITING EXAM IN NMHS