Civics Textbooks, Classroom Processes and Constructions of Citizenship: A Sociological Study of a School in Delhi
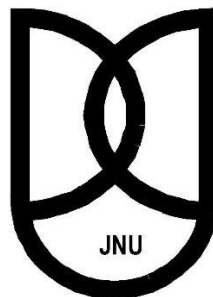
Thesis submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis, entitled **'Civics Textbooks, Classroom Processes and Constructions of Citizenship: A Sociological Study of a School in Delhi'** submitted by me to the Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University for the award of the degree of **Doctor of Philosophy** is my original work. It has not been submitted in part or in full for any other degree in any University.

RUPAMANJARI HEGDE

CERTIFICATE

We recommend that the thesis be placed before the examiners for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of this University.

PROF. S. SRINIVASA RAO

Chairperson

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Supervisor

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A few years ago when I was working as a content developer and curriculum designer for a private educational enterprise in Delhi-NCR, I used to design instructional support material for teachers in the classroom. This often involved developing detailed minute-to-minute lesson plans in social studies related to themes like gender, diversity, discrimination and marginalization. The potential buyers/users of the developed materials were schools and teachers all across India whom I as a developer of the specific content never had the opportunity to interact with. The questions that used to plague me while designing such content were – How would teachers transact lessons developed by someone else unless they believed in the ideas and perspectives embedded in them? What if they held completely contradictory perspectives on issues related to gender justice and issues of inequality? These questions stayed with me and later got me interested in taking up research on social science textbooks and the dynamics of their transaction in schools.

Coming back to hard-core academics after a long hiatus was not easy. I had switched over from the field of historical studies to the area of educational studies. The journey was indeed arduous. There were many moments of exasperation and self-doubt, anxiety and frustration. But the journey was equally fulfilling, exciting and academically invigorating and enriching. The fact that I was able to sustain myself through this very long journey was due to the support, guidance and encouragement I received from a number of people. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all.

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wish that I complete my doctorate. I am happy that I am being able to fulfil their wish after so many years. Babua, Anamika, Ritudidi, Kanad Da and Boudi were always there to encourage and support. Tojo provided the much needed distraction. Thank you all so much for having faith in me and being there for me whenever I needed you.

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BPL	Below Poverty Line
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education
CCA	Co-Curricular Activities
CCE	Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation
CRPF	Central Reserved Police Force
DIET	District Institutes of Education and Training
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
JV	Jawahar Vidyalaya
JVS	Jawahar Vidyalaya Samiti
MCD	Municipal Corporation of Delhi
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource and Development
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NCF	National Curriculum Framework
NCFSE	National Curriculum Framework for School Education
PGT	Post Graduate Teacher
SGFI	Sports and Games Federation
SPL	Social and Political Life
TWC	Textbook Writing Committee
ZIET	Zonal Institutes of Education and Training

Chapter One

Introduction

A *khap panchayat* in a village in Haryana issuing a *fatwa* against the use of mobile phones by young unmarried women; hundreds of Adivasis being displaced as their villages get submerged because of the construction of the Sardar Sarovar Dam in the Narmada River Valley in Madhya Pradesh; a Muslim couple being denied accommodation in Mumbai; a minor Dalit girl being gang-raped and murdered by upper caste men in Uttar Pradesh because her brother had eloped with an upper caste women from the same village; youth from the North-Eastern states staging a *dharna* at Jantar Mantar, New Delhi against the racial discrimination they experience in the city; members of the Maratha community demanding for reservation in education and government services in Mumbai -- instances like these making headlines in national media are a common feature today. While all these individuals and groups are citizens of India these instances suggest that citizenship for many has always been and continues to be routinely denied, thwarted, contested and challenged. It is also not a static phenomenon and is constantly being redefined and reclaimed.

Citizenship is defined as a specific legal status attributed to an individual under the Constitution of India (Jayal 2013:2). A person by virtue of enjoying that status is entitled to certain rights like the right to life, right to freedom of speech and expression and the right to work and live in a country. However, the instances cited here suggest that the legal status of being a citizen is most often not adequate enough to guarantee the full enjoyment of these rights. Rather a full realisation or actualisation of citizenship becomes possible only when an individual or a community can exercise all the rights that they are entitled to under the Constitutional framework and are able to also enjoy "a sense of identity and belonging" (ibid.).This is because as Jayal argues citizenship not only entails "relation between the individual and the State" but also a "relation between the citizens" (ibid.). This brings into focus the relationship between citizenship and nation. Nations are

defined as imagined communities[1] that are often imagined into existence (Anderson 2006: 5-7). A legal status as a citizen/s does not always ensure for an individual or a community an automatic inclusion within the national imagination. On the contrary, the position certain communities enjoy within the national imagination shapes their experience of citizenship at the level of access to rights and entitlements and also their inclusion and integration within a nation state.

Citizenship from the perspective of the nation state is also a matter of duties. Rights provided to the citizens are often conditional to the extent they can fulfil their duties towards the nation state. It therefore becomes imperative for the nation state to educate and train citizens how to contribute towards nation-building. The importance of education in shaping the national imagination and ideas of citizenship cannot be overlooked. Green argues that in the case of the majority of modern nation states education systems have been and continue to be "national institutions devoted, in varying degrees, to the preparation of future workers and the formation of future citizens" (Green1997:181). The school constitutes a major site where students are groomed into future citizens. Often regarded as the "dominant Ideological State Apparatus" (Althusser 1973:153) it helps in structuring the "unconsciousness" of the citizens with its disciplinary regimes, daily rituals (e.g. assembly) and classroom teaching-learning processes. Curriculum and textbooks play a crucial role here, becoming the most potent tools to actualize the vision of nation-building and construction/s of citizenship. It has been argued that since citizenship is central to the process of nation-building, the visualisation of the "ideal" citizen in the national imagination and its construction through an officially sanctioned curriculum have usually been aligned to the political agenda of the specific regime in power (Advani 2009; Bhog *et al.* 2010; Batra 2015). This is seen to largely explain why curriculum and textbooks become the repository of "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:44-

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[1] A nation is commonly defined as a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, and inhabiting a particular country or territory. In that sense the terms "nation" and "nation state" often become co-terminous. However the term "nation state" usually refers to a sovereign State limited within a territorial boundary. A "nation" on the other hand can also be an imagined community whose boundaries can extend beyond the territorial boundaries of a country. Again a single nation state can be inhabited by a number of nations. For example the Jews regarded themselves as a "nation" before Israel was formed while "the idea of the multiplicity of nations has been politically articulated in the form of the Pakistan Oppressed Nations Movement (Saigol 2000:129).

46). Research highlights that textbooks are very often rewritten as per the requirements of the changing political regimes (Anyon 1979; Advani 2009; Bhog *et al* 2010). This often throws up contesting visions of citizenship and nationhood leading to a redesigning of the national curriculum in many countries with changing political regimes. Textbooks in general often reflect such changes. As Jain (2004) highlights these diverse constructions of citizenship are most apparent in the civics textbooks which are specifically aimed at inculcating in young minds the "right" values and attitudes and prepare them as "ideal" citizens.

The National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF 2005)[2] has been critically acclaimed by scholars for having introduced radical "epistemological shifts" (Batra 2010:13). It is also claimed to have transformed the visualisation of the citizen by situating citizenship education within the perspectives of human rights and critical pedagogy aimed at providing the students with "an opportunity to reflect critically on issues in terms of their political, social, economic and moral aspects" (NCF 2005: 23). Another significant change, it is argued, is noticeable in the proposed inclusion of the "perspectives of the *adivasi*, *dalit* and other disenfranchised populations" in curriculum and textbooks (NCERT 2006: vii). These innovations, it is pointed out, are mostly evident in social science. Therefore, some of the primary aims of this study would be to examine the following questions: How do the civics textbooks construct ideas of citizenship with specific reference to some of the most marginalized communities in India, namely, the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits? To what extent do the textbooks succeed in reflecting the perspectives of these communities?

The curricular changes reflected through textbooks, however, become meaningful only when they are able to effectively transform the classroom pedagogic process. This transformation would essentially depend upon how the teachers transact and interpret the textbook and how students receive the same. Therefore the following questions also become significant: To what extent and how do these curricular perspectives get translated within the discourse of the classroom and impact the process of teaching and

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[2]The NCF 2005was operationalized during the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance regime (2004-2014) or UPA I and has continued beyond 2014 (which witnessed another regime change).

learning? How do the teachers and students interpret the textbooks and construct their notions of the nation, State and citizenship especially with regard to certain marginalized communities (namely Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits)? What are the factors which shape this process of meaning-making? Set in a government school in Delhi these are some of the questions that the present study seeks to address.

The study is limited to an analysis of the middle school civics textbooks, namely the Social and Political Life (SPL I-III) series published by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT). While an overall analysis would be conducted the study would focus on specific chapters in SPL III which look more closely at marginalization as experienced by the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits[3]. Besides this, some other chapters in SPL III would also be looked at. These chapters would be examined to understand how the textbooks are transacted and interpreted by the teachers and read by the students. The fieldwork for the study has been conducted during 2014-2015, the period during which India witnessed a political regime change[4] that introduced a number of programmes in the area of school education based on its ideological framework. It would, therefore, be interesting to examine whether such policies shaped the overall school culture and influenced the manner in which the teachers and students interpreted the textbook and constructed their notions of citizenship.

1.1   Situating the Study: A Review of Literature

Textbooks as well as the transaction of textual knowledge by teachers and the interpretation of the same by students are nested within the larger context of the school, society and nation state. An enquiry into how textbooks construct certain specific notions of citizenship, nation and identity   and how these get transacted by teachers and read by students necessitates an understanding of the inter-linkages between textbooks and the wider socio-political and cultural milieu. This facilitates an understanding as to how such notions are conceived of within that context. It also helps to unravel how such perceptions influence the constructions of citizenship, nation and identity in textbooks

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[3]The details of the research design have been provided later.
[4]The year 2014 saw the ascendance of the Bharatiya Janata Party to power at the Centre that made it mandatory for schools, especially under the Central Government to celebrate the Bal Swatchhata Abhiyan, the Sanskrit Week and others (see Chapter Four).

and classrooms. The following discussion which refers to some of the major theoretical debates and empirical studies both in the context of India and the world, attempts to do that.

1.1.1 Nation and Citizenship: Ideas, Contestations and Constructions

The Constitution of India was adopted in 1950. A remarkably progressive document it upheld the promise of transforming a deeply fragmented and hierarchically organized Indian society into a civic community in which all citizens irrespective of their class, caste, religion, ethnicity and gender would be treated as equals. It thus epitomized a "radical notion of citizenship" (Jayal 2013:24). However a look into the history of India over the last few decades since Independence shows that the promise is far from being realized. As Jayal argues,

> The powerful and potentially transformative project of a civic community, in terms of both the status of citizenship and its performance, and in terms of citizen's relationships to each other as well as to the state, now appears enervated and depleted. The project of a national-civic community appears to be overwhelmed by a plurality of narrowly circumscribed identities, often in uneasy tension with each other and with the national-civic; the citizenly solidarity that must underwrite policies to reduce inequality is weak and tenuous; the social intolerance of difference compromises the neutrality of law; and there remains little that is recognizably civic about Indian citizenship (ibid.).

This dilution or violation of citizenship rights is most pronounced in the case of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in India namely the Adivasis, Mulslims and Dalits and therefore needs attention.

Historically the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits were not regarded as equal citizens but were stigmatized and looked down upon by the more dominant groups in society (Jayal 2013; Oommen 2014). The situation remains largely similar even now. Even the introduction of group-differentiated rights under the Constitution has not succeeded in ensuring their inclusion as equal citizens in the Indian society and polity (Jayal 2013:21-24). This indicates that the experience and realization of citizenship for citizens does not depend exclusively on the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Rather it is substantially determined by the position an individual or communities enjoy within the national imagination.

A nation's identity which is reflective of the national imagination is defined by the values it upholds, the past it wishes to cherish and "the kind of country and people it wants to be" (Parekh 2006:2). At the same time it is shaped and constrained by its history, its present circumstances, future aspirations and a coming to terms with its various problems. Over the years India has been conceptualized in diverse ways by different groups of people and personalities. The nationalist leaders like Gandhi, Tagore and Nehru looked at India as a civilization having a pluralistic and "internally differentiated composite culture" (ibid.:3). As Cohn argues this was best articulated by Nehru as "unity in diversity" or the "ability to absorb and reshape that which came into India as foreign" (1971:57). Nehru and other leaders believed that India's true strength lay in "things of the spirit and the mind" as against the West's superiority "in technology and materialistic goals" (ibid.). This, they argued explained how India was able to withstand the onslaught of conquest and subjugation over centuries (first by the Muslims and then by the British) that had left the country deeply fragmented, materially bankrupt and intellectually and morally stagnant. However, they strongly believed that India still had adequate energy and resources to resurrect itself and once again "resume its rightful place in the world" (Parekh 2006:3). This view of resurgence was widely accepted and continues to be an essential component of our national consciousness.

The post-Independence era, under the leadership of Nehru, witnessed a re-imagination of India from a civilizational entity to a modern nation state equipped with a written Constitution and a democratically elected government. It was felt that if Indians "were to take charge of their collective destiny, they needed to develop a common sense of belonging and become a reasonably cohesive political community" (Parekh 2006:4) having a "shared identity, based on a shared conception of what their country stood for" (ibid.). This found expression in what Nehru termed as the "national philosophy of India" which was defined by "individual liberty, equality of opportunity, social justice, secularism, the spirit of enquiry or.. scientific temper of which non-alignment was a contingent expression" (ibid.)[5] Emphasis was also laid on the need to remove the

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[5]The Nehruvian doctrine of Panchsheel embodied the constitutional vision of international order and was meant to contribute towards the maintenance of peace, good neighbourliness and the idea of moral conduct in international relations (Verma 1989:1).

widespread economic and social inequalities and thereby create a democratic, just, egalitarian and humane society. This found expression in the form of the Directive Principles of State policy under the Constitution of India.

The Nehruvian idea of India as a nation was and continues to be challenged by the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its political affiliate, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)[6], in the form of *Hindutva* or what they call "cultural nationalism". At the centre of the ideology of *Hindutva* is the construction of a *Hindu Rashtra* based on a grand Hindu vision of India by projecting India as a Hindu country and reclaiming it exclusively for Hindus. As Noorani points out the genesis of *Hindutva* can be traced back to V.D. Savarkar who argued that the entire stretch of land from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari belonged to the Hindus, who in spite of their differences are one and who look upon the Bharatbhumi or Hindustan as their *Pitribhu* (fatherland) and *Punyabhu* (holy land) (Noorani 2016:38). He notes that this was not the case with the followers of Islam and Christianity for whom Hindustan could be a fatherland but never a holy land which existed elsewhere. A similar argument has been forwarded by Menon:

> The RSS's effort has been to construct a "national identity" which is anterior to and elides over the colonial as well Islamic periods of recent times to reach out to an "authentic" India of the hoary past, which remains emblematic of its "real" culture—unique, untrammelled and unadulterated by colonial or Islamic hybridity.(Menon 2016: 44)

Another alternative and very different idea of India has been gaining popularity since the nineteen eighties. Unlike the earlier visions espoused by Nehru and the leaders of the nationalist struggle, it wished to see India emerge as a political power of reckoning on the global map backed by military strength and economic power. According to Parekh it advocated the need to "open up our markets, liberalize and deregulate our economy and…ensure a free inward flow of capital and goods" in order to be "integrated into the global economy" (Parekh 2006:8) It also highlighted the need to build ties with global super powers like the USA with an aim to further its nuclear aspirations. This vision was and continues to be supported by a diverse group of people ranging from "the globalised and cosmopolitan techno-managerial elite….large Indian business houses with global

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[6]The Bharatiya Janata Party along with its alliance partner, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has been re-elected with a thumping majority for the second consecutive term in the recent Lok Sabha Elections (2019).

markets in sight,..ambitious middle classes ....large sections of the media,....major groups of NRIs" to "influential sections of the Sangh Parivar" (ibid.).

These diverse imaginations of India as a nation have been critiqued from different quarters. It is argued that the vision of creating a *Hindu Rashtra*is antithetical to the very idea of nation as espoused by the founding fathers of India. According to Purohit (1965) Hindu nationalism – is "exclusive, narrowly based, mixed with religion" (cited in Noorani 2016: 40). It is also "militant and aggressive towards other religions" and "had great belief in centralized leadership and in militancy" (ibid.). Guru also criticizes the *Hindutva* forces for their use of *Bhumi* or land as the "absolute criterion to define the nation"(2016:6). He draws attention to the existence of a *Bahishkrit Bharat* ("quarantined India"), an expression used by Ambedkar, within *Bharatvarsha* or *Parishkrut Bharat* (sacred India) (ibid.). He holds the right wing as completely lacking "the moral stamina to critically reflect on the predicament of *Bahishkrit Bharat"* inhabited by the Dalits (ibid.:7). The aspiration to see India emerge as a neo-liberal state (which India has already become) of global reckoning has also been dismissed as being "narrow and exclusive" by Parekh (2006:8). According to him it overlooks the plight of the poor, downtrodden and marginalized, is engulfed by consumerist interests, is bereft of secular values and therefore morally bankrupt. In his view Nehru's vision of India was indeed "inclusive, secular, culturally sensitive, based on ethnic and cultural plurality...and could be owned by all Indians" (ibid.:6). It also "gave democratic institutions deep roots in Indian self-consciousness, held the country during its critical period, nurtured dissent and disagreement...and gave India a distinct international presence" (ibid.). But Parekh is also critical of Nehru. He points out that Nehru's vision of India was "statist, elitist, did little to speed up India's economic development and tackle poverty, paid only limited attention to primary education, healthcare and other basic needs of the masses" (ibid.) It was also "insufficiently sensitive to rural India and the religious aspirations of the people" (ibid.).

Irrespective of their variations and positive elements all these diverse views of India as a nation were conceptualized and privileged by the dominant groups in society. As pointed out in the foregoing discussion even the Nehruvian idea of the nation in spite of being

inclusive represented an elitist perspective. While the imagination of India as a *Hindu Rashtra* and a prospective global economy were exclusionary the Nehruvian imagination in spite of its emphasis on issues of social justice and secularism was unable to adequately engage with the same. Within these dominant imaginations of the nation, the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits were never regarded as equal citizens in spite of the many Constitutional rights and legal measures introduced by the Indian State to address the issues of inequality and social justice. They were and continue to be viewed by the dominant groups through the lens of the prevalent stereotypes and prejudices and this explains their marginalized status. The following discussion elaborates on this.

Although the term "tribe" to describe people "who were different from those of the rest of the civilization" was a "colonial construction" Xaxa argues that it was in use since the sixteenth century to describe "groups/communities living in primitive and barbarous conditions" (2006:278). Banerjee points out that the name Adivasi which literally means "original inhabitant" was adopted by the tribal communities like the Santals, Mundas and Gonds around the nineteen thirties to challenge the "colonial 'primitivist' labels such as tribe and …the Indian upper caste labels, often with untouchability associations, such as *jungli, nishada* and *chandala*" (2009: 6). However the claim of the Adivasis as the true indigenous communities of India resulted in a situation whereby "tribal" identity was articulated as autonomy of "tribal" traditions (ibid). This Bannerjee argues resulted in the "culturisation" of the tribes and by "the second half of the twentieth century, the identification of the adivasi with …pure culture, became yet more institutionalized" (2009:12-13). It was reflected in the manner the Adivasis were presented as "part of state display- in republic-day parade, as dancers and craftspeople set up at state fairs and markets" (ibid.: 13). This continued the prevalent perception of the tribes/Adivasis as a primeval and exotic community of forest-dwellers.

Xaxa argues that it was G.S.Ghuriye who propagated that tribes were "backward Hindus" and this "set the tone of a future line of thinking on tribes in India" (2006:280). Since then, "the idea that tribes are Hindus has become a refrain among right-wing Hindu social and political activists" rendering it "the general pattern of thinking about tribes in India today" (ibid.). Such articulations have culminated in violent attacks against tribal

Christians in India in the recent past. During "the course of the media coverage of these attacks, Sangh Parivar activists repeatedly and aggressively claimed that tribals cease to be tribes once they become Christians" and argued that "they must declare themselves to be Christian and not tribal when they apply for jobs and other benefits from the government" (ibid.).

Moreover the development policies of successive Indian governments have resulted in large-scale displacement and dispossession of tribal communities. Oommen notes that although the Constitution confers upon every child the right to get educated in his/her mother tongue up to the age of fourteen this "constitutional promise is systematically thwarted in case of the tribal communities" as their languages are "stigmatized by the mainstream society"(2014:88). These languages have no presence in the "public sphere (administration, local economic transactions etc.)" (ibid.) and are not used as medium of instruction in schools. This explains why tribal children feel alienated in schools and eventually drop out. Oommen argues that this has largely prevented "the formation of an Adivasi elite which can champion the tribal cause" (ibid.).

One stigma attached to the Muslims is that they are "cultural outsiders" (Oommen 2014:119). In spite of it being an established fact that "pre-conquest Islam existed in India through Arab migration to the Malabar Coast as far back as the seventh century" it is widely believed that "theirs is an alien religion which entered India through conquest"(ibid.:120). He points out that the Indian Muslims are not a "monolithic entity" but a conglomeration of various sub-categories (the upper-caste converts to Islam, the converts from the Other Backward Classes or OBCs and those from Scheduled Caste background) (ibid.). Yet they are still regarded as a homogeneous community which is held responsible for many of the problems that confronted the nation state. For instance, they continue to be blamed for the Partition of the Indian sub-continent and the bloody period of communal rioting which followed. Being the largest minority community in the country they are often regarded as a vote-bank for politicians and are therefore regarded as a threat by the Hindu majority within a democratic set-up. Their allegiance towards the country is often held suspect as it is believed that their loyalty lies elsewhere, especially to Pakistan and Bangladesh. These misconceptions are accentuated by the Muslim

community's preference for an exclusive personal law anchored in religious texts and their refusal to accept a Uniform civil law as also their adherence to a distinct lifestyle which renders their religious identity more pronounced. These factors reinforce their identity as the ultimate "Other" in the eyes of the Hindu majority. Thapan points out that although this "Hindu obsession" with the Muslim "other" other had been prevalent for many decades it "has taken dangerous forms in the riots that have taken place in recent years" (2009:11-12). She notes that this perhaps explains why the "relationship between the Muslims and the Hindus has a history of continuous mistrust between them in spite of close friendships and networks among individuals and families" (ibid.:12)[7].

Kumar draws attention to the "exclusionist, corporate ridden, market driven and anti-poor and anti-labour" stance adopted by the Indian media which he argues "has completely failed to do justice in analysing the complex and emotional issues of multi-religious and multicultural Indian society in general and that of the minority communities in particular" (2011: 59). This explains why the portrayal of Muslims and other minority communities is not only rare in mainstream Indian media - Bollywood[8] films, tele-serials and newspaper and television advertisements - but also promotes a stereotypical construction of their identity and lifestyle. In mainstream Hindi cinema they are typically portrayed as smugglers, gangsters, beggars and terrorists. Such propaganda argues Farooqui "leads to the essentialization of Muslims as products of their pathological "nature" while absolving the political and social system of all responsibility in ensuring equity" (2012:60).

The Dalits or Scheduled Castes (SCs) along with the Scheduled Tribes (STs)[9] or Adivasis are undeniably the most marginalized communities in contemporary India. While along with the STs they suffer from extreme poverty and powerlessness what contributes specifically towards their marginalization is their "degrading ritual status" (Oommen

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[7]This mistrust and othering of the Muslims have been on the rise since 2014 with the coming to power of the current political dispensation at the centre and have been reflected in the political rhetoric espoused by the various Hindutva groups in the electronic and print media as also in the social media.

[8] Bollywood is a pseudonym used to refer to the Hindi language film industry in India. It is based in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

[9] Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes is the official name given in India to certain communities who are historically disadvantaged. The Scheduled Castes are often referred to as Dalits. The term `Dalit' means `broken' has been adopted by these communities as a sign to reflect the centuries of discrimination within the caste system.

2014:46) arising from the practice of untouchability. It is well-known that in spite of untouchability being legally abolished under the Indian Constitution it continues in practice. Oommen argues that class societies being based on "a single axis of stratification (the secular)" (ibid.: 54) allows for both upward and downward mobility for an individual or a set of individuals. Caste societies in contrast are organic in nature. He explains that as a result "while individuals can and do move up or down in the secular context, this does not fundamentally alter their status in the ritual context, i.e., in caste hierarchy" (ibid.). This leads to "status divergence - change in secular status, but immobility in the context of ritual status" (ibid.). If at all mobility takes place it occurs for the group and not for an individual separately.

However the Dalits or Scheduled Tribes do not constitute a homogenous category. Oommen points out that since caste being a "linguistic-regional phenomenon" in India, "there are no all-India equivalences of castes (*jatis*) which are different from *varnas* (2014:57). Even Brahmans- the most pan-Indian category- vary across regions, based on their structure of domination" (ibid.). Similarly the status of the Dalits varies region-wise in terms of nomenclature and degree of deprivation, the Mahars in Maharashtra, Namashudras in West Bengal being some of the "dominant" castes among the SCs. "Each of these linguistic regions" as Oommen notes "has several SCs, and they vary substantially in size and upward mobility" (ibid.:58). While some of these groups "have achieved high upward mobility …in the secular context due to their favourable response to modern education and consequent occupational mobility" (ibid.) others have not been so successful. This internal diversity on the basis of secular status amongst the SCs, has led many to "argue for the abolition of caste-based reservation in India" on the ground that "positive discrimination/affirmative action benefits only the strong among the weak" (ibid.). But while it is true that the reservation policy has resulted in certain sections among the Dalits having "benefited disproportionately" the fact remains that the "vast majority among those who are entitled for benefits are yet to benefit or have benefitted very little from reservations" (ibid.).

It would be interesting to explore whether and to what extent these popular perceptions of the marginalized communities impacted the manner in which the teachers transacted and interpreted the textbook and the students read the same.

1.1.2   *"Official knowledge" and the Constructions of Citizenship in Textbooks*

It has been argued that the knowledge contained in textbooks is neither neutral nor objective (Anyon 1979; Apple 2000; Crawford 2004) but undergoes a rigorous process of selection in the hands of the "powerful" (Anyon, 1971:362) sections of the society before being approved as the prescribed curriculum of the State or government in power. In fact, textbooks exemplify the Raymond Williams referred to as the "selective tradition" (Williams 1961   cited in Apple 2000:46) whereby certain kinds of knowledge are selected, especially those which serve the specific interests of or values upheld by the "powerful" (Anyon, 1971:362) sections of the society. According to Apple this leads to the construction of "official knowledge" (Apple, 2000:46) which delegitimizes the knowledge that is excluded - the knowledge of the less powerful or those which challenge the interests of those in power. Though this never occurs without conflict it usually leads to what is called "cultural silences" (Crawford 2004:11).

Anyon examines a collection of widely used secondary school history textbooks in the United States to understand the depiction of economic and labour history during the period between the Civil War and the World War I. She argues that "the story told is not neutral" as the textbooks uphold "the interests of the wealthy and powerful" and provide "ideological justification for the activities and prerogatives of these groups" (Anyon, 1979:379). In the process they delegitimize the "points of view and priorities of groups that compete with these established interests for social acceptance and support" (ibid.). Being a repository of "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46) textbooks often project a specific idea of citizenship. This leads to the visualization of an "ideal" citizen in the projected national imagination and almost always necessitates the construction of an "other" (Saigol 2000; Jain 2004). Jain in his study on NCERTs civics textbooks (1975-1999) shows how most often   the "ideal" citizen in many textbooks is projected as one who is educated and is therefore liberal, politically conscious and rational (2004:179-

180). He/she also has the ability to distinguish between right and wrong, and can appreciate the value of culture and tradition. Such a citizen being aware of his/her rights and duties towards the nation state is also loyal and obedient and hence capable of contributing towards nation-building. The illiterate, in contrast, is depicted as the "other" being irrational, casteist, un-informed, lacking the ability to differentiate between right and wrong and unable to appreciate culture and tradition (ibid.:180). Being unaware of their responsibilities towards the nation state they are therefore unfit to be a citizen. According to Jain this leads to a demonization of the uneducated and illiterate, imposes on them a "negative self-identity" as the "other" thereby disqualifying from citizenship "the large mass of people of small and marginal peasantry, landless and agricultural labourers, artisan groups, Dalits and tribals" (ibid.:181-182).

Research (Advani 2009; Bhog *et al* 2010; Farooqui 2012) has also highlighted the presence of communal messages in school textbooks. A review committee set up by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) in 2005 for instance drew attention towards the rampant usage of "disturbing communal propaganda" in school textbooks published by different state boards, private schools as well as those under the aegis of various religious and social organizations (Farooqui 2012:58). Often textbooks contain popular folklore which conveys subtle messages thereby essentialising the national identity as majoritarian and Hindu and stereotyping the minorities as the ultimate "other." Referring to some of the English language textbooks published by NCERT (1990s) Advani points out how the "visible, normative face of Indian identity in the books is overwhelmingly Hindu"((2009: 115)). Not only are the central characters in most of these books Hindu but the "stories which deal with broadly secular themes are securely based in a Hindu society" (ibid.). The Muslims on the other hand are stereotyped as "crafty….devious or savage" (ibid: 117) and hence the obvious "other".

The construction of the Muslims as the "other" acquires a new dimension in the NCERT textbooks published between 2000 and 2004. Bhog *et al* highlights how these textbooks identify "the minority as the fountain-head of communal ideology" and "marks the Muslim community as the root cause of global terrorism, strengthens the minority-majority argument and furthers the stereotype of the violent Muslim in the national

context" (2010: 214-215).   It has been argued that under circumstances when there is an absence of a rational view of knowledge it is quite likely that such content would be accepted as legitimate by the majority of teachers. Farooqui notes that when such myths or stereotypes are presented as historical facts in the form of "official textual knowledge" or "are narrated or referred to by persons of authority such as teachers then other related myths regarding Hindu-Muslim conflicts and plunder, heard through word of mouth from family members or the community, also appear to children as truth" (2012:58).

The "ideal" citizen in the projected national imagination also has a distinct gendered identity that often helps to create a division of citizenship. Examining school textbooks in India and Pakistan Saigol (2000) points out how through such a division rights become the prerogative of the male citizens. On the other hand the female counterparts in the textbooks are expected to fulfill their duties to the State/nation as wives and mothers. They are supposed to fulfill such duties at two levels - "….biologically by giving birth to the population and culturally by bringing up men as good soldiers/workers/citizens capable of defending the 'motherland', and engaging in productive work…" (Saigol, 2000 :132). Their role also includes nurturing and producing "… women who are obedient and subservient to men in the family and are capable of becoming 'good mothers' who will carry on the work of reproduction in the future" (ibid.).

Attention has also been drawn to the complex relationship between nationhood, State and imaginations of women as citizens whereby "patriarchal notions, development objectives, ….sexual politics define the nature of women's participation in democratic life" (Bhog *et al* 2010:217). Drawing upon some of the state as well as NCERT textbooks (1990s) Bhog *et al* point out how it is "possible to uphold 'gender equality' and yet be driven by patriarchal notions of family and the desire to monitor women's bodies and sexuality" (ibid.). The textbooks talk about the entitlement of women to be equal beneficiaries of the State's development policies like education and job opportunities. But they are neither vested with agency nor expected to fight for their rights. Rather their "fertility and sexual desire is located within the structure of the nuclear family" (ibid.).

Biases are noticeable in textbooks published by non-State actors also. Manjrekar (2011) discusses how the RSS has always highlighted the role of education as a key factor in spreading a Hindu nationalist consciousness. She discusses how this is projected "through a curriculum that emphasizes the supremacy of Hindu culture and defines citizenship through allegiance to an idea of India that is exclusively Hindu" (ibid.:351). In the RSS ideology women are given a significant role in this project of nation-building. Manjrekar examines the ideals of Hindu girlhood as represented in *Balika Shikshan* (Education for Girls) - a guidebook for teachers published by Vidya Bharati, the educational wing of the RSS. According to her in the *Balika Shikshan* women are assigned the crucial responsibility of becoming the "cultural reproducers of community and nation"(ibid.:356). This, she argues, not only projects a specific ideal of girlhood and womanhood that is exclusively Hindu but also reflects the "larger politics of knowledge production within the RSS framework of schooling for a Hindu nation" (ibid.:351).

The construction of the citizen in textbooks also delineates a distinct imagination of the State. The NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2004) for instance, represent the State as the nucleus of all action whereas the citizen is expected to be a loyal collaborator and an obedient patriot. Jain (2004) points out that any form of dissent, excepting those carried out peacefully to express the dissatisfaction and anguish of the citizen against State power, is negatively looked at in these textbooks. The textbooks "denigrate people's movements against dominance and exploitation by presenting them as threats to public order" (ibid.:180) and the citizen is reminded to "follow rules" as laid down by different authorities. Jain notes that such attempts create a situation where rights become conditional on "State benevolence" (ibid.).

A very different portrayal of the State is visible in the Ekalavya[10] textbooks. Madan shows how the State in these textbooks is not represented as the prime player but as "another player in a complex field" and as a "living, breathing entity" having lapses and pitfalls which characterize the "contemporary realities of the practices of the state" (2010

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[10]Ekalavya is a non-governmental registered society set up in 1982 in Madhya Pradesh. It closely worked with the Hoshangabad Science Teaching Programme which was jointly run by the State Government and other voluntary organizations. It also conceptualized and implemented an innovative Social science Teaching Programme in a large number of government schools in Madhya Pradesh.

:112) . In contrast the people are visualized "as the fountainhead of all kinds of initiatives" who try to reclaim their rights through a "complex process of lobbying, persuading and reasoning" (ibid.:111)). The ordinary people are no longer portrayed as a "homogeneous mass" but as a socially stratified group "operating in a complex socio-political context (ibid.:112). While the State is provided considerable space economic relations "emerge as another major axis in Ekalavya's vision of civics" (ibid.:109). This is seen in the inclusion of themes like economic interdependence, agrarian relations, industrial and non-industrial production and the forms of market" (ibid.). This provides a deeper understanding of "social power, inequality and the changing face of opportunities" (ibid.:110) in the local context. It also makes it possible for learners to analyse "the political economy of society at large" instead of remaining confined within the "surface layer of rules presented by the [S]tate"(ibid.). Batra notes that texts like Ekalavya's "engage the young readers with questions and issues of development with a critical perspective" (2010:15). This, she points out is "aimed at educating children about their positive role as citizens in understanding reality as well as intervening actively to make a difference in the quality of their lives" (ibid.). However it has been argued that the textbooks do not provide adequate attention to the social sector like unemployment and gender based discrimination.

1.1.3   *Schooling and Constructions of Citizenship*

While textbooks are an integral part of the schooling process other aspects of the school– the disciplinary regime, rituals like the morning assembly, special events and celebrations, architecture of the building as well as the classroom teaching-learning processes - significantly contribute towards constructions of the nation and citizenship among the students.

Challenging the liberal view of public schooling as the neutral transmitter of knowledge a number of sociological studies draw attention to the role of schools in socially and culturally reproducing the hierarchical social order based on class and the values associated with it. It has been argued that schools instead of providing opportunities for social mobility and individual development actually function as centres for the

reproduction and perpetuation of "dominant ideology" and forms of knowledge. Bernstein especially refers to the "expressive culture" of the school which are a "source of its shared values" (1966:429).It consists of rituals which he terms as "consensual" (e.g. assemblies, ceremonies, uniform) as they "function..to bind together all members of the school, staff and pupils as a moral community, as a distinct collectivity" (ibid.). However by relating "the school's values and norms to those held by….certain dominant groups in the non-school society" such rituals according to him "facilitate appropriate sentiments towards the dominant value system of the wider society"(ibid.).

The reproduction of "dominant ideology" is also actualized by providing the "different classes and social groups with the knowledge and skills they needed to occupy their respective places in a labour force stratified by class, race and gender" (Aronowitz and Giroux 1986:70). Althusser defines the role of the school in modern capitalist society as the "dominant Ideological State Apparatus" (Althusser 1971:153). He highlights how schools through the use of ideological hegemony in other words the ideology of the ruling class (reflected in the methods of reward and punishment, expulsion and selection) contribute towards "the reproduction of the relations of production i.e. of capitalist relations of exploitation" (ibid.:154). The "theoretical construct that illuminates the structural and ideological connection between the schools and the workplace" is the notion of the "hidden curriculum" (Aronowitz and Giroux 1986:75) It explains how schools influence and shape the students' behaviour and attitudes through various tacit ways – the daily rituals, codes of conduct, classroom organization, architecture of school buildings and other informal pedagogical procedures. These silent messages which characterize classroom social relations "structure the unconsciousness of students" (ibid.:76) and provide legitimacy to and rationale for the hierarchical organization of knowledge, authority, work, values and social relations.

Schools have also been looked at as independent institutions which function as sites for cultural reproduction by indirectly endorsing the culture of the dominant classes. The "cultural capital" - ways of thinking, usage of language, dispositions, skills and competencies -that a middle/upper class child inherits from her family and social location is promoted and legitimized by the school which looks down upon the culture of other

groups (Aronowitz and Giroux 1986:80). This argues Bourdieu amounts to "symbolic violence" whereby schools through the use of culture as the mediating link between ruling class interests and everyday life succeeds in promoting "inequality in the name of fairness and objectivity" under the guise of being the "neutral 'transmitter' of the benefits of a valued culture" (ibid.).

However the argument that schools function as sites of reproduction of "dominant ideology" has been challenged by other studies (Willis 1977; McLaren 1986) on the ground that it completely negates the role of human agency. Such an argument, it is said leaves little or no scope for mediation and resistance and fails to explain how teachers, students and others come together to make and reproduce conditions of their existence. Highlighting the importance of human agency, these studies focus on the evidence of conflict, struggle and resistance and show how schools become sites where subordination and contestation occur simultaneously (Aronowitz and Giroux 1986:71). Moreover theories of reproduction are also criticized for failing to provide a dialectical and in-depth understanding of culture and the way it operates and ignoring the existence of student counter cultures, their formation and internal dynamics. Situated in a Catholic middle school in Toronto attended by Azorean Portuguese migrants, McLaren's study shows how the daily rituals of the schooling process (morning assembly, systems of reward and punishments etc.) facilitated the reproduction of the "existing patterns of class and ethnic dominance" (1986 : xiv). At the same time it demonstrates how the students in spite of being "compliant and acquiesced to teacher-sponsored rules which were presented as salient, real and natural" put up "a spectrum of resistances and reprisals to their instruction" (ibid.:146). Such efforts, the study demonstrates, were intended to "rupture and erode the authority of the teacher" and contest "the legitimacy, power and significance of school culture in general and instruction in particular (e.g. the overt and the hidden curriculum)" (ibid.).

Set in a wide variety of schools spread across India, there are a few studies which explore how each of these institutions from their diverse social location and ideological positioning, attempt to instil specific ideals of citizenship and nationhood among the student community who respond to the same in a variety of ways. The studies draw

attention to the significant role played by routine rituals and practices and how these were interpreted by the teachers and the students. It is also important to take into consideration the student and teacher composition and the relationships among them to understand how these help forge certain ideas of citizenship. Based on her study in a co-educational Sarvodaya Vidyalaya in Delhi Gogoi (2014) draws attention to its mixed student population which consisted mostly of second or third generation immigrants from Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand and mostly belonged to lower middle class and working class background. This Gogoi points out "was reflective of inclusion as a practice under Sarvodaya (literally good for all) (2014:141). According to her the school was also largely successful in instilling among the students "the virtues of citizenship including secularism" (ibid.: 148). This was evident in the manner the students in spite of their diverse religious backgrounds were able to form "intimate friendship groups and dyads"(ibid.).

Attention also needs to be drawn to the significant contribution of routine rituals like the assembly meant to inculcate among the students a love for the nation. According to Benei (2008) the emphasis laid on the correct pronunciation of the words during singing /chanting in the assembly along with the bodily comportment to be followed, render them akin to the chanting of *mantras* (ritual formula) as part of daily worship in Hinduism. This helps to generate "a sense of collective identity" and "a singularly insular love for the motherland" among the students temporarily (2008:204). It also creates "a social body of future generations of Indian citizens" expected to be "unconditionally devoted to the nation's love and service" (ibid.:204-205). Benei argues that the sheer everydayness of these rituals not only leads to a "collective shaping of the nation at the most basic, 'grassroots' level" but renders it "banal" (ibid.). However this "idea of India, together with love for the country…is also crucially transmitted through language" (ibid.:207). This she points out facilitates an inculcation of nationalist values through the prism of the region (ibid.:196).

The selection of the songs, prayers and rituals become important in this context. Since this varies depending on the mission and vision of the specific institutions it strongly impacts the shaping of citizenship and identity among the students. According to Gogoi

the secular nature of the prayers and songs and the national anthem in the context of the Sarvodaya school (where her study was conducted) was aimed at inculcating "strong nationalist feelings among the students towards a unified India" (2014:146). Such practices she argues appeared to negate the effect of Hindu symbolism as exemplified by the presence of a picture of the Hindu Goddess Saraswati in the school and the celebration of Diwali, a major Hindu festival. Focussing on the RSS schools in Chattisgarh, especially the Saraswati Shishu Mandirs run by the Vidya Bharati, Sundar (2004) on the other hand shows how schooling promotes the creation of a *Hindu Rashtra*. She draws attention to usage of "Hindu" cultural markers in these institutions for instance enforcing specific uniforms like *sari* and *dhoti-kurta* for female and male teachers respectively, addressing the teachers as *acharya* and having their own roster for celebration of special days(e.g., birthdays of Shivaji, Savarkar, Krishna Janmastami as Children's Day). All this leads to the creation of a specific idea of citizenship and identity formation which essentializes the Indian identity as exclusively "Hindu" to the exclusion of all other identities. Likewise Forever's study (2007) located in the RSS-led Swaraswati Shishu Mandir Primary Schools, draws attention to the school's disciplinary regimen (e.g. use of songs, chants) which were "underpinned by ideas of Hindu superiority and the need to protect the Hindu nation against threatening cultural and religious minorities"(Froerer 2007:1033). However it was interpreted by the students as an instrument to achieve academic success and becoming a good citizen.

1.1.4   Classroom Processes and Constructions of Knowledge and Citizenship

Several scholars have attempted to understand the dynamics of the classroom pedagogic processes and how it shapes the construction of school knowledge. It is argued that a "pedagogical relationship" is determined by the "the degree of control teacher and pupil possess over the selection, organization and pacing of the knowledge transmitted and received" (Bernstein 1971: 50). "Frame" according to Bernstein "refers to the strength of the boundary between what may be transmitted and what may not be transmitted in the pedagogical relationship" (ibid.). The acceptance of a clearly defined curriculum and its transaction in the classrooms through a rigidly "framed" pedagogical process result in stratification between different kinds of knowledge. He notes that usually what is

considered as appropriate and "valid transmission of knowledge" is defined by the expert knowledge the teacher has and provides to the students rather than knowledge which is drawn from the *commonsense* knowledge that the student derives from his/her experiences of lived realities (family, peer-group and community) (ibid.: 58). The child thus is socialized into regarding educational knowledge as something that is "esoteric" or of a higher order and the *"commonsense"* knowledge as something that is mundane and ordinary (ibid.).

The nature of "framing" also influences the degree of authority the teachers exercise over the taught (Bernstein 1971: 61). When the "framing" is rigid the teacher exercises supreme authority over the pedagogical process and seeks to determine the boundaries between what counts as "valid transmission of knowledge" and what does not (ibid.: 47). On the other hand when the "framing" is weak the teachers become less didactic and the classroom is characterized by a "more democratic and unauthoritarian communication structure" (Sarangapani 2003:127). Under a weak framing "a great deal of out-of-school knowledge" enters the classroom whereas under a rigid "framing" "the two arenas do not mix" (ibid.). This not only blurs the distinction between the "esoteric" knowledge held by the teachers and the everyday, commonsensical knowledge that the students bring into the classroom but results in a definite shift in the nature of authority (Bernstein 1971: 61). Set in a primary government school for boys in rural Haryana, Sarangapani's study (2003) shows how the construction of legitimate knowledge was regulated by the authoritarian teacher who delegitimized the children's contributions to knowledge construction. The process was facilitated by the children who based on the shared belief of the community that disciplining was the only means to social mobility, willingly succumbed to the rigid disciplining and authoritarianism of the teachers.

The segregation between educational and commonsensical knowledge is further cemented through a formal assessment process. When knowledge is highly stratified it results in a situation where "some kinds and areas of knowledge are regarded as much more 'worthwhile' than others" (Young 1971:34).These include knowledge that is "formally assessed" and emphasizes on written as opposed to oral presentations and individualism as against group work or collaborative learning. The focus is also on

"abstractness of the knowledge and its structuring and compartmentalizing independently of the knowledge of the learner" and "unrelatedness of the academic curricula which refers to the extent to which they are 'at odds' with daily life and common experience"(Young1971: 36-38). If academic curricula are thus defined it sets the criterion under which non-academic curricula is designed – "oral presentation, group activity and assessment, concreteness of the knowledge involved and its relatedness to non-school knowledge" (ibid.: 38).

The ideas of constructivism as propounded by Piaget (1936) and Vygotsky (1978) visualize the individual as an active participant in the construction of knowledge based on her/his "personal and subjective experiences" (Karagiorgi & Symeou 2005:18). The learner here is not considered as a "controlled respondent to stimuli as in the behaviouristic rubric"(ibid.). But she is regarded as one who "actively constructs knowing while striving to make sense of the world on the basis of personal filters" consisting of "experiences, goals, curiosities and beliefs" (ibid.). Learning also takes place within a social context through socio-cultural practices like language. This encourages a "dynamic process of interchange" through "negotiation of meaning" and "sharing of multiple views" whereby the learner "individually and socially constructs meaning as he/she learns" (ibid.). However the Constructivist approach has been criticized for its inability to evaluate learning (Prawat and Hodden 1994; Jonassen 1992). Since constructivism promotes a range of "right" answers as against one "right" answer, setting standards for assessment becomes unviable. The fact that learners are allowed "unlimited discretion to select what is studied, from among available resources and how it is studied" (Karagiorgi & Symeou 2005:22) renders it difficult to ensure that all students learn uniformly.

Several factors shape how a textbook is read and interpreted within classrooms. The experiences teachers and students bring with them based on their class, race, gender and religious background and the values and collective memory cherished by the community they belong to all contour the way they transact or interpret the textual knowledge. Apple argues that "the meaning of a text is not necessarily intrinsic to it" (2000:57). According to him there arises a wide gap between what is projected as "official knowledge" through

textbooks and how it is interpreted in the process of classroom teaching and learning. This is primarily because, a text can be read in "multiple" and "contradictory" ways – "dominant", "negotiated" and "oppositional" (ibid.: 58). In a "dominant reading", the reader completely accepts what is projected in the text; in a "negotiated" reading she rejects certain views while accepting the text in general and in an "oppositional" reading the reader completely rejects the text and constructs her own views. However, in reality the readers often combine all three types to reinterpret the text and construct knowledge. Thus while the teachers regard the textbooks as vehicles of "official knowledge" they reject, mould and transform that body of knowledge selectively (ibid.).Moreover there is no guarantee that "what is taught is actually learned" (Apple 2000:58). Brown and Kelly also argue that when the learners read a textbook it becomes difficult to guarantee that there will be "congruence in meaning between teacher and students or a students and student" (2001:502). This is because they "come to school with values, histories, perceptions that ultimately contour meaning within the classroom" (ibid.501). Thus texts are "part of a complex story of cultural politics", there being multiple texts for every text – "contradictions within it, multiple readings of it, and different uses to which it will be put" (Apple 2000:59).

The significance of collective social memory or popular perceptions in moulding a teacher's or student's reading of a textbook has been highlighted by Porat. He examines "the relation between the text-book account and the students' formation of historical perceptions"(Porat 2004: 963) to understand how a group of high school students belonging to two socially distinct schools in Israel read and interpreted a textual account of a specific event related to the Arab-Jewish conflict in 1920. According to Porat, students usually bring into the textbook their previous perceptions, "views which they absorbed from the culture in which they live and think" (ibid.:964). This in turn provides "a context that is liable to shape their comprehension of what they read" (ibid.). These perceptions which draw sustenance from their lived experiences at the individual level, dominant discourses in the media as well as the values and ethos upheld by the community they belonged to – crystallize to form their "cultural schemata"(ibid.:965). This provides the lens with which they perceive the world around them. Thus, students do not simply read the textbook. Rather they "culturally comprehend" it (ibid.:963).

How "official knowledge" is transacted or made available to students in the classroom is also influenced by the social class biases and prejudices nurtured by teachers towards the students. The willingness or unwillingness on the part of the students to accept a definition of knowledge as put forward by the teacher also determines the educational identity of the student. According to Keddie the teachers consciously "differentiate in selection of content and pedagogy between pupils perceived as of high and low ability" (1971.:156). This results in the construction of "classroom knowledge" which is different from curricular knowledge (ibid.:133). She demonstrates how notions of "hierarchical categories of ability and knowledge" among teachers resulted in the manipulation and "differentiation of an undifferentiated curriculum" even in "unstreamed" classrooms in the context of a heterogeneous British school (ibid.:143-156). Such notions were shaped by the perceptions the teachers had of pupils which were based primarily on the "social class judgments of pupils' social, moral and intellectual behavior" (ibid.:150). Appropriate pupil behavior was determined not necessarily by the ability of the student "to move to higher levels of generalization and abstraction so much as an ability to move into an alternative system of thought from that of his everyday knowledge. …"(ibid.).Since the middle class children easily accepted the teacher's definition of certain concepts the teachers felt satisfied with them and categorized them as "more educable", "of high ability" and those who could master subjects (ibid.:156). On the other hand the working class students who questioned the teacher's frame of thought were regarded as inferior and having low ability and this in turn maintained the social distribution of power (ibid.: 154).

Not only social class bias but stereotypes and prejudices held by teachers towards immigrant population of students often determine how official policies are translated into educational practices in classrooms. Ortloff interrogates how social studies teachers in Bavaria (Germany) interpreted citizenship education and defined citizenship in the background of the emergence of Germany as an immigrant nation in the 1990s (having officially redefined its citizenship and immigration laws). The findings suggest that although the teachers engaged with multi-culturalism in the classrooms they continued to interpret citizenship in "ethno-cultural terms" (Ortloff 2009:189). Thus the "good" citizen was defined as one who followed "European and Christian values" (ibid.:213).

Accordingly the immigrant children fitted into this image were accepted as "good" foreigners capable of being successful in the education system.

There exists a crucial linkage between pedagogy and constructions of knowledge and citizenship. The classroom it is argued needs to be regarded not merely as a space where the pedagogic encounter takes place but where it is possible to observe multilayered and complex relations. Thapan explains how such relationships are played out – "between the teacher and the student, the textbook and its interpretation by the teacher, the student and the textbook, among students themselves in relation to what is being taught.....and a multitude of discourses, all cross-cutting and moving constantly in that performative present when identities are constituted and subjectivities expressed" (Thapan 2006: 4198). Since the teacher uses dictation of notes as the preferred pedagogic tool, the dictated notes – the "thinkable" (in other words "authentic and legitimate") - acquires legitimacy from the fact that they are meant to be consumed so that "authentic" sentences can be reproduced for evaluation(ibid.). However since the students are not supposed to retain them beyond the examination, it "inadvertently provides space for the development of perspectives and ideas that do not necessarily prevail in the text" – in other words, the "unthinkable"[11] or impossible – which constitutes the "very real in students' lives" (ibid.). Such pedagogic practices often encourage constructions of citizenship that are very different from that advocated by the textbooks and schools. In another study set in a government school Thapan highlights how students remained "completely alienated from the efforts of the state to inculcate nationalist values" through "their complete disavowal of privileging the authority of the textbook" (2009:12). She demonstrates how they rejected Gandhi's policy of non-violence and held him "squarely responsible for the Partition"(ibid.). Instead motivated by Bollywood films, television serials, popular perceptions in society a large number of students articulated "their preference for Bhagat Singh who, in their minds, used violence and led a passionate struggle against ..British rule"(ibid.).

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[11]Bourdieu uses the terms "thinkable" and "unthinkable" to distinguish different kinds of knowledge (for details see Bourdieu 1971b)

The classroom is also a space where the teachers and students indulge in strategizing and negotiations to maintain equilibrium (Hargreaves 1975, Woods 1983, Hammersely 1984, Pollard 1984). Woods (1983) explains the behavior of the teachers and students in terms of "strategies" which are adopted by both to attain their respective goals which they achieve by "constantly laying strategies, sub-strategies and counter-strategies" (Woods, 1983: 104). But life in school cannot continue unless the interaction process between the teachers and students is kept alive through "negotiation" or "search for agreement" which are sophisticated, implicit in nature and acquire the form of "abbreviated symbols"(ibid.: 127). Woods point out that all those activities which to an outsider may appear as disruptive or meaningless (e.g., "having a laugh") are actually "part of the negotiated activity among teachers and pupils and thus comprise "the 'hidden mechanics' that hold a working community together" (ibid.: 12). However this view has been criticized for failing to problematize what constitutes the core of teaching-learning process and interactions - knowledge itself (Young,1971: 26) It has also been questioned for its inability to analyse what happens inside the school through the lens of class, gender and power dynamics that are integral to the schooling experience (McLaren 1986).

1.1.5   *Teacher Preparation and Process of Textbook Development*

The significance accorded to textbooks in the teaching-learning process as well as the nature of assessments most often drive the transaction of lessons inside classrooms. How teachers are prepared to deliver lessons and how textbooks are conceptualized and written also become crucial in this context. At the same time the context in which teachers operate also influence the process of teaching and learning. A few studies are available in the context of India which draw attention to these issues.

Right from the colonial period and up till now the teaching –learning process in most classrooms in India is dictated by the overwhelming presence of what Kumar (1988) refers to as the "textbook culture". He discusses how the textbook not only regulates the "pacing and ordering" of curricular knowledge it dictates the manner in which the teacher delivers the lessons in the class (1988:455). She has little "freedom to choose what to teach" or design the "mode of assessment" (ibid.: 452), her entire focus being

directed towards completing the "prescribed syllabus with the help of the prescribed textbook" (ibid.: 455). He notes that while the roots of the "textbook culture" can be traced to the "socio-economic and cultural conditions" prevalent during the colonial period the textbook continues to be the "symbolic hub of the power structure that governs the teacher's daily routine" (ibid.: 453). As in the colonial context even now the centralized system of examinations and the "examination-textbook link" also impact the way the students respond to the system. Being unable to relate to a curriculum that is disconnected to their diverse social milieu and fearful of failure in examinations they are left with little choice other than to memorize vast amounts of textual knowledge and reproduce the same in the examinations. Since it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that students do not fail in the examinations they automatically direct all their energy towards preparing students "as meticulously as possible for the event" (ibid.: 461).This results in a situation in which the teachers are left with little choice but to confine "teaching to the content of the prescribed textbook"(ibid.).

Research (Kumar 2005; Batra 2005; Batra 2015) shows that the process of teacher education has also failed to disrupt the prevalence of the "textbook culture" since the vision as well as the curriculum for preparing teachers have remained remarkably unchanged over a century. Kumar draws attention to how the training of elementary as well as school teachers in general "remains largely untouched by an academic grounding in modern child-centred pedagogy" (2005:463). Most elementary schools India are bereft of proper building and teaching equipment, the prescribed textbook being the only teaching aid available for teachers(ibid.).

The years following the introduction of the National Policy of Education (1986) saw the establishment of a widespread network of teacher training institutes both at the national and state level like the District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs). Yet as Batra (2005) notes, these have "remained largely confined to conventional pedagogies" while the teacher continues to be regarded as merely "a passive deliverer of State-prescribed child-centred learning"(ibid.:4748). In such a situation "issues of inclusion and exclusion, gender disparity, communalism and the marginalized child" became "mere topics for

discussion without disturbing the institutional structures and mechanisms which continue to legitimize the exclusion of this discourse from mainstream teacher education"(ibid.). Moreover the teaching community being itself dominated by "upper castes and forward sections of the society" prefers to "strengthen rather than question the *status quo* on questions of caste, community and gender asymmetry" (ibid.: 4347).

While the NCF 2005 ushered in radical changes in the way the curriculum has been designed   it has been criticized for not paying adequate attention to the critical role of teachers in implementing the changes in classrooms. Batra notes that the NCF 2005 has failed "to engage enough with a most crucial link-the agency of the teacher" (ibid.:4347) and "offers limited direction on how teachers could be prepared to include hitherto excluded narratives, experiences and voices and make them available in the classroom" (ibid.:4349). The NCF 2005 appears to be driven by the false perception that a well-written textbook based on democratic ideals and critical pedagogy can by itself enable teachers to overcome their personal beliefs, prejudices and biases internalized over a period of time. But the teachers are a product of their socio-cultural location and are influenced by the prejudices and stereotypes prevalent in their socio-cultural milieu. Batra points out that under such circumstances when they are subjected to an "external imposition of educational reform, including elements based on critical pedagogy" it is likely that they would "make a choice between these externally driven changes and folk pedagogic methods internalized over long periods" (ibid..4352). The NCF 2005 however ignores this aspect and advocates that the teacher can be persuaded and trained rather than being "empowered to evolve pedagogies that foster critical thinking" (ibid. 4350).

There is also an urgent need to critically examine the content, pedagogic perspective as well as the very process of developing curriculum and textbooks (George 2004; Batra and Nawani 2010; Ekalavya Team 2010). Set in the context of civics education George's study (2004) reveals striking discrepancies among the curricular aims, the concepts presented through the textbooks, "the notions that children have about concepts dealt with in the textbooks" as well as the "notions that they have picked up from their social world" (ibid.:8). George attributes such gaps to the nature of the textbooks which situated within a "Constitution-centric or legalistic approach" present ideas about political

institutions and processes which do not corroborate the ideas that children gather from "the real political world" and their own socio-cultural milieu (ibid.:72-73). The fact that the textbooks are terse in nature and their transaction in classrooms is not followed by meaningful discussion between the teacher and the taught further contribute to the discrepancy. The study therefore highlights the urgent need for the discipline of civics to "incorporate into itself the structures, institutions and processes associated with politics as they appear from outside the legalistic framework" (ibid: 75) even at the cost of changing the very character of the subject itself.

Batra (2010) focuses on the social science programme developed and implemented by Ekalavya in government schools in Madhya Pradesh and provides critical insights into the process of curriculum design and textbook development. It brings together studies which highlight the crucial role of focusing on the pedagogic perspective while conceptualizing curriculum and textbooks in the context of social science. The reflections by the Ekalavya team provide an insiders' perspective regarding the importance of including extensive and in-depth background research and collation of feedback from field trials before and during the process of conceptualizing the programme and after its implementation as part of the curriculum development process. Attention is also drawn to the numerous training workshops which were regularly held with teachers from government schools prior to introducing the textual materials in classrooms This helped in identifying sections of the textual material that were incorrect, abstract or socially sensitive and incorporating the required changes. The studies discuss how the workshops in particular allowed the teachers to develop a sense of ownership for the textbooks. The importance of collecting feedback from children's performance in regular examinations and special tests on specific concepts is also highlighted. The studies reveal how the triangulation of feedback informed the revision of the textbooks (see details in the Ekalavya Team 2010:42-104).They also show how the teaching and learning of social sciences can be conceptualized differently from the regular State-driven initiatives.

According to the teachers the simple language in the textbooks along with explanation for difficult words and the inclusion of stories and dialogues facilitated comprehension among children, aroused their curiosity to "seek more information from other sources"

and answer questions on their own thereby making it unnecessary for teachers to resort to dictation of answers (The Ekalavya Team 2010:266). One significant feedback collated from the teachers revealed that the children lagged behind answering questions that "required them to make inferences, comparisons and judgements" (ibid.:268). The authors therefore, highlight the importance of segregating textual content into "familiar" (ibid.:282) and "unfamiliar" areas. They suggest that these needed to be addressed through specific curricular objectives, the former through evoking "processes of interpretation, abstraction and extrapolation" and the latter through "processes of comprehension, synthesis, comparison and connection-building" (ibid.).

Batra and Nawani's chapter in the same study focuses on the strengths and limitations of the social science textbooks developed by Ekalavya (2010). They specifically focus on the pedagogical approach followed in the textbooks. Attention is drawn to how the textbooks consciously refrain from using definitions to prevent mechanical rote-memorization of concepts. Instead stories and simulated situations are introduced to explain concepts and ideas. Batra and Nawani however, are critical about the absence of definitions which they argue, not only helps learners "articulate a concept in clear and precise ways" but also enhances their understanding (ibid.:226). According to them most importantly it helps in moving "from a concretized understanding of a concept to a more generalized and de-contextualized comprehension" (ibid.). The textbooks however overlook this aspect. Another important feature of the textbooks is the presence of visuals (e.g. illustrations and photographs) which the authors note are meant to initiate discussion, provide "authenticity to what is being discussed in the text" and enable children to develop "a concrete understanding" of "objects, events and processes" (ibid.:241). However they point out that these are not always "well integrated with the general text" and leaves much room for improvement (ibid.).

The inclusion of a number of in-text questions and end-text questions according to the authors has the potential to determine the pedagogic approach adopted by the teachers. While the former is primarily aimed at engaging the students in a "process of active learning" and developing in them "critical thinking and reasoning abilities (Batra and Nawani 2010:243), the latter is directed towards "reinforcing learning" and assessing

"student-learning" (ibid.). The skill of recall is used in the textbooks not for rote memorization but for referencing or retrieving information. There are also activities that provide opportunities to children to "gather information not given in the book or bring their personal experiences into the classroom discourse" (ibid.:250). Further, children are encouraged to provide their responses through drawing to enhance their skills of representation. Besides there are activities which are designed to "foster decision-making in children" while also empowering them to "develop independent thinking" (ibid.:252).

Attention also needs to be drawn to the circumstances under which teachers function. While the colonial system of education turned the teacher into a "meek dictator" (Kumar 2005:73) the new regimes of "accountability" and "managerialism" that have been introduced since the nineteen nineties have further circumscribed the teachers' autonomy. Driven by the belief that teachers especially within the public school system are inefficient and reluctant to work and therefore need to be made accountable they are constantly subjected to monitoring and surveillance which is bound to adversely impact their performance. As Gupta and Ahmad point out:

> Everything that a teacher does in the classroom is sought to be controlled and micro-managed from above. The syllabus is prescribed down to what has to be taught every week....Instructions are issued about what has to be tested and when, what kind of notebooks must be maintained by students, what kind of assignments are to be given to students, as well as what kind of questions may be asked in the class. All this is done through written directives whose tone is always imperious, hectoring and on occasion even threatening (2016:268).

This idea of the teacher within the public schooling system being "unaccountable" has also been linked to the abysmal quality of teaching-learning that takes place within the government schools. This has been put forward by several surveys and studies which have pitted the public school system vis-a-vis the private school system (Jain *et al* 2018:3).

The studies reviewed so far provide critical insights into understanding the linkage between schooling processes and the broader socio-political contexts in constructing and privileging certain notions of citizenship, nation and identity. They also provide an understanding as to how the contours of the processes through which knowledge in general gets constructed within classrooms can be looked at. Further the review has

brought into focus the significance of analysing the impact of teacher training, the modalities of the textbook development process and the impact of the intrusion of ideas of "accountability" and "new managerialism" into the public schooling system. The present study would be conducted keeping these ideas in the background.

1.2 Rationale and Theoretical Framework

As the review of literature reveals, how prescribed curricula and textbooks sanction what is considered as "official" or approved educational knowledge and construct specific notions of citizenship is an area that has received some research attention in India (Saigol, 2000; Jain, 2004; Advani 2009; Bhog *et al* 2010; Manjrekar, 2014). Attempts have also been made to understand the linkage between school culture and constructions of citizenship both in the context of the world (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Paul Willis 1977; McLaren 1986) and within India (Sundar 2004; Froerer 2007; Benei 2008; Gogoi 2014). There are also a few studies which have looked at classroom pedagogic processes and how knowledge gets constructed (Sarangapani 2003; Vijayasimha 2013). However, how pedagogic processes within classrooms contribute towards the shaping of identities and notions of citizenship is an area that has remained largely unexplored in the context of India. Thapan's (2009) is perhaps the only study which emphasizes the need to look into this linkage but does not delve into it at length. What happens when the "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46) itself creates space for the entry of out-of-school knowledge into the premises of the classroom? How does this impact the "valid transmission of knowledge" (Bernstein 1971: 47)? How does this shape the construction/s of citizenship and nation? Does the "official knowledge" find complete acceptance amongst the readership or does it lead to contestations and "multiple" readings? What factors other than the textbook influence the meaning-making process? While a few studies are available across the world (Epstein 1998; Porat 2004) which engage with some of these questions there is no study that focuses on transaction of specific textbooks and how that shapes the constructions of citizenship. The proposed study attempts to address some of the above questions.

The study draws on multiple theoretical frameworks. Apple's (2000) concept of "official knowledge" is useful to examine how civics as a subject is shaped through successive national curricular frameworks. Informed by this as well as the guiding principles of the NCF 2005 the study further analyses how the salient features of the curriculum framework find expression through the textbooks, namely the Social and Political Life series (SPL I-III) used in the selected school. In this connection the study first attempts to understand how the ideas of the nation and citizenship have been conceptualized in these textbooks. The pedagogic perspective that informs the textbooks (especially constructivist approach and critical pedagogy) also receives attention and focus is given to the various pedagogic tools used in the textbooks[12].

"Civics classroom knowledge" is a construct that has been evolved for the analysis. It draws on Keddie's (1971) idea of "classroom knowledge" but refers to civics knowledge generated within the classroom in the context of this study. This construct becomes useful to examine to what extent the classroom civics knowledge is aligned to the official textual knowledge and to what extent it is different. Classroom pedagogic processes have been studied in the light of Bernstein's (1971) concept of "framing". Further the study also attempts to understand how the teachers and students interpret the textual knowledge and how the processes and spaces outside the civics classroom as well as the school contribute towards the manner in which they construct their notions of nation and citizenship. Apple's (2000) notion of "cultural politics" and Bernstein's concept of "expressive culture" become pertinent in this context. The micro-interpretive approaches (Hargreaves 1972; Woods 1983) help to understand the teacher-student interactions within the classroom.

1.3   Objectives and Research Questions

1. **To examine how the middle school civics textbooks construct concepts such as citizenship, nation and State**

   1.1.   How the nation is represented in the Social and Political Life (SPL) textbooks?

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[12]The SPL textbooks use a variety of creative expressions like stories and storyboards as also visuals to explain concepts and ideas. There are also a number of in-text and end-text questions. These have been referred to in this study as pedagogical tools.

1.2. How do the textbooks construct the idea of citizenship especially with regard to certain marginalized communities?

2. **To analyse the pedagogical perspective of the textbooks**

2.1. How are concepts and ideas to be explained according to the Social and Political Life textbooks?

2.2. How is assessment planned out?

2.3. To what extent do the textbooks create space for the entry of out-of-school knowledge?

3. **To analyse how the teachers transact the textbook**

3.1. Do the teachers transact the civics knowledge in accordance with the content and pedagogical perspective of the textbook?

3.2. What emerges as "civics classroom knowledge"?

3.3. How do the teachers interpret the textual knowledge with reference to ideas of citizenship, nation and State?

4. **To analyse how the students receive the transacted knowledge –**

4.1. How do the students interpret the textbook with reference to concepts like citizenship, nation and State?

4.2. Do the students interpret the textual content in "multiple" ways?

5. **To explore the factors which influence transaction of the textbook and the construction of "civics classroom knowledge"**

5.1 What factors influenced the transaction and interpretation of the textbook by the teachers?

5.2 What factors influenced the manner in which the students engaged with the textbook?

5.3 What factors inside and outside the classroom shaped the construction of "civics classroom knowledge"?

1.4 Methodology

The present study is qualitative in nature and has been conducted in two stages. The first is an analysis of the Social and Political Life textbooks ((SPL I-III). The second examines the transaction of the textbook/s in the classroom and its interpretation by the teachers and students.

1.4.1 Stage I: Analysing the Civics Textbooks

Altogether seventeen chapters from the three SPL textbooks were selected for analysis. These included the following seven chapters from SPL I - *Diversity, Diversity and Discrimination, Panchayati Raj, Rural Administration, Urban Administration and Rural Livelihood* and *Urban Livelihood*. From SPL II six chapters were selected namely *On Equality, Role of the Government in Health, How the State Works, Growing Up as Boys and Girls, Women Change the World and Struggles for Equality* . Finally four chapters were included from SPL III namely *Understanding Secularism, Understanding Marginalization, Confronting Marginalization, and Public Facilities*[13]. The selected chapters were analysed using thematic content analysis (Krippendorp 2004). Some "pre-existing categories" (ibid.: 476) like nation, citizenship and State were taken to understand how the textbooks constructed these ideas. New themes such as diversity, identity of the citizens in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic and religious background, construction of rural/urban spaces, gender and role of the citizen also emerged in the process. The data was coded by using relevant themes and categorizing distinct concepts, happenings and phenomenon. This was followed by organizing the coded data into categories (which were used to group together different concepts). The final stage involved interpretation and analysis of the data by developing connections between the categories and analysing patterns – regularities, variations and singularities. This helped in generating conclusions.

Thematic content analysis was used to analyse the pedagogy that informed the SPL textbooks. The various pedagogical tools and methods that were used in the text to explain key concepts and ideas as also to assess student learning were studied. The difficulty level of the language used in the textbook was also looked at. The pedagogical tools were further examined to understand to what extent these were likely to facilitate the understanding of key concepts and participation of students in the process of knowledge generation. To understand whether the textbooks created space for the students to think critically and express their opinion the assessment tools were examined. The tools were also analysed to find out to what extent these allowed the teachers to

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[13]Refer to Annexure I for details of the research design.

assess the students on a range of skills including the ability to reason, draw inferences and extrapolate.

1.4.2   Stage II: Analysing the Transaction and Interpretation of the Textbook

The second stage of the research was aimed at providing insights into how the teachers transacted the textbook and how they and the students constructed the textual knowledge. Initially a pilot study was conducted in a reputed private school in South Delhi. A few social studies classes (VI – VIII) were observed for about a week and the teachers were also consulted. This helped in deciding that the study should focus on Class VIII. As the students were introduced to the concepts of citizenship and nation in Class VI, it was felt that by the time they were in Class VIII they would have developed some understanding of the concepts and would be more mature and articulate. Following this a co-educational government school in South Delhi, Jawahar Vidyalaya (henceforth referred to as JV) was approached. After consulting the Vice-Principal and a few teachers, two sections of Class VIII were selected to conduct observations of the civics classes taught by two different teachers.

The data was collected from varying contexts using multiple tools like participant observation, interviews, and written work of the students. Observation of civics classes was conducted for six months (July 2014 to February 2015) and detailed handwritten notes were taken to obtain "live data" about the "phenomenological complexity of the participant's worlds" (Cohen, 2007: 397). Finally the transaction of the following four chapters from SPL III namely *Understanding Secularism, Understanding Marginalization, Confronting Marginalization, and Public Facilities* were selected for data analysis. Occasionally the students and teachers were observed in spaces outside the classroom such as the playground and staffroom as also during the assembly and special events like Independence Day celebrations and co-curricular activities (dance, sports).

The data gathered through observations was supplemented and validated by a range of interviews with the teachers and students at JV. 27 focus group interviews, each with duration of approximately one hour were conducted with a select group of 30 students, 15 from each section of Class VIII. Focus group interviews being "carefully planned"

enabled the researcher to "obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment" (Krueger 1988:18). It also facilitated group interaction and helped to "provide greater insight into why certain opinions are held" (Blaikie 2010:207). Care was taken to ensure proportional representation from all social groups – girls/boys as well as students from the General/Reserved categories and different religious backgrounds. Besides around 10 one-to–one interviews of approximately one hour each, were conducted with the two social studies teachers and art teacher. It was also possible to engage the Principal and the Vice-Principal in similar interactive sessions of one hour each. To obtain the perspective of the authors of the textbook, some of the members of the NCERT's Textbook Writing Committee for social sciences were interviewed either through face-to-face interactions or telephonic conversations.

All the interviews were semi-structured and conducted in informal settings using the interview-guide approach. Broad topics and issues to be covered were outlined in advance while the framing and sequence of questions were decided by the interviewer during the course of the interview. The questions were open-ended and primarily aimed to obtain an insight into the processes of meaning –making, to understand whether the text was read in multiple ways and to examine the factors which influenced the same. The interviews were either audio taped using a hand recorder or written down later[14] based on some notes made by the researcher during the interaction. The collected data was later transcribed and translated from Hindi to English wherever required. The data gathered was supplemented by examining the written work of the students (for instance, class and home assignments).They were also asked to complete certain written tasks designed by the researcher.

The interviews were conducted in different phases (See Annexure II). This helped in bridging the gaps and answering new questions which came up after a partial data analysis. To collect information regarding the socio-economic background of the students the class register maintained by the class-teachers was looked at. Part of the data especially the details regarding the educational background of the parents (of the students) and their income –level was gathered from the students. For this they were

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[14]Some of the people interviewed did not agree to have their interviews recorded.

requested to fill up a questionnaire. Finally the collected data was again analysed using thematic content analysis and interpretations were finalized.

1.5   An Overview of the Chapters

Following the introductory chapter the second chapter and the third chapter foreground the study through an analysis of the SPL textbooks. The former focuses on the NCF 2005 and the SPL textbooks to delineate the key features of the same with regard to the constructions of citizenship, nation and State. The latter analyses the pedagogical perspective of the textbooks. This provides the frame to examine the classroom teaching-learning processes in the selected school.

The fourth chapter introduces the "field" where the research was conducted. It locates the institution in its socio-cultural context by focussing on its vision and mission, the demographic profile of the students, the school culture and other features. It specifically focuses on the middle school, especially Class VIII A and VIII B from where the data for the present study was collected.

Chapter five attempts to capture the dynamics of the civics classrooms – how the teachers transacted the textbook and how the students participated in the classroom pedagogic process. It examines how and to what extent the classroom pedagogic discourse was shaped by the textbook.

How the teachers and students interpreted the textbook and constructed notions of citizenship and nation constitutes the central theme of the sixth chapter. It attempts to analyse whether and to what extent such constructions were shaped by sources beyond the textbook.

To understand why the teachers and the students interpreted the textbook in specific ways chapter seven examines the specific context in which the textbook was transacted. This includes the nature of the in-service teacher professional development processes, the manner in which the students engaged with the textbook as also the textbook development process. The last chapter summarizes the findings of the study and draws out the key conclusions.

Chapter Two
Re-Imagining Citizenship

An analysis of curriculum and textbooks is essential in order to explore how they are intended to be transacted in classrooms by the teachers and read by the students. This chapter attempts to do that by trying to understand how civics or citizenship education in the Indian context has been conceived within the ambit of school curricula and textbooks. Section One (2.1) of this chapter focuses on the inception of civics as a school subject and traces its history and evolution in the Indian sub-continent. It includes a brief analysis of the various National Curriculum Frameworks (1975, 1988 and 2000) to understand the changing constructions of the nation and citizenship keeping in mind the linkage between school curriculum and the State. It specifically focuses on the salient features of the National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF 2005) with reference to citizenship education. Section Two (2.2) engages in a detailed analysis of the current civics textbooks to understand how and to what extent they reflect the salient features of NCF 2005 in terms of the content, especially how the nation and citizenship have been imagined. The study, as mentioned in Chapter One is limited to the middle school (Classes VI-VIII) textbooks, namely the Social and Political Life (SPL) textbooks. Since the study aims to look at citizenship with specific reference to some of the marginalized communities in India, namely the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits, this chapter especially examines the unit *Social Justice and the Marginalized* (in SPL III) which includes two chapters namely *Understanding Marginalization* (chapter 7) and *Confronting Marginalization* (chapter 8)[15].To bring in a comparative perspective wherever relevant the study refers to some of the middle school civics textbooks published by NCERT between 1975 and 2004[16].

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[15]To differentiate between the chapters in textbooks and the chapters in the thesis, the former would be written as 'chapter 1/2/3…' and the latter would be written as 'Chapter One/Two/Three…'.

[16] These include *Our Civic Life, Class VI (NCERT 1987), How We Govern Ourselves, Class VII (NCERT 1988), Our Country Today, Problems and Challenges, Class VIII (NCERT 1989)* and the *India and the World I* series for classes VI-VIII (NCERT 2002-2004) and would henceforth be referred to in this chapter as NCERT 1987, NCERT 1988, NCERT 1989 and NCERT 2002-2004 respectively.

2.1 Civics or Citizenship Education: The Historical Context

Historically, the emergence of the nation states in the nineteenth century necessitated the creation of a modern citizenry imbued with national consciousness so crucial in the process of nation-building. The new nation states which emerged in different parts of the world during this period following "decolonization, the collapse of former "empires" and other forms of national transition" required such a citizenry for their sustenance (Green 1997:184). According to Saigol a good citizen was not only required to be "obedient, docile, and law-abiding…infused with nationalist spirit" but one who was capable of performing "national duties" by being "hard-working", "industrious" and thereby contributing towards "national production" (Saigol 2000:133).This required the "welding of diverse, conflicted, and multiple regional populations" to transform them into national citizens infused with loyalty towards the nation state (ibid: 135).

Prior to the establishment of nation states, education in most of the major West European countries and northern states of USA was under the control of religious institutions like the Church. These institutions primarily imparted "apprentice-based forms of education" (Green 1997: 32). But the changing socio-political scenario created the demand for a very different kind of education geared towards producing and reproducing citizens/workers and inculcating in them a national consciousness. Mass schooling was regarded as most suitable to perform this function by bringing about a transformation "in consciousness, feeling and imagining" among the people (Saigol 2000:135). A State - directed education system was regarded as a key instrument to achieve this goal. It is not surprising therefore that "national educational systems in modern states, in particular within the newly constituted post-colonial states, have been the prime instruments of nation-building and state-formation"(ibid:133). Civics as a school subject emerged in this specific context. Nietz (1961) cited in Madan (2010) traces the origin of modern form of civics aimed at educating the masses in matters related to public life and "Civil Government" to the USA particularly to the rise of republican democracy during the late eighteenth century. In England too citizenship education was introduced in schools towards the end of the nineteenth century and dealt primarily with the role of government functionaries (For a detailed discussion see Madan 2010:107-108).

Citizenship education, in the context of the Indian sub-continent, developed in the colonial period (Saigol 2000; Jain 2004). In fact, the very first book of civics named *The Citizen of India* authored by Lee Warner was introduced to the Indian audience in 1897. The primary aim was to educate the "natives", otherwise regarded as "illiterate, backward, uncivilized, not politically conscious...dirty, immoral" (Saigol 2000: 135). They were to be transformed into "responsible citizens" having "desirable attitudes and social behaviour" and thus made capable of assisting the State in the act of governance (Jain 2004:178). To achieve this it was considered essential to educate the people in the policies of the State, rules of government institutions and the responsibilities of the functionaries. Jain however shows how this perception of the natives as irresponsible, morally weak and ignorant was more of a colonial construct (ibid.). Most importantly it was used by the British to "legitimize colonial rule and to establish superiority of Western civilization" (Jain 2015: 116).

Kumar notes that the aim of the colonial masters was to create a civil society consisting primarily of a small section of educated Indians drawn from the upper strata of the Indian society who would assist them in the act of consolidation of colonial rule and administration. The idea was to instil the attitudes and skills of the colonial rulers into a small minority of property holders who would then be socialized to consider themselves as morally and intellectually superior than the vast mass of illiterate natives. This was not only supposed to encourage them to aspire for "a share in the colonial State's power and the privileges that went with it"(Kumar 2005:17) but was aimed at turning them into reliable collaborators in the colonial project of establishing British rule followed by its consolidation.

The mid-twentieth century witnessed the transition of the Indian sub-continent from a British colony to an independent nation and republic[17]. This resulted in the transformation of the Indian people from subjects of the British Empire to citizens of a sovereign state equipped with citizenship rights. An examination of the education policies in post-independent India however reveals that the colonial legacy (that is,

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[17]This transition resulted in the partition of the Indian sub-continent giving birth to two independent nation states namely India and Pakistan.

formation of an obedient and responsible citizenry) continued to influence the framing of the national curriculum over the successive years. In the post-colonial years, India as a newly emerging nation state was confronted with the task of nation-building and creation of a national identity strong enough to weld together the diverse cultural loyalties and suppress the divisive regional forces and create a responsible, obedient and patriotic citizenry (Batra 2010; Advani 2009). This anxiety found expression in successive government reports like the Secondary Education Commission (GoI, 1952-53) popularly referred to as the Mudaliar Commission and the report of the Education Commission (EC,1964-66) popularly known as the Kothari Commission. Drawing attention to the "accentuation in recent years of certain undesirable tendencies of provincialism, regionalism and other sectional differences" (GoI, 1952-53:6) the Mudaliar Commission report emphasized the need for an education system that would "strengthen the forces of national cohesion and...national unity" and foster amongst the students "a deep love of one's own country"(ibid:26). In a similar vein, the Kothari Commission Report reiterated that a national system of education had to be geared towards fostering "a sense of national solidarity and...national consciousness" (EC,1964-66:15) through enabling the students "to discover the 'unity in diversity' that India essentially is"(ibid.). To actualize this vision several concrete steps were taken like setting up centralized institutions like the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and developing a national curriculum followed by publication of State sponsored school textbooks which were "... inexpensive ....of uniform quality and content throughout the country"(Batra 2010:19).

2.1.1 *Constructions of Citizenship and Nation in National Curriculum Frameworks*

The first National Curriculum Framework was published in 1975 during the Indira Gandhi led Congress regime (1966-1977). This was followed by the operationalization of the second National Curriculum Framework during the next Congress regime under Rajiv Gandhi (1988-1999). The years 2000-2004 witnessed the coming to power of a new political regime - the National Democratic Alliance[18] (NDA) led by an assertive Hindu

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[18] The NDA, which was formed in 1998, is a centre-right coalition of political parties in India led by the Bharatiya Janata Party. It came to power in 1998 and continued till 2004.

right wing and the third National Curriculum Framework was introduced during this period. A perusal of the successive National Curriculum Frameworks (NCFs) -1975, 1988 and 2000 - shows that their central focus was nation-building. One finds in the documents an emphasis on the need to promote "national integration" and "national consciousness" (The Curriculum for the Ten-Year School, NCERT 1975[19]: 4), foster "national pride and cultural identity" (the National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education, NCERT 1988[20]:5). There was also a focus on the need for "building an enlightened, strong and prosperous nation"(The National Curriculum Framework for School Education, NCERT 2000[21]:1).This national unity was to be achieved through nurturing a citizenry instilled with certain duties and responsibilities and it found reflection in the manner civics was conceptualized in the three frameworks. The documents recommended that the aim of civics should be towards imparting "training in civic life" and "an understanding of the civic processes"(NCF 1975:22) through learning about "the civic and political institutions", "contemporary social and economic conditions and problems" (NCF 1988:27) as well as "the constitutional obligation" and "civic competencies" (NCFSE 2000:64-66).

A close study of the vision and mission of the various NCFs till 2000 however reveals specific changes in the way citizenship and the nation were conceptualized. Such changes can be linked to the political exigencies and ideological underpinning of the regime in power. For instance, the NCF 1975 was the first National Curriculum Framework introduced in the post-Partition years which had experienced brutal communal violence. According to Batra in order to strengthen the foundation of a national identity it was crucial for the State to show "respect to the beliefs and practices of minority and majority religious communities" and construct "a history of harmonious co-existence and cultural synthesis" (2015:39).This was reflected in the social science curriculum. The NCF 1975 cautioned against the rise of "narrow, parochial, chauvinistic tendencies" (NCF 1975:19) among the students. Instead what was highlighted was to develop in them "a proper understanding of the different sub-cultures of India and the common bonds that hold

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[19]Henceforth NCF 1975
[20] Henceforth NCF 1988
[21]Henceforth NCFSE 2000

them together" (ibid.: 4). At its core was the Nehruvian idea of a pluralistic nation based on "unity in diversity" and the principles of "individual liberty, equality of opportunity, social justice, secularism" which according to Nehru represented the "national philosophy of India" (Parekh 2006:4)[22].

While the role of a national system of education cannot be underestimated in the post-independent era one cannot overlook the limitations of this kind of a concerted attempt to portray a united nation through a school curriculum. It is, indeed, correct that the NCF 1975 drew attention towards developing appreciation for the various sub-cultures. But the manner in which the aspirations of diverse groups and regional identities were subsumed within a nationalist imaginary through the overriding importance provided towards forging a homogeneous national identity revealed hegemonic domination of the centrist forces over regional aspirations (Advani 2009). Moreover, the manner in which diversity was singularly regarded as a source of harmony overlooked the existence of conflict and inequality. Further, while the NCF 1975 expected the learners to familiarize themselves with the structure and function of the government institutions it did not encourage them to critically examine the way these institutions operated and question their lapses, if any. This suggested that the ultimate aim of the curriculum was to ensure that the learners grew up into obedient and loyal citizens. Batra characterises the NCF1975 as a "modernization project" along the lines of the Kothari Commission report which viewed "modernity and nationalism as synonymous" (Batra 2015:38-39).This explains why it "focused on creating the secular, socialist and scientific citizen" (ibid.40).

The NCF 1988, the subsequent curriculum framework, reiterated the need for strengthening "the unity and integrity of the nation" through developing in the learners an appreciation for "the cultural heritage, traditions and history of different ethnic groups and regions of the country" (NCF 1988:4).Yet it is possible to notice a substantial difference in the way it conceptualized the idea of the nation and citizen. Jain points out that the 1980s was an era that "witnessed the growth of a new, assertive, consumerist middle class and an industrialist class that sought technological collaboration with foreign companies", "privatisation of the public sector" and "reduction of public

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[22]See Chapter One pp.6-7.

expenditure" (Jain 2004:169). This found reflection in the government vision which promoted "pro-liberalisation policies" and "technocratic solutions to India's problems" (ibid.). Accordingly the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 emphasized the need for a national education system that would be geared towards developing citizens as human resource and "transforming a static society into one that is vibrant and dynamic and committed towards development and change" (ibid.168). In accordance with such a vision, the NCF1988 focused on "evolving a system of education which would....prepare the country to meet the future challenges" in order to enable them "to participate effectively in national development endeavours" (NCF 1988:3). It, thus, represented the aspirations of a new India – one which was ready to enter the global arena as a political and economic power of reckoning[23]. This explains why the curriculum aimed at developing the citizens as "human resources" (ibid.).

The NCF 1988 was characterised by certain inherent contradictions. For instance, it emphasized the urgent need that "all pupils irrespective of caste, creed, location or sex have access to education of a comparable quality" by ensuring that "the conditions of learning provide equal chances of success to all" (NCF 1988:4). Mention was also made of "bringing girls and boys on par" and catering to the "special requirements of the first generation learners" (ibid.). At the same time the curriculum laid the foundation for the emergence of an alternate or non-formal system of education which required "developing compensatory and remedial measures in education to suit the needs of the deprived, the disadvantaged and the disabled" (ibid.) in order to bring them at par with others. Based on the NPE 1986 it thus paved the way for the institutionalisation of a two-tier system of education – privileged schooling at State expense for bright students selected on the basis of merit and non-formal education primarily for the underprivileged (Jain 2004:169). Jain argues that such attempts were "gross violations of the constitutional obligations to provide free and compulsory education to every child, to ensure equality of opportunity and eradicate child labour" (ibid: 170).

The view of national identity and citizenship based on secular values which was promoted by the first two national curriculum frameworks was severely challenged and

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[23]See Chapter One pp.7-8.

redefined by the NCFSE 2000. It explicitly emphasized the need to develop "content essential to nurture national identity" that would "inculcate a sense of pride in the country and in being an Indian" (NCFSE 2000:64). This was evident in the way the curriculum sought to project a picture of a glorious past. Referring to ancient scriptures like the *Chandogya Upanishad* it celebrated the existence in India of "an advanced education system and the world's first universities" (NCFSE 2000:1) that imparted education in subjects as diverse as religion, mathematics, astronomy, linguistics, science of defence and mineralogy.

The NCFSE 2000 may appear ostensibly future-oriented and progressive as seen in its attempt to renew the curriculum regularly to "keep the learner's knowledge base up to date" through the inclusion of the "latest developments in communication system, space technology, biotechnology" (NCFSE 2000:32). Yet it was to a very large extent regressive and exclusionist as seen in its attempt to construct an "Indian citizen" (Batra 2015:42) and a national identity that was embedded in a Hindu majoritarian, patriarchal and upper caste ethos. For instance, it highlighted how education must "contribute to ...the upliftment and empowerment" (NCFSE: 4) of the weaker sections including the Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and women. But at the same time justified how in an agrarian society in the past "successive generations followed the occupation ...of the family or the caste at large" (ibid.). It aimed at making "education accessible to more and more girls" and introducing a "gender inclusive and gender sensitive" (ibid.:9-10) curriculum. But it also emphasized the importance of recognising "the best features of each gender in the best Indian tradition" to nurture a generation of girls and boys who would "grow up in a caring and sharing mode as equals and not as adversaries" (ibid.). Thus, by encouraging the learners to develop a "capacity for tolerating social differences arising out of caste, religion, ideology, region, languages, sex etc.", it sought to validate and maintain the *status quo* rather than question the existing socio-economic inequalities in the country (ibid.:12). One finds in the curriculum an urgency to inculcate amongst the students "moral and spiritual values", "rooted in (its) indigenous tradition" (ibid.:35). There is also an emphasis on the teaching of Sanskrit which according to it had a "universal appeal all over the country" being "inextricably linked with the life, rituals, ceremonies and festivals of vast Indian masses" (ibid:53-54).While the importance of

learning an ancient language like Sanskrit can be appreciated, it is difficult to understand its linkage with the larger Indian population. For, in reality its use is limited only to the upper caste, Hindu majority communities. According to Advani the NCF 2000 promoted an "essentialized 'Indian' value system" by invoking the image of "a Hindu mythic past" and through the construction of the "ideal Indian citizen as religious and Hindu" (2009:65). Thus, it represented an idea of a nation and citizenship which was aligned to the RSS ideology of *Hindutva* and *Hindu Rashtra* and hence exclusive and religion-based[24].

2.1.2 The Key Features of NCF 2005: A Paradigm Shift

Guided by a group of leading educationists and experts drawn from diverse fields, the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, has been widely appreciated for having introduced radical "epistemological shifts" (Batra 2010:13) especially in the way it conceptualizes the nation and citizenship.

The NCFSE 2000 was severely criticized for promoting a national identity that was majoritarian and patriarchal and for proposing a curriculum framework that undermined the pluralist character of the Indian society. The NCF 2005 highlights the need to "internalize the principles of equality, justice and liberty to promote fraternity among all" (NCF 2005:7). It espouses an education system that would be capable of responding to the "cultural pluralism inherent in our society" which in turn would "sustain a robust democratic polity" (ibid.). It thus reiterates a national identity based on the ideals of secularism, egalitarianism, pluralism and social justice.

The NCF 2005 Position Paper by the National Focus Group on Teaching of Social Sciences, NCERT (henceforth to be referred as NCF 2006) points out that between 1975 and 2000 the Social science curriculum remained utilitarian in its approach and focussed primarily on developmental issues. Issues like "poverty, illiteracy and casteism" were regarded as "obstacles to national progress" and "the common 'illiterate masses'" were blamed for having "failed the nation"(NCF 2006:3). This kind of approach was unable to reflect "the normative dimension, like issues of equality, justice, and dignity in society

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[24]See Chapter One, pp.6-7.

and polity" (ibid.). To bridge this gap NCF 2006 proposes the need to shift the focus of the Social sciences from utilitarianism to egalitarianism. Through "a discussion of concerns such as threats to the environment, caste/class inequality, State repression" (ibid.3) it hopes to "awaken in the students a real concern for social justice" (ibid: 4) and thereby address the normative concerns. In this connection it proposes the inclusion of the "perspectives of the *adivasi, dalit* and other disenfranchised populations" (ibid: vii).

The NCF 2005 recommends a strong case for addressing gender concerns especially through the Social Science curriculum which so far had remained confined within a "patriarchal nationalistic frame" (NCF 2006:vi).This was reflected in the increasing presence of women in textbooks as "examples" and through the inclusion of the achievements of few well-known women in history (ibid: 4). The NCF 2006 in contrast suggests an "epistemic shift" from this "patriarchal frame" by "making the perspectives of women integral to the discussion of any historical event and contemporary concerns" (ibid.).

The civics curriculum in the NCF 2005 has also been re-fashioned as political science. According to the NCF 2006 civics was introduced in the Indian school curriculum in the colonial context to counter the "increasing 'disloyalty' among Indians towards the Raj" (NCF 2006:4). Its purpose was to inculcate "obedience and loyalty" (ibid.) among the natives. Political Science[25] in contrast, involves "the dynamism of a process that produces structures of dominance and their contestations by social forces" and imagines civil society as the sphere "that produces sensitive, interrogative, deliberative and transformative citizens" (ibid.). The NCF 2005 thus introduces a shift in the manner citizenship is to be conceptualized. Intrinsic to an understanding of citizenship is its relationship with the State. The NCF 2005 therefore also recommends a major change in the manner the State needs to be portrayed- from a paternalistic, monolithic structure to a more realistic one characterised by lapses and gaps in functioning.

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[25] Under NCF 2005, civics in the middle school has been refashioned as social and political life. According to Batra it is a new subject that draws upon the disciplines of economics, sociology and political science (2010:18).

But translating these curricular goals into practices that would significantly transform classroom teaching-learning processes would require teachers who are not only well-trained but who are conversant with the founding principles on which the NCF 2005 is based. Serious concerns have been raised by scholars like Batra who have argued that the curriculum is based on "several assumptions about teachers" (2015:52). According to her since NCF 2005 does not provide concrete directions as to how teachers are to be prepared to deliver the curriculum it is quite doubtful if they would be able to "negotiate the challenges of diverse classrooms" by including narratives and perspectives which have so far remained excluded and marginalized (ibid.)[26].

2.2 Analysing NCF 2005 Civics/Political Science Textbooks

This section analyses how and to what extent some of the salient features of the NCF 2005 mentioned above are reflected in the SPL textbooks. A comparison with the earlier NCERT civics textbooks (NCERT 1975-2004) is made wherever relevant. Using Apple's idea of "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:44-46) as well as the guiding principles of the NCF 2005 the discussion is framed by the following questions –

- How is the Indian nation imagined in the textbooks? Is the national identity based on the ideals of secularism, egalitarianism and pluralism?
- How is citizenship conceptualized in the textbooks? Are the citizens encouraged to evolve into sensitive and deliberative individuals invested with agency?
- How are gender concerns addressed? Do the textbooks challenge the patriarchal framework and incorporate the perspectives of women to understand some of the current socio-economic and other issues?
- How do the textbooks represent the perspectives of the marginalized communities and highlight the issues of social justice?
- How is the State imagined? Is the State represented as one capable of sustaining a robust democratic polity?

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[26]See detailed discussion in Chapter One pp.28-29.

2.2.1 *Imagining the Nation*

To understand how the nation is imagined in textbooks it becomes essential to examine who constitutes it and what their identities are in terms of their socio-economic and cultural location. At first glance the people in the earlier civics textbooks (NCERT 1975-2004) appear more or less as neutral entities. The visuals depict both rural and urban women and men from different classes, some working in the field, while some are placed in offices and research laboratories. But it is difficult to locate them in terms of their specific regional context or position in the caste hierarchy[27]. A few visuals represent people from different religious communities (NCERT 2002:149-150). However the "normative Indian" (Advani 2009:120) in these textbooks appear as exclusively and overwhelmingly Hindu from the Hindi belt. This is evident from visuals showing men wearing turban along with *dhoti* and *kurta* and women wearing *sari* in a particular way, their head covered with *pallu* along with *bindi* on their forehead, as worn by men and married women respectively from the majority community (NCERT 2002: 143-154)(Box 1, Annexure III).

The SPL series depicts a society inhabited by people located in different regional, socio-economic and cultural contexts. They hail from a range of regions and locales of the country, from metros like Mumbai (the storyboard of Shanti, SPL III: 67), peri-urban areas like Kurnool in Andhra Pradesh (the story of Swapna, SPL II: 105) to the rural hinterland of Madhya Pradesh (the story of the Tawa Matsya Sangh, SPL II: 118) as also the tribal belts of Orissa (the storyboard of Dadu, SPL III: 81-82). Regional specificities are further delineated through colourful visuals showing men from Tamil Nadu in traditional *mundus* (SPL I: 70, 73) (Box 2, Annexure III). It is also highlighted through the presence of characters with distinctive regional names, for instance, *Karuthamma* from Tamil Nadu (SPL I: 71) and Mr and Mrs *Shinde* from Mumbai (SPL III:67).

Whether it is an urban or a rural context, the people in the SPL series are also shown to belong to different social strata, having diverse modes of livelihood and living standards.

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[27]There are however a few exceptions. For instance one of the Civics textbooks contain one/two visuals showing how people dress in hilly regions while another depicts different forms of folk dances (NCERT 2002 : 144-145).

In the textbooks characters like Bacchu Majhi, a cycle rickshaw puller from Bihar (SPL I: 78), and Vandana, a budding entrepreneur from Delhi (SPL I:80), share the socio-cultural space with big land-owning agriculturists like Ramalingam from Tamil Nadu (SPL I:71) and Ashok Jain (SPL II:5), a rich industrialist. The socio-cultural space is also multi-religious. This is evident from the presence of members from different minority communities like Hakim Sheikh, a Muslim agricultural labourer from rural West Bengal (SPL II: 21), Melanie, a Christian domestic help (SPL II: 49), and Jaspreet, a Sikh upper middle class home-maker (SPL II: 47).The SPL series thus challenges the reduction of the Indian socio-cultural space as flattened and homogeneous. Rather it upholds the pluralist, heterogeneous, and multi-cultural character of the Indian nation.

However, some gaps remain. The southern and western regions find maximum representation and the northern region is adequately represented. But representations from the central and eastern parts of the country are comparatively less while the North-East is almost entirely absent. The only exceptions are a brief reference to the Chakhesang community in rural Nagaland (SPL I: 68-84) and a cursory mention of the militarisation of the North-East in the context of marginalization of the Adivasis (SPL III:86).

The SPL series focuses at length on the Muslims[28], the largest of the minority communities. However the textbooks' engagement with the other minority communities like the Sikhs and Christians remain minimal. The religious minorities like Parsees, Buddhists and Jews remain totally invisible.The texts do refer to the social discrimination faced by the people with disability (SPL I: 16) and discuss about the provisions made in the Persons with Disabilities Act passed by the State (SPL II: 14-15). But such issues remain in the periphery.

2.2.2 *Problematizing Diversity*

In NCERT 2002 diversity is usually represented as a source of harmony. The community for instance is depicted as a space where different families following different occupations live together peacefully in a sharing and caring mode. They also contribute

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[28]See discussion later in this chapter.

towards "economic interdependence" and "social well-being of its member families" thereby promoting "a sense of belonging and togetherness" (NCERT 2002:143). Further cultural diversity is portrayed as a source of strength and not conflict. This overlooks the economic inequalities and social and cultural disharmony existing in the Indian society. According to Advani it thus fails to provide a "lived sense of cultural variation" and represents a strong urge to uphold a "nationalist search for continuity and a uniform cultural identity" (2009:81-82).

The SPL series begins by highlighting the benefits of diversity in human lives. With the help of an in-text exercise (SPL I: 8) one of the textbooks encourages the learner to probe and record how diversity manifests itself in various forms of cultural practices (dress, food, religious and marriage customs). However, the understanding of diversity extends far beyond this narrow definition. The textbook makes an effort to explain the root of this cultural variation in terms of geographical conditioning and historical processes. This is done by introducing two case-studies, that of Kerala and Ladakh where "extensive inter-religious and inter-cultural influences...have..become a part of everyday life" (SPL I: 9-10). Instead of invoking the trope of "unity in diversity" to present the Indian nation as an organic whole through "pre-figuring the nation as united because of, and thereby in spite of, its diversity" (Balagopalan 2009:2) the SPL textbooks trace the essential unity of the country to a particular event in history, namely the freedom movement as also to a "contemporaneous document" namely the Constitution (ibid: 11). The freedom struggle is especially invoked to show how "women and men from different cultural, religious and regional backgrounds.....worked together to device joint actions,...and found different ways to oppose the British" (SPL I:11).

Further diversity in these textbooks is not singularly portrayed as a source of harmony. Rather a detailed explanation as to how diversity arising from socio-economic differences often result in inequalities and discrimination is provided. The textbooks contain various case-studies and in-text exercises that challenge the learner to question socially constructed stereotypes and prejudices related to gender and rural/urban population. Unlike the earlier civics textbooks (NCERT 1975-2004) which treat issues like poverty, caste and religion-based discrimination in isolation as social evils the SPL series

encourages the learner to engage with the issues at greater depth. This helps in understanding how such practices are deeply entrenched through the everyday practices and functioning of socio-political institutions. The following discussion elaborates this in the rural –urban context and through the construction of gender.

2.2.3   *Challenging the Rural-Urban Binary*

Barring a few variations, the villages in some of the NCERT textbooks (1987 and 2002) are depicted as idyllic spaces with neatly arranged rows of brick houses, community development programmes (NCERT 1987:13-14) and where the signs of modernization are identifiable in the form of electricity connections and use of tractors (NCERT 2002:145-146). Absent from this idealisation of the villages are natural calamities like drought and famine, lack of adequate healthcare facilities, oppression of landlords and moneylenders and farmers caught in the vicious cycle of failed crops and dispossession leading to suicides. The textbooks admit that a large number of villages continue to suffer from poverty and illiteracy. However, there is no mention of the existence of social stratification (class and caste) or diversity of livelihoods (weaving, fishing, pottery making) thereby making the "generic farmer," "the synecdoche of national progress" (Advani 2009: 118).

The urban spaces in the same textbooks, in contrast, are visualised as the face of modernization symbolized through sky-scrapers, supermarkets, well-equipped hospitals and a fast-paced life. The urban Indians are shown to be engaged in diverse professions as doctors, nurses, shopkeepers and sweepers - all living in perfect harmony. This harmony is disrupted by the rapid influx of semi-literate and illiterate villagers who throng the cities in search of jobs. Thereby they not only create a pressure on the available urban resources but are held responsible for every problem in the cities ranging from scarcity of clean drinking water to an increasing crime rate (NCERT 2002: 146). The textbooks thus construct the rural and urban spaces as the two contrasting facets of modern India.

The community portrayed in the SPL series, whether in the urban or the rural context does not represent a picture of a harmonious whole. But it is depicted as a contested space

stratified by hierarchies of class and caste and where diverse interests negotiate and clash to get their due. The textbooks highlight how in both the spheres the ordinary citizens struggle for the fulfilment of their basic rights to live a life of dignity. While problems like poverty, water crisis, class hierarchy and communal bias confront the rural and urban citizens alike, certain issues gain prominence in a specific context.

The agricultural community in the SPL series is deeply fragmented consisting of rich land-owning farmers (Ramalingam, SPL I:71), small farmers (Sekar, SPL I:70), as well as landless agricultural labourers struggling to earn a living (Thulasi, SPL I:68). The rural economy is shown to depend on a variety of non-farm activities like fishing, weaving, animal husbandry, pottery making and selling, tailoring and money lending (chapter 8, SPL I). The difficulties that the rural citizens like farmers (Sekar, SPL 1:70-71) have to experience for instance crop failure and the struggles they have to undergo (inability to pay off debts often leading many of them to commit suicide) also get highlighted. Several other issues also render the rural citizen vulnerable like land encroachment (the story of Mohan, SPL I: 49-50), burden of debt and exploitation of small farmers by middlemen (the story of Swapna, SPL II: 105-106) and lack of adequate and accessible medical facilities (the case-study of Hakim Sheikh, SPL II: 25-27). Caste-based discrimination also appears to be more deeply entrenched in the rural community (the story of Rathnam, SPL III: 98-99). All this present a complex and more realistic picture of rural India.

The urban landscape in the SPL series is not only represented by sky-scrapers, fast-paced vehicular traffic, plush hospitals and well laid-out shopping malls but is also characterised by unhygienic working-class neighbourhoods, overcrowded government hospitals and roadside open markets. People belonging to differential socio-economic strata constitute the city's eco-system. Here highly affluent industrialists, upper middle and middle class consultants and government servants are shown to co-exist with lower middle and working class people like factory workers, roadside vendors, domestic helps, artisans, rickshaw-pullers and daily wage labourers. The urban people are shown to struggle with their own set of problems namely garbage accumulation (the story of Gangabai, SPL I: 60-61), unhygienic living conditions (the storyboard of Kanta, SPL II: 4-5) and lack of access to basic amenities like water (the case-study of the citizens of

Chennai, SPL III: 106-107). Further issue of low wages, lack of job security and protection against ill-treatment (the case-study of Nirmala, SPL I: 82), and absence of safety and security in workplaces (the photo-essay on Bhopal Gas Tragedy, SPL III: 124-126) are seen to plague the urban populace, especially those belonging to the lowest rungs of the society.

Thus, the rural and urban spaces in the SPL series are not represented as binaries - either as idyllic locations devoid of any problems or as places ridden with multiple disadvantages. Rather they emerge as spaces with their distinct and often similar set of issues which reflect the lived diverse realities of the readers.

2.2.4 Construction of Gender

Although both sexes are well represented through visuals in the earlier NCERT civics textbooks (2002-2004) a closer examination reveals a definite gender bias. Women are found sharing the public space with their male counterparts as agricultural labourers, construction workers, *panchayat* members, artisans and classical dancers. But the range of livelihood choices available to men far outnumbers those provided to women. The visuals reinforce certain social stereotypes regarding division of labour. A woman is shown as a nurse whereas the municipal sanitation worker, bus driver, shopkeeper and the journalist are depicted as exclusively male. Whether in the *gram panchayat* or within the family, it is the male members who are shown to occupy the central position, taking decisions while the female representatives remain in the periphery (NCERT 2002: 143-161).

The most prominent image of the women in the textbooks (NCERT 1987; NCERT 2002) emerges to be that of the nurturer and care-giver. They step out only to meet the needs of the family (purchasing house-hold goods in the supermarket or fetching water from the community bore-well).When they are visible in the public spaces they are seen either pursuing refined, softer professions like painting or traditional care-giving roles as nurses (NCERT 2002: 156-158). The only exceptions are iconic personalities like Sarojini Naidu and Vijaylakshmi Pandit who appear as members of the Constituent Assembly along with stalwarts like B.R.Ambedkar (NCERT 2003:176). Scholars (Advani 2009;

Batra 2010; and Bhog *et al* 2010) argue that the agenda of socialization upheld by the NCF 2000, in spite of being ostensibly progressive, was very much patriarchal and conservative. This explains why the ideal Indian woman in the civics textbooks is constructed both as a homemaker and a working woman who assertively makes her way into the public space while retaining "the ideology of Sita-like womanhood" (Advani 2009: 125) [29].

In the SPL series one finds women sharing an equal platform with the male citizens. Although the contribution of iconic figures like Pandita Ramabai and Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain are discussed, there is a distinct attempt to go beyond the achievements of a few successful women. The textbooks are replete with examples of ordinary women belonging to various social groups engaged in varying capacities in the private and public spheres. They also actively contribute to the family's income as also to the socio-economic development of the community and nation. They are not only depicted in their traditional care giving role of the home-maker (Shabnam Bano, SPL II: 5) but also as earning members of the family as manual scavengers (SPL III:101), fisher folk (Aruna, SPL I:73), domestic helps (Melanie, SPL II:49) and factory workers (SPL II:109). They are found to be engaged in a range of professions as teachers (Manjit Kaur, SPL II:4), government employees (Yasmin, SPL I:57), business entrepreneurs (Vandana, SPL I:80-81) and lawyers (Kamala Roy, SPL III:69-70). Further a few are shown to occupy positions of authority like marketing managers (Sudha, SPL I:83) and village *sarpanch*(SPL I:46). Moreover the problems faced by women at work are represented through several stories. Mention needs to be made of the stories of landless agricultural labourers like Thulasi suffering from irregular source of income and less pay, a small cotton farmer like Swapna overburdened with debt and the vulnerability of women factory workers like Nirmala employed on a casual basis.

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[29] Chatterjee (1999:116-134) shows how the nineteenth century Bengali middle class, in order to counter the civilizing mission of colonialism, allowed the external, material and exclusively male domain to remain open to the influences of Western, scientific education and ways of lifestyle. But they made every attempt to resist similar influences in the inner, spiritual world represented in concrete form by the home and the women who resided in it. Chanana (2001: 47) points out that though women's education received a great fillip during the 1920s the educational goals for women continued to be shaped by their position within the family structure-as the "primary agents of socialization" and "keepers of the domestic realm" who played a crucial role in the "success of sons and husbands".

The SPL series creates ample space to engage the readers in understanding how gender stereotyping is a social construct. It is represented as a product of socialization and existing power structures of a patriarchal society and not as an outcome of biological inheritance. This is illustrated through case studies (Samoa Island and Madhya Pradesh, SPL II: 45-46), examples of daily routine practices like gifting of gender-specific toys to children (SPL II: 46) as also in-text exercises (SPL II: 55-56).

The fact that gender stereotypes and devaluation of women as homemakers and caregivers exist in different strata and communities in the society is highlighted. This is depicted through the storyboard on Jaspreet, an upper middleclass homemaker (SPL II:47-48) and the case-study of Melanie, a domestic help (SPL II:49). The textbooks further discuss how women in contrast to men are subjected to the double burden of house work and working outside. In this case a survey carried out in Haryana and Tamil Nadu (SPL II: 50) is referred to. Reference is also made to instances of gender-based discrimination like domestic violence (the storyboard on Kusum and Shazia, SPL III: 46-48) and dowry deaths (the case-study of Sudha Goel, SPL III: 58).

However, the discrimination that women employees face with regard to pay, promotion and related issues are not discussed in the current textbooks. No reference is made to the sexual harassment and atrocities that women encounter at the workplace or in the larger society. While women in general are subjected to these atrocities the fact that certain sections of women, by virtue of their location in the class/caste hierarchy as well as their religious background and ethnicity are more vulnerable, is overlooked. The relation between women and caste is referred to in the case-study of the manual scavengers (SPL III: 101). But, how the prevalence of the caste system feeds into the overarching patriarchal social structures to further marginalize and place women in more vulnerable positions is not explored adequately.

The contribution made by Pandita Ramabai (SPL II: 59) towards the cause of women's education and emancipation is highlighted. But the textbooks do not mention anything about her inter-caste-marriage and her conversion to Christianity, steps which were considered revolutionary and radical in her social context. Moreover, while the textbooks

have an entire section devoted to issues on gender, the treatment of gender is largely reduced to male/female binaries. The discussion primarily revolves around how gender is socially constructed and how such constructions result in perpetuating stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles. But the existence of the LGBTQ community and the problems they have to confront remain entirely invisible.

2.2.5   Re-defining Citizenship

The issue of inequality and discrimination experienced by different members of the society/nation cited in the foregoing discussion raises certain fundamental questions about citizenship. Since every member of a society/nation is also a citizen this brings into focus the relationship between the citizen and the nation state. It has been pointed out earlier[30] that every citizen by virtue of being legally a member of a nation state is not only expected to perform certain duties or responsibilities but is entitled to enjoy a range of rights. This in turn provides him/her a sense of identity and belonging *vis-a-vis* the nation state. The benefits of citizenship are thus supposed to encompass all members of a society irrespective of their ethnicity, social class, religious affiliation, gender and caste. However, as argued earlier, legal status as a citizen is always not adequate to guarantee a person equal access to rights. Therefore it becomes important to analyse how citizenship and the State have been envisaged in the earlier and current civics textbooks.

In the earlier NCERT textbooks (1975-2004) the learner is constantly reminded to develop the "appropriate" qualities of a citizen - rational conduct, co-operation and concern for fellow beings – in order to fulfil his/her obligations towards his/her family, community and society at large. But the textbooks argue that it is not enough for a person to be a mere citizen. Rather he/she is encouraged to become a "good citizen" (NCERT 1988: 49) by imbibing certain other qualities. These include obeying "laws of the land" (ibid.), being "conscious of their rights and duties" (NCERT 2003:186), keeping themselves "well informed about the happenings and problems of the country" (ibid.) and giving priority to the interest of the nation - in order to be of any value to the nation.

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[30]See Chapter One, pp.1-2.

Thus, citizenship in these textbooks hinges on the notion of duties and underplays the question of rights.

The State in these earlier NCERT textbooks (1975-2004) is represented through a detailed description of the salient features of the Constitution as also the structure and functioning of the various institutions - the *Panchayati Raj,* the Municipal Corporations, the Parliament, Executive and Judiciary. But the textbooks in this projection of "official knowledge" (Apple 2000: 46) leave no scope for any discussion on any lapse/ malpractices that can occur in the functioning of the State machinery or how such gaps can be addressed by the government in a democratic manner. Rather the State is always portrayed as a monolithic, paternalistic and benevolent structure looking after the well-being of the citizens. For instance, the textbooks (NCERT 1989:31-41; NCERT 2004:226-235) acknowledge the widespread prevalence of malnutrition, poverty, begging and child labour and lack of adequate health-care facilities for the majority of the population. However, no space is provided which encourages the reader to reflect on the socio-economic or political factors which force a certain section of the population to resort to begging or send their children to work in factories or mines. That it is the result of the State's inability or negligence to provide for and rehabilitate those living below the poverty line is carefully ignored. Bhog *et al* (2010) comment that such a depiction not only reduces the ideals of democracy, socialism, secularism and social justice, the cornerstones of our Constitution, into mere "commandments" but robs them of "their radical possibilities or any link with the learner's life-world" (ibid: 210) (Box 3, Annexure III).

The SPL defines citizenship within the framework of rights of the citizen. The textbooks go beyond defining citizenship merely in terms of political rights ─ rights which enable all adult citizens in a democracy, to vote as equals irrespective of their social location. Rather it questions the very basis of this equality by situating it within the socio-economic reality of the citizens' lives which are characterised by inequalities and differences of various dimensions (storyboard on Kanta, SPL II: 4-6). These inequalities, as the textbooks show, can be challenged by gaining access to and realizing certain other rights ─ specifically the civil, social and economic rights which together can ensure a life

of dignity for all citizens. These rights are enshrined in the Constitution in the form of Fundamental Rights. Reference is specifically made in the textbooks to the Right to Equality (Article 15) and the Right to Life (Article 21). The latter has been particularly invoked to include a range of rights and entitlements including right to healthcare (chapter 2, SPL II), water (chapter 9, SPL III) and livelihood (case-study of Olga Tellis, SPL III:62) (Box 4, Annexure III).

Mention is also made of the various special rights and entitlements provided for the marginalized sections of the society (chapter 8, SPL III) for instance the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act, 2006 and the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989 (chapter 8, SPL III).Citizenship in the SPL series is therefore envisioned in terms of group-differentiated rights.

The SPL series highlights that while the rights are enshrined in the Constitution it is not always possible for citizens to exercise their rights easily. Rather these rights are repeatedly challenged, thwarted and infringed upon by various actors — individuals, groups, institutions and even the State. This is highlighted through chapters like *Diversity and Discrimination* (chapter 2, SPL I), *Equality* (chapter 1, SPL II), *Public Facilities* (chapter 9, SPL III) as well as through different storyboards, case-studies and stories throughout the SPL series. In majority of the cases the citizens are shown to be subjected to some form of societal discrimination. Such cases appear to be spread across different social classes and period of time. This is seen in the stories of B. R. Ambedkar (SPL I: 19-20) and Om Prakash Valmiki (SPL II: 7-8) - instances of caste-based discrimination, Ramabai (SPL II: 59) and Jaspreet (SPL II: 47-48) - cases of gender-based discrimination or the Ansaris (SPL II: 8) and Sameer Do (SPL I: 4-6) - instances of religion-based discrimination. In many cases the challenges come from the immediate context like the family as in the case of Jaspreet (SPL II: 47-48). One also finds instances where economic background of the citizen renders him/her vulnerable to exploitation by the more affluent and powerful sections of the society (the story of Om Prakash, a landless labourer, SPL I:44-45).

One finds in the SPL textbooks a number of instances discussing the lapses in the various departments of the government often resulting in depriving the citizens from their rightful entitlements. Mention should be made of instances like the negligence of the local municipalities in ensuring timely garbage removal in urban neighbourhoods (the story of Gangabai, SPL I :60-62) and lack of adequate healthcare facilities in government hospitals in rural areas (the chapter 2, SPL II).There are also stories which highlight the deliberate and lackadaisical attitude of the government in ensuring safety and security of factory workers and citizens (the photo-essay on Bhopal Gas Tragedy, SPL III:124-127) or the failure of the government in guaranteeing adequate water supply to citizens (chapter 9, SPL III). These instances provide opportunities to critique the political economy of the State instead of remaining confined to the "surface layer of rules presented by the [S]tate" (Madan 2010: 110). Further, through chapters like "Public Facilities" and "Law and Social Justice", the textbooks (Box 5, Annexure II) also try to highlight how the role of the government in providing facilities like water is "linked to concerns addressed in our fundamental rights"(SPL III:105). Moreover in certain cases the State is also depicted as taking deliberate measures to encroach upon the rights of the citizens as in the case of the forest dwellers (the story of the Tawa Matsya Sangh, SPL II: 117-119). It is mentioned in SPL III how the State "allow non-tribal encroachers in the form of timber merchants, paper mills etc. to exploit tribal land, and to forcibly evict tribal people from their traditional forests in the process of declaring forests as reserved or as sanctuaries" (SPL III:102).

2.2.6   *Marginalized Communities and Citizenship*

The issue of citizenship acquires particular significance in the context of the marginalized communities in India. While these communities enjoy a legal status as citizens of the Indian nation state questions arise regarding whether and to what extent they can exercise their Constitutional rights to access the benefits and live a life of dignity. It is also important to understand in this context the factors that prevent them from claiming their Constitutional rights as citizens and ultimately push them to the margins of society.

It has been mentioned earlier that the social science curriculum prior to 2005 treated issues like poverty, caste-based discrimination as isolated social problems. These were reflected in the textbooks as stand-alone chapters titled *Untouchability*, *The Caste System* or sub-themes like *Beggary*, *Communalism* clubbed under *Other Social Problems* (NCERT 1989). Such themes were treated as impediments in the path of the nation's development process and were usually followed by chapters which detailed the welfare measures implemented by the various State agencies. No space was provided to discuss how such issues were often a result of complex socio-economic, cultural and political processes and lapses in the functioning of the State agencies. Further no attempts were made to understand them from the perspectives of those communities who were impacted by them.

SPL III specifically draws attention to the issue of social justice in the operation of the Indian society and polity through the inclusion of the unit *Social Justice and the Marginalized*. It comprises two chapters namely *Understanding Marginalization* and *Confronting Marginalization*. The first chapter introduces the term "marginalization" and explains it through examples drawn from the students' everyday experience of feeling excluded – at school, inside the classroom and playground for being different from other children in terms of behavioural traits or cultural preferences. It is also discussed how an individual or a community often feel devalued or are looked at with fear owing to her/their socio-economic status or specific cultural habits. Linkage is also drawn between these experiences and the inability of the individual or community to access certain resources and opportunities or exercise their rights (Box 6, Annexure III). To further explain the connection between marginalization and citizenship the unit draws upon the experiences of three communities –the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits. It highlights how their attempts to exercise their rights as citizens are thwarted time and again by the larger society and the State which in turn leads to their marginalization. The discussion which follows primarily focuses on this specific unit but also draws upon the representation of these communities elsewhere in the SPL series wherever relevant.

a. The Adivasis

In NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2004) the Adivasis either find negligible reference or are stereotyped in different ways. For instance, in NCERT 1989 (Box 7, Annexure III) the Adivasis are represented as an exotic and primitive community of forest dwellers who were easily exploited by others because of their economic condition, lack of education and scientific temper. The textbook advocates urgency for integrating the community into the mainstream through education. The need to preserve their unique culture and tradition is also talked about.In another instance the North-East inhabited by "heterogeneous ethnic groups" (NCERT 2004: 247) is designated as the hub of ethnic terrorism and insurgency arising from a demand for "secession, separate state or greater autonomy" (ibid:248).This kind of representation not only singles out a specific community and region as a dangerous threat to the integrity and very existence of the Indian nation state but once again results in the perpetuation of stereotypes. A discussion on terrorism is not unwelcome anytime. But as Bhog *et al* notes, in the absence of "a larger understanding of the different forms and sites of violence" especially, the role of the State in violating human rights such a construction of terrorism becomes "a political act of marking and identifying regions and specific communities as violent and anti-State" (2010: 215).

The chapter *Understanding Marginalization* in SPL III draws attention to the Adivasis or Scheduled Tribes, as one of the marginalized communities in India. Highlighting that the term "Adivasis" literally means "original inhabitants", it introduces them as "communities who lived and continue to live in close association with forests" (SPL III: 83). It refers to the heterogeneous[31] nature of the community in terms of the different groups, their spatial distribution across the Indian sub-continent[32] and their means of livelihood (Box 8, Annexure III). The textbook specifically highlights how the Adivasis are stereotyped in popular imagination as "exotic, primitive and backward" (SPL III: 84). It points out how they are usually showcased during official events, in books and movies

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[31]The Scheduled Tribes as per the 2011 Census comprise 8.6 percent of India's population. The Constitution Order (Scheduled Tribes) 1950, in its First Schedule, lists 744 tribes spread across the different States of India.

[32]According to Oommen (2014:76) broadly speaking the tribes of India 'could be divided into two categories based on their spatial locations – the encysted tribes of Central India and the frontier tribes of north-east India.'

in "stereotypical ways" dressed in "colourful costumes, headgear and through their dancing" and little attention is paid to the "realities of their lives" (ibid.). Mention is also made of how they are regarded as being "resistant to change or new ideas" and are hence held responsible for "their lack of advancement" (ibid.).

To dispel the stereotypes the textbook draws attention to some of the unique features of the community for instance their egalitarian social structure as seen in the absence of the caste system – a feature which distinguishes them from the majority Hindu community. Mention is also made of their rich cultural heritage consisting of distinct religious customs, belief systems and languages as also their symbiotic relationship with some of the dominant cultures (Box 8, Annexure III).Further the textbook discusses at length how historically the Adivasis had a symbiotic relationship with the settled civilizations and empires owing to their deep knowledge about the forests and forest resources. This enabled them to live as self-reliant communities not dominated by the latter (Box 9, Annexure III).

The textbook focuses on the actual reasons behind the marginalization of the community. It analyses how the rapid economic changes taking place today in the form of development, industrialisation, shrinking forest spaces and changing forest policies pushed by the State as well as the private sector have resulted in their displacement. This has forced the Adivasis to migrate to urban areas where they are forced to take up manual work for very less pay. It thus explains how they get trapped in a vicious cycle - displacement leading to loss of habitat and poverty which results in deprivation. This in turn leads to malnutrition and illiteracy among the community thereby perpetuating their marginalization across generations (Box 10, Annexure III).

There is definitely an attempt to dispel the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis in the SPL series. They are represented as a heterogeneous and empowered community of forest dwellers with an egalitarian social structure and a rich cultural heritage. Attention is also drawn to the communities' symbiotic relationship with dominant cultures and their significant contribution to the development of settled civilizations in the past. However the textbooks do not cite adequate examples of women and men from the community

who are achievers, or who have fought for the development of the community or those who have contributed to the nation's progress. There are definitely a few exceptions. Mention needs to be made of Lakshmi Lakra (SPL II: 57), the Adivasi girl from Jharkhand who fights social taboo to become a railway engine driver. Another example is that of C.K.Janu, the Adivasi activist who has been working towards defending the community's "right to occupy land that was traditionally theirs" (SPL III: 102). Reference is also made to the struggle put up by the Tawa Matsya Sangh to reclaim the rights of a fishing community in Madhya Pradesh (SPL II: 116-119). But overall there appears to be relative silence and omission of icons and ordinary citizens from the Adivasi communities especially who have either made a name in a specific field or have shown agency to resist oppression or have brought about changes. This tends to reinforce the very image of the communities as inherently backward, an image which the textbooks have attempted to do away with. The SPL series while initiating a sincere effort towards this direction appears to have not done enough.

The textbook also presents a sharp critique of the pro-development policies of the State and holds it squarely responsible for the displacement, dispossession and marginalization of the Adivasis. It reiterates how in spite of their legal status as citizens the Adivasis have been unable to claim their basic fundamental rights to live a life of dignity because of certain policies of the State. Reference is also made to the militarization of the North-East. However while such measures can be indispensible in certain cases the fact that these have resulted in different forms of State repression and human rights violation of citizens are not discussed.

b. The Muslims

In most of the NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2000) the Muslims are either conspicuously absent or are cursorily mentioned under themes like *Communalism*. One of the textbooks (NCERT 2004), however devotes an entire chapter on terrorism which also includes an image of the 9/11 attack on the twin towers of the World Trade Centre. It thus represents the projection of a carefully crafted "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:

46) aimed at fulfilling the right-wing agenda of the State. It also essentializes the national identity as majoritarian and Hindu and stereotypes the minorities as the obvious "other".

The SPL series focuses on the Muslim community at length. In keeping with the depiction of India as an inclusive and pluralist society and polity, it includes several case-studies which depict the Muslims located in different corners of the country, from cities like Pune, peri-urban areas like Meerut (Uttar Pradesh) to the rural hinterland of West Bengal and South India. They are shown to belong to different strata of the society ranging from very low, working class backgrounds to middle and upper middle class communities. They are also shown to contribute to the economy of the country in varied ways – as agricultural labourers, factory hands, street-vendors, artisans, small traders, and also as media persons and employees in the government and non-government sectors. Moreover they are present as school students, homemakers and members of village communities like the *gram sabha* and labour unions.

At one level the textbooks portray the members of this community as any other common citizen living in harmony with members of other religious communities (the story of Jehangir, Mala, Rehana and Shankar, SPL I: 57). They also appear to be plagued by the same existential problems like water crisis (the story of Anwar SPL I: 44), sanitation issues (the story of Yasmin Khala SPL I: 58), lack of proper healthcare facilities in government hospitals (Hakim Sheikh, SPLII: 21) and gender-related issues like domestic violence (the storyboard of Shazia SPL III: 46). Thus, the Muslims are shown as an integral part of India, sharing the socio-economic and cultural space of the nation along with their Hindu counterparts.

At another level the textbooks highlight the prejudices and stereotypes prevalent in the society *vis-a vis* the Muslims. Mention needs to be made of the story of the Ansaris, a middle class Muslim couple who face extreme difficulty in finding suitable accommodation in a metropolitan city and are finally asked by the property dealer to change their names which they refuse (SPL II:8). There is also the story of Sameer Do, a street vendor who goes looking for his relatives in a riot-ridden village in Meerut and disappears (SPL I: 6). It draws attention to the distrust amongst communities which often

takes the shape of communal violence and result in displacement and loss of life. These cases also highlight the fact that the social discrimination of the minorities is not limited to any specific strata of the society or region. Reference is made in the SPL series to other prevalent myths about the community namely their bias about educating girls which it is argued accounts for the lesser presence of poor Muslim girls in schools (SPL I: 18).

The chapter *Understanding Marginalization* in SPL III specifically attempts to examine the marginalized status of the Muslims (SPL III: 88-89). It refers to the Sachar Committee Report (2005) to argue that "on a range of social, economic and educational indicators the situation of the Muslim community is comparable to that of other marginalized communities like Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes" (SPL III:89). Referring to same report the textbook points out that "25 per cent of Muslim children in the 6-14 year age group have never been enrolled in school or have dropped out" (ibid.). This percentage, it remarks "is much higher than that of any other socio-religious community" (ibid.). Attention is also drawn to the prejudices prevalent in mainstream public imagination regarding certain social customs and practices typical of the community, primarily their way of dressing and appearance for instance women wearing *burqa* and men sporting a long beard and donning the *fez*cap during *namaz*(SPL III:89-90). It highlights how such customs often set them apart from the majority communities, confer on them a distinct identity as the "other" and thereby contribute to them being discriminated against, ghettoised and gradually marginalized.

The textbooks do not stop at drawing attention to the stereotypes existing in society *vis-a-vis* the Muslims but try to dispel them. For instance, it is mentioned that the specific customs related to clothing and appearance (*burqa*, *fez* cap and long beard etc.) are not followed by the entire community but by a section of the population (Box 11, Annexure III). Reference is made to the Sachar Committee Report to challenge the prevalent misconception about the community's preference for *madrasa* education. Data is provided to highlight how the majority of the Muslim children are either enrolled in government or private schools as compared to an insignificant section of the populace who attend the *madrasas*(SPL III:91). It is also shown how the lesser presence of poor

Muslim girls in schools is not the result of prevalent bias within the community towards educating girls but needs to be attributed to poverty (SPL I: 18).

What is striking is that in spite of the textbooks' attempt to dispel many of the stereotypes, the image of Muslims as a backward and marginalized community overshadows all other projections. The presence of a few Muslims belonging to the middle and upper middle strata of the society, working as media persons (Ruksana Mirza SPL II:5) or as NGO workers (Shazia SPL III:46), or as lower level government servants (Yasmin SPL I:58) cannot be ignored. But they are either too few or remain in the periphery. There is hardly any example of members of this community in positions of authority or as a State functionary. This kind of portrayal certainly overlooks the significant contribution of the community towards nation building. Though one finds in the textbooks the presence of Rokeya Sakhawat Husain (SPL II:60) as the progressive, liberal and educated face of the Muslim community, this gets subsumed under the category of women and women's empowerment. Absence of other celebrated Muslim women and men of the past and present as well as the conspicuous elision of their contribution to various spheres of life – education, film, music, art, sports, industry/business, politics and governance further strengthen the stereotypical construction of the Muslims as an inherently backward community.

Moreover, the textbooks fail to problematize the marginalized status of the Muslims. They describe the marginalized condition of the community without clearly explaining the causal factors behind the same. They maintain a guarded silence regarding the role of the State in combating the social and economic marginalization faced by the Muslims[33]. The textbooks acknowledge that the community has been over the years "deprived of the benefits of socio-economic development" (SPL III: 88).   But they do not clarify the reasons behind such deprivation. One finds only a veiled reference to communal problems like riots (the case of Sameer Do and the victims of Hashimpura riots) but such discussions remain peripheral to the main content. There is also a complete silence on the

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[33] D' Souza criticizes them for playing the "minority card" to retain the Muslims as a permanent "vote-bank" since in reality the concessions were granted only to the leadership and did not lead to the upliftment of the community as a whole (1999: 215)

prejudices and conservatism prevalent amongst sections of the Muslim community particularly with respect to gender roles. In a multicultural country like India, the granting of minority rights is fully justified to prevent the homogenising tendency of the nation state and safeguard the autonomy and cultural identity of the minorities. However scholars (Mahajan 1999; Bhargava 1999) argue that this has made it obligatory for the State to follow a policy of non-interference in the practices among certain sections of the community related to matters of the family like marriage, separation, divorce, maintenance, child custody and inheritance. This has "stood in the way of ensuring the minimum conditions necessary for gender equality" within the community thereby placing women in a subordinate position (ibid.: 63). Further by preventing the absorption of the community into the mainstream it has failed to "stem the process of marginalization" (ibid.: 60).This it has been argued has posed a serious hurdle "in the path of democratisation" (ibid.: 63). The textbooks however do not raise any of these questions.

The SPL series thus has succeeded in highlighting the marginalized status of the largest minority community of the country. But by not analysing the reasons behind the same, it has not been able to undo the construction of the Muslims in the public imagination as an inherently backward community.

c. The Dalits

One of the earlier civics textbooks describes issues like the caste system and untouchability as evils which not only divided the society into "water-tight compartments" but "proved to be a great hindrance to the economic development of our country" and "affected the country's unity and security" (NCERT 1989:24). It further points out how the caste system resulted in the "exploitation of the people of the lower castes by the people of the higher castes" (ibid:23). But this is discussed in the context of the overall development of the nation and not from the perspective of the Dalits themselves. On the other hand, the NCERT 2002-2004 textbooks maintain a complete silence *vis-a-vis* contentious issues like the caste system and untouchability. One can only

find an indirect reference to these issues in the context of fundamental rights, especially the right to equality and the abolition of untouchability.

While some of the textbooks highlight the efforts taken by Gandhi and social reformers like Ram Mohan Roy to end the evils of the caste system (NCERT 1989:24) they[34] completely overlook the efforts made by iconic figures like Phule, Ambedkar and Periyar in their struggle against the caste-system. The textbooks also overlook the many resistance movements led by Dalit groups in different parts of the country and thereby represent the community as bereft of any agency (Box 12, Annexure III). Scholars (Kumar 1989; Advani 2009) have argued that such a "selective tradition" can result in a superficial understanding and flattened construction of the nation for the upper caste, upper class students. Besides, they argue, it can lead to a sense of alienation and exclusion among the marginalized sections.

The SPL series focuses on the Dalits or Scheduled Tribes as another of the most marginalized sections of the society. It directly addresses the issue by explaining the origin of the caste system and its impact on the lives of Dalits. Further with the help of case-studies and anecdotes from the lives of celebrated Dalit icons like B. R. Ambedkar (SPL I: 19-29) and well-known personalities like Om Prakash Valmiki (SPL II:7-8) the textbooks draw attention to the discrimination faced by Dalits over centuries. The textbooks also explain the impact of the caste system on the lives of ordinary people. Mention needs to be made of the story of Rathnam (SPL III: 98-99), an educated Dalit youth whose refusal to perform certain caste duties invited the wrath of the dominant castes who retaliated by harassing him and his family members and then forcing the entire village to ostracize them. The series further highlights the continued practice of manual scavenging and the resultant exploitation and extreme humiliation experienced by the manual scavengers, mostly Dalit women and young girls (Chapter Three, p.91). There is also statistical data from surveys conducted at national levels which highlights the marginalized status of the Dalits with regard to educational indicators (SPL II: 62-63).

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[34]Jain points out that while these texts highlight the contribution of Gandhi against the caste system, they do not mention the contribution of leaders like Ambedkar, Phule and Periyar learning about which 'would have helped children to understand that liberation from, and resistance against untouchability can also come from the Dalits themselves (2004:184-185).

However, while the SPL series draws attention to caste-based atrocities to a commendable extent the issue of caste has been evoked only in reference to Dalits. Although the textbooks mention in detail about the origin and evolution of the caste system which divided the society into upper and lower castes (SPL I: 6, 18-19) it is only the members of the Dalit community who have been conferred with their caste identity. No other community or groups or individuals have been identified in terms of their caste. This might give the impression that caste-identity is something unique to the Dalits. Excepting a peripheral reference to the presence of caste identity in matrimonial advertisements in newspapers (SPL II: 7) there is also no discussion or reference in these textbooks regarding the institutionalization of such divisive and discriminatory practices in other spheres of life.

Notwithstanding the gaps the SPL series has largely succeeded in highlighting the fact that legal status as a citizen does not necessarily guarantee complete and uninterrupted access to civil, social and other rights. Rather such rights can be thwarted and infringed upon by various actors —individuals, the larger society and the State itself often leading to citizens being subjected to inequality, discrimination and marginalization. This is particularly evident in the case of some of the most vulnerable sections of the population, like the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits.

d. The Citizens' Agency

The SPL series invests the citizen with agency. Irrespective of their social class background, many of the citizens are seen to exercise their agency. Women, for instance, are shown to reclaim their rights in different ways — challenging the prevalent social norms and prejudices (Ramabai, SPL II: 59), pursuing their aspirations through sheer will power (Laxmi Lakra, SPL II: 57), challenging the devaluation of housework (Jaspreet, SPL II:47-48) and setting out to reform the system itself (Rokeya Hossain, SPL II:60). Through these instances, the textbooks highlight how women as citizens, have the ability to challenge and subvert the very patriarchal societal structures that try to subjugate them. In several instances the citizens resort to legal assistance and ask for intervention by various State institutions like the police (the story of Mohan who lodged a FIR in the

local police station against his neighbour for encroaching on his land, SPL I: 49-50).They also approach the judiciary when their rights are thwarted. Here attention needs to be drawn to the case-study of Hakim Sheikh, an agricultural labourer who after meeting with a serious accident filed a case in the court against government hospitals when they refused to treat him (SPL II: 21).

Individual agency is not the only way cited by the SPL series for reclaiming citizenship. Collective action like forming cooperatives and organising social movements, be it the women's movements to fight for the rights of women against a patriarchal social system or the formation of cooperatives by displaced communities to salvage their rights to livelihood, are upheld by the textbooks as the rightful means for reclaiming their fundamental rights. The textbooks refer to the struggles put up by the educated middle or upper middle class sections of the society against social discrimination. Mention needs to be made of the storyboard on the contribution made by the Lawyers' Collective and the National Commission for Women to pass the Domestic Violence Act (SPL III:46-48). But very often attention is drawn to the collective front put up by ordinary citizens. There are numerous examples which represent women and men, often those living on the margins, as the nuclei of such action. They are shown participating in public rallies and protest marches, holding public hearings, sitting on *dharnas* and expressing their dissent through innovative tools like theatre, song and creative writing. Some important examples provided in the textbooks are the struggle put up by the Tawa Matsya Sangh (SPL II: 118) to reclaim the right to livelihood for the displaced forest dwellers in Madhya Pradesh and the women's movement to reclaim equal citizenship rights (SPL II:63-67).

The textbooks especially highlight the struggle and resistance put up by the Dalits to reclaim their rightful status as citizens. They devote an entire section on the struggle put up by Ambedkar (SPL I: 19-20) as well as Om Prakash Valmiki (SPL II: 8) vis-a-vis the atrocities and social discriminatory practices of the caste-system. There are also a number of cases where ordinary citizens from the Dalit community are shown to voice their protest against such practices by seeking support from law. Mention needs to be made of the story of Rathnam, who filed a complaint with the police under the SC/ST Prevention

of Atrocities Act 1989. The fight led by the *Safai Karamchari Andolan* (SPL III: 101) (Chapter Three, p.91) to draw attention of the government and public to the continued practice of manual scavenging is also highlighted. Further attention is drawn to the struggles put up by many assertive Dalit groups in South India (SPL III: 99). These struggles were not only responsible for influencing the government to enforce the existing laws but also frame new laws to ensure justice to the members of the community against discrimination and violation of their fundamental rights. The framing of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 is a case in point (Box 13, Annexure III).

The citizens however are not shown to emerge victorious always. Rather the textbooks invest the citizens with a spirit to fight and highlights that to rise against any forms of injustice and inequality is legitimate and in the very spirit of democracy. This difference in treatment of civics textbooks definitely shows a shift in perspective. In this connection mention needs to be made of the case of Satayrani, an elderly woman. She is shown in the textbook "sitting on the steps of the Supreme Court surrounded by legal files gathered during the course of a long legal battle to seek justice for her daughter who was murdered for dowry" (SPL II: 64).

The SPL series in a way subverts the idea of the ideal citizen as one who is compliant, dutiful and obedient and succeeds in creating a new ideal- that of a citizen who is not only aware of her rights as a citizen but one who is capable of reclaiming her rights when encroached upon. However the textbooks in the process of creating a new ideal and invoking the "liberal rational self ....as the marker of citizenship" (Balagopalan 2009:12) inadvertently moves towards constructing an "other". The "other" in this case includes the citizen who is gullible, lacking in critical thinking and agency and incapable of reclaiming her rights. This construction of the "ideal" citizen as the rational, liberal one is contradictory to the very nature of Indian polity.

The SPL series, in a departure from the earlier NCERT textbooks (1975-2004) exposes the many failures and gaps in the functioning of the State. It also highlights how the State often directly encroaches upon the rights of the citizens (as in the case of the Tawa

Matsya Sangh or the Adivasis discussed earlier). However, instances like the above are rare in the SPL series and often the State is found to relent when confronted by the people. The State's failure to guarantee the citizen's their due thus appears more owing to negligence than a result of a conscious policy decision (the story of the Tawa Matsya Sangh, SPL II:117-119). Moreover, the number of cases where the rights of the citizen are thwarted by the State are very few in comparison to the cases where the citizens are seen to face challenges from their fellow citizens or the larger society.

On the contrary one finds a detailed discussion on the founding principles of the Indian State as enshrined in the Indian Constitution as well as the measures adopted by the State to ensure the citizens their rights and entitlements. For instance, the chapter *Understanding Secularism* highlights how the Indian State in keeping with the Indian Constitution upholds its secular character in order to ensure every citizen the freedom "to live by their religious beliefs and practices as they interpret these" (SPL III:19). This is elaborated through a detailed explanation about the specific character of Indian Secularism (Box 14, Annexure III).

Further the functions of the different organs of the State are not simply enumerated in isolation but are explained in a context. It is shown how the State machinery comprising the parliament, the executive and the judiciary has in-built provisions that can be utilised by the citizen to fulfil or reclaim their rights. The textbooks provide a detailed account of the various laws that have been enacted by the Parliament towards the realisation of social justice for the marginalized sections of the society. Mention needs to be made of the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act, 1993, the Disabilities Act, 1995, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers Act, 2006, the Domestic Violence Act in 2006 and the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act, 1989(chapter 8, SPL III). Similarly, the provisions enshrined in the judicial system (the Supreme Court has formulated guidelines for protection against sexual harassment in work places and educational institutions in 1997) are cited to explain how the citizens can counter the forces that challenge their rights.

The various schemes introduced by the government namely the mid-day meal scheme in government schools and subsidised hostels for Dalit and Adivasi communities (chapter 1, SPL II and chapter 8, SPL III) are also discussed. There are also specific policies that have been introduced to safeguard the interests of the marginalized sections of the society. The reservation policy is an example (Box 15, Annexure III).

The message that comes across is that the State has taken ample steps to ensure the citizens their rights and it is for the citizens to access or salvage those rights through legal, democratic means. These include filing a case or pursuance of a public interest litigation in the court (chapter 5, SPL III) and participating in democratic modes of protest namely rallies and public meetings (chapter 10, SPL II). Thus, in spite of the failures in the functioning of the State apparatuses, the State itself retains its paternalistic benevolence.

The different measures introduced by the State (scholarships and reservation of seats in government educational institutions and services for the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes) have benefitted a large number of people from the marginalized communities by giving them access to educational and other institutions. But the discrimination faced by them within these institutional spaces has been completely overlooked in the SPL textbooks. Moreover, the textbooks remain completely silent regarding the various caste-based atrocities and instances of human trafficking specifically those directed against women and children belonging to the Dalit community. Jain has questioned the silence of the earlier NCERT textbooks on the sexual exploitation and sexual violence against Dalit women as also on "the role of the State and its police in violating human rights of Dalits" (2004:184). He has also drawn attention to the State's nexus with and support to upper caste armies' as also "its failure to bring about land reforms as the necessary pre-condition for restoring the Dalits' right to be human" (ibid.). Often such cases of violation of rights go unpunished due to gaps in State policy or the lackadaisical attitude of the State machinery like the police and judiciary. But in many instances the rights of the citizens' are thwarted due to conscious and deliberate decisions adopted by the State. Barring the few cases discussed earlier such instances are not referred to. It appears that the current textbooks have given a voice to the marginalized sections, their victimisation

and their struggle against the same. But at the same time they have highlighted the positive role played by the State without acknowledging the failure of State policies.

2.3   Conclusion

The above discussion shows how civics as a subject of school education originated and evolved over the years in the Indian context. It also highlights how curriculum and textbooks constitute a site where changing regimes of political power stake their claim by ushering in contesting visions of the nation, State, citizen and citizenship to actualize their ideological aspirations. A comparison between the civics textbooks (published by NCERT between 1980s and 2000) and the current SPL series (based on NCF 2005) explains this through the shifting portrayal of the nation from a homogenised majoritarian Hindu entity to a more heterogeneous, multicultural and multi-ethnic construction. Diversity in these textbooks is not regarded as a source of harmony but is problematized to reflect the inequities and discriminatory practices that are in-built in it. The SPL series challenges the rural-urban binary and represents the two spaces not as idyllic but riddled with certain common and specific sets of problems. It also highlights the contribution of women, especially ordinary women who appear in diverse roles and belonging to different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. A special focus is given to some of the most marginalized communities, namely the Adivasis, Dalits and Muslims and an attempt is made to dispel the stereotypes attached to them and examine the reasons leading to their marginalization. The ideal citizen in the SPL series is not one who is unquestioningly obedient and patriotic. She is invested with an agency and thus capable of reclaiming her/his fundamental rights when they are encroached upon either by societal pressure or the State itself. The SPL series also marks a departure from the earlier civics textbook in its depiction of the society and polity in a more realistic manner. It exposes all the cleavages arising out of institutional and systemic lapses and social inequalities based on class, caste, gender, ethnicity and religion. However, in spite of the gaps in the functioning of the State apparatuses, the State itself retains its paternalistic benevolence as depicted in the multiple schemes and laws enacted by it.

Chapter Three

A New Pedagogy for Classrooms

An understanding of the SPL textbooks remains incomplete without analysing the pedagogical framework that is proposed for the transaction of lessons. As in the case of the textual content the pedagogic approach followed in the SPL textbooks is informed by the NCF 2005. This chapter would attempt to analyse how this approach has been integrated in the textbooks. Since the study examines the idea of citizenship with reference to particular marginalized communities the chapter would focus on specific themes that have been identified for observation in classrooms. These themes are drawn from *Understanding* Margnalization (chapter 7) and *Confronting* Margnalization (chapter 8) which together comprise the unit *Social Justice and the Marginalized* in SPL III. Besides a few themes from two other chapters in SPL III, namely *Understanding Secularism* and *Public Facilities* which have been selected for observation would also be briefly examined. Further the discussion would critique the feasibility of implementing the pedagogic approach in classrooms.

3.1   NCF 2005 and a Shift in Pedagogy

The NCF 2005 recognises the problem of increasing curricular load on learners that had resulted in deep anxiety and stress among children and parents. It proposes to address this by making learning "an inclusive and meaningful experience for children" and moving away from "a textbook culture" (NCF 2005:13). To address this it emphasizes the need to give importance to children's lived experiences and nurture their creativity. According to NCERT 2006 in order to rejuvenate social science teaching, learning needs to be treated as a process of inquiry. This requires children to actively participate in the process of knowledge construction. To implement this NCERT 2006 encourages teachers to develop a democratic culture within classrooms by shifting from the practice of filling students with information to engaging in debate and discussion (NCERT 2006:9). Further allowing students to bring into the classroom their lived experiences drawn from their varied social-economic and cultural contexts has been recommended to make children aware of the diverse social realities.

To implement this pedagogical approach the NCF 2005 recommends the introduction of the Constructivist perspective. According to this perspective learning is a "process of the construction of knowledge" whereby the learners "actively construct their own knowledge by connecting new ideas to existing ideas on the basis of materials/activities presented to them (experience)" (NCF 2005:17). Therefore it is important that children are encouraged to ask questions and draw a connection between what they are learning in school to the outside world. They should also be allowed to answer questions in their own words and based on their lived experiences. Construction of knowledge also takes place within a social context for instance within a group through socio-cultural practices like language. This encourages a dynamic process of interchange that leads to collaborative learning. This creates space for "negotiation of meaning" and "sharing of multiple views" whereby the learner "individually and socially constructs meaning as he/she learns" (ibid.).

Learners are also expected to become "critical observers of their own conditions and needs", develop the ability to "think and reason independently" (ibid.) and "have the courage to dissent" (NCF 2005:22). In this context the curriculum proposes the inclusion of critical pedagogy as a pedagogical approach to provide the students with "an opportunity to reflect critically on issues in terms of their political, social, economic and moral aspects" (ibid.). This is expected to not only encourage them to accept "multiple views on social issues" through "democratic forms of interaction" but also create the space for them to explore how "such issues are connected to their lives" (ibid.).

The NCF 2005 recommends reorienting the curriculum through "multiple ways of imagining the Indian nation" (NCF 2006: 3) and by balancing the national perspective with the local. In this connection it proposes the need to "work towards institutionalizing an alternate, more decentralized mechanism of knowledge-generation in which teachers, students and the local community feel empowered to bring in their own realities to the content of social studies" (ibid:2). This is to facilitate teachers and students from different corners of the country and cutting across various social groups to connect with the textbooks (ibid.).

Specific guidelines regarding assessment and evaluation are also provided. The principal aim of assessment is to provide feedback to teachers on students' learning. Taking a cue from the feedback teachers can improve "the teaching-learning process and materials" (NCF 2005:72). They can also "review the objectives that have been identified for different school stages by gauging the extent to which the capabilities of the learners have been developed" (ibid.). This can be achieved through continuous comprehensive evaluation based on routine learning activities and exercises. The curriculum argues against reducing examinations and tests to merely assess children's ability to recall and reproduce textual knowledge. Rather it emphasizes that "tests in knowledge-based subject areas must be able to gauge what children have learnt and their ability to use this knowledge for problem-solving and application in the real world" (ibid.) Moreover it recommends assessing children on their "processes of thinking" especially "where to find information, how to use new information, and to analyse and evaluate the same"(ibid.). For this it is essential to design questions that are open-ended, challenging and allow children to go beyond what is provided in the textbook or guidebook. At the same time, it is important that question papers are designed graded for difficulty so as to enable "all children to experience a level of success, and to gain confidence in their ability to answer and solve problems" (ibid.).

Questions however have been raised about the pedagogic approach recommended by the NCF 2005. Batra for instance has expressed serious doubts as to whether teachers would be equipped to "transcend the compulsions of a textbook culture" and be open to use diverse sources of knowledge and encourage the students to do the same (Batra 2015:52). Saxena on the other hand is critical about the NCF 2005's view on the process of knowledge construction which she argues is based on a confused understanding of "cognitive processes and epistemology" (2006:56). Referring specifically to science education she asks that if "knowledge construction is an individual enterprise" then how can children "gain knowledge of complex conceptual schemes that have taken the best minds hundreds of years to build" (ibid.). Saxena has particularly drawn attention to the inadequate attention given to teacher preparation in the curriculum framework which they feel has "trivialised the role of teachers as instructors and mediators" (ibid.:58). The discussion which follows begins with examining how the textbooks introduce these perspectives to the teachers.

3.2   The Pedagogical Approach of the SPL series

Each of the SPL textbooks includes an "Introductory Note to Teachers". It defines the aims of the textbooks in terms of the content, the rationale behind selecting a specific pedagogic approach and the role the teachers are expected to play. It thus outlines the pedagogical framework by providing a comprehensive idea as to how the textbooks are intended to be transacted from the perspective of the authors. The introductory note in one of the SPL textbooks states that contrary to popular belief Social science is not "a box full of general knowledge facts to be learnt by rote" (SPL III: vii). Rather its aim is "to build in the students a critical and informed way of looking at their contemporary world" (ibid.). To achieve this the authors argue that is it important to use "material that draws upon the experiential understanding of familial and social issues that middle school children bring in the classroom" (ibid.). And all this they point out would necessitate a "different pedagogic style" (ibid.).

The note highlights that "children learn best through concrete experiences" (SPL II: vii). The SPL textbooks therefore refrain from using definitions to explain concepts. Instead stories and other forms of creative expressions[35] like storyboards are included to explain concepts and ideas. This is aimed at developing the "learner's abilities to critically understand and analyse these issues in keeping with the tenets of the Indian Constitution" (ibid.).This way they also learn to empathize with the issues being raised. The note argues that the visuals (photographs, illustrations, photo essays) present in the textbooks are not ornamental but integral to the content and therefore can be used to further analyse issues and concepts. Moreover the inclusion of a range of in-text and end-text questions is supposed to "make students engage analytically with the material presented" (ibid.).

The teacher by transacting the textbook always plays the role of a mediator between the textbook and the learners. The SPL series envisages a larger role for the teacher that extends beyond merely transacting the textbook. The note points out that it is impossible for a national textbook to provide content that covers the wide range of diversity and regional specificities that characterise the lives of students in different corners of the

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[35]The various creative expressions like storyboards, photo-essays and questions (in-text and end-text) used in the SPL series have been referred to in this study as pedagogic tools.

country. It therefore advises teachers to fill that gap by bringing in more local and relevant examples to the discussion provided these do not contradict the ideas and concepts presented in the textbook.

The note further highlights that the textbooks "mark a departure from the earlier ones precisely because they name and identify specific forms of inequality" (SPL III: vii) based on caste, religion and gender. Since such a diversity is a reality in classrooms today the authors expect the teachers "to play a crucial role in transacting this material with a sensitivity and firm commitment to respecting the dignity of all students in the classroom and the school" (SPL II: viii). It also instructs them to ensure that the classroom space remains "safe for students of all backgrounds to air their opinions without feeling left out, ridiculed or silenced" (SPL III: viii).

The following discussion would attempt to examine specific themes from SPL III to understand to what extent the pedagogic approach outlined by the "Introductory Note to Teachers" gets reflected in the textbook.

3.2.1 *Explaining Concepts and Ideas*

A wide range of pedagogic tools are included in the SPL series. The concrete experiences used in the textbooks are in the form of narratives, both fictional and non-fictional and include stories, storyboards, case-studies and photo essays. The storyboards, mostly narratives, are based on everyday events and include written texts accompanied by illustrations of characters, objects and situations. Sometimes these are introduced at the beginning of a chapter or as part of a sub-theme within a chapter to encourage the learner to think about a concept or idea which is explained in the accompanying text that follows. Often the storyboards appear after a discussion about a specific concept or idea in the text and are meant to provide a concrete shape to the same in the form of a story.

One finds in the textbooks several case-studies which highlight specific issues and are often based on everyday events. These are usually presented in boxes in the form of newspaper reports and are accompanied by colourful visuals.Some case-studies also appear in the form of short autobiographical essays. Often the storyboards and case-

studies are accompanied by a few in-text questions. According to the textbook the storyboards are aimed at drawing "the learner into the narrative through the use of visuals that are often more expressive than lines of text" (SPL II: ix). Both storyboards and case-studies are aimed at enabling the learner "understand ideas and institutions" (SPL I: xi). These are also meant to encourage among them "introspection as well as discussion, with the effort being made to have the student identify as much as possible with the story" (ibid.).

A number of visuals, both in colour and black and white appear alongside the main narrative, case-studies and stories. These are mostly photographs and illustrations and are aimed at serving multiple purposes. Besides explaining the narrative contents of the textbooks the visuals are meant for enable the child analyse the various issues discussed in it and "visualise a situation even if the child is not familiar with it" (ibid.). In addition, the teachers are further encouraged to source relevant visual material from the library, internet, newspapers and magazines and use them in the classroom as and when it is possible.

Marginalization, Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes, Marginalized Communities and the State, Secularism and *Public Facilities* are the few themes which are being examined in the discussion that follows.

a. Marginalization

The concept of "marginalization" has been explained in the textbook with the help of several examples (Chapter Two, p.63 and Box 6, Annexure III).The attempt has been to highlight how the experience of being discriminated and devalued ultimately pushes an individual, group or community to the margins economically, socially and culturally. The explanation is supported by a storyboard (1). It begins in the form of a conversation between an elderly Adivasi man named Dadu and his grandchildren. As they watch an Adivasi float on television as part of the Republic Day parade the granddaughter raises a question: "Dadu why do they always show Adivasis as only dancing?" Both the grandson and Dadu lament how people do not know anything about Adivasis. The story then proceeds with Dadu narrating to his grandchildren about their rich cultural heritage and

the interdependence that existed between Adivasis societies and nature. The manner the storyboard is introduced in a way challenges the stereotypes that exist in popular imagination about the Adivasis. It also highlights the actual reasons that led to their displacement, dispossession and eventual marginalization. Dadu explains how he along with members of his community were forced by the State and other private actors to leave his/their ancestral land in Orissa and migrate to the city in search of work. The story narrates the struggle that Dadu and his family had to undergo once they shifted to the city, being forced to live in a cramped place in unhygienic surroundings and without any proper means of livelihood. The pain and sense of alienation they experienced being completely cut-off from their ancestral land and culture and estranged from their relatives and community members are also highlighted. Attention is drawn to the difficulties that Dadu's grandchildren had to undergo being unable to go to school due to lack of money. They lagged behind in studies. They also experienced bullying in the hands of their classmates (once they began attending school) for their inability to converse in Hindi. The situation improved slightly only when Dadu's son managed to get a job in the city.

As mentioned earlier there is no specific definition of "marginalization" that is provided in the textbook. But an attempt is made to present the concept as a multi-dimensional phenomenon - economic, social, political and cultural in nature. The aim of the storyboard, it appears, is to bring the issue alive in the imagination of the learner and help them "empathize with the issues being raised" (SPL III: vii). A complex concept is thus presented in a more learner-friendly manner.

The storyboard is also accompanied by the two in-text questions (Box 1) meant to enable the teacher find out whether the students have understood concept "marginalization" as explained in the main text and embedded in the storyboard.

b. Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes

Visual 1 & 2: Adivasis Dancing

The above two images of tribal communities in their traditional costumes are often the only ways in which Adivasis communities are represented. This then leads us to think of them as being 'exotic' and 'backward'.

Source: SPLIII, p.84

The Adivasis have been introduced in SPL III (*Understanding Marginalization)* as one of the most marginalized communities in India. Chapter Two mentions how the community has been stereotyped in public imagination (p.64). In this context the textbook introduces two colourful visuals (1 and 2). The visuals show different Adivasi communities in their traditional costumes participating in a group dance. The accompanying caption highlights how such representations reinforce the popular perception about the community as being "exotic" and "backward". The purpose of introducing the visuals in this case, it appears, is to emphasize the stereotyping that the Adivasis are subjected to, draw the attention of the learners to the issue and make them engage with it meaningfully.

The social marginalization and the resultant "othering" experienced by another marginalized community, namely the Muslims is also discussed. Attention has already been drawn to some of their specific social customs (women wearing *burqa* and men sporting a long beard) which results in creating stereotypes (Chapter Two p. 68 and Box 11, Annexure III). Here a case-study (1) which is in the form of an essay written by a young Muslim girl is presented. It narrates her experience during a communal disturbance when she and her brother were asked to change from traditional clothes like *salwar kameez* and *sherwani* into regular jeans and T-shirts, perhaps to avoid attention and avert a possible attack by members of the majority community. At the same time, it highlights how as Muslims and members of a minority community the children were made conscious of their distinct identity which is linked to "all kinds of fears and discrimination" (SPL III: 90). Written in an evocative manner the case-study is aimed at making the learner understand the feeling of alienation experienced by the members of the Muslim community and hopefully make them empathize with the community. To gauge whether the students have understood this idea there is an in-text question given alongside the storyboard (Box 2).

Case-Study 1: Ainee's Question

I live in a Muslim-dominated area. Some days back during Ramzan there was some disturbance that started taking a communal outlook. My brother and I had gone for an Iftar party in the neighbourhood and were dressed in traditional clothes, that is sherwani and salwar kameez respectively. On returning home, my brother and I were asked to change our clothes to jeans and T-shirt.

Now when everything is fine I wonder what was the reason that we were asked to change our clothes and why I didn't find it odd. Were our clothes giving away our identity and is that identity linked to all kinds of fears and discrimination?

Ainee A. Farooqi

Source: SPLIII, p. 90

Box 2

The above essay has been written by a child around your age. What do you think she is trying to convey?

Source: SPL III, p.90

It has been discussed earlier how the typical clothing style and appearance not only gives the Muslims a distinct identity but creates a stereotype about the community being resistant to modernization and harbouring a regressive attitude towards women. To dispel the stereotype there is a black-and white photograph which shows a few Muslim women in

Visual 3: Muslim Women in a Public Rally

Muslim women are an important part of the women's movement in India.
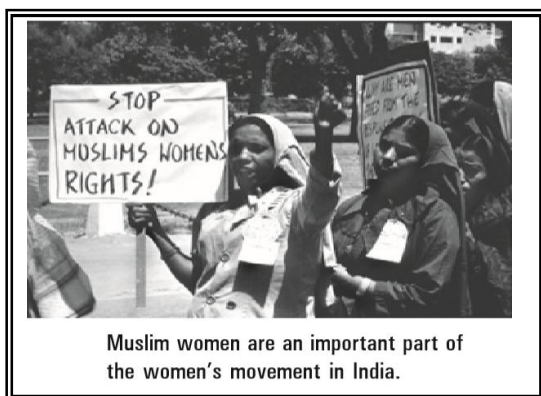
Source: SPLIII, p. 90

burqa participating in a public rally holding placards which say "Stop Attack on Muslim Women's Rights" (Visual 3). The visual along with the caption not only challenges the popular perception about the *burqa*-clad Muslim women being a voiceless community but portrays them as proactively fighting for their rights and exercising their agency.

Mention has already been made of the Sachar Committee Report to draw attention to the marginalized status of the Muslims on a range of social, economic and educational indicators (Chapter Two, pp. 67-68). Data based on various government reports is included in the form of tables. For instance, one table reveals how the Muslims in comparison to the Hindus are lagging far behind in terms of their access to basic amenities like electricity, piped water and *pucca* houses(SPL III:88)[36]. Another table highlights how the percentage of Muslims employed in different government services is abysmally low (SPL III:89)[37].A third table (Table 1) is given with literacy rates for different religious communities (SPL III:89)[38]. The literacy rate of the Muslims is shown to be the lowest. Bringing of official data into the textbook chapters is significant as it helps in establishing the veracity of the claim made about the marginalized status of the Muslims. The question given with Table 1 is an exercise for the students to engage in a simple interpretive analysis.

Table 3.1: Literacy Rate of Different Religious Communities in India

II. Literacy Rate by Religion, 2011 (percentages)						
All	Hindus	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Buddhists	Jains
74	63	57	74	67	71	86
Which of these communities have the highest and the lowest literacy rate?						

Source: SPL III, p. 89

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[36] Based on a report published by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (1999)
[37] Based on a report published by the Prime Minister's High Level Committee Report (2006)
[38] Based on Census of India 2001

Visual 4: A Muslim boy in a school
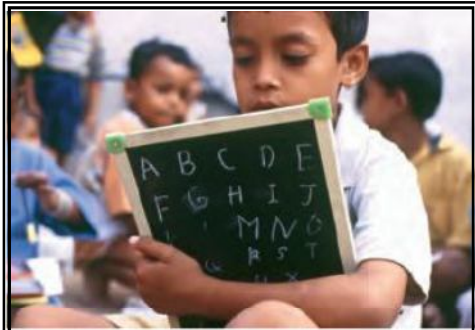
The Sachar Committee Report also debunked other prevalent myths about Muslims. It is commonly believed that the Muslims prefer to send their children to Madarsas. The figures show that only 4 per cent of Muslim children are in Madarsas, where as 66 per cent attend government schools and 30 per cent private schools.

Source: SPLIII, p. 91

In a sense the case-study, visuals and tables are attempts to dispel some of the stereotypes that surround the Muslims. Misconceptions attached to the educational preferences of the community are challenged in a photograph showing a young Muslim boy in regular school uniform in a classroom busy writing English alphabets on a slate (Visual 4). The caption below the photograph explains how the percentage of Muslims in *madrasas* is comparatively very low (4 per cent) compared to their presence in government (66 per cent) and private schools (30 per cent). The significance of the photograph and the caption lie in the fact that these challenge the popular perception about the community's alleged preference for *madrasa* education.

c. Marginalized Communities and the State

Visual 5: Resistance by Adivasis

This is a photo of Niyamgiri Hill located in Kalahandi district of Orissa. This area is inhabited by Dongarria Konds, an Adivasi community. Niyamgiri is the sacred mountain of this community. A major aluminium company is planning to set up a mine and a refinery here which will displace this Adivasi community. They have strongly resisted this proposed development and have been joined by environmentalists as well. A case against the company is also pending in the Supreme Court.

Source: SPL III, p.86

The relationship of the marginalized communities with the State as well as their struggle to reclaim their citizenship has also been discussed (Chapter Two p.65. and Box 10, Annexure III). In the discussion on the displacement of the Adivasis due to the

unplanned development policies of the State, several pedagogic tools are presented. For example, there is a photograph showing an unused mining site in the Niyamgiri Hills in Orissa (Visual 5).Alongside the main text and accompanying the photograph is a short

paragraph which provides a background to it. Both the photo and the accompanying explanation highlight an important aspect about this particular Adivasi community – the resistance put up by them against a powerful private entity to safeguard their culture and tradition and the courage and tenacity displayed by them in the process.

While referring to the huge displacements of tribal communities from their original habitat in Jharkhand and adjoining areas and their eventual migration to plantations in India and outside during the colonial period the textbook introduces a poem.Written by a migrant Adivasi labourer the poem succinctly captures the aspirations of the migrants and the hard reality that confronted them in the plantations (Poem 1) once they were forced to migrate there. The inclusion of the poem serves the purpose of bridging the gap between two different subjects - social science and language textbooks because in reality such a gap does not exist in the daily lives of communities. It also highlights how songs and poems often become powerful expressions of the resistance movements and struggles for justice put up by the marginalized communities. There is also an in-text question which is meant to make the learner think and engage with the issue.

Poem 1: Song written by a migrant Adivasi labourer

From the 1830s onwards, Adivasis from Jharkhand and adjoining areas moved in very large numbers to various plantations in India and the world - Mauritius, the Caribbean and even Australia. India's tea industry became possible with their labour in Assam. Today, there are 70 lakh Adivasis in Assam alone. The story of this migration is full of extreme hardship, torture, heartbreak and death. For example, in the nineteenth century alone five lakh Adivasis had perished in these migrations. The song below captures the hopes of the migrants and the reality they faced in Assam.

Come Mini, let's go to Assam

Our country has so much suffering

The country of Assam, oh Mini

Has tea gardens full of greenery...

The Sardar says work, work

The Babu says catch and bring them in

The Saheb says I'll take off the skin of your back

Hey Jaduram, you deceived us by sending us to Assam .

Source: Basu, S. *Jharkhand Movement: Ethnicity and Culture of Silence*

What do you think this poem is trying to convey?

Source: SPL III, p.85

To draw attention to the marginalization of the Dalits and the continued practice of manual scavenging a case study (2) is introduced. It not only draws attention to the inhuman condition under which the members of the community especially women and young girls work but also questions the role of the State in fulfilling its obligation towards guaranteeing the citizens their fundamental rights. At the same time it highlights the struggle put up by the *Safai Karamchari Andolan* to make the State take cognisance of the problem. The accompanying visuals showing a safai karamchari at work (Visual 6) and some demolishing a dry latrine (Visual 7) hold the promise of making the situation come alive in the imagination of the child.

Case Study 2: Manual Scavenging and the Safai Karamchari Andolan

The Scourge of Manual Scavenging

Manual scavenging refers to the practice of removing human and animal waste/excreta using brooms, tin plates and baskets from dry latrines and carrying it on the head to disposal grounds some distance away. A manual scavenger is the person who does the job of carrying this filth. This job is mainly done by Dalit women and young girls. According to the Andhra Pradesh-based Safai Karamchari Andolan, an organisation working with manual scavengers, there are one lakh persons from Dalit communities who continue to be employed in this job in this country and who work in 26 lakh private and community dry latrines managed by municipalities.

Manual scavengers are exposed to subhuman conditions of work and face serious health hazards. They are constantly exposed to infections that affect their eyes, skin, respiratory and gastro-intestinal systems. They get very low wages for the work they perform. Those working in urban municipalities earn ₹ 200 per day and those working privately are paid much less.

As you have read earlier in this book, the practice of untouchability has been abolished by the Indian Constitution. However, manual scavengers in different parts of the country, the Bhangis in Gujarat, Pakhis in Andhra Pradesh and the Sikkaliars in Tamil Nadu, continue to be considered untouchable. They often live in separate settlements on the outskirts of the village and are denied access to the temple, public water facilities etc.

In 1993, the government passed the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act. This law prohibits the employment of manual scavengers as well as the construction of dry latrines. In 2003, the Safai Karamchari Andolan and 13 other organisations and individuals, including seven scavengers, filed a PIL in the Supreme Court. The petitioners complained that manual scavenging still existed and it continued in government undertakings like the railways. The petitioners sought enforcement of their Fundamental Rights. The court observed that the number of manual scavengers in India had increased since the 1993 law. It directed every department/ministry of the union government and state governments to verify the facts within six months. If manual scavenging was found to exist, then the government department has to actively take up a time-bound programme for their liberation and rehabilitation. The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act came into force on 6 December 2013.

A manual scavenger at work

Members of the Safai Karamchari Andolan demolishing a dry latrine.

What do you understand by manual scavenging?

Re-read the list of Fundamental Rights provided on page 14 and list two rights that this practice violates?

Why did the Safai Karamchari Andolan file a PIL in 2003? What did they complain about in their petition?

What did the Supreme Court do on hearing their case in 2005?

Source: SPL III, p.101

A set of in-text questions provided alongside the case-study and the photographs further provide an opportunity for the teachers to find out if the students have grasped the key ideas presented in the case-study.

d. Secularism

Storyboard 2: Celebrating Religious Festivals in Government Schools

In the storyboard, discuss the answer given by the teacher.

It has been discussed in Chapter Two how the SPL series refrains from describing the State and the ideals enshrined in the Constitution in an abstract manner. Instead it provides nuanced explanations (Box 14, Annexure III) and uses concrete examples. For instance, to explain the secular nature of the Indian State and specifically how it follows a strategy of maintaining a distance from religion a storyboard (2) is introduced. It is in the form of a conversation between a teacher and a few students in a government school. During the conversation the teacher when asked by the students if they could celebrate an upcoming religious festival in the school, explains why it was not possible to do so. He argues that in keeping with the Indian government's policy of not supporting any specific religion, government schools were not permitted to "promote any one religion either in their morning prayers or through religious celebrations" (SPL III: 22). He also informs that the rule was not applicable in case of private schools. Thus, by using a familiar example drawn from the lived experiences of the students the textbook

explains the nuances of the secular nature of the Indian State. A question alongside the storyboard meant to facilitate participation of the students in a discussion is also given.

e. Public Facilities

Visuals, as the earlier instances show are often used to convey a powerful message. Some draw attention to instances of citizenship being thwarted due to the negligence of the State. For instance, the chapter *Public Facilities* introduces the following photographs (Visuals 8 and 9) which highlight the situation of public water supply in urban and rural areas in India. The first one shows a group of women in a working class neighbourhood filling up water from a municipal water connection. The second one shows a village woman sitting on an open field with an empty container trying to look for water from a hole dug on the ground. The accompanying caption highlights the gravity of the water crisis in rural areas. Both the visuals draw attention to the lackadaisical attitude and failure of the State towards meeting the basic needs of the citizens. Further questions are raised about the political economy of the State that legitimizes the unequal distribution of a public facility among different social categories of citizens.

Visual 8: **Water crisis in urban areas**   **Visual 9**: **Water crisis in rural areas**
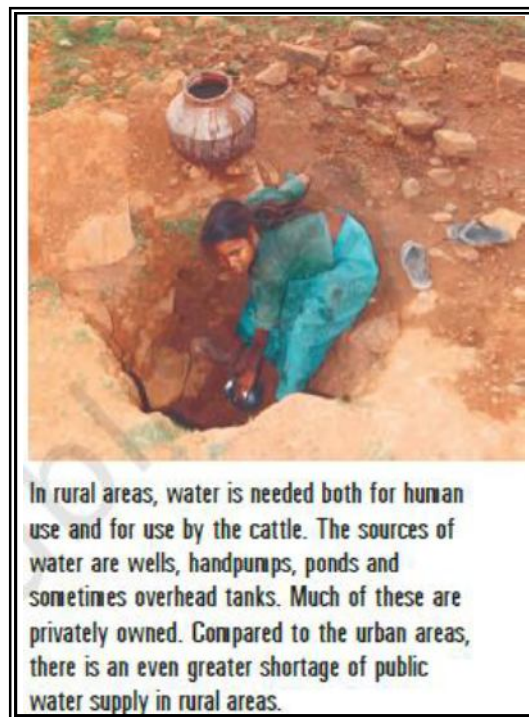
In rural areas, water is needed both for human use and for use by the cattle. The sources of water are wells, handpumps, ponds and sometimes overhead tanks. Much of these are privately owned. Compared to the urban areas, there is an even greater shortage of public water supply in rural areas.

Source: SPLIII, p.113   *Source: SPLIII, p.108*

The use of storyboards, case-studies and other pedagogic tools definitely has the potential to help the child understand the underlying concept and ideas in the main text to a large extent. The language used in these narratives, especially the storyboards is kept relatively simple compared to the rest of the main text to enable the students to read and understand them independently. Many of these tools are also provided with one or a few in-text questions. These are meant to not only allow the teachers find out if the students have understood the key concept or ideas presented through these tools but also to facilitate their participation in the classroom teaching-learning process.

Box 3: Definition of Secularism

A secular state is one in which the state does not officially promote any one religion as the state religion.

Source:SPL III,p.15

However very often the concepts introduced are complex and abstract as in the case of "marginalization" and "secularism". While the chapter on secularism provides a definition (Box 3) of the concept along with the storyboards and textual examples, a similar clear-cut definition is absent in the case of "marginalization". Rather it is presented through various examples in the main text followed by the storyboard (Dadu's story). It is expected that the learner with the help of the teacher will be able to deduce or arrive at her/his own definition of the concept based on the textual examples and the storyboard. Batra and Nawani, however, argue that a definition serves the significant purpose of "putting a concept in precise terms" (Batra and Nawani 2010: 226) and enables the learner to move from a "concretised understanding of a concept to a more generalised and de-contextualized comprehension" (ibid.).This leads to the learning of abstract ideas. In the absence of definitions for complex concepts like "marginalization" it remains doubtful whether and to what extent the teachers will be competent to explain such concepts and enable the child to grasp them. It also remains to be seen how far the children will be able to explain such concepts in their own words just by reading through the storyboard and the examples in the main text.

The visuals along with the accompanying text are likely to make the chapters engaging and interesting to read for the learner. However, their placement and the way they are linked to the main text are likely to pose a challenge to both the teachers and the learners.

For instance the picture of *burqa*-clad Muslim women in a protest rally (Visual 3) does confront the stereotypical perceptions about the community. However there is no reference to this in the main text either on the page in which it appears or elsewhere. Similarly the preference for *madrasa* education by the Muslims is contested both with a picture and an explanation (Visual 4). But they are not placed in proximity with the main text which talks about the low literacy rate among the community. Again, in case of the visual related to the resistance put up by a specific Adivasi community against the setting up of mines in the Niyamgiri hills (Visual 5), the issue is not mentioned anywhere else in the chapter. In all three instances there exists every possibility that the significant points raised by the visuals along with the accompanying text could be overlooked by the teacher and the students.

Box 4: Level of Language in the Main Text

> The Act (SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989) distinguishes several levels of crimes. Firstly, it lists modes of <u>humiliation</u> that are both physically <u>horrific</u> and <u>morally reprehensible</u> and seeks to punish those who (i) force a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe to drink or eat any <u>inedible</u> or <u>obnoxious</u> substance…(ii) forcibly removes clothes from the person of a member of a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe or parades him or her naked or with painted face or body or commits any similar act which is <u>derogatory</u> to human dignity…

Source: SPL III, p.100

It is also important to draw attention to the language used in the textbook. While the language used in the storyboards and case-studies is kept simple the same cannot be said about the main text. It not only deals with complex concepts and ideas but is lengthy and contains words and expressions which are difficult and often abstruse. The following is an example (note the underlined words and phrases).

While each chapter is provided with a glossary which explains the meaning of some of the difficult words and expressions there are many more which are left unexplained. For instance, out of all the difficult words (in italics) in Box 4 only one (morally reprehensible) is included in the glossary while the rest are left unexplained. Moreover, very often the meaning/explanation/definition provided for each of the difficult words consist of multiple equally difficult words which the students and even many teachers would find difficult to comprehend. The following are a few examples (note the underlined words and phrases)

Box 5:Examples of Difficult Words/New Concepts in the Glossary

> *Morally reprehensible: This refers to an act that violates all norms of decency and dignity that a society believes in. It usually refers to a <u>hideous</u> and repugnant act that goes against all the values that a society has accepted.*
>
> *(Source: SPL III, Chapter 8-Understanding Marginalization, p. 103)*
>
> *Dispossessed: To possess is to own something and to be <u>dispossessed</u> is to have to give up <u>ownership</u> or to give up <u>authority</u>.*
>
> *(Source: SPL III, Chapter 8-Understanding Marginalization, p. 103)*
>
> *Sanitation: <u>Provision</u> of facilities for the safe <u>disposal</u> of human and animal urine and <u>faeces</u>. This is done by construction of toilets and pipes to carry the <u>sewerage</u> and treatment of waste water. This is necessary to avoid <u>contamination</u>.*
>
> *(Source: SPL III, Chapter 9-Public Facilities, p.119)*

While the textbooks are also available in Hindi it needs to be remembered that once the language is of a certain level in English there is a possibility that the Hindi version is likely to be equally difficult in terms of use of concepts, words and expressions. Here it is essential to remember that these textbooks are meant to be used by teachers and students in government and private schools across the length and breadth of the country and across different social strata. Since it is difficult to ensure that everybody would be equally and sufficiently proficient in English or Hindi there remains a possibility that the language of the textbooks may create a barrier for the teachers and students to engage with the textbooks meaningfully.

3.2.2 Assessing Students

The SPL textbooks present a definite approach as to how students are to be assessed. The drawbacks of the existing system of evaluation which forces learners to memorize dictated answers are highlighted in a *Teacher's Note on Evaluation* presented in the textbooks. It is argued that since the prevalent evaluation system promotes a culture of teaching and learning whereby students are rewarded mostly for their ability to regurgitate memorized answers from the textbook during examinations, teachers are compelled to mark out sentences and paragraphs in the textbook. Often they resort to dictating notes from guidebooks available in the market. This in turn, it is pointed out, has produced "a vicious cycle in which each reinforced the other" (SPL II: x). The note,

therefore, advocates an urgent need to change such a system and encourages the teachers to take up the challenge by ensuring that evaluation is "based on 'new' questions" (ibid.). It is suggested that questions that demand "recalling information by rote should be minimal" (ibid.). Instead "different kinds of questions based on the main conceptual ideas of each chapter" (ibid.) need to be included in order to evaluate students on a range of skills like the ability to reason and infer and extrapolate from situations. Such questions are included as exemplars in the end-of text questions and the note encourages the teachers to "formulate new questions, similar to the end-text questions"(SPL I: x) so as to abandon the practice of students "learning answers to a fixed set of questions" (ibid.). This is to ensure that the students feel confident to express their opinion and answer the questions in their own words and thereby engage with the concepts meaningfully.

Teachers are cautioned against "expecting exact responses" (SPL II: xiii). Rather they are advised to evaluate the students on their "comprehension, ability to soundly reason and communicate their ideas" (ibid.). This creates space for the learners to come up with "a range of correct answers" (ibid.). To implement this idea, the textbooks advise the teachers to develop a "common evaluation scheme" (ibid.) which would help them "distinguish between the range of correct answers as well as more crucially identify the wrong answer" (ibid.). This is further explained with the help of an example. The teachers are further advised to be "tactful and gentle" (SPL II: x) while correcting the language of the answers.

A perusal of the textbooks reveals that each of the chapters contains a number of in-text and end-text questions. Some of the in-text questions present alongside some of the pedagogic tools like storyboards have been cited and discussed earlier. Often such questions are provided alongside the main text. Besides enabling the teachers to informally assess if the learners have understood the key concepts and ideas embedded in the main text and various pedagogic tools these are also meant to engage them in a discussion. The end-text questions, as the name suggests, are found at the end of each chapter and are aimed at formally assessing the students after they have studied the chapter. Both the in-text and end-text questions are placed at different levels in terms of

difficulty and skills required to answer them and can be broadly divided into four/five categories.

The first category of questions is meant to gauge the extent to which the information or concepts provided in the textbook have been comprehended by the learners. The learners are usually expected to refer to the specific chapter or a chapter taught previously, locate the answer provided in the textbook, retrieve some of the main ideas and explain the same in their own words. The second category of questions attempt to "expand on the student's understanding of concepts by attempting to locate these within the child's own experiences" (SPL I: ix).This provides the learners an opportunity to step beyond the textbook, find out extra information and share their own experiences while drawing upon the main text. Such questions are in keeping with the NCFs aim of creating space for "multiple ways of imagining the Indian nation" (NCERT 2006). Thus they provide scope for bridging the gap between the "national perspective" (ibid.) with the local. It further encourages an alternate and "more decentralized mechanism of knowledge-generation" (ibid: 2) in which teachers, students and the local community can participate by sharing their lived experiences and thus relate to the textbook meaningfully.

There are also questions which are aimed at testing the learners for their "ability to reason" (SPL II: x) or critically analyse a given problem and share their opinion.Such questions constitute the third category. These are aimed at testing "the extent to which the learner has understood the concepts included in the chapter and is able to articulate its main ideas in their own words as well as apply these to different contexts" (ibid.).

To enable the teachers gauge whether the learners have grasped the underlying concepts in the storyboards and case-studies the textbooks further include questions which test their ability to "infer and extrapolate" (ibid: xi).According to the teacher's note this kind of questions are "important to SPL because of the extensive use of narratives to explain concepts as well as the constant reference to the learner's own experiences" (ibid.). Since these questions provide the linkage between the narrative and the underlying concept they can enable the teacher to evaluate the "learner's ability to understand the concept as well as its explication" (ibid.). These comprise the fourth category. The third and fourth

categories are also meant to assess the students on higher order skills compared to the first two categories discussed here. There are also questions which encourage the learner to bring out their creative abilities. These constitute the fifth category.

Given below are a few examples of the range of questions which give an idea as to how the various concepts and ideas in the textbook are to be assessed.

a. Marginalization

The chapter *Understanding Marginalization* in SPL III includes quite a few questions, both in-text and end-text to assess the students' understanding of the concept "marginalization". Some of the in-text questions have already been cited earlier (Box 1). These two questions, being introduced at the beginning of the chapter are meant to enable the teacher gauge whether the students are able to recall relevant textual information specifically related to the experience of marginalization (of different social groups as well as Dadu) and exhibit an initial understanding regarding the concept "marginalization". The end-text exercise includes a similar question (Box 6).

Like the first two questions it also requires the students to recall certain factual details from the text. However, unlike the first two questions cited above it is part of the end-text exercise. It is introduced after the students have read through the entire chapter which discusses about the experiences of the two marginalized communities, namely the Adivasis and the Muslims, how they are subjected to discrimination owing to the prevalent stereotypes in society and how the State plays a role in preventing the citizens from accessing their citizenship rights which in turn leads to their marginalization. In this case the students are expected to generalize by retrieving the relevant information from ideas spread across the chapter and arrive at their own understanding of the concept. The question clearly instructs the students to explain the concept in their own language. It therefore serves a different purpose.

b. Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes

Box 7

Can you name some Adivasi communities that live in your state? What languages do they speak? Do they live close to the forests? Do they migrate to other regions looking for work?(SPL III:26)

Source: SPL III, p.83

To gauge whether the students have understood the stereotypes associated with the marginalized communities and how that shape their experiences of marginalization the textbook includes a range of questions. For instance, while drawing attention to the cultural heritage of the Adivasis and their contribution to settled civilizations the textbook introduces the following sets of in-text questions (Boxes 7 and 8).

Box 8

What metals are important in present-day India? Why? Where do they come from? Are there Adivasi populations there? List five products that you use at home that come from the forest (SPL III:85).

Source: SPL III, p.85

In both cases the learners are required to first read and comprehend the textual information and then embark on research to find out additional information about the Adivasis. In case of the questions in Box 7 the learners are encouraged to gather first-hand information about the lifestyle of the Adivasis living in their own state. This includes collecting data about their language and culture and the factors which force them to migrate to other places. In case of the questions in Box 8 they are asked to draw upon their lived experiences and acknowledge the contribution of the community towards settled civilizations. There is also an end-text question which intends to further test the students on their ability to critically analyse the stereotypes associated with the community and challenge the same by drawing upon the information provided in the textbook (Box 9).

Box 9

Imagine you are watching the Republic Day parade on TV with a friend and she remarks "Look at these tribals. They look so exotic. And they seem to be dancing all the time". List three things that you would tell her about the life of the Adivasis in India.

Source: SPL III, p. 92

c. Marginalized Communities and the State

Several questions are presented in the textbook to evaluate if the students have understood the relationship between the marginalized communities with the State and how this impacts the question of their citizenship.

Box 10

> *By whom were the following demands being made on forest land?*
> *-timber for construction of houses and railways*
> *-forest land for mining*
> *-forest land for agriculture by non-tribal people*
> *-reserved by government as wildlife parks*
> *In what ways would this affect tribal people?*

Source: SPL III, p.85

As discussed earlier (Chapter Two p. 65) the sub-theme *Adivasis and Development* in the chapter *Understanding Marginalization* (SPL III) highlights how the community has been displaced, dispossessed and gradually marginalized owing to "economic changes, forest policies and political force applied by the State and private industry" (SPL III: 85). It is provided with a few in-text questions (Boxes 10 and 11).

Box 11

> *In your opinion why is it important that Adivasis have a say in how their forests and forest lands are used?*

Source: SPL III, p.87

Here the learners are not only expected to retrieve factual information from the text (Box 10) but critically analyse the same and express their opinion regarding the issue based on their ability to reason (Box 11).

Box 12

> *In the storyboard you heard about how Helen hopes to make a movie on the Adivasi story. Can you help her by developing a short story on Adivasis?*

Source: SPL III, p.92

There is also an end-text question which encourages the students to draw inferences and make extrapolations based on the storyboard on Dadu and the sub-theme on Adivasis and then use their creative abilities to weave a story on their own (Box 12):

d. Secularism

A number of in-text and end-text questions are included in the chapter *Understanding Secularism* in SPL III to assess the students' understanding of the concept "secularism". Given here are a few examples (Boxes 13 and 14):

The question in Box 13 is an in-text question and is introduced towards the end of the chapter after the students have read through the various examples, storyboards and a definition of the concept. It is therefore aimed at allowing the teachers evaluate whether the learners have comprehended the concept embedded in the storyboards, and examples and are able to draw inferences and make extrapolations. The two questions in box 14 are part of the end-text exercise. The first question expects the students to collect some information, draw upon their lived experiences and then come to a conclusion based on their understanding of the concept "secularism". The second question encourages them to bring out their creative abilities based on their understanding of the same concept. All three questions thus are different ways of assessing student learning.

e. Public Facilities

A range of questions are made available in the textbook for the chapter "Public Facilities" (SPL III).Given here are a few examples:

Box 15

You have seen the four situations illustrated above. Based on these, what impression do you get of the water situation in Chennai? Discuss: Is there a general shortage of water for everyone in Chennai? Can you think of two reasons why different people get varying amounts of water?

Source: SPL III, p.108

The first question (Box 15), an in-text one, is introduced right at the beginning of the chapter following four illustrations which depict the uneven supply of water among different social classes of people in Chennai. The situations are further explained in the main text in the form of stories. The question which is based on the students' ability to reason, expects them to critically analyse the situations and comment on the possible reasons behind the unequal distribution of water among citizens. The second question (Box 16) which is part of the end-text exercise, expects the students to draw inferences based on their understanding of ideas presented in the chapter and make extrapolations regarding the pros and cons of studying in private educational institutions as compared to public ones.

Box 16

Private educational institutions – schools, colleges, universities, technical and vocational training institutes are coming up in our country in a big way. On the other hand, educational institutions run by the government are becoming relatively less important. What do you think would be the impact of this? Discuss.

Source: SPL III, p.118

The inclusion of different categories of in-text and end-text questions definitely expands the scope of assessing the students in a variety of ways and on a wider range of abilities and skills. These include referencing, comprehension, interpreting, analysing, drawing inference and extrapolation. But, few points need attention. To begin with many of the questions appear ambiguous and therefore remain open to diverse interpretations. For instance if one reads the questions in Boxes 9 and 12 carefully it appears that in both cases the learner is expected to dispel the stereotypes about the Adivasis. Accordingly they are expected to discuss those aspects of their lifestyle which are not so well-known -- their rich cultural heritage, their symbiotic relationship with settled civilizations in the past -- as also the reasons behind their eventual displacement from forests leading to their dispossession and marginalization. However, the question in Box 10 does not state this clearly and thus remains vague and confusing. This creates the possibility of it being misinterpreted by the teachers and students and might lead to an

endorsement of the very stereotypes which the textbook has attempted to challenge. The question in Box 12 creates space for the students to frame an answer in their own words using their creativity but based on their understanding of the key issues highlighted in the chapter. However, it is also ambiguous to an extent and thus can be misinterpreted in a similar manner.

The discussion in Chapter One has highlighted the importance of bi-furcating the textual content into familiar and unfamiliar concepts and assessing the two arenas through different types of questions - those based on interpretation/analysis/inference/ extrapolation for the former and those related to comprehension/comparison for the latter (Batra 2010). Such a bifurcation is also aimed at bridging the gap between learners from different contexts (e.g. rural/urban) whereby what is familiar or unfamiliar would be context dependent and the questions could be interchanged accordingly. Moreover, the inclusion of a certain percentage of comprehension questions is also meant to ensure the participation of those students who usually remain quiet and are not forthcoming in answering questions easily. It is not that comprehension or recall-based questions are absent in SPL III. But not all the information, ideas and concepts which are unfamiliar and abstract are accompanied by such questions. Some of the unfamiliar information and ideas also challenge many of the deeply entrenched prejudices and stereotypes.

For instance, the chapter *Confronting Marginalization* highlights the proactive role played by many Dalit groups to assert their rights (Box 13, Annexure III), something which contradicts the prevalent perceptions about the community as having no agency. Similarly, the chapter *Understanding Marginalization* presents details regarding the various facets of Adivasi lifestyle (Box 8, Annexure III) which are not so well known. They also in a way confront the stereotypes associated with the community. Often such textual content is not accompanied by basic recall or comprehension questions which are meant to enable the teachers find out if the students have assimilated the ideas or not. Such questions are also absent in the end-text exercises. This shows that the chapters do not make an attempt to bifurcate the familiar and non-familiar ideas and concepts. There is also no attempt to address them with relevant questions which if present would have

enabled the teachers to assess the students on their mastery of various skills at different levels.

In the absence of questions to allow teachers to gauge whether the students have been able to adequately grasp new ideas and concepts which challenge established notions it is unlikely that students would be able to respond to questions based on reasoning and application or inference and extrapolation. For students to master such skills it requires them first to grasp the new ideas and concepts, overcome the prevalent stereotypes and be convinced about the new ideas. Only then they can move to the next level and answer questions appropriately. And if the next level questions (as in the examples in boxes 9 and 12 discussed earlier) are ambiguous the situation becomes more difficult. Under such circumstances it creates the possibility of the questions being misconstrued by both the teachers and students. Moreover, unless checked, there is every possibility that all the new and abstract ideas and concepts would be overlooked or misinterpreted by the teachers and therefore would not be grasped by the learners. Thus, instead of challenging prejudices chances are that such misconceptions might become further consolidated.

The inclusion of various pedagogic tools like storyboards, case-studies, visuals, in-text and end-text questions definitely create space for the teachers to engage the children in debate and discussion through enabling them to share their lived experiences, reflect critically on specific issues and express their opinion in their own words. This holds the potential of making the classroom participatory. It also creates the possibility of turning the classroom into an inclusive, non-threatening space for sharing of diverse perspectives and opening it up for the entry of out-of-school knowledge. Such knowledge if allowed to be integrated into the domain of "official knowledge"(Apple 2000:46) embedded in the textbooks can definitely transform the classroom pedagogic discourse from being a teacher – driven one to one where the students actively participate in the generation of knowledge with the teacher playing the role of a facilitator. It also creates the possibility of encouraging the students to engage critically with the textual knowledge. However, this would require the teachers to be adequately trained. Moreover collectively taken, each of the chapters in the textbooks consists of too many pedagogical tools, each of

which would demand a lot of time and expertise to meaningfully engage the students in a discussion (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: Pedagogical Tools used in SPL III

Pedagogical Tools used	*Understanding Secularism*	*Understanding Marginalization*	*Confronting Marginalization*	*Public Facilities*
Storyboard	2	1	x	1
Case Study	2	2	1	3
Story	x	x	1	2
Visual	5	6	4	18
Poem	x	1	2	x
Survey/Pie-Chart	x	3	x	2
Glossary (no. of words)	3	6	6	4
In-Text Questions	5	16	8	12
End-Text Question	7	8	4	9
Total	24	46	29	54

Given the severe constraint of time under which teachers in most government and private schools operate, it remains to be seen to what extent these tools would be used in the classroom judiciously and whether they would be used at all.

A careful analysis of the textual content reveals that the textbooks do uphold a definite perspective *vis-a-vis* issues like inequality, social justice, gender concerns and marginalization. Teachers are expected to play a role in mediating information and opinion within the classroom with regard to such issues with the required sensitivity. At the same time there are questions which remain open-ended and can be interpreted in diverse and contradictory ways. This raises several questions: unless the teachers are adequately and appropriately trained to understand the perspective of the textbook both in terms of textual content and pedagogical approach can it be ensured that they would be open to accept ideas that contradict and challenge prevalent perceptions and entrenched prejudices? And unless the teachers are convinced and willing to accept new ideas how

can then it be expected that they would engage in discussion and dialogue with the students in a democratic manner and help them answer such questions in their own words? Who will monitor what can be included in that range of "right" answers and what should be left out? Most importantly, will a textbook which allows for diverse perspectives in the form of a range of "right" answers work when the assessment system has not undergone corresponding reforms? The SPL series does advise the teachers to use a common evaluation scheme to assess the students. But since it does not elaborate what that common evaluation scheme ought to be, how will teachers decide on the parameters to assess student learning?

Moreover, one needs to take into consideration the ground realities under which schools function in the country. While the textbooks deal with many controversial issues which challenge many of the deeply entrenched stereotypes and biases vis-a-vis the less dominant and marginalized sections of the Indian populace the teachers mostly belong to the dominant/majority communities. Under such circumstances is it possible to guarantee that they would be able to or willing to deliver the textbooks as per the intent of the textbook authors? How can it be ensured that the teachers coming from diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts would overcome their prejudices and misconceptions and deliver the textbooks with the required sensitivity? Considering the complex nature of some of the themes like marginalization, secularism, diversity and discrimination as well as the constraint of time under which teachers across the country operate, would it be possible for the teachers to think of appropriate local examples and share them with the students? The review of literature has drawn attention to the relatively questionable quality of both the pre-service and in-service teacher education in India (Chapter One pp. 28-29). Unless there is a complete overhaul of the existing teacher professional development programmes it remains doubtful to what extent the teachers would be able to transact the textbooks as envisioned by the authors.

3.3 Conclusion

The foregoing discussion analyses the innovations introduced in the SPL series with regard to pedagogy in keeping with the *Introductory Note to Teachers* present in each of

the textbooks and the recommendations proposed by the NCF 2005. Collectively taken, all these pedagogical tools definitely have the potential to make the classroom teaching-learning process participatory and democratic. These also encourage the students to engage with various social and political issues critically and allow them to express their views without hesitation and fear. The textbooks also attempt to discourage the practice of rote learning by encouraging the students to answer questions in their own words based on their understanding of concepts and thus create space for a range of correct answers. However, some gaps remain as seen in the absence of definitions for complex concepts, the inappropriate placement of visuals within the text, the abstruse nature of the language used and the ambiguous nature of some of the questions. These might create space for the textual content to be misinterpreted by the teachers and students.

However from the discussion in the previous chapter and this chapter it appears that the SPL series textbooks have been largely successful in reflecting the radical shifts introduced by the NCF 2005 both in terms of content and pedagogy. In that way it can be said that the SPL series definitely has succeeded in setting a template for change and showing that it is possible to conceptualize social science from a different perspective and approach. But the feasibility of these changes becoming a reality in classrooms remains questionable in the absence of similar changes in the area of assessment and an overhaul of the current teacher preparation processes. The chapters that follow (Five and Six) present the observation and analysis of the actual transaction of specific themes in the civics textbook in the middle section of a school in Delhi.

Chapter Four

Jawahar Vidyalaya: Understanding the Field

The previous two chapters have analysed how the radical shifts introduced by the NCF 2005 have been given shape in the Social and Political Life series both in terms of textual content and pedagogy. Two of the subsequent chapters (five and six) would examine how the textbooks were transacted and interpreted by the teachers in the classroom and received by the students–some of the primary objectives of this research study. Before entering the classroom, it becomes crucial to have an understanding of the field. The field selected for the present study was a school named Jawahar Vidyalaya[39]. This chapter aims to provide an understanding of the institutional and social context of the school to situate the study in its particular milieu.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides an overview of the school. This includes among other things details regarding the mission and vision of the institution, layout of the campus, admission policy and demographic profile of the students. An understanding of the field would remain incomplete without a discussion of the school culture which finds expression in the disciplinary regime of the school, the daily rituals and celebrations. This is presented in the second section of the chapter.

4.1   Jawahar Vidyalaya: An Overview

Jawahar Vidyalaya (henceforth referred to as JV) was a co-educational government school in Delhi affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) for the All India Secondary School (Class X) Examination and the All India Senior School Certificate (Class XII) Examination. It was part of a chain of government schools spread across India under the Jawahar Vidyalaya Samiti (JVS), a centralized autonomous body under the Ministry of Human Resource and Development (MHRD), Government of India. The school was situated close to some of the prestigious government and

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[39]Jawahar Vidyalaya is a pseudonym for the government school where the fieldwork was conducted. Similarly the name of the central school committee, Jawahar Vidyalaya Samiti, as well as the names of the teachers, students, Vice-Principal and Principal used in the study are pseudonyms. This is according to the terms of confidentiality agreed upon between the school and the researcher.

government funded institutions of higher education and research in the country. The primary branches (Class I-V) of JV were located within the campuses of these institutions from where the children joined the main school. The main school where the present study was conducted housed the upper primary (VI-VIII)[40], secondary (IX-X) and senior secondary (XI-XII) classes.

4.1.1   The School at a Glance

The school, a freshly painted three storey red building was visible right from the main road. It was surrounded by a red-brick wall topped with an iron railing and enclosed a huge compound. The main gate had a few uniformed security guards who ushered in the visitors only after they had filled in certain personal details and purpose of their visit in the visitor's register kept at the gate. It led to a cemented pathway. To the left of the pathway was a fairly spacious parking arena which usually had a few cars and two-wheelers (belonging to the academic and non-academic staff of the school and other officials of the JVS) parked there. Opposite to the parking arena a covered pedestal decorated with hanging strings of fresh marigold flowers housed a big idol of Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of learning. The pathway which was flanked by large patches of open ground with huge trees and flower beds led to the entrance to the school building.

The ground floor and the first floor of the building housed the school whereas the second floor was used for official purposes of the JVS. The entrance opened into a narrow passage. A few plastic chairs, meant for visitors, were lined up against the walls on both sides of the passage. One of the walls had a display board adorned with colourful photographs of the recent school events like the Independence Day and art work done by the students. A few attendants sat behind a large desk which was placed at the end of the passage. The attendance register for teachers was kept on the desk every morning and the teachers usually put in their signatures in it as they entered the building. A soft board on the nearby wall displayed the time-table for the day. The names of the absentee teachers along with the names of teachers on "arrangement duty" in their classes were also put up on it daily. It was a regular practice in the school after the assembly when the teacher in

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[40]The upper primary classes are also referred to as the middle school in this study.

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charge of time-table took note of the absentee teachers for the day and the specific periods/classes she had to teach. She then assigned other staff members present with an "arrangement duty" provided they had a non-teaching or free period. This was done to ensure that the students were not left unattended during the school hours.

a. The Lobby

On the right side of the passage was the school lobby which was an interface between the outside world and the school. It was an enclosed space situated in between the Principal's chamber on one side and the Vice-Principal's office on the other. A set of cushioned chairs and a centre table were placed on one side of the lobby. This was where all visitors - parents and others - who came to meet the Principal or the Vice-Principal waited before they were ushered into the inner chambers by an attendant. The lobby was decorated with a huge oil-painting depicting an idyllic Rajasthani village, a fairly big aquarium, a potted plant and more functional objects like a water -cooler.

The Principal's chamber was fairly spacious. He sat on a chair behind a large table. A few chairs were placed across the table for those who came to meet him. The photocopier machine, a personal computer and a printer were placed in one corner. Any staff member wishing to get a document photo copied had to come to this room. A few sofas were lined across the wall facing the Principal's desk. Since it was one of the few areas which was air-conditioned the guests who were invited as judges during various events like the social studies Day were usually received here. The room was equipped with a close-circuit television screen which continuously displayed the images of different areas - the main gate, playground, corridors and lobby. According to the school authorities it was installed to ensure the safety and security of the students and faculty members. A large display unit in one corner of the room showcased the many trophies won by the students in various inter-school events and competitions. A photograph of Mahatma Gandhi adorned the wall behind the Principal's seat.

JV also had a Vice-Principal and a Joint Vice-Principal. They shared one room, which was much smaller than the Principal's chamber and was situated opposite to it. It was minimally furnished and had one long table, a few chairs and three cupboards for storing

various official documents. Senior teachers were often seen visiting the room to consult the Vice-Principal and Joint Vice-Principal regarding various day-to-day matters and to look up the documents as and when required.

b. Classrooms and other Facilities

The lobby opened into a long open corridor which had rows of classrooms (Class X-XII) lined on both sides. The library, two computer laboratories, the German room (where the students who had opted for German as a hobby in the middle school came to attend classes) and two staffrooms for the male teachers were also located on this floor. Besides, there were several cubicles separated by make-shift partitions which housed the first–aid room (where a nurse attended to the medical needs of the students), the Counseling room (where a professional counselor attended to the social and emotional needs of the students), and the Sports room.

A ramp and a staircase led up to the first floor which had rows of classrooms (Class VIII-X) situated on both sides of a long corridor. The first floor also housed a spacious auditorium and three staffrooms for the women teachers, some of which were equipped with computer facility. A long passage connected the main school building with the annexe. Some of the science laboratories, the art room, yoga room, music room besides a few classrooms (Class VI-VII) were located in that building.

The school had separate washrooms, each supplied with running water, for girl and boy students and the female and male faculty members. It also employed a number of sanitation staff. Water coolers were placed next to the washrooms on each floor. There was also a canteen run by a private agency. It served snacks and soft drinks as well as meals and beverages.

Inside the school compound was a huge open ground which had a football field, a basketball court and a lawn tennis court. A swimming pool, run by a private agency and located right next to the school could be accessed by the students. There was also an elevated cemented stage where the daily morning assembly and various school events were held.

c. Organizational Structure

The JVS was founded in the nineteen sixties. According to the official website of the organization, its aim was to provide "excellence in education" and make available a "common curriculum and medium of instruction" to the wards of Central and State government employees. Its purpose was also to fulfill the larger goal of educational research by carrying out "experimentation and innovations" in the field of education. The mission document of JVS also claimed the contribution of the organization towards nation-building. This was explained through its stated aim of developing a spirit of national integration and inculcating patriotism as well as cultural and ethical values among the students. The objectives of JV, which was established in the early seventies, were aligned to the JVS mission. These objectives which were mentioned in the school diary (provided to every student at the beginning of an academic year) emphasized the need for promoting "an all-round development of the child" to enable her to become "a productive and contributing member of the society". Besides academics, the objectives also highlighted the need for developing in the child "life skills" and nurturing talent in games, sports and co-curricular activities so as to enable her to become "successful in career and life".

JV operated under the framework of guidelines set up by the JVS which functioned under the MHRD. It had its own organizational hierarchy consisting of the commissioner, the different joint commissioners (for academics and training) and assistant commissioners who forwarded the recommendations and mandates of the MHRD to the school. The Principal who was the academic and administrative head of the institution was responsible for operationlizing these mandates. In its day to day functioning, the school operated under a framework of hierarchy based on "an elaborate division of labour at different levels" (Gogoi 2014:110) that involved the Vice-Principal, the head of the department for each subject, subject teachers (both scholastic and co-scholastic), class teachers, various committees(academic and administrative),the administrative staff and student council.

The Principal was appointed by the JVS and served for a term of five years. As the head of the institution he was accountable for ensuring the smooth functioning of the school and had both academic and administrative responsibilities. His academic responsibilities included among other things academic supervision (ensuring regular holding of classes and examinations) and overseeing the admission process. His administrative duties consisted of the general administration of the school, management of financial matters and generation of funds. The Principal was available for consultation by the parents daily for a specific period of time during the school hours for various issues related to the admission of their child to the school or transfer to another school. He also functioned in close consultation with the academic and non-academic staff of the school, advising and guiding them in various matters related to the institution. While the Principal was the institutional head and the over-all in-charge of the school the Vice-Principal and Joint Vice-Principal looked after the minute details of its day-today functioning. This included among other things observing a few classes daily in operation and inspecting the students' notebooks from time to time. They also acted as the interface between the parents and the school regarding matters related to admission and issuing of transfer certificates.

The subject teachers in JV were mainly responsible for teaching their subjects according to the prescribed curriculum. They were also responsible for preparing questions for the different examinations and evaluating answer scripts. Each subject had a subject head or coordinator (usually a senior teacher) and the other subject teachers worked in close collaboration with her. They also reported to the class teacher about the progress of the students from time to time. Most of the teaching staffs were also part of various committees. Mention needs to be made of the moderation and examination committee, the science club and the scout and guide club. Many of the teachers also had the additional responsibility of being in charge of one class (a group of thirty five to forty students) as a class teacher. Occasionally the subject-teachers were asked to carry out certain additional responsibilities. These included invigilation during examinations, accompanying the students to various inter-school competitions held in other JVS schools within and outside the city and conducting cultural events in the school.

At the bottom of the organizational hierarchy was the students' council which was a nominated body usually consisting of the students of the senior secondary classes (XI and XII). It was assisted by the office bearers of each of the four houses.[41] The nominated members were sworn in to the student council through a formal investiture ceremony. The duties of the council included maintenance of discipline among the students during the assembly and recess, overseeing the activities of the different houses, and mediating between the Principal, teachers and the students whenever there was any internal problem.

d. Academics and Co-Curricular Activities

In keeping with the CBSE guidelines, the curriculum in the middle or upper primary school (Class VI-VIII) at JV included both scholastic (Hindi, English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies[42] and Sanskrit which was taught as a third language) and co-scholastic subjects (Art, Health and Physical Education). The students studied the same subjects in the senior school (Class IX and X) also but were allowed to choose any one language, either Hindi or Sanskrit. In the higher secondary stage (Class XI-XII) they were allotted different subjects in accordance to the stream chosen by them (Humanities/Commerce/Science). However the school also exercised its discretion in the allotment of streams and choice of subjects taking into account the availability of seats in each stream and the performance of the students at the secondary level.

As directed by the CBSE the students of the middle and secondary classes (VI-X) were assessed through CCE (Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation)[43] in the form of formative and summative assessments. The entire academic year was divided into two terms, first term (April-September) and second term (October- March). Each term the school conducted two formative assessments which included one pen and paper test.

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[41]The entire student population of the school was organized into four different groups or houses. This has been explained in detail later in this chapter.

[42]Batra points out that in many countries "the term 'social studies' is used to suggest an 'integrated' study of social sciences in school education" whereas "the term 'social sciences' is reserved exclusively for use in university education"(Batra 2010:6)

[43] The CCE was introduced in all CBSE affiliated schools as mandated by the Right to Education Act 2009 and was in operation till 2017. Under this system the students from classes 6-10 were evaluated throughout the academic year through multiple tests and different types of assignments instead of one pen and paper examination at the end of the academic year and were awarded grades in place of marks. One important aspect of the system was the no-detention policy.

Besides written assignments (class works and home works), presentations and group projects were also used to evaluate the students. The summative assessments which included only paper and pen tests were held at the end of each term. The marks secured by a student in each subject in the different assessments throughout the academic session were converted to a nine point grading scale to provide the final assessment report. The system of assessment was slightly different in the senior secondary classes where the students were regularly assessed through written examinations.

The faculty at JV consisted of trained teachers, both PGTs (Post-Graduate Trained Teachers i.e. teachers with a master's degree in a specific subject along with a B. Ed[44] degree) and TGTs (Trained Graduate Teachers i.e. teachers with a graduate degree and B. Ed) for the different subject areas. There were altogether thirty PGTs and forty five TGTs. While a TGT was eligible to teach up to the secondary level, a PGT was qualified to teach the senior secondary classes. There was also one teacher each for art education, music and work education while computer and physical education had more than one teacher. The majority of the teachers in the school were females though there were quite a few male teachers. The teachers primarily belonged to the majority Hindu community from North India though there were a few from West Bengal and Bihar. One or two teachers also belonged to the minority communities.

The JVS followed an elaborate procedure to recruit the faculty. This included advertising for vacancies in the Employment News, holding written examinations for the applicants and finally conducting interviews for the shortlisted candidates. The candidates were selected in accordance to the prescribed government rules regarding category-wise reservation. Periodically the teachers were also transferred to other JVS schools.

A Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) coordinator (usually a senior teacher) planned out a series of co-curricular activities for an entire academic session. According to Manjula Sachadeva, the CCA coordinator, this was done to promote an all-round development of the students and inculcate in them a sense of healthy competition. Every month three to four periods were allotted to CCA activities like poster designing, story writing,

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[44]Bachelor of Education or B. Ed is a two-year professional degree which prepares graduate students to work as a teacher in schools in India.

calligraphy and quiz. The themes for such activities were selected in accordance to certain national programmes (the Swatch Bharat Abhiyan[45]) or were aimed at sensitizing the students about certain social (child abuse) or environmental issues (environmental pollution). Besides other creative activities like group song and designing *rangolis*[46] were also included.

To carry out the CCA activities in an organized manner, the entire student community was divided into four houses named after famous personalities – Patel, Rana Pratap, Tagore and Ramanujam (all males).Each house was headed by a house master and a number of associate house masters (all teachers) who were assisted by a number of student representatives like the house captains and house vice-captains. Class-wise two classes were placed under each house and they were provided with a house uniform which consisted of T-shirts of different colours along with a pair of trousers/skirts. All interested students were eligible to participate in the CCA activities. The best entry from each grade under each house was selected by the Principal along with a student coordinator and later prizes were awarded to the winners.

Sports and games received significant attention at JV. The school offered facilities for different outdoor (lawn tennis, football, cricket, kabbadi, athletics) and indoor games (chess, table tennis, skating, taekwondo) and also yoga. There was also throw ball and hand ball especially for girls. There were three full-time coaches who trained the interested students in the sports of their choice. The students were encouraged to participate in competitive events held within the school as also at the cluster[47], regional[48] (where all JVS schools from one region participated) and national (where the winning school teams from the different regions participated) levels. The best team at the national level was sent to the SGFI (Sports and Games Federation of India) events where teams from both government and private schools from different parts of India took part. The school further encouraged the interested students by providing several facilities free of

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[45]The Swatch Bharat Abhiyan or 'Clean India Mission' is a nation-wide programme launched by the NDA Government in 2014. It focuses on sanitation and hygiene and is aimed at universal sanitation coverage.
[46]*Rangoli* is a decorative art form traditionally done by women on auspicious occasions like festivals and marriages to welcome Hindu deities.
[47] Two to three schools under the JVS form one cluster.
[48]All the schools under the JVS are grouped into four regions – northern, southern, eastern and western regions.

cost like sports kits, shoes and studs (football). It also organized the Annual Sports Day to encourage a hundred percent participation from the students.

JV had a trained art teacher. The emphasis provided to art was evident from the display of the students' colourful artwork throughout the school. The students were also encouraged to participate in various cultural activities through the CCA programme and the special assemblies held every Friday. Musical renditions, usually patriotic songs in Hindi or Sanskritized Hindi as well as regional songs (e.g. in Bengali, Haryanvi) were often a part of the special assemblies which were organized under the guidance of a qualified music teacher.

4.1.2   Admission Policy and Demographic Profile of the Students

JV was sponsored by a few government and government funded institutions of higher learning in the neighbourhood. Hence it gave preference in admission to the children and grandchildren of the current and retired employees of these institutions. Besides, admission was also open to children of all Central Government and State government employees. However depending on the number of vacancies, the school also provided admission to children of parents employed in the private sector from neighbouring as well as distant areas of Delhi.

The school had a well-defined fee structure keeping in view the different social categories of students who constituted its clientele. Apart from a nominal admission fee the monthly fees were collected under different heads like tuition fee, computer fund and School Development Fund. The school provided category- wise exemptions to all girl students, all Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST)[49] students and children of

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[49]Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes is the official name given in India to certain communities who are historically disadvantaged. The Scheduled Castes are often referred to as Dalits. The term `Dalit' means `broken' has been adopted by these communities as a sign to reflect the centuries of discrimination within the caste system.Other Backward Classes (OBC), on the other hand, is a collective term, officially used to refer to castes which are both socially and educationally disadvantaged. Both the Scheduled Castes and the Other Backward Classes along with the Scheduled Tribes (STs) are provided reservation in higher education and public sector employment under the Government of India.

JVS employees. Complete exemption was provided to children from the BPL[50] category, children with disability and girl students who were the only child of their parents.

The official website of the school provided an overall idea about the demographic profile of the students at JV for the current academic session. The following tables capture the overall demographic profile, both sex-wise and social category-wise, of the students from Class I to Class XII for the academic session 2014-2015[51].

Table 4.1: Sex Ratio of students at JV (Classes I – XII) for 2014-2015

Class	Total Enrollment	Girls	Boys
I-XII	3933	1767	2166

Table 4.2: Social Category-wise Demographic Profile of Students at JV for 2014-2015

Class	Total Enrollment	SC	ST	OBC	Physically Challenged	General	Muslims	Minority
I-XII	3933	1008	183	552	20	1917	112	141

As Table 4.1 shows out of the total number of 3933 students the total number of enrolment for girls was 1767 while that of boys was 2166. According to Table 4.2 there were 1008 Scheduled Caste students, 183 Scheduled Tribe students and 552 Other Backward Classes students. Out of the total number of enrollments the general category consisted of 1917 students. Besides there were 20 students belonging to the physically challenged category, 112 Muslims and 141 students belonging to the minority category (consisting of Buddhists, Sikhs and Christians).

Each class in JV middle or upper primary school (VI-VIII) and secondary school (IX-X), had eight sections (A-H). Each section had at an average, forty students though the ratio of boys and girls varied from one section to another. Class XI and XII each had three

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[50]BPL or Below Poverty Line is an economic benchmark used by the Government of India to identify economically disadvantaged households and individuals. Such households and individuals are eligible for government aid.

[51]The data provided here captures the category-wise enrollment of students during the period of the fieldwork. Although the fieldwork was carried out in the senior school (Classes VI-XII), the data for the primary section (Classes I-V) has been included here because Class I is the entry point for the students.

sections for Science, three sections for Commerce and two sections for Humanities. The total number of students in each class and each section in the senior secondary level varied. Since the present study focuses on two classes - VIII A and VIII B of the middle school, the following section will focus more closely on the demographic profile of these two classes.

a. A Closer Look at Class VIII A and Class VIII B

It was a regular practice at JV for the class teacher to maintain the details regarding the socio-economic background of each student, for instance, the residential address, caste and religious background as well as the parents' names, nature of occupation and income level in the attendance register. Looking at the attendance registers of Classes VIII A and VIII B provided an idea regarding the demographic profile of the students. Table 3 captures this.

Table 4.3: Demographic Profile of Class VIII A and Class VIII B

	Class VIII A		Class VIII B	
	Girls	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Boys**
Scheduled Caste	3	9	5	3
Scheduled Tribe	---	---	---	---
Other Backward Classes	1	2	---	1
Minority	---	1	1	---
General Category	9	14	16	14
Total: Girls/Boys	13	26	22	18
Total No. of Students in Class	**(13 + 26) = 39**		**(22+ 18) = 40**	

Table 4.3 shows that the demographic profile of the students was slightly different in the two sections of Class VIII selected for the study. For instance Section A had more boys (26) than girls (13) whereas in Section B the number of boys (18) and girls (22) was almost equal. In both the sections most of the students belonged to the general category though there were a few who belonged to the reserved categories. Section A had a sizeable number of students from the reserved category (12 SCs, 3 OBCs) compared to Section B (8 SCs and I OBC). There were no ST students in these two classes though

there were few in the school. The majority of the student community in the school as well as in the selected classes was Hindu. There was 1 Sikh (SC) boy in Section A and a Buddhist (SC) girl in Section B. These two classes had no students belonging to the other minority communities like Muslims or Christians though there were quite a few in the school.

A questionnaire that the students in the two classes were asked to fill up revealed that most of them belonged to families which were relatively well-educated. In both the classes, many of the mothers (69 per cent) had either completed their school education (till Class XII) or were graduates (24 per cent) while only a few had completed post-graduation (2 per cent). Among the fathers most were graduates (82 per cent) while there were many who held a post-graduate degree (10 per cent). A few had studied even beyond post-graduation level (3 per cent). However there were parents who had not continued their education beyond Class X (2 per cent) while there were few (3 per cent) who had completed only the elementary level of education (Class VIII).

In the majority of the families the father was the sole bread-earner working in different government (75 per cent) or private organizations (23 per cent). Among those fathers who were employed in the government sector there were some who worked as laboratory assistants, clerical staff, peons, drivers or cooks in government or government-funded institutions like the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU). There were some who were teachers in various government schools. A few also served in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). Quite a few were employed in the private sector while some had their own business (2 per cent). Amongst the mothers the majority were homemakers (85 per cent), while some worked in government offices (7 per cent) and some were employed in the private sector (5 per cent). A few also had their own small business (3 per cent) like a beauty parlour or grocery shop.

In both the sections the students largely came from nearby residential colonies as well as from slightly distant areas in outer Delhi. A few came from more distant places bordering Gurgaon and Faridabad.

4.2 School Culture and the Construction of the "Ideal" Citizen

Thapan has characterized school culture as an "expression and affirmation of the school's ultimate values" (Thapan 2010:54). The following discussion will focus on school culture in the context of - a) the disciplinary regime at JV and b) rituals, celebrations and special events to understand how the school attempted to inculcate certain values among the students and how it was received by them.

4.2.1 The Disciplinary Regime at JV

One of the many adages painted on the walls of JV read "Discipline is the key of all greatness- spiritual and moral". The importance of inculcating discipline in the students was emphasized by the Principal, Mr. Srivastava during an interview: "My stress is on discipline ..not academics". Accordingly the school adopted diverse ways to inculcate the same among the students both within and outside the classroom. The following discussion elucidates this.

a. A Desirable Body Image

The school diary mentioned that the students were required to come to the school regularly in "neat, clean and tidy" school uniform[52]. This was repeatedly emphasized by the Principal, the Vice-Principal and the sports teacher during the morning assembly. For instance on one such occasion, the Principal, Mr. Srivastava drew the attention of the students to the importance of coming to school in uniform and maintaining punctuality. He explained that it was instrumental in achieving academic success.

> All of you read the same books and are taught by the same teachers and yet there is vast difference in your performances in the examinations. Why is this so? If you are punctual in everything you

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[52]The students at JV had to wear different sets of uniforms for summer and winter as prescribed by the JVS. In summer the girls in upper primary classes (VI-VIII) wore grey pleated skirts with half-sleeve shirts in multi-coloured check fabric. The boys wore half-sleeve shirts of the same fabric matched with grey shorts. Girls in the senior classes (IX- XII) were seen in collared *kurta*s made of the same multi-coloured check fabric along with grey *salwars* while the boys of the same classes sported similar half-sleeve shirts along with grey trousers. In winter the half-sleeved upper garments for both boys and girls were replaced by full-sleeved ones. Girls in upper primary classes wore grey woolen stockings while boys of the same class were allowed to wear full-length trousers in grey. Besides both boys and girls had to put on either grey blazers or grey sleeveless sweaters or grey jumpers.

do, maintain discipline and wear your uniform properly you will be able to reach school before time. Your performance will also be better.

The students were also expected to be neatly groomed. For instance the girls in the middle school were expected to wear their hair in two neatly tied plaits along with red ribbons while girls in the secondary and senior secondary classes were allowed to tie their hair in a single plait or pony tail tied with a red rubber band. Younger girls with short hair were asked to either wear a red hair band or red hair clips to prevent their hair from falling on their face. All girls were discouraged to wear any make-up or flashy jewellery like bangles, earrings or nose-pins. Likewise the boys of all classes were expected to have short hair, neatly combed while it was mandatory for senior boys to be clean shaven.

The female teachers at JV always came in traditional Indian clothing like *salwar-kameez* or *churidar-kurta* and sarees. None of them were ever seen sporting western outfits or sleeveless upper garments (*kurtas* or blouses). The male teachers usually came in formal shirts and trousers and were rarely seen in informal clothes like denim pants and T-shirts. The dress code was relaxed for the female and male sports teachers who were mostly seen in sports outfits like track-suits. At JV there thus appeared to be an unwritten dress code for the teachers also. However this was denied by one of the teachers who argued that the teachers in JVS schools in different parts of the country were allowed to come to work dressed in their traditional attire[53].

Yet many students especially in the senior classes and a few in the junior classes were found to defy the rules. Many of the senior girls and a few in the upper primary classes were seen to flaunt their front or side fringes. Often they had their hair fashionably done in a single pony-tail. Using of kohl in their eyes, wearing nose-pins and painting their nails with the trendiest shades were also popular among them. Like the girls, the boys were seen to grow a beard while some, following the latest trends in hairstyling, sported a spiked hair-do.

Such violations were met with a certain degree of strictness by the school authorities. On one occasion Nina Dobhal, a social studies teacher was overheard discussing with her

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[53]This ranged from *mekhla-chadar* in Assam to skirts in Goa.

colleagues in the staffroom about a girl in the middle school. She narrated how she affectionately tried to convince the student how a "real" school girl should be groomed:

> There's one girl in my Class VI ..she's very dark-*kaali hai* but she has beautiful eyes. Once I found that all her hair was on her face. So I told her: "Look you have such lovely eyes..if your hair is all over your face how will one see your eyes? I am married and therefore entitled to dress fashionably. But I put a hair band when I come to work. In school we like students to tie their hair neatly in two plaits..then only they look adorable..they look like real school girls!

Teachers in the classroom often pulled up deviant students for not adhering to the dress code and hairstyle. Keshav Mishra, another social studies teacher, for instance, once confronted a boy during class for sporting a spiked hair-do. He also instructed him to come to school after having a bath: "How many times do you comb your hair? Why is your hair like this? It looks like today you haven't had a bath …. You should always have a bath before coming to school!"

One of the students shared how one teacher often moved around the corridor with a pair of scissors. Whenever she noticed a boy with long hair she would cut off a portion of his hair. Trisha shared: "There is one teacher, she brings a pair of scissors to school and whenever she finds any boy with long hair she chops it off!"

Teachers also emphasized the importance of maintaining a fit and healthy body. They argued that it would enable the students to concentrate in studies. KM for instance on one occasion was found mocking a student for being overweight. He further provided him with a few suggestions as to how he should control his weight and maintain a fit body.

> Looking at Shekhar, whom he had asked to do sit-ups for not completing homework, KM said: "Is this the way to do sit-ups? You are not even sitting! So you eat a lot of hot-dogs, *haan*? Don't eat so much of hotdog. Get tiffin…. You must take a full round of the school ground during the games period in order to have a fit body. Otherwise you will not be able to concentrate on studies.

The school authorities and the teachers thus made a concerted effort to ensure that the students developed a certain desirable body image and presented themselves accordingly within the school premises. Deka argues that "signs of disobedience to a great extent are mapped on the body, the way in which the body is conducted, groomed or made to appear" (Deka 2014:76). The school authorities at JV thus acted "as the custodian of the body which is strongly associated with the notion of modesty and docility" (ibid: 77).

Conversations with the students however suggest that the school was not always successful.

> Trisha: Yes having a school uniform is important ..it helps in maintaining equality among all students….but teachers should know how to handle those who do not follow the rules. Like on every Wednesday the students have to wear a specific house uniform. Whoever does not follow is made to stand in the playground for four periods. Does that really help? Now more number of students have stopped coming to the school in that uniform on Wednesdays. They don't seem to mind if they are made to stand outside in the playground ..in fact that becomes an excuse to bunk the class!!"

> Himanish: Teachers should change the modes of punishment. Instead of making the students stand outside in the field they should hold them back after school hours or call the parents. Also the teachers frequently threaten the students saying "we'll call your parents!" but they don't do so. So the students don't take them seriously!!

The students agreed that having a school uniform helped in maintaining a degree of equality among the students. They also accepted that some degree of strictness needed to be maintained by the school authorities to bring the indisciplined students under control. However they often questioned the nature and relevance of the punishment meted out to the errant students. For instance they felt meting out punishments like time-outs to students for not coming to school in proper uniform did not deter them from doing so. Rather such punishments provided them an opportunity to bunk classes more frequently. The students also felt that the teachers were inconsistent. They shared that the teachers often issued threats to errant students but rarely implemented the same. This they felt emboldened such students who did not take such threats seriously.

b. Disciplining Minds

Conversations with some of the teachers and students revealed that discipline was a major problem at JV. Ipsita Mitra, the art teacher pointed out:

> Discipline is more to do with the behaviour of a person….The way the students talk, .. within the friend circle...and the way they talk to you or me...and it's a general tendency whatever you ask them not to do or they know they are not supposed to do, they will definitely do that. ..then there's the issue of bad language...! They make it a point that you do not teach by creating a ruckus,.. by hooting in the middle of the class! They speak in a tone that you will be irritated. Or you will lose your interest to teach...they will forget to bring their notebooks week after week. How far will you tolerate? Once, twice, three weeks maximum? Okay you can overlook. But at a point of time you will be bound to say "what is wrong with you?"

The concerns raised by the art teacher were shared by the other teachers. They often complained about the students' lack of interest in studies and the absence of discipline among them. This according to them was reflected in the manner the students behaved in

general, their body language, the way they interacted with each other and the language they used to converse with teachers and friends. Further they drew attention to the defiance the students displayed when instructed to do something by the teachers within and outside the classroom. They also complained about the absence of decorum among the students inside the classroom. This was reflected in the manner the students often disrupted the classroom by not following instructions, hooting, forgetting to bring their notebooks to class for several weeks all of which made the teacher lose interest in teaching.

The concerns highlighted by the teachers found resonance among many of the students.

> Aparna: The discipline issue in our school is bad. The students shout so much that the teachers have to shut the door and windows while teaching. The moment the bell rings you will find all the boys running outside to the corridor..they start beating up each other, …..it's fine to have a little bit of fun-*masti*..but the way the students respond when the teachers say something..they immediately answer back ─*ulta jawab*!. Some even leave the class with their bags even while the teacher is teaching! So there should be some kind of discipline in the school.

Some of the students shared how many of the boys regularly created a commotion both inside the classroom and in the corridor. They were seen running around, shouting or beating up their friends playfully in the absence of a teacher. The students spoke about the defiant manner in which some of the boys responded to the teachers whenever they were questioned about their misbehaviour. According to them many even bunked classes regularly. They felt that the level of discipline in the school was lax and needed a more stringent enforcement.

It has already been discussed how the school authorities and the teachers tried to inculcate bodily discipline among the students. This went hand in hand with regulating their behaviour. While disciplining the body depends on "physical training of habits and demeanour" inculcating behavioural norms requires regulation of "thought, conduct and a general everyday philosophy of life" (Deka 2014:78). This was addressed at JV through diverse ways ─ displaying adages inside the school building, distinguishing between "good" and "bad" behaviour and surveillance and punishment.

The school authorities resorted to certain subtle measures to instil among the students a respect for discipline. Around the school one would come across, a number of adages on the walls in Hindi and English written in white paint against a blue background. Some of the adages were in the nature of advisory statements reminding the students of their duties towards the school. For instance, a separate board on the ground floor placed near the library enumerated the guidelines that the school authorities expected the students to follow while they were present in the school premises. It was also aimed at evoking among the students a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the institution. The following is an example:

An Adage at JV

Jawahar Vidya Mandir, Vidya Marg, New Delhi
This is our Vidyalaya   *The Classrooms are ours*   *Proper Use of dustbins keeps the classrooms NEAT and CLEAN*   *Lights, fans and fittings are for our comfort*   *Blackboards are provided for effective learning*   *Windows are provided for ventilation and daylight*   *Proper arrangement of furniture ensures our safety*

The adages also included advisories intended to provide the students with astuteness in their path to achievement and success. The following are a few examples - "An hour in the morning is like two in the evening", *"Dharya hi buddhi ka path pradarshak hai"* (Patience is the guiding factor for wisdom). However some adages were clearly more philosophical in nature like "Knowledge of our duties is the most essential part of the philosophy of life", *"Yahi sabse dhanavan hai jo sabse kam par santosh kar sakta hai kyuki santosh hi saccha dhyan hai"* (One who is satisfied with minimal things in life is the richest of all as satisfaction is the best virtue). There were also a few posters encouraging the students to join the Indian Armed Forces and were aimed at invoking a

sense of national pride and patriotism among the students. It is however difficult to evaluate whether and to what extent these adages impacted the behavior of the students.

"Good" and "Bad" Behaviour

Deka argues that a school is usually "a normative site" which attempts to inculcate among the students "fixed notions of what is wrong or right" (Deka 2014:79). The authorities and teachers at JV believed in enabling the students to distinguish between "good" and "bad" behaviour or what could be counted as acceptable norms of behaviour and what could not be. Sometimes the daily morning assembly at JV was used as a forum for this. While instances of "good" behaviour or conduct on the part of the students were praised by the teachers in front of the entire assembly instances of "bad" behaviour were criticized. The perpetrators if identified were also rebuked.

On one occasion, the issue of maintaining hygiene and sanitation within the school premises was raised by Ipshita Mitra. Addressing the assembled students, she read out a letter written by one girl student of a senior class complaining about the poor maintenance of hygiene and cleanliness in the school toilets. Through the letter the girl asked in what ways the students could cooperate to address the problem. The teacher praised her for her clarity of thought. Further she highlighted the measures taken by the school recently to keep the toilets clean:

> The school has put in a lot of effort and money to provide a clean and hygienic environment for you. We have installed liquid soap dispensers and kept a hand towel in every toilet. But there has been no cooperation from your side.. so I hold all of you responsible for the poor sanitary conditions in the school!!

Following this she displayed a broken soap dispenser which she claimed was pulled out from one of the toilets by some miscreant student. She also mentioned how the hand towels were often found inside the commode or flush tank. She asked if the school was investing so much money and time for the benefit of the students why there was no cooperation from them.

The school followed a strict policy of not allowing the students to carry money beyond a specified limit. The students in the assembly were often subjected to a body search by the class teachers who checked the pockets of their upper and lower garments. The class

monitors and other senior students were asked to search the school bags of all students. The names of all those found guilty were noted down and they were punished. On one occasion three girl students (perhaps monitors) were invited to the stage and praised for recovering money from the bags of some students and depositing them to the teachers.

Such discussions in the assembly however invited a mixed reaction from the student community. While some were appreciative of the assembly as being informative there were many who described it as "boring", "nothing more than a routine" and "punishment".

Surveillance and Punishment

Some very proactive measures were adopted by the school authorities to inculcate respect for discipline among the students. Mention has already been made of the closed circuit camera placed in the Principal's room. Ostensibly its purpose was to maintain a close watch over all the areas of the school premises for security reasons. In reality it was like a "Panopticon" (Foucault 1977: 201) acting as a reminder to all staff and students that their activities were being closely monitored by the Principal. Every day after the classes had begun the Principal took a few rounds of the entire school. This was to ensure that the teachers went to the classes on time and the students remained within the classroom even in the absence of the teacher. Often when the students became boisterous inside the classroom, the teacher, to make them quiet, issued warnings: "Principal Sir is on his round and will soon come here. So better behave yourself!!"It was a common sight in the school to see the Vice-Principal, Joint Vice-Principal, the art teacher and the games teachers keeping a watch when the students had to return to their classes after the morning assembly. A similar watch was kept when they came out of and returned to their classrooms during the recess and when the day ended and the students returned home. They had to ensure that the students remained disciplined by walking in a single file, and did not push each other or resort to any kind of misbehaviour. This however did not prevent the students from indulging in such mischief.

The school authorities went beyond simply monitoring the general behaviour of the students. Often during the recess and the interval between two periods the male Vice-

Principal along with the male sports teachers were seen carrying a stick in their hands and moving around the corridors. If they caught any of the students "misbehaving" they immediately resorted to yelling at them and even beating them up. On a few occasions even the Principal was seen resorting to similar corporal punishments and verbal admonitions while dealing with such recalcitrant students. Punishments however differed for the boys and girls. Usually it was the boys who were subjected to corporal punishments. Girls, when caught "misbehaving" were verbally rebuked and let off with a warning.

When asked to comment on the benefits and success of the disciplinary measures adopted by the school, the teachers and students shared their perspectives. During an interview the Principal proclaimed how the focus on discipline during his tenure had drastically reduced the number of late-comers and incidence of students coming to school without uniform. He also mentioned that there were only a few miscreants in the higher classes and the school no longer needed the presence of police personnel in front of the school gate. All this in his opinion could be achieved by focusing on discipline.

The students however disagreed with the teachers and the Principal on the use and efficacy of the disciplinary regime in the school. When asked about the use of corporal punishment, they commented as follows:

> Punit: Corporal punishment is very wrong….if the child does something very wrong he can be taken to the Principal. And if it's not that serious he can be given a time-out or made to do sit-ups.
>
> Anuj: The Government has banned corporal punishment. But even then many teachers in our school resort to it... If we want we can file cases against these teachers…!! They should make us understand ..explain things like parents do. This is the age when we need to be told what we should do and what we should not..

The students were critical and expressed their strong disapproval for the rampant usage of corporal punishment. Referring to the banning of such punitive measures by the government they argued that as students they were even entitled to file a complaint with the police against the teachers who resorted to corporal punishments. They endorsed the need for disciplinary measures. But they suggested alternative ways of handing issues of indiscipline like taking the errant students to the Principal and explaining the dos and

don'ts to them as parents usually did. They also shared their views regarding the behaviour of some of the teachers.

> Aparna: The teachers also need to be disciplined. There's one teacher..once a group of students in our class were listening to music on their mobile phones sitting in front of him and he too was doing the same sitting behind them!!.
>
> Trisha: There's one teacher.he uses abusive words which I feel ashamed to repeat before you.....he even gives *gaali* to girls..some teachers even use *ma-behen ki gaali*!!If teachers don't have this much of discipline as to how they need to talk then what can we children do?

The students complained about cases of misconduct on the part of some of the teachers. They argued that along with the students the teachers also needed to be disciplined. What they disapproved most was how some of the teachers while admonishing them, resorted to verbal abuse and did not spare the girl students. They also shared their grievance vis-à-vis some teachers who they felt did not even spare their parents.

> Anita: Once we had a free period and the children were … playing kabaddi in the class..there was a lot of noise..Someone saw our yoga teacher coming and said "the fat one has come (*motawala aah gaya*)!" I admit it was wrong..but why should he be abusive to our parents..he could have scolded us..But he started shouting: "Who said this? You don't know how to behave..Your parents must be like this only..I am much better than them". Once one of the students, Abhijeet was caught by him for doing some mischief. So he asked Abhijeet: "What does your father do? When Abhijeet answered that he is a chef this teacher retorted - A chef's son cannot be any better..go and study in the school in which your parents studied! Your parents haven't taught you how to behave!!

The students also complained that the teachers were often disrespectful and judgmental towards their parents. One of them narrated an incident about how a teacher on being made fun of by some of the students for being overweight made certain disparaging remarks about their parents and their educational background. They found such behaviour on the part of the teachers unacceptable and highly condemnable.

The above discussion reveals that the school made a concerted effort to inculcate among the students bodily discipline and discipline of behaviour. However the school authorities were not always successful and the disciplinary measures adopted by the school were often thwarted by some of the students. It was thus a continuous struggle for the school to bring the recalcitrant students under control. While the students approved of the usage of disciplinary measures and punishment to improve the *mahaul* of the school they were critical of the usage of corporal punishment. They also questioned the moral authority of some of the teachers to regulate their behaviour on grounds of misconduct on the part of

the teachers themselves. This reflected their sense of morality and the ability to distinguish between "right" and "wrong".

4.2.2   Rituals, Celebrations and Special Events

At JV the rituals consisted of routine rituals like the morning assembly and some special celebrations and events that were organized on specific occasions (e.g. annual sports day, Independence Day). These served specific purposes.

a. The Morning Assembly at JV

It has been discussed earlier how the morning assembly was used as a platform by the school to enable the students to distinguish between "good" and "bad" behaviour. It was also a forum to inculcate in them a range of values and norms of behaviour.

The timing and duration of the assembly was fixed - 7.30 to 7.50 a.m. in summer and 8.00 to 8.20 a.m. in winter. It was mandatory for the entire school community to be present at the assembly. Apart from being held at a particular time it was organized at a specific venue, the school playground. On a regular school day, as one approached the school in the early morning one would hear the repetitive drum beats, played by one of the students on the bare cemented podium in the playground, reverberating in the air. It was similar to a clarion call to the members of the school community calling them to report for the assembly. The fact that the assembly was held daily at a particular time and venue and was meant to be attended by the entire school community – the Principal, Vice-Principal, teachers and students – signified the importance attached to it by the school authorities.

Nearing the playground one would observe a few teachers and students scurrying towards the podium to get into their assigned space on the ground. Those, especially some senior boys and girls who were found chatting and some younger boys who were still busy playing around the field, would be reprimanded by the vigilant teachers asking them to "hurry up" and get into their positions. Every student was expected to be punctual in attending the assembly and disciplinary action was taken against the late-comers. They were made to stand in a separate queue outside the main playground but near the podium

so that they were visible to the entire school community. Their names were noted down by a teacher and later provided to the class teacher who regularly kept a record of the same. Late attendance for the assembly thrice a week was dealt with strictness. Students were called upon by the class teacher and asked to give an explanation for their late attendance. This was meant to reiterate the sanctity of being punctual for the assembly.

The gathering at the assembly had a definite physical structure and organization. Each class was made to stand in a group in separate columns of boys and girls supervised by their class teacher. The students of the middle school (Classes VI to VIII) - the junior most group - occupied one side of the stage. They were followed by the students of the senior school (Classes IX and X) and then the students of the senior most classes (XI and XII). The assembled students thus formed a semi-circle facing the stage.

The teachers did not join the students. They were seen walking up and down, ensuring that the students of their respective classes stood in columns in an orderly manner. They also were seen instructing the students to keep an arm's length distance between each other. The sports teacher and the arts teacher who were in charge of organizing the assembly also ensured that the students followed the norms. Thus although the assembly symbolized the coming together of the entire school community it revealed a hierarchy between junior and senior classes and between the teachers and the students while maintaining a strict segregation gender-wise. It thus pointed to the existence of "elements of differentiating rituals" within "consensual rituals" which provided "a good cover for discrimination and differentiation between pupils" (Thapan, 2006:57).

The assembly had a pre-designed format. At 7.50 a.m. sharp the drumbeat would stop. Following this the sports teacher, a burly gentleman in his late fifties, would begin instructing the assembled students over the microphone to stand in "Attention" (*Savdhan*) and "At Ease" (*Vishram*) position alternately for a couple of times. This was followed by the class teachers taking the roll call. One student would call out the roll numbers alphabetically over the microphone. As the students would respond by raising their hand, the class teachers would mark them present in their respective class registers. The absentee students would be marked accordingly.

The recitation of the school prayer and school pledge followed after this. Led by the school choir (a group of girls reciting the prayer) and assisted by a group of boys playing different musical instruments the entire student community was expected to collectively recite the prayer. The prayer was usually a devotional song paying obeisance to an abstract deity. Sometimes popular Sanskrit *slokas* like *Asotoma Sadgamaya* and the Gayatri mantra were also recited. At JV, the recitation of the school pledge was regarded as a serious affair. Following the students on the stage, the entire student community was asked to hold their right arm in a horizontal position (reminiscent of taking a pledge in the armed forces) and solemnly take a vow to fulfill their duty towards the country, its people and heritage. The pledge was taken in Hindi, English and Sanskrit alternatively through the week. Given below is the English version of the pledge:

> ### *The School Pledge*
>
> *India is my country and all Indians are my brothers and sisters.*
> *I love my country and I am proud of its rich and varied heritage.*
> *I shall always strive to be worthy of it.*
> *I shall give respect to my parents, teachers, classmates and all elders*
> *And treat everyone with courtesy.*
> *To my country and my people I pledge my devotion.*
> *In their well-being and prosperity alone lies my happiness.*

The reading of the news headlines of the day came next. As the assembled students waited, one student would read out a few headlines of the day related to local, national, international news as also news from the arena of sports and a brief weather report. The "thought for the day", a moralistic advice, would be shared by another student from the same class[54]. The assembly would conclude with the singing of the national anthem - *Jana Gana Mana.* The performance of each of these items was preceded or accompanied by simple calisthenics (for instance, *savdhan and vishram*) coordinated by one of the students on the stage.

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[54]At JV, the responsibility for leading the assembly each week was allotted to one class under the supervision of the class teacher.

The manner in which the school pledge at JV was worded and expected to be recited shows that it was meant to instil among the students a feeling of pride and love as also a certain sense of duty and responsibility towards the nation and fellow citizens. Similarly the collective singing of the national anthem was expected to arouse among the students unconditional love for the motherland. However not all students were found to participate in the assembly as expected by the school. As the various items like the pledge and prayer were conducted many, especially the senior school boys were observed talking among themselves, laughing and pushing each other. They thus appeared non-serious. Whenever they caught the attention of the vigilant teachers they were either given a warning or made to stand on the side. Many of the middle school students also appeared restless. However once one of the students on the stage announced on the microphone, "Get ready for the National Anthem", the assembled students and teachers readied themselves. They immediately stood in the correct posture – holding their body and head upright with both hands held straight on their two sides. As the school choir assisted by the music teacher playing the harmonium led the assembly in singing *Jana Gana Mana* everybody participated whole-heartedly. This was evident from the readiness, spontaneity and disciplined manner with which all the students responded to the announcement. No strict vigilance was required and none of the teachers had to admonish any of the students.

During the group discussions the students shared their opinion on the importance of the assembly:

> Smriti: Assembly is nice. It creates a sense of "unity in diversity" among the students. In our school there are children from different backgrounds. But everybody has to recite the same prayer..it's not like there's a different prayer for Hindus and Muslims!
>
> Punit: Assembly is good. We get to know a lot of new things from the special item, news..teachers make some important announcement..Yoga sir teaches us new techniques to keep calm..it refreshes our mind. But sometimes we become fed up while reciting the pledge..lifting our hands up and down…if we touch someone by mistake it becomes a problem!
>
> Anuj: We get bored attending the assembly every day…it becomes too much to stand in the hot sun for so long..our legs start hurting and the teachers give such long lectures!! It should happen on alternate days.
>
> Sunil : I think it's total time-pass!

The students at JV, as the above conversation shows, appeared divided in their opinion while talking about the assembly. Some acknowledged the importance of the assembly in

fostering a sense of unity or collective identity among the students as also rejuvenating the mind. At the same time they did not hesitate to express their feeling of sheer boredom, irritation and discomfort for having to attend the assembly as a routine. They especially resented being made to stand in the sun for a long duration and listen to long lectures by the teachers. The students appeared equally divided while commenting on the importance of the school prayer:

> Punit: There's no harm in taking the name of god once a day...
>
> Varsha: We ..do prayer..like chanting of *slokas* like the Gayatri mantra..It gives us inspiration..and it has been clinically proved that the Gayatri mantra energizes us when we chant it with devotion-*mann se jab bolte hai!*
>
> Prerna: Everyday there's a prayer...nothing new ….PT starts and most of the children don't do anything!!
>
> Amitosh: It just gives a headache!

Some students acknowledged the importance of participating in the school prayer as they felt that it provided them inspiration, energy and peace of mind. But many were completely dismissive of the assembly and expressed their resentment very strongly. They felt the rituals like the prayer, pledge and news headlines served no purpose but wasted their time. However they were unanimous when asked to comment on the importance of the national anthem.

> Anita:: It's important..it gives me a sense of peace-*shanti* and I feel proud of my country while singing the national anthem.
>
> Vikas: It gives us speed..I feel like going and bashing up someone who's doing some mischief!!
>
> Sunil: National Anthem ...I really respect it. Not just me..all the rowdy students here – *bade bade gundey*—they have complete fun during the assembly...like when the prayer goes on they indulge in abusing each other...giving *gaali*..but as soon as the national anthem starts- all become attentive and quiet..Nobody moves!!

The feeling of resentment expressed by the students vis-à-vis the assembly in general was however absent with regard to the national anthem. The students shared how they felt a sense of pride for being an Indian and also found it very motivating. One student who was otherwise so dismissive of the assembly shared how even the most rowdy students who were otherwise disruptive during the assembly became attentive while singing the national anthem. Thus, although the students provided mixed responses while commenting on the importance of the assembly, on the whole they unanimously showed their respect for the national anthem. This shows that the assembly did succeed to an

extent in establishing the "we-feeling" (Waller 1938 cited in Thapan 2006:56) or group solidarity amongst the students as a school community. The singing of the national anthem in particular helped in a reaffirmation of the feeling of nationhood and merging of the school community with a larger identity as Indians through paying obeisance to the nation.

b. Celebration of Special Events

Apart from these routine activities discussed above there were other ceremonies which were celebrated either annually or as one-time events as per the government regulations. These included the annual celebration of the Independence and Republic Days, and events like the Bal Swachata Abhiyan (introduced by the current government in 2014). Although these ceremonies were distinct from the routine rituals they contributed to the formation of the overall school culture.

Independence Day

The Independence Day Ceremony was celebrated with great fanfare by the entire JV community. The entire school displayed a festive look with the school building and the cemented podium on the playground decorated with tricolour festoons. It was also an occasion when parents and family members were invited to attend the celebration along with their wards. The programme began with the unfurling of the national flag by the Principal. This was followed by a tree-planting ceremony led by the Principal. As the student on the stage drew a connection between the green colour in the national flag to *haryali* or nature the event acquired a symbolic significance in which the Principal as the head of the institution appeared to re-affirm his faith in the rejuvenation of the nation by planting a sapling. The cultural program which followed consisted of song and dance performances from a diverse cultural genre ranging from patriotic songs, popular Bollywood numbers, to a Sufi geet and a Kathak performance. There was also recitation of poems and speeches paying tribute to the freedom fighters and leaders of the Independence movement and offering obeisance to the motherland. The speeches and poems also repeatedly reminded the students of their duty and responsibility as citizens towards their country—"*Desh*". Tributes were also paid to the teachers by the students

for their key role in preparing the future of the nation. The programme was made participatory with the help of a quiz in which students from the audience were given an opportunity to display their general knowledge regarding the freedom struggle.

The Independence Day is regarded as an occasion to commemorate the day when India won freedom from colonial rule many years back and to pay homage to the sacrifices made by hundreds and thousands of Indians to win that freedom. It is also a celebration of Indian nationhood to reaffirm the faith of Indians in their very existence as a nation. The fact that the occasion is celebrated with great fervour in all educational (government and private) institutions as per the order of the Indian State signifies the role such institutions are expected to play in nation-building and grooming the students as "good" citizens of the country. The Independence Day celebrations at JV reflected this. It appeared to instil among the students a sense of pride and love for the nation and its diversity. When asked to comment on the significance of the event Anita, a student shared:

> On this day we are told about a lot of good things..what had happened in the past..in our country..traditional dances and songs are put up from which we get to know about the different facets of our country..we come to realize how powerful our India is!!

The Bal Swatchata Abhiyan

The Bal Swatchata Abhiyan (Clean India Drive for Children) was an important event organized at JV to mark Children's Day (November 1) which is also celebrated nationwide to commemorate the birthday of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister. Under the direction from CBSE and Government of India, in which all government, government-aided and private schools were asked to participate, a week-long cleanliness drive was organized at JV. On the first day of the mission regular academic activities were suspended for a few periods and the students were instructed to engage in cleaning the school building and campus under the supervision of the teachers. As one entered the school, the students were seen moving around in groups all over the school building carrying brooms and dusters in their hands. Inside the classrooms they were busy in different activities - rubbing the blackboard with wet cloth, dusting the furniture and sweeping the floor with brooms.

Besides attempting to sensitize children about the different aspects of hygiene the event was also aimed at incorporating children, the future citizens of India along with the teachers into the larger discourse of citizenship by making them an integral part of the mega cleanliness drive initiated by the current government-the Swatch Bharat Abhiyan. It was also an innovative way to make them aware about their duty as citizens and what an "ideal" citizen ought to be. When asked as to whether they were enjoying the task many students replied- "Yes we are really liking it". A few girls were however reluctant to participate in the drive and jokingly commented- "Why should we do the cleaning? We are good kids..we have a bath daily and come to school!!" While most of the teachers were seen quietly following the orders some did not hesitate to express their displeasure. Keshav Mishra, a social studies teacher for instance commented: "Look at this government. Three periods have been allotted for this mission!! How will we complete the syllabus?" The event thus evoked mixed reactions from the student and teaching community at JV.

The Sanskrit Week

During the period of the fieldwork the school celebrated the Sanskrit Week as per the guidelines provided by CBSE under the direction of the newly elected government. For an entire week the school organized several competitive events for the students which included narration of short stories in Hindi from popular Sanskrit fables like Hitopodesa and Panchatantra, essay writing in Sanskrit on any Sanskrit author, recitation from Gitagovindam and chanting of *slokas* from the Bhagavad Gita. The event was organized at the cluster level of JVS and students of different schools under the JVS participated in it.

Following the government order, the school also made it mandatory for the students to undertake the school pledge in Sanskrit twice a week. During the same period the learning of German as an optional third language was discontinued at JV. Under an order by the MHRD, the students were made to study Sanskrit as a compulsory additional language and were allowed to learn German as a hobby. The decision was received with a lot of disappointment and anxiety by the students and their parents. However the idea was

welcomed by some of the teachers. Nina commented: "It's good that Sanskrit is introduced as it's very important for us…it's connected to our life…all our rituals and rites of passages are in Sanskrit like the rite of birth – *janam sanskara*."

Although the Sanskrit Week was ostensibly organized to develop an interest and love for the Sanskrit language among the students and teachers it reflected a distinct Hindu majoritarian bias as seen in its selection of texts all of which were representative of the dominant cultural ethos. This projection of the Hindu cultural ethos as the most significant component of Indian culture disregarded its diversity and pluralist character. It amounted to an essentialization of Indian culture. It also added to the already existing majoritarian undercurrents of the school culture and made it more pronounced[55].

4.3   Conclusion

The foregoing discussion provides an overview of the field. Jawahar Vidyalaya was a co-educational government school housed in a spacious building within a sprawling compound. It was well-equipped with trained teachers, classrooms, a huge playground and other facilities like a library, an auditorium and computer and science laboratories. While a majority of the students belonged to the general category there were a substantial number of students from the reserved categories. A small percentage also belonged to minority communities. In the two sections of Class VIII, the student community was primarily Hindu and hailed from North India. They belonged to relatively well-educated families. The fathers were the main bread-winners employed in lower-level government jobs. Some were employed in private organizations. The mothers were mostly home-makers.

The discussion also provides an insight into the culture and ethos of JV. The school management with its disciplinary regime sought to mould the students into a moral community with its focus on developing a desirable body image as also through regulation of their behaviour. This was challenged by the students from time to time. The students accused some of the teachers for misconduct and questioned their moral authority to discipline them. The rituals, celebrations and special events represented the

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[55]See Chapter Six.

culture of the school as well as the values it stood for. While the students appreciated some of the rituals they were fairly vocal in their criticism about certain aspects of the same. All the students unanimously expressed their love and respect for the national anthem. Thus the school definitely succeeded to an extent in welding the students into a community and inculcating in them a love for the nation. The school was largely secular in its ethos and beliefs as evident from daily rituals like the school prayer and the inclusion of cultural activities during the assembly and celebration of the Independence Day. Yet the majoritarian overtone of some of the rituals as seen in the selection of songs and prayers from Hindu scriptures, the celebration of special events (e.g. Sanskrit Week) and presence of distinctly Hindu symbols (e.g. Saraswati statue) could not be overlooked. This was to an extent contrary to the mission of the JVS which proclaimed its aim to contribute towards nation-building and ensuring national integration. To what extent this could have also influenced the manner in which the students and teachers looked at the representation of some of the marginalized communities, especially the Muslims. This has been discussed in Chapter Six. In a way, JV with its disciplinary regime and rituals helped forge a certain image of the "ideal" Indian citizen in the perception of the students and teachers -- one who was educated, disciplined, obedient, patriotic, and contributed to the development of the country. He also belonged to the majority community. This image was contradictory to the image projected by the SPL series which as the discussion in Chapter Two shows was more inclusive in nature and upheld the pluralistic character of the Indian nation. The SPL series also constructed the "ideal" citizen as one who was rational and invested with agency to reclaim his/her rights and entitlements. It needs to be seen how the teachers and the students read and interpreted the textbook against these two contradictory images of the "ideal" citizen to construct their own idea regarding the same. The discussion in some of the subsequent chapters (five and six) will evolve around this.

Chapter Five

Constructing "Civics Classroom Knowledge"

This chapter would attempt to analyse how official civics knowledge was transacted and made available in the classroom at JV. Two sections in Class VIII were selected for systematic observation of the transaction of the civics textbook. The chapter would therefore focus on how two teachers who taught civics in the two sections of Class VIII transacted the unit *Social Justice and the Marginalized* (consisting of the two chapters, namely *Understanding Marginalization* and *Confronting Marginalization)* from SPL III. Besides the transaction of two more chapters, namely *Understanding Secularism* and *Public Facilities* would also be looked at.

5.1   Situating Civics Education in JV Middle School

Within the Indian school system, social science is referred to as social studies. It is an integrated study of social sciences and includes history, geography and civics and sometimes economics[56]. Since the present study is going to specifically focus on the dynamics of the civics classroom at JV it becomes important to understand how civics as a subject was situated within the school's daily academic routine. Understanding the location of civics within social studies (S. St), how it was taught and by whom is also significant.

A regular school day at JV[57] began with the morning assembly which lasted for twenty minutes. Each day had altogether eight teaching periods having duration of forty minutes each with a recess that lasted for thirty minutes in the middle of the day. The time-table followed in one of the classes selected for observation gives an idea as to how a week/day in the school was organized.

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[56]Under CBSE social studies in the middle school consists of history, geography and civics. In the secondary school economics is also included under social studies.

[57]JV was open five days a week from Monday to Friday. It remained closed during the weekend excepting the 1st, 3rd and 5th Saturdays which were regular school days. The academic session began in April and ended in March with three long vacations in summer, autumn and winter. The school also remained closed on all national holidays. The school timings were different during summer (7.30 a.m. – 1.40 p.m.) and winter months (8.00 a.m. - 2.10.p.m.).

Time-Table of Class VIII A at JV

Class VIII A	Assembly	1	2	3	4	Recess	5	6	7	8
Duration *Summer*	7.30- 7.50	7.50-8.30	8.30-9.10	9.10-9.50	9.50-10.30	10.30-11.00	11.00-11.40	11.40-12.20	12.20-1.00	1.00-1.40
Duration *Winter*	8.00-8.20	8.20-9.00	9.00-9.40	9.40-10.20	10.20-11.00	11.00-11.30	11.30-12.10	12.10-12.50	12.50-1.30	1.30-2.10
Mon	Assembly	Hindi	Lib	Eng	Science	- R	**S. St**	Math	Games	W.E.
Tue	-do-	Hindi	Comp	Art	Science	- E	Math	**S. St**	Eng	Eng
Wed	-do-	Hindi	Music	Eng	Science	- C	Math	**S. St**	**S. St**	Activity
Thurs	-do-	Hindi	Eng	Sans	Activity	- E	Math	**S. St**	Science	Science
Fri	-do-	Hindi	Eng	Sans	Science	- S	Math	Math	Games	Comp
Sat	-do-	CCA	Eng	Sans	Games	- S	**S. St**	Math	Hindi	Hindi

As seen in the time-table for Class VIII A in the middle school, every week five periods were allotted each for social studies and science. Six periods were allotted each for English, Hindi and mathematics. Two periods out of the six/five periods allotted to each subject were clubbed together as double periods once a week. Sanskrit which was the third language offered in the school was taught thrice a week. Daily one to three periods were set aside for co-scholastic activities like computer, library and games.

Social studies in the middle school (Classes VI to VIII) had three components – history, geography and civics/social and political life. These subjects were taught in a cyclical manner beginning with history, followed by geography and then civics. Each component had a separate textbook[58]. The entire academic year was divided into two terms, the first term (April- September) and the second term (October-March) and the syllabus was

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[58]All schools under JVS use the NCERT textbooks in class I-XII as per the mandate of CBSE. This rule is applicable in case of all government schools under CBSE. Private schools under CBSE can choose between textbooks published by NCERT and other private publishers for class I-VIII but have to use NCERT textbooks for classes IX-XII.

accordingly distributed. In each term the students were supposed to learn a specified number of chapters each from all three components of social studies. The distribution of marks for each component during examinations was equal. However it was observed that occasionally during some of the formative assessments history and geography each were accorded 35/40 marks out of 100 marks while civics was allotted 30/20 marks. This was not a regular practice mandated by the CBSE. But it indicated that history and geography were in general accorded more importance than civics within the school.

In the middle and secondary levels (Classes IX-X), one teacher taught all the different components under one subject (social studies/science) irrespective of her/his specialization[59]. For instance in Class VIII A, social studies was taught by Keshav Mishra (KM)[60] who was a TGT and had a post- graduation in geography[61]. Madhumita Roy (MR) who was a PGT with a Master's degree in economics taught social studies in Class VIII B[62]. According to Ashutosh Gupta, the head of the department for humanities, this adversely effected the quality of teaching in social studies as no single teacher was competent to teach all three/four components under social studies. This he felt was also responsible for the lack of interest towards the subject among most students. The practice was different in the senior secondary Classes (XI-XII) where the teachers taught a specific subject according to their specialization at the graduate and post-graduate levels.

5.2   Teaching-Learning in the Middle School

The two classrooms – VIII A and VIII B which were selected for observation were situated almost next to each other, at the far end of the corridor on the first floor of the school building. Each classroom had a huge blackboard, a set of wooden table and chair for the teacher and desks for students. A few chalks and a duster were usually kept ready

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[59]This is the general practice in most schools in Delhi, whether it it is government or private.

[60]KM was a man in his early fifties. Though he had completed his post-graduation in Geography from a reputed university in Uttar Pradesh he worked as a TGT (Trained Graduate Teacher). He had been an employee of the JVS for the last two and a half decades serving in various JVS schools in different parts of the country.

[61] It was seen that a few teachers like KM who in spite of being eligible to teach in the senior secondary level chose to remain a TGT due to certain personal reasons.

[62]Madhumita Roy was a PGT in economics and was in her late thirties. During the period of the fieldwork she taught social studies in the middle and senior school. She later got a promotion and was transferred to another branch of JV school in Delhi where she taught economics in the senior secondary classes.

on the teacher's table. The students' desks (wooden benches with attached tables) were arranged in four/five rows facing the blackboard. Each desk seated two students. The seating arrangement was changed very week based on rotation to ensure that every student got an opportunity to sit on the front benches from time to time. In Class VIII A the class teacher made one boy and one girl sit in one bench in order to minimize disturbance. In Class VIII B on the other hand a gender-wise segregation was followed and each bench seated either two girls or two boys. However the seating arrangement decided upon by the teacher was not followed strictly and the students took every opportunity to sit with friends of their choice.

The blackboard usually had the date and number of students present and absent written on it in one corner. The period (in sequence), the subject to be taught and the name of the subject teacher were also written. It was observed that the information was updated daily before each period commenced by those students who were allotted that responsibility by the class teacher. Allocation of other responsibilities among the students like keeping the blackboard clean, maintaining discipline in the classroom and distributing students' notebooks (after being corrected by the teachers) were also decided by the class teacher in consultation with the class. The names of the students (usually in pair) responsible for these duties were neatly written on a chart paper and put up on a display board. The class time-table and a few art work done by the students were also displayed.

Standing in the corridor during the interim phase between the ending of one teaching period and beginning of another, one would see the students moving in and out of their respective classrooms. They would be busy attending to various needs like filling up water bottles and visiting the washroom. Some would be seen simply exhausting their energy by running after each other. A similar situation prevailed inside. Both the corridor and the classrooms thus continued to remain noisy and the situation changed only when the teacher arrived.

Both the teachers took on an average two to four teaching periods to complete one chapter in civics. The transaction was roughly structured around specific phases, an introductory phase when the teacher introduced the lesson, an explanatory phase where

he explained the key concepts and a question-answer phase where he informally assessed the understanding of the students orally by asking quick questions. This was followed by a more formal recapitulation phase where the students were made to write down dictated answers to questions in their notebooks. There was also a revision phase when the students were informally assessed either orally (quiz, question-answer frame) or through written assignments in the form of class tests. It usually took place prior to a written examination.

5.2.1 Explaining Concepts and Ideas

The following discussion focuses on the transaction of lessons by KM and MR. Excerpts from classroom observation based on the transaction of chapters from SPL III are given as episodes. The episodes relate to specific themes from the selected chapters mentioned earlier. These include *Marginalization, Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes, Marginalized Communities and the State, Secularism and Public Facilities*.

a. Marginalization

Episode 1.1 is from Class VIII A where the teacher is introducing the concept "marginalization" from the chapter *Understanding Marginalization*.

Episode 1.1

It is the second period after recess. The bell had heralded the beginning of the social studies period at 11 a.m. but KM arrives at the class almost ten minutes later. Seeing the teacher the class stands up promptly to wish him.

Class (in a sing-song voice): Goo..od mo..orning sir!

KM does not respond. Keeping the register and the textbook (SPL III) on the table he gestures with his hand asking the students to sit down. Most of the students however continue talking to their bench mates, exchanging their seats, sharing jokes and laughing. A few, perhaps the more studious ones, take out the relevant textbook. After waiting for a few minutes KM begins to give instructions to the class in Hindi.

KM: We are going to begin a new chapter today called *Understanding Marginalization*. In the last class I had asked you to read it at home and come. How many of you have done so?

None of the students raise their hands.

KM: There is a story in this chapter. Read it.

KM now turns to the blackboard. Holding a piece of paper on which he had noted what he regarded were the "key points" of the chapter prior to coming to the class, he begins to write down the same on the blackboard in English and Hindi. However while all the students, following the teacher's instructions keep the textbook open on their table, they continue to remain inattentive. As the noise level reaches a peak KM turns towards the class and issues a threat.

KM: Where is all this noise coming from?...You don't want to read!! You should be sent out of the class!!.....What does marginalized mean?

Trisha (stands up): Uncivilized!

Lalit: One who cannot talk to others properly.

Dissatisfied, KM dismisses the answers with an emphatic "No!!" Next he draws a rectangular box on the blackboard with a few intersecting straight lines in one corner that resembles a page of a notebook. He begins to explain:

KM (points to the main part of the box): This is the main part where we write. (He now points to the margin) This part which is above the line and on the side is the margin. Here we write the question number, date etc.......

(KM now observes Aneesh and Abhi talking and shouts at them): *Murga bano* (stand like a cock)!!

(He continues to explain): If we apply this example in the context of the society, then the main part would be regarded as mainstream or *mukhyolog* and those who do not belong to the mainstream, would be regarded as marginalized. They do not have access to fundamental rights for example, educational rights. You have heard the story of Ekalavya....Who was his *guru*?

Amitosh: Drona

KM: Drona told Ekalavya – Give me a *gurudakshina*[63]- and asked for his thumb! Why?

Param: So that he is unable to shoot the arrow!

Amitosh: There will be no competition with Arjuna!

KM: Ekalavya built a clay statue of Drona and learnt the art of archery by himself. Drona did not train him. He trained Arjuna and when Ekalavya surpassed Arjuna Drona brought him down by asking for his thumb... Sometimes a teacher behaves similarly. If he grants one student 40 out of 40, and another student also scores the same marks, he deliberately grants him 35...this is treachery! Drona asked for Ekalavya's thumb so that he was unable to reach the level of Arjuna.. In those days the situation was such that, if anyone (from the marginalized communities) heard the Vedas or Puranas being recited, some hot liquid used to be poured into their ears and they lost their hearing... these people were denied their educational rights..so the higher caste people climbed up the social ladder while these people went down...the British tried, the government tried..but to no avail! These people are *pichde*–backward!!

The above episode gives an idea as to how KM introduced a new chapter. He came to the class a few minutes after the bell rang. He did not reciprocate when the students greeted him but instructed them to settle down. He did not succeed easily and the situation somewhat came under control only when he began teaching. Both the teacher and the students had their personal copies of the same textbook, SPL III which was the prescribed textbook for "civics"[64] for Class VIII in all government schools. While KM and the

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[63]*Gurudakshina* refers to the custom of repaying a teacher or spiritual *guru* after the completion of a period of study or formal education. It is usually a form of showing respect and gratitude to the teacher and does not necessarily involve monetary repayment.

[64]Chapter Two explains in detail the position of NCF 2005 with regard to the use of the term "social and political life" in place of the commonly used term "civics". However, throughout this chapter and the following one the term "civics" is used to denote "social and political life" as a subject area to differentiate it from the textbook having the same title - Social and Political Life.

majority of the students used the English version of the textbook the medium of instruction in the class was Hindi punctuated by occasional use of certain concept words like "marginalization" in English. Only a few students in KM's class used the Hindi version of the textbook. The textbook was used by KM as an important source of reference. He expected his students to read the chapter at home on their own before he began teaching it in the class. Even inside the class he instructed them to consult it independently. He used it to cull out some important ideas which he wrote down in brief on the blackboard in the form of bullet points in Hindi and English. He, however, did not instruct the students to read the same or note them down. Rather he used them as referrals for himself as he went about teaching. He introduced the lesson by using a question-answer frame and engaged the students in a brief discussion.

A comparison with the main text (Box 6, Annexure III) in SPL III shows that KM did not try to explain "marginalization" according to the textbook. He did not locate it in the realm of the students' everyday experience of feeling excluded in their immediate context or in the larger social context owing to their difference with others based on behavioural traits, cultural practices and socio-economic status. Although he instructed the students to read the storyboard on Dadu (Chapter Three, p.85) on their own a few times in the class he did not ensure that they followed his instructions. He did not read it out himself but overlooked it completely. Instead he introduced a lot of out-of-school content and examples of his own. For instance he drew a page of a notebook on the blackboard in the form of a rectangular box. This was used to represent the main body of the page and the margin marked out by two straight lines, one horizontal and another vertical intersecting one another near the top of the left hand side border of the page. He used this to highlight the difference between the mainstream (represented by the main body of the page) and those who remain marginalized (represented by the margin). He elaborated further by situating the problem in the social context and explained how some sections of the population have been pushed to the margins of society due to their inability to access certain fundamental rights like educational rights. Further KM tried to depict "marginalization" in terms of the various forms of discrimination existing in the society both in the past and present. In this context he introduced the popular story of Ekalvaya

from the epics and then drew from his everyday experience to show how a teacher often indulges in unfair means to favour one meritorious student at the cost of another.

"Marginalization" was also looked at by KM as a product of caste-based discrimination which has been in existence in India for centuries. He explained that in earlier times certain sections of the population were prevented from having access to the Hindu scriptures and education according to prevalent social norms which resulted in their downward social mobility. Interestingly he did not interpret the story of Ekalavya from the same perspective – how the teacher belonging to a dominant community (Brahmins) favored one student from another dominant community (Kshatriya) at the expense of another equally if not more meritorious student from a less dominant community (Adivasi).The textbook also contained two in-text questions (Box 1 Chapter Three, p.86). These were meant to help the teacher summarize the learning and enable him to gauge if the students had assimilated the concept or not. But KM overlooked them.

Thus, though KM referred to the textbook he digressed from it. He tried to explain "marginalization" using different examples drawn from his everyday experience and cultural repertoire thereby introducing a lot of out-of-school knowledge. In the process he reduced "marginalization" to another form of discrimination and was unable to explain it as a complex phenomenon having different facets-social, cultural and economic.

b. Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes

Episode 2.1, is also from Class VIII A and presents how the themes *Who are Adivasis?* and *Adivasis and Stereotypes* from *Understanding Marginalization* were explained by KM.

Episode 2.1

KM is teaching the chapter *Understanding Marginalization*. He had earlier asked the class to read the chapter at home. He begins the class by discussing about the Adivasis, their demographic composition and their lifestyle and culture. He also asks a few questions.

KM: We are going to study about the Adivasis. There are 500 types of Adivasis out of which 60 percent are in Orissa. Altogether they constitute 8 percent of the total population of India……….. (He now looks at Nishant and asks) How many tribals are present in Orissa?

Nishant can't answer.

KM asks Himanish who is also unable to answer.

KM: Go to the corner and stand like a cock! The President prepares a list..look up the Census 2011..which castes are included under SC/STs..the life of the Adivasis was dependent on forests, they built their houses there, they used to collect their food from there, hunted animals, gathered things (forest products) and sold them, cleared forests and did farming…..They worshipped the mountains, rivers…The mainstream comprises those who belong to the general category. They were different from the mainstream- their clothes are colourful, they wear animal feather on their heads, they don't have any fixed time for singing and dancing……..The Christian missionaries used to give them medicine and convert them ..there are many Adivasis who claim to be STs but in reality they have been converted to Christianity… A lot of things come from the forests..Ayurvedic doctors used to prepare medicines from plants and herbs…even now in the villages if someone gets injured or hurt they don't go to the doctor..they don't want to spend money…they think what is the use?

Trisha: If someone gets hurt they apply turmeric paste!

KM: They prepare a paste out of neem leaves and apply..there are many such medicinal plants..

While explaining about the lifestyle of the Adivasis in the class, KM discussed some of the demographic details about the community for instance, their total population in India, their presence in a particular state of India and their different types mentioned in the textbook. But he did not refer to the heterogeneous nature of the Adivasis both in terms of their spatial distribution across the Indian sub-continent and with regard to their means of livelihood, details which are provided in the textbook. The textbook mentions about the Adivasis being referred to as Scheduled Tribes in government documents, the existence of an official list of tribes and how they are grouped together with Scheduled Tribes in the category Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes. KM merely spoke about the President's list on SC/STs and asked the students to consult the Census 2011 data to find out which castes are included in that list. He thus placed the different tribes and the castes in the same category. He also did not mention about the Adivasis' egalitarian (caste-less) social organization that the textbook highlights (For details see Box 8, Annexure III).

KM completely overlooked the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis (Chapter Two, p.64).He dwelt on the Adivasis' close association with forests and nature, the way they procured their food and their agricultural practices as also their specific religious customs for instance how they worshipped mountains and rivers. But he did not provide all the textual details. Also he did not point to the community's rich cultural heritage consisting of distinct religious customs, belief systems and languages as also their symbiotic relationship with some of the dominant cultures. These details have been highlighted in the textbook to dispel the stereotypes. KM only referred to the large-scale conversions

among the Adivasis under the influence of the Christian missionaries and grudgingly added how many Adivasis in spite of being Christians identified themselves as Scheduled Tribes. Further, digressing from the textbook KM commented on the cultural traditions of the Adivasis, especially their clothing and appearance which in his opinion differentiated them from the mainstream (See Box 8, Annexure III).

KM mentioned how the forests were a rich source of medicinal plants and herbs and how these were still popular in rural India. But he did not acknowledge the significant role played by the Adivasis who with their deep knowledge about forests and forest resources contributed towards the development of settled civilizations (Box 9, Annexure III). The in-text questions (Chapter Three, Box 7, p.100) were ignored. The visuals provided in the text highlighting how the Adivasis were stereotyped (Chapter Three, p.86) were also left unused by KM.

Thus though KM referred to the textbook he used it selectively. He did not try to dispel the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis. Instead he depicted them as a primitive community of forest dwellers with an exotic lifestyle and thus reinforced the stereotypes about the community.

The following three episodes (2.2 to 2.4) deal with the theme *Muslims and Marginalization* from the chapter *Understanding Marginalization* in SPL III. They provide an idea as to how the theme was taught by MR and KM in Class VIII B and VIII A respectively.

Episode 2.2(Class VIII B)

MR is explaining the theme *Muslims and Marginalization* from the chapter *Understanding Marginalization*. She refers to the low educational status of the Muslims and their resultant marginalization.

MR: A survey was conducted in 2001.. There's a table in the textbook....they (Muslims) do not have education..they are a minority not only in terms of numbers..they are backward –*pichde*! For instance in case of girls, the parents would withdraw them from schools after they attain a certain age..they are poor also so they think that they will have to in any case get the girls married off..so what is the need of educating them? There are a lot of drop-outs in this community.

Episode 2.3(Class VIII A)

Having explained about the marginalization of the Adivasis (Episode 1.1) KM takes up the next theme *Muslims and marginalization* from the chapter *Understanding Marginalization.* KM draws attention of the class to the low the educational status of the Muslims.

KM: There was a judge named Rajinder Sachar. In 2005 a committee was formed called the Sachar Committee which prepared a report on the status of Muslims based on their social, economic and educational condition.…It was seen (in the report) that between 6-14 years, 25 percent children do not go to school..which means 1 out of every 5 children does not go to school. 4 percent children attend *madrasas* where they are taught in Urdu, *Pharsi* (Persian). 30 percent go to government schools.

While MR and KM referred to the survey (Chapter Three, Table 3.1, p. 88) and the main text to explain the low educational status of the Muslims they overlooked certain details. Neither of the two teachers mentioned how the Muslims lagged behind other minorities in terms of their literacy rate (Chapter Three, pp.93-94) nor did they attempt to dispel the prevalent stereotype regarding the Muslims' alleged preference for *madrasa* education which has been discussed in the textbook (Chapter Two, pp. 67-68).

As discussed earlier the Sachar Committee report has mentioned that only a minuscule percentage (4 per cent) of Muslim children is enrolled in *madrasas* (Chapter Three, p.89). The majority, according to the report, attends either government (66 per cent) or private (30 per cent) schools. MR totally ignored these details. Instead she mentioned about the regressive attitude of the Muslims vis-à-vis the women of the community, something which is not mentioned in the textbook. This attitude, in her opinion was evident in their beliefs regarding women's education and their expected role within the family. According to her it highlighted the backward nature of the community, their lack of financial resources and contributed towards their marginalization. This reflected MR's strong stereotypical views about the community.

KM also did not mention about the substantial number of Muslim children attending private schools. He provided incorrect data regarding the number attending government schools. Moreover, he introduced some extra-textual information and commented on the curriculum followed in *madrasas* which he pointed out was very different from that followed in regular schools. Thereby he reinforced the stereotype with regard to the Muslims' alleged preference for *madrasa* education. Again both the teachers overlooked the visual (Chapter Three, p.89 and the Table p.88) provided in the textbook.

Episode 2.4(Class VIII A)

KM is explaining the theme *Muslims and Marginalization* in the chapter *Understanding Marginalization*. He specifically refers to certain social customs followed by the community with regard to clothing and appearance.

KM:Women (Muslim women) wear *burqa*. In North India Hindu women put the *ghunghat.* Muslim women cover themselves from head to toe ..this is the *pehchan* (identification mark) of married Muslim women. We find more of them in villages and less in cities. ..The men grow long beard and wear a kind of cap called *fez*cap..they wear this while performing *namaz*. This is their identification mark.

A comparison between the textual content (Box 11, Annexure III) and the explanation provided by KM (Episode 2.4) shows that although he discussed at length about the social customs followed by the Muslims with regard to clothing and appearance he did not mention how the same have resulted in creating stereotypes. He also overlooked how such stereotypes were misused by the majority community to discriminate against the Muslims and how the same have resulted in their marginalization. Instead, contrary to the textbook he highlighted these very customs as distinctive markers of Muslim identity or *pehchan* that set them apart from the rest of the society. He however mentioned that *burqa*-clad Muslim women were more visible in the rural areas. KM also overlooked the case-study (Ainee's Question, Chapter Three, p.87) and the accompanying question (Chapter Three, Box 2, p. 87). These pedagogic tools, if used, would have helped the students relate to the sense of alienation and discrimination experienced by a young Muslim girl and would have perhaps made them empathize with her. The visual of the *burqa*-clad Muslim women participating in a rally to demand justice (Chapter Three, p.88), if engaged with would have also encouraged the students to question the stereotypes attached to the community. This was also ignored by KM. All this reflected the prejudices held by him towards the community.

Thus both the teachers distorted the textual knowledge and left out most of the pedagogical tools provided in the textbook. Unlike the textbook they did not try to dispel the stereotypes attached to Muslims but actually reinforced them.

c. Marginalized Communities and the State

Episodes 3.1 and 3.2 present how MR and KM explained the theme *Adivasis and Development* from the chapter *Understanding Marginalization* in Classes VIII B and VIII A respectively.

Episode 3.1(Class VIII B)

MR is explaining the sub-theme *Adivasis and Development*.

MR: Turn to page 84 –*Adivasis and Development*. It says that now some improvement is happening..they (Adivasis) are going to school…schools and roads are being constructed inside the forests, those who are bright they go to the cities for higher education..in Delhi there are many Adivasis who are in big posts, who mingle with us, there are many people working under their supervision but all this took time…Mining is happening..There are 4 states like Jharkhand which are rich in minerals. So Adivasis have been displaced..forest have been cleared and mining has been promoted, factories have been set up..if they are not living in the forests they have experienced development..but they have suffered loss also..their simple lifestyle has disappeared, the atmosphere has become polluted, the State has cleared forests, national parks and sanctuaries have been set up covering huge tracts of forest land ….

Episode 3.2 (Class VIII A)

It is the second lesson on *Understanding Marginalization*. KM begins the class with some instructions to the students.

KM: Write down this extra question- Who is Adivasis?

The students promptly write down the question in their notebook.

KM: This question usually carries 2 marks in the exam.

KM now uses the question-answer frame to check if the students had read the chapter and come.

KM: How do the tribals fulfill their needs?

Amitosh: From forests

KM (looking at Vimlesh): What is the full form of ST?

Vimlesh can't answer.

Nishant (raising his hand): Scheduled Tribe

KM: How many tribals are there?

Trisha: 500

KM: How many types?

Sunil: 60

KM now begins to explain the theme *Adivasis and Development*.

KM: …Problem began when the British came. One reason was the introduction of forest laws by the British in 1865. Tribals were banned from hunting animals, cutting woods..activities which they have been doing for generations…... They were also banned from practicing shifting agriculture..They used to work..they used to collect forest products and sell them…all that was banned ..so they were displaced. They began working in plantations…in peoples' homes. Maximum, 50% went to mining ……

Both MR and KM seemed aware of the impact of the development policies of the State on the Adivasis (Box 10, Annexure III). Drawing from the textbook MR explained how such policies have had certain negative impact on the community leading to their displacement and dispossession. At the same time, digressing from the textbook, she highlighted how the policies have resulted in modernization of the community through

education and their induction into well-paying salaried jobs. This she argued have led to some amount of social mobility and have facilitated the integration of the Adivasis with "mainstream" society. KM made no mention of the development policies pursued by the post-independent Indian State in collusion with certain private actors and how such policies have adversely affected the Adivasis. But he attributed the displacement, dispossession and gradual marginalization of the Adivasis to the forest laws introduced by the colonial State.

The other pedagogical tools used in the textbook, for instance, a poem along with an illustration (Chapter Three, p.90), the photograph related to the resistance put up by the Dongria Konds against the proposed setting up of an aluminium refinery near the Niyamgiri Hill in Orissa (Chapter Three, p.89) and in-text-questions (Chapter Three, Box 11, p.101) were all left unused by both the teachers.

Episodes 3.3 and 3.4 are based on observation in Classes VIII B and VIII A respectively. Both the episodes present how the teachers explained the theme *Protecting Rights of the Dalits and Adivasis* from the chapter *Confronting Marginalization*.

Episode 3.3(Class VIII B)

MR is teaching the chapter *Confronting Marginalization*. She refers to the framing of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 by the government and how it was used by the community.

MR: Rathnam took help of a law..a new law was enacted ..the 1989 SC/ST Prevention Act .The ritual was stopped.. Another law was passed for the benefit of Adivasi women..if some administrator(upper caste) tries to exploit these women then they can take recourse to this law… There is an example in the box..read it once (pointing to a case-study in the textbook). Do people behave nicely with them?

Some of the students begin to read the case-study. After a while they raise their hands, ready to answer questions.

MR: What is manual scavenging? Explain in your own words

Arjun: Dalits remove dead animals, human excreta

Geetika: This practice refers to people who remove waste/excreta of animal/human with hand

MR:Those who do this work they are referred to by a specific name…..

Class: *Safai karamchari(sanitation workers)*

MR: There are around 13 lakh *safai karmacharis* in India…is there any law to protect their rights?

Tara: Employment of Manual Scavengers

MR: Can you name some such communities?

Abhijit: Bhangis and ………

MR: Where are they from?

Anita: Tamil Nadu

MR: What kind of law has the government passed for them? How will it benefit them?

Ishani: They can file a PIL (Public Interest Litigation) with the help of this law

Episode 3.4(Class VIII A)

KM is teaching the chapter *Confronting Marginalization*. He refers to the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act1989 and the *Safai Karamchari Andolan*.

KM: Act 1989..there are a lot of things which one can't do with the SC/STs.. for example you can't force them to eat something that is inedible..you can't insult them by putting black colour on their face.. can't disrobe a women and parade her or forcibly grab their land...they are often subjected to these atrocities in areas where the police can't reach! But however powerful you are these crimes are punishable under this law..earlier these used to happen as these people were not aware…it's reduced now but still happens…one more example is there in the text…the dry larine story..these people were forced to lift human and animal excreta by hand…this was shown on in the TV programme called Satyamevo Jayate…it's still continues..

Both MR and KM began the class by referring to the framing of the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 by the government. They provided some details about the provisions of the act drawing from the textbook. But they ignored most of the details. MR referred to the story of Rathnam mentioned in the textbook and explained how the law was used by him to seek justice. KM did not mention this. But both the teachers disregarded the contribution of the assertive Dalit groups towards the enactment of the law (Box 13, Annexure III).

MR used the case-study provided in the textbook to explain the condition of the manual scavengers in India. She first instructed the students to read it and then engaged them in a discussion by using a question-answer frame. She focused at length on the condition of the manual scavengers, their spatial distribution across India and asked the students to name a few such communities. She also repeatedly drew the attention of the students to the role played by the government towards the uplift of the community. KM only mentioned about the existence of manual scavenging in India and digressing from the textbook made a reference to a popular television programme related to the issue.

However a careful comparison with the textual content (Chapter Three, Case Study 2 p. 91) reveals that both the teachers ignored many significant details like the inhuman working conditions to which the manual scavengers are exposed and their abysmally low

wages. They also overlooked the significant role played by the Dalits and the *Safai Karamchari Andolan* in filing a PIL in the Supreme Court to highlight the continued practice of manual scavenging in government undertakings like the railways. Thus the case-study was not used in its entirety. In the textbook the case-study on the manual scavengers is accompanied by two visuals and a set of in-text questions (Chapter Three, Case study 2, p.91). Had the teachers drawn attention of the students to these tools it would have enabled them to understand how the Dalits have tried to fight back against an oppressive social structure to get justice. But they refrained from doing so. Though MR used a question-answer frame to gauge the comprehension level of the students the questions only required them to retrieve some factual information and did not encourage them to analyse the case-study in depth. All this reinforced rather than challenge the image of the manual scavengers as passive victims of fate and circumstance.

The foregoing discussion shows that the textbook was not used by the two teachers in the manner it was intended to be used by the textbook authors. The main text was used selectively. While some portions were left out completely those which were selected, were either distorted or were delivered partially. From time to time they did refer to some storyboards, case-studies and survey but again they either used them partially or misrepresented them. Even when they instructed the students to read them on their own they did not ensure whether the instructions were followed or not. A few other storyboards and case-studies were also left unused. Moreover the visuals and the in-text questions were completely overlooked. On the whole the teachers preferred to deliver the lessons by providing elaborate explanations of the textual content in their own words in Hindi. While doing so they brought in a fair amount of out-of-school knowledge into the classroom. The textbook thus was never delivered in its entirety and on the whole the teaching-learning process remained teacher-driven. Thus how the textual content was taught and made available to the students was not shaped by the textbook. Rather it was regulated by the teachers.

5.2.2 Classroom Participation

The episodes presented earlier (Episodes 1.1-3.4) reveal that most of the pedagogical tools introduced in the textbook especially the in-text questions were overlooked by the teachers while transacting the lessons. However there were occasions when the students did participate in the teaching - learning process. The space for students' participation was primarily provided by the teachers – when they used the question-answer frame and when they instructed the students to perform different tasks. This section explores the nature of the students' participation in the classroom teaching-learning process.

a. Answering Questions and Following Instructions

The question-answer frame which was frequently used by both the teachers through different stages of transaction of the textbook fulfilled multiple purposes. Sometimes it took place at the beginning of a class when the teacher wanted to gauge if the students, following his instructions, had read the chapter and developed a preliminary understanding of the main theme of the chapter (Episode 1.1). It also helped the teacher to understand if the students were able to retrieve certain factual details (Episode 2.1). Further the question-answer frame was used to enable the students recapitulate what had been taught in a previous lesson (Episode 3.2). At other times it was introduced in between a teaching session when the teacher had asked the class to read a case-study and wanted to gauge the extent to which the students had comprehended it (Episode 3.3). Sometimes the teachers would ask questions which would require the students to recall factual details from a popular story (Episode1.1) or share information pertaining to prevailing social perceptions or commonsensical knowledge (Episode 2.1). This was more of an informal phase, when the teacher randomly selected some students and asked a few questions of her own orally.

Another way the students participated in the classroom process was by passively following a range of instructions which were given by the two teachers. These required them to perform specific tasks. Such tasks included opening the textbook and turning to a specific chapter and page (Episode 3.1) and referring to a storyboard or case-study

(Episodes 1.1, 3.3). The students were also instructed to write down a few extra questions in the notebooks (Episode 3.2).

Therefore participation by the students in JV both during the question-answer phase as well as the occasions when they were given instructions to perform a specific task was largely teacher-driven. It occurred at the behest of the teacher and as and when she/he deemed it necessary. The students were not provided an opportunity to participate in the pedagogic process on their own volition or when they felt the need to do so. The instructions were usually in the nature of commands which the students were expected to follow passively and any non-compliance on their behalf often invited punishment (Episode 1.1). In the context of a teacher-driven classroom the question-answer phase definitely appeared to be the only space when the students' voices could be heard. Yet in both the classrooms it was the teacher who remained in charge of the situation.

Moreover, the discussion in Chapter Three reveals that the in-text questions in the textbook were aimed at assessing the students on a range of skills ranging from the ability to recall and comprehension to ability to reason, infer and extrapolate. This required the students to read the chapters carefully and analyse them. Such participation if allowed may have encouraged the students to critically examine the textual content and connect the same with their lived experiences. Had it been carefully guided by the teachers, this would have facilitated a judicious entry of out-of-school knowledge into the classroom. This would have not only enriched the classroom discourse but would have further encouraged a deeper engagement with the textual content by the students. However all the in-text questions were left unused by the teachers. Moreover the questions asked by them were primarily recall based in nature. This allowed the students to answer them just by glancing through the textual content superficially and retrieving factual information. They were also able to answer the questions by drawing upon their general knowledge and sharing certain popular perceptions. This severely curtailed the space for meaningful and active participation of the students in the classroom discourse. While extra-textual knowledge entered the classroom, it was unfiltered and often irrelevant. Thus it neither enriched the classroom discourse nor facilitated a critical engagement with the issues highlighted in the textbook on the part of the teachers and the students.

b. The Boundaries of "Legitimate" Knowledge

The foregoing discussion shows that the use of the question-answer frame created space for the students to participate in the classroom teaching-learning process to some extent. This might suggest that the students were permitted to contribute towards the process of knowledge generation with knowledge drawn from their own context. Would that imply that the process of knowledge generation inside the civics classrooms at JV was left largely unregulated? Here it would be necessary to examine not only the nature of the questions that were asked by the teachers or the responses provided by the students but how such responses were received by the teachers. The following episode provides an idea:

Episode 4.1(Class VIII A)

> KM is introducing the chapter *Public Facilities*. He instructs the students to open the relevant chapter in the textbook and read it. He now turns to the blackboard to write down the key points of the chapter. After a while KM turns to the class and begins asking a few questions.
>
> KM (looking at Trisha): How many types of fundamental rights are there?
>
> Trisha (standing up): Right to freedom, right to equality.
>
> KM (shakes his head in dissatisfaction): Go and kneel down!
>
> KM (looks at Himanish and asks the same question)
>
> Himanish: Right to equality, right to constitutional remedy, cultural and educational rights….
>
> KM (again shaking his head to indicate his dissatisfaction, stops Himanish and begins to explain): Public facilities…. All individuals, irrespective of whether they are rich or poor and where they live should have access to fresh drinking water, hospital, school, college, road and public transport….this fundamental right is right to life…

In this episode, the teacher while trying to explain the concept of public facilities as a significant part of fundamental rights of the citizens asked certain questions. A comparison with the textual content (Box 4, Annexure III) shows that he was trying to provide them a background before introducing the main theme and also checking their ability to recollect what they had learnt in some of the earlier chapters about the different fundamental rights. The students while responding to the teacher's query were actually correct. But KM was expecting them to refer to a specific fundamental right - right to life - which according to him constituted the "right answer" in the specific context. Instead of providing any clue to them he straightaway rejected their answers. He also rebuked and punished them. Thus even when the students participated in the classroom discussion and

answered questions based on textual knowledge, such responses were not always accepted as legitimate. Rather the legitimacy of their responses was decided by the teacher who appeared to be the ultimate authority to determine what constituted legitimate knowledge.

The earlier discussion in this chapter shows that although many of the pedagogical tools (storyboards, visuals, in-text questions) were not actually used by the teachers yet a lot of out-of-school knowledge was introduced into the classroom by the teachers and the students. Does that suggest that the students were always encouraged to bring in out-of-school knowledge and such knowledge was accepted and incorporated into the textual or "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46)? Was such knowledge accepted as legitimate knowledge? Does that suggest that the classrooms at JV were characterized by weak "framing" (Bernstein 1971:50)? The following episodes examine how such out-of-school knowledge brought in by the students was treated by the teachers.

Episode 4.2(Class VIII A)

> KM is teaching the chapter *Public Facilities*. He turns the attention of the class to the situation of government water supply in the rural areas.
>
> KM: How does the government supply water to the villages?
>
> Aneesh: Hand pump..the village headman gives money..
>
> Vimlesh: They dig wells.
>
> KM (completely ignoring what the students have said): They repair the old wells, if water in the wells is not used then it becomes bad…actually people are using more of hand-pump..what is the third point?
>
> Aneesh: Rain-water harvesting
>
> Param: Water from the tube-well..digging ponds..because if we are taking out water through hand-pump then that water needs to be re-filled..so through ponds the water goes back to the ground…
>
> KM again completely ignores the information provided by the students.

In this episode, when asked by the teacher about the various ways in which water is supplied in rural areas by the government, the students provided a range of answers. A comparison with the textbook (Box 5, Annexure III and photograph of water crisis in rural areas; Chapter Three, Visual 9, p.93) shows that they not only drew from the textbook but introduced a fair amount of additional non-textual information based on their general knowledge and lived experience. The information shared by them enriched

the discussion and appeared relevant. But the students' contributions were neither appreciated nor acknowledged by the teacher and were ignored.

Episode 4.3(Class VIII A):

KM is teaching the chapter *Understanding Secularism*. He asks them a few questions to gauge their general awareness regarding different religions and their religious heads.

KM: Who's the *dharmguru (religious head)* of the Hindus?

Vimlesh: Brahma

KM(looking dissatisfied): But he is a god!

Himanish: Guru Nanak

KM now looks at Ananya, and lifts his head, gesturing that she should answer.

Ananya: Buddhist…no…*pandit*

KM: *Pandit* is a specialist..one who is a learned person. The *dharmguru* of the Hindus is called *shankaracharya*. There are four holy places in Hindu religion- Dwarka, Puri, Kedarnath and Kanyakumari and each is headed by a *dharmguru*. Who is the religious head of the Christians?

Amitosh: Father

Lalit: Pope

KM:Yes..Where does he live?

Satish: Vatican City

KM (looking satisfied): In which country is it located?

Aneesh: Italy

In this episode the teacher asked a few questions to the students to gauge their general awareness about Hinduism and the religious heads. Perhaps drawing from their general knowledge the students came up with one word answers which the teacher found incorrect. However unlike on other occasions he did not get irritated or reprimand them. Instead he provided an elaborate explanation. Next he came up with another set of questions about Christianity. This time some of the responses satisfied him and wanting to find out more details he asked further questions. The students drawing from their general knowledge responded appropriately. A comparison with textual knowledge (Box 14, Annexure III) shows that all the questions asked by the teacher had a rather peripheral connection to the theme under discussion which was secularism. However the out-of-school knowledge introduced by the students was well received by KM. Perhaps he wanted to engage the students in the discussion by drawing upon what he felt was familiar to them. Hence he encouraged them to bring in such information and

acknowledged the same though the relevance of the same to the main idea of the chapter remains questionable.

The earlier episodes (4.1- 4.3) show that, although there was ample space in-built in the textbook for the entry of out-of-school knowledge based on the lived experience of the students there were only a few occasions when such space was made available to the students. This was because most of the pedagogical tools present in the textbook to facilitate the students' engagement with the textbook were seldom utilized by the teachers. This is not to say that out-of-school knowledge never entered the classroom. Rather it was made available by the teachers as they explained the textbook introducing in the process additional information on various themes. This was readily incorporated as legitimate knowledge although it very often contradicted or substituted the textual or "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46). The teachers did at times allow the students to bring in out-of-school knowledge into the classroom. Although on many occasions such knowledge was relevant and enriched the classroom discourse, it was often ignored or dismissed by the teachers (Episodes 4.1 - 4.2).This was because the teacher as Sarangapani notes "controlled what would be treated as knowledge to be received by the students" (2003:131).On the other hand, even when the out-of-school knowledge introduced by the students appeared not so relevant it was accepted by the teacher on certain occasions (Episode 4.3). Thus, what could be regarded as legitimate knowledge did not depend on the nature of the knowledge or its relevance to the chapter. Rather its legitimacy or validity was decided by the teacher.

c. Challenging the Boundary: The Difficult Questions

Though the teachers were particular about regulating what needed to be incorporated as legitimate or valid knowledge and what need not, the extent to which they succeeded in doing so sometimes varied in the two classes. Often in MR's class when there was a discussion about group-differentiated rights provisioned by the Indian Constitution like the reservation policy it generated a heated debate. The following episodes illustrate this.

Episode 5.1(Class VIII B)

> MR is teaching the chapter *Confronting Marginalization*. She draws attention of the students to the theme *Laws for the Marginalized*.
>
> MR: Those people whom you have treated differently for them the government has introduced a special provision..if Adivasi/Dalit boys and girls want to study hostels have been opened for them for free. Why free? Because they don't have money.
>
> Smriti: This is wrong! The SC/STs, Adivasis appear for many exams..there are many among the general category who are poor. Why shouldn't they get these benefits?
>
> MR: Look here-the reservation policy..there is reservation of seats in education and in jobs, like in case of Central and state government jobs. If one person gets a job then it will lead to the upliftment of the family. If some Adivasi child is doing well in studies, he/she has to compete with children from the same category in order to become a doctor or engineer. If there are 100 seats, 80 will go to the general category and remaining 20 will be reserved for the SC/STs. …There is something called the cut-off point. For instance if the cut-off point is 99 % for the general category then it will be little less, say 96 % for the reserved category. Is this fine?
>
> Smriti: No, not fair!
>
> Abhijit: why not?
>
> MR: There has to be a debate. Without this facility such a child will not be able to become a doctor. If we give them the opportunity then he will at least become a doctor though not a very good one because we have provided the opportunity!

In this episode MR was referring to the steps taken by the State to address the marginalization experienced by the Dalits and Adivasis. In this context she was explaining the various features of the reservation policy (Box 15, Annexure III). However the very mention of the policy evoked sharp responses from some of the students like Smriti (belonging to the general category) who immediately expressed her disapproval. She argued that it was an unfair policy the benefits of which were limited to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. She further pointed out that the benefits of such policies should be extended to the economically weaker sections among the general category also. Her views were challenged by another student, Abhi. MR however did not question her but said that the matter needed to be debated. Though she approved of the reservation policy yet she questioned the rationale behind introducing different cut-off levels for different categories of students - those from the reserved category and those belonging to the non-reserved category. She further expressed strong doubts about the capability of students from the reserved category who would graduate as medical professionals. Thus while MR largely drew from the textbook she appeared to be influenced by popular assumptions and stereotypes associated with these

communities. This explains why she was unable to explain the rationale behind the reservation policy convincingly to the students.

Episode 5.2(Class VIII B)

> MR is teaching the chapter *Understanding Secularism*. She is explaining how the Indian State in order to uphold the secular principles enshrined in the Indian Constitution allows citizens complete freedom to follow the religion of their choice. To elucidate this further she cites the example provided in the textbook about how the State prohibits government educational institutions from celebrating religious festivals but allows private ones to do so.
>
> MR: …Constitution says that minority communities can establish their own schools in order to develop their own population, and can celebrate their own festivals to propagate their own religion…These private schools usually have reservations for children from their own community.
>
> Geetika: Ma'am, can the government change the rules?
>
> MR: Yes but all communities are not developed… there will be equality in future!
>
> Geetika: But upper castes will go down!!
>
> MR: It's not like that ..all are equal.
>
> Smriti: Will it happen till our time?
>
> Prabhat: It looks unlikely…good students- *padhnewale bacche* - can manage to do well wherever they are..
>
> MR: Imagine there is a child, who's deprived, poor..doesn't have electricity at home, there are frequent power cuts, if such a child gets the benefit of reservation, what is the problem?
>
> Smriti: It leads to discrimination…..
>
> Prabhat: SC, ST, OBCs also come from rich families, why should they be given reservation?.........People tell lies. Caste certificates need to be verified like the way passports are verified.
>
> MR (looking exasperated): Look, I am not running the government…a day will come when these questions will be raised in the parliament..so you have to wait till that day…equality will come...

In this episode MR was explaining the differential policy promoted by the Indian State vis-à-vis the celebration of religious festivals in government and private educational institutions. In this connection she mentioned about the provision of reservation of seats for minority communities in private schools established for these communities. This immediately invited strong reactions from a few students who steered the discussion towards the reservation policy though it had only a peripheral connection to the theme under discussion –secularism. As MR justified the provision saying that it was beneficial for those communities that were not developed and assured that "there will be equality in future!" various responses were heard. Some expressed their apprehension saying that it led to discrimination vis-à-vis the upper castes. They argued that a meritorious student was capable of performing well anywhere and did not require any reservation. Some

others mentioned how the benefits of the reservation policy were frequently misused by the creamy layer amongst the SCs, STs and OBCs and thus questioned the very basis of the policy. A few others vociferously demanded the removal of the reservation policy. During the entire discussion the students belonging to the Dalit and OBC families remained quiet. MR did not instruct the students to stop nor did she denounce their arguments. Instead she partially acknowledged their viewpoint but at the same time tried to convince them about the necessity of following the policy in the present context. However a comparison with the text shows that was she unable to explain the rationale provided in it. Hence she distorted the text. She was also unsuccessful in containing their discontent and looked exasperated.

Although MR often encouraged the students to participate in discussions, she usually remained in charge of the flow of information, asking questions or giving instructions to the students. However in the two episodes cited above it was the students who initiated the discussion, posed difficult questions, offered counterpoints to nullify the explanations provided by MR and literally steered the course of the conversation. One reason for this could be that the discussion revolved around a very contentious issue. The students who were articulate and belonged to unreserved categories and middle class families were perhaps relatively at an advantage than many in their peer group (belonging to the reserved categories and lower middle class families). Drawing upon out-of-school knowledge and popular understanding of the issue they expressed their views confidently and challenged the textbook. Moreover, MR's classes being more inclusive and participatory in nature perhaps also encouraged such interjections by them. MR appeared unprepared to handle the situation.

5.2.3   Preparing Students for Assessment

Prior to the formal evaluation phase was the recapitulation phase when teachers informally assessed and prepared the students periodically. They helped them recapitulate the key points in a specific chapter that has been taught in the class. For this the school introduced certain norms.

a. Dictating "Right" Answers

At JV it was a general practice to use the end-text questions provided at the end of each chapter in the textbook for recapitulation. The teachers occasionally added some extra questions on their own. The formal assessments were usually based on these questions. The episodes that follow illustrate how the recapitulation phase was transacted.

Episode 6.1(Class VIII A)

On entering the class KM instructs the students to take out their textbooks and their notebooks. He tells them that they are going to do "question-answer" for the chapter *Understanding Marginalization*. The students promptly open their textbooks to the relevant page. The class appears exceptionally quiet and well-disciplined.

KM: Look at the end of the chapter..there is question number 1- *Write in your own words two or more sentences of what you understand by the word marginalization*. The answer to this question is at the beginning of the chapter. (He now points to specific sentences in the textbook) Look here … mark the first line - *To be marginalized..is to be forced to occupy the sides or fringes and thus not be at the centre of things*. Begin with *To be marginalized ..* and then go to the second line and mark till *centre of things*.

The students mark out the relevant sentence in the textbook with their pen/pencil.

For the second question KM does not mark out the answer from the textbook. Instead he dictates the answer on his own: Look at the second question – *List two reasons why the Adivasis are becoming increasingly marginalized*. The answer is - *Their marginalization is because they speak a different language, follow different customs or belong to another religion*.

The students copy the answers in their notebooks.

Episode 6.2(Class VIII B)

After entering the class MR begins to instruct the students: Take out your notebooks. Today we are going to complete the questions and answers for *Understanding Marginalization*. Who wants to write the answers on the blackboard?

A few hands go up. MR asks Smriti to come out. MR does not use the textbook but hands out a guidebook to her. Smriti stands on the narrow ledge (jutting out from the wall just below the blackboard) and holding the guidebook in one hand, starts copying the answers one by one on the blackboard.

As the class gets busy copying the answers MR intermittently reads out the answers from the guidebook.

MR: Okay the second question- – *List two reasons why the Adivasis are becoming increasingly marginalized*. The answer is- *1.Adivasis love to lead their life in their own way without any interference from the other. 2. They usually resist changes or new ideas*.

After a while MR signals to Sonal to take over from Smriti. As the class gets busy copying the answers MR reads out the answer to another question from the guidebook.

MR: Ok ..so the third question is – *Imagine you are watching the Republic Day Parade on TV with a friend and she remarks* "Look at these tribals. They look so exotic. And they seem to be dancing all the time." *List three things you would tell her about the lives of Adivasis in India. The answer is–1. They love to wear colourful dresses. 2. They are very close to nature. 3. They have their own language, Santhali is one of them*.

Although the teachers introduced a fair amount of out-of-school knowledge into the classroom while teaching and occasionally permitted the students to do the same, the foregoing episodes show that they restricted themselves to dictating the answers to the end-text questions. KM mainly used the textbook to source the answers by helping the students mark out specific lines/paragraphs in the textbook. When it was not possible to select specific sentences he composed the answers on his own but based on the textbook and dictated the same. This was done even in case of questions which expected the students to write the answer in their own words.

MR did not refer to the textbook. Instead she used a popular guidebook[65] named *How to Score Full Marks* published by a private publisher to source the answers. The guidebook appeared to be quite popular among many of the students who also possessed their personal copy of the same. MR shared during an informal conversation that she found the explanations given in the textbook very elaborate and therefore used the guidebook as an alternative. Sometimes when she felt that the answers provided in the guidebook were not very precise she marked out specific sentences and paragraphs. She did not dictate the answers herself but asked one of the students to copy them down on the blackboard. Following this she instructed the rest of the class to copy the same in their notebooks. In fact on occasions when she could not be present in the class, MR instructed one of the students to copy the answers from the guidebook on the blackboard while the rest were expected to reproduce them in their notebooks.

A comparison between the dictated answers in the above two episodes and the textbook however reveal certain discrepancies. In case of the first question the textbook provides an elaborate explanation of the term "marginalization" along with various examples to highlight the complexity of the concept (Box 6, Annexure III).It also uses the storyboard on Dadu to explain the concept in a more learner-friendly manner. In the class KM had explained "marginalization" using diverse examples though he had digressed from the

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[65] The CABE Committee Report published by the MHRD in 2005 notes "Across states, there thrives on the prescribed material a private industry circulating shadows of government books, teachers' handbooks, "question banks" and guides. Guides comprise the main private publications mentioned... Except in Uttar Pradesh, where government-approved authors are published privately, there are no mechanisms to approve private publications, which many schools use to supplement or to substitute for government books" (CABE Report 2005: iv).

textbook[66]. But while helping the students recapitulate KM selected only the opening sentence in the textbook. He left out the rest of the explanation. Further he ignored the examples he had used in the class. Moreover, as pointed out in Chapter Three, this question appears in the end-text exercise and the students were expected to answer it after they had read through the varied experiences of "marginalization" encountered by different communities. It was also expected that they would cull out the diverse examples and answer the question in their own words. However, such an opportunity was not provided by the teacher. Instead, he dictated the answer which in spite of being correct remained incomplete.

In case of the second question the textbook shows how a combination of multiple factors which were economic, social, cultural and political in nature led to the marginalization of the Adivasis (Box 10, Annexure III).This was brought out not only through the main text but with the help of the storyboard on Dadu which explains how the unplanned development policies of the State forced certain Adivasi communities to migrate to cities where they had to deal with displacement, impoverishment and a sense of alienation all of which resulted in their marginalization for generations (Chapter Three, p. 85). However, this was ignored by both the teachers who located the causes leading to the marginalization of the Adivasis within the community itself. KM composed the answer on his own, perhaps based on his distorted understanding of the textbook and drawing from prevalent stereotypes in popular perceptions. MR on the other hand sourced the answer from the guidebook which also presented a distorted understanding of the issue drawn from popular discourses in the larger society (Annexure V). The two answers though derived from different sources appeared similar and were distorted.

The third question was aimed at challenging the stereotype prevalent in popular imagination about the Adivasis. Accordingly the teachers were expected to discuss about the different aspects of Adivasi lifestyle mentioned in the textbook, for instance, their rich cultural heritage, their contribution to dominant cultures as also the problems faced by the members of the community due to the development policies of the State (Boxes 8-10, Annexure III). But MR provided an incorrect answer taken from the guidebook which

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[66] See Chapter Two p.63.

had misinterpreted the question and distorted the answer. In fact, in case of both the second and the third questions the answers instead of dispelling some of the prevalent stereotypes about the Adivasis actually reinforced the same. Thus although the teachers used dictation of notes as the preferred mode of pedagogic practice the dictated answers appeared to be either incomplete or incorrect. It was possible to notice similar omissions, misinterpretations and additions as was evident during the transaction of the textbook.

b. The Official Stamp

At JV the school management had laid down certain norms to ensure that the dictated answers were complete, bereft of any mistake and ready to be learnt before the students appeared for the examinations. This episode highlights how such norms were implemented.

Episode 7.1(Class VIII A)

> KM had just completed dictating answers to the end-text questions. He now wanted to ensure that the notebooks are made ready to be sent to the Vice-Principal's office and instructed the class accordingly.
>
> KM: You should complete your work at home, get your "copy" (notebook) signed by your father and bring the notebook day after tomorrow for submission.
>
> Class: Okay sir.
>
> KM: Only if you do that will I check your copies and then send them to the Vice-Principal's office for the official stamp. And the ones who will forget will be made to stand in front of the Principal's office..remember that!!

An elaborate procedure was instituted by the school management to enable the students become examination-ready. After the answers were either marked out or dictated by the teachers, the students were instructed by the teachers to copy the answers in their notebooks on their own. Following this they were expected to get the notebooks signed by their parents (in most cases the father) and then submit the same to the teacher within a few days for checking and correction. The notebooks were later corrected by the teachers and returned to the students. Periodically the notebooks were sent for inspection to the Vice-Principal/Principal who had to first ensure that these were complete in every respect (having complete answers, parent's signature and answers corrected by the teacher). After this the official stamp was put on each. This procedure was followed before an ensuing examination (mid-term or final examinations). On one occasion MR

was found making the students copy answers from the blackboard even before she had completed teaching that specific chapter. She shared during an interview that she usually did this when she was behind her schedule and the students' notebooks were due for inspection and stamping. The teachers always gave strict instructions to the students when the notebooks were due for inspection.KM as the above example shows issued a warning to penalize the students if they did not follow the instructions properly. The stamped notebooks were later collected by the teachers from the Vice-Principal's office and distributed to the students who were expected to learn the same answers for the ensuing examinations.

The fact that the teachers and the school attached so much importance to the dictation of answers reflects the "examination-textbook link" that Kumar has mentioned (1988:459). It also highlighted the primacy of learning one "right" answer. Such a practice was completely contradictory to the pedagogic approach laid out by the SPL series that encouraged creating space for a range of "right" answers that reflected multiple perspectives and coined in the students' own words. This is what question 1 cited earlier intended. Yet the school followed dictation of notes as a norm rigidly. Since it was these answers which the students were expected to memorize and reproduce during the examinations here the school management took no chance. Extra care was taken to ensure that the answers to be learnt by the students were of a minimum standard and the teachers were instructed to act accordingly. The teachers justified the practice on the ground that the students came from a background where the parents' educational level rendered them incapable of providing any academic support to their children. Hence the school had no option but to fill that gap to ensure that the students achieve a minimum level of academic performance. This explains the presence of such rigid institutional norms at JV.

However not all questions provided in the textbook were not included in this elaborate exercise. This was true of questions which expected the students to exercise their creative abilities or required them to look for answers from sources outside the textbook. Either they were left out or the students were given the freedom to answer them independently. What is pertinent is that such questions were unlikely to be part of the assessment process

and hence were treated differently (see the second question in Box 14, Chapter Three,p.102).

5.2.4 Classroom Negotiations

From the forgoing discussion it appears that the classroom in JV was a space where the teaching-learning process was mainly regulated by the teacher. The students had little or no space to exercise agency in the way they behaved inside the classroom or participated in the teaching-learning process. There were however a few exceptions. Yet to conclude that the teachers were consistently successful in regulating the participation of the students in the pedagogic process would overlook the complexity of the situation.

One of the episodes discussed earlier (Episode 1.1) shows that in KM's class the majority of the students remained disengaged from the teaching-learning process. The classroom from time to time would be unsettled and noisy. It was not that the teacher would be unaware of what was happening but he did not immediately reprimand the students. Rather he used different strategies to handle the situation. For instance, when the class began KM was aware that the students, excepting a few were not reading the textbook or the storyboard as instructed by him. Instead they were busy chatting, laughing and moving around the class. Yet he did not try to stop them. He went about noting down on the blackboard the "key" points of the chapter that he was about to begin teaching. The students also continued with their mischief perhaps knowing that the teacher would not punish them immediately. It was only after KM had almost completed noting down the points on the blackboard that he turned around and issued a threat to punish the students. He realised that the situation was going out of his control and tried to salvage his authority. Even when that did not work he used the question-answer frame to make them settle down and draw their attention.

However there were occasions when the teachers resorted to various forms of punishment while the students used a repertoire of strategies to get away with their mischief. The following episodes illustrate this.

Episode 8.1

It is one of the revision lessons. KM has planned to check the notebooks of the students. KM sits in his chair and calls out the names of the students from the register one at a time.

KM: Rahul bring your copy to me.

Rahul stands up and nods his head indicating that he hasn't completed his work.

KM: You haven't finished your work!! Come out of your seat and do sit-ups a hundred times!

Rahul comes out of his seat and looking unperturbed quietly stands behind the teacher. He pretends to hold his ears, lifts his feet a little, doesn't really do sit-ups and even tries to dance. KM continues to call the students one by one with their notebooks.

KM (looks at the register and calls out): Nishant! (Finding that he hasn't got his notebook KM shouts at him): Go and stand like a cock-*Murga bano!!*

A few boys, probably Nishant's friends, come to his rescue: Please leave him today… it is his birthday!!

KM(looking a bit taken aback):Okay..am letting him off for today!

KM continues to check the notebooks. After a while he calls out: "Sunil!!"

Param: He is bunking the class- *Woho bunk pe hai*!

Soon KM realizes that two more boys, Amitosh and Aneesh are also not present in the class and instructs two of the monitors, Lalit and Himanish to go and complain to the Vice-Principal.

Episode 8.2

MR is teaching the chapter *Public Facilities*. She begins with a recapitulation of what has been taught in the previous class.

MR: Yesterday we learnt about public facilities. What are they?

The usual enthusiastic students, Geetika, Ishani, Arjun raise their hands. MR looks at Ishani and nodding her head, indicates that she can respond.

Ishani: Road, water

MR is about to resume teaching when suddenly Ishani gets up and complains about two boys, Anuj and Punit playing cards. These two boys had been caught before and had been given warning by the teacher. Today she was enraged at their behavior. She walks up to the boys and before they can hide the cards, begins to beat them up. Next MR asks them to come out of their seats and stand near the blackboard facing the wall. Meanwhile Arjun picks up the cards.MR collects the cards from him, tears them up and throws the papers into the dustbin. Next she resumes teaching.

These episodes show that the negotiations between the teacher and the students took different forms. The teachers used various strategies to regulate the behavior of the recalcitrant students – giving time-outs, making them do sit-ups, or sit like a cock, or kneel down. In extreme cases they complained to the Vice-Principal and even meted out corporal punishment. The students, however, remained nonchalant and used their own strategies to get away. Warnings, threats and even punishments were rarely taken seriously by them. This was observed in both the classes (Episodes 8.1 and 8.2).   On certain occasions the students would come together in solidarity to bail out their friend

from being punished by the teacher. They would cleverly manipulate the situation in such a way that the teacher would have no option but to yield to their "emotional appeal". Sometimes, the defiance of the students took an extreme form that almost challenged the teacher's authority forcing him to bring the matter to the notice of the higher authorities. Episode 8.1 illustrates this.

In MR's class it was a group of about twenty students, the more articulate ones, consisting mostly of girls and a few boys, who displayed more enthusiasm than others to participate in the pedagogic process. Though many a times MR allowed them the opportunity to respond, she moved around the classroom to ensure that all the students including the less articulate and quieter students as well as the reluctant ones remained focused. However, in spite of her efforts some of the students continued to remain disengaged – completing left-over written work in some other subject like Science, chatting and laughing with each other and playing with cards. Whenever they caught the teacher's attention they were reprimanded by her. The most disobedient ones received more severe punishments. This was illustrated in Episode 8.2.

The authority relation between the teachers and the taught varied from situation to situation making them engage in various forms of negotiations. Conversation with the students revealed that their participation in the classroom pedagogic processes was mostly an outcome of a conscious decision. Some of the students admitted to being inattentive in the class or not completing their home assignments if they found the lesson uninteresting or when they disliked the subject.

> Aparna: When sir used to teach we found some points interesting...whenever we found something uninteresting then we would start gossiping!

> Sunil: I would never complete my assignments and then get punished!! ....also I never felt like studying social studies...not that I found the language or the textbook very difficult...it was just too lengthy and boring......

The situation was however strikingly different during the recapitulation phase. As Episodes 6.1-6.2 show the class, unlike on other occasions, was exceptionally quiet with the students sitting in their assigned seats, with textbooks open in front of them, seriously marking out the answers in their textbook or copying answers from the blackboard.

The students at JV appeared to understand that the most important pedagogic practice of their teachers was the dictation of "right answers". As Thapan argues it symbolized for them the selection "that which must be consumed and reproduced for evaluation" the emphasis being clearly on "retention of 'authentic' sentences for reproduction" in the examinations (2006:4198). The students perhaps readily understood that this was the "worthwhile knowledge" privileged by the school authorities since it was to be "formally assessed" at the individual level (Young 1971:36-38).Hence they gave it the importance it required.

5.3   Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the broad trends that characterized the civics classroom teaching-learning processes at JV. While the textbook was omnipresent in the classroom in every learning situation and to a large extent delineated the pace and content of the classroom pedagogic process it was not the key defining factor. Rather the teaching-learning process was to a very large extent shaped by rigid "framing" (Bernstein 1971:50) which determined what could be and what could not be transmitted in the pedagogical relationship within the classroom. Although the teachers used the textbook they took liberty at every phase of the teaching-learning process, introducing extra-textual knowledge and overlooking many of the pedagogical tools and textual content. What they selected from the text they very often distorted it. The textual knowledge thus was never transacted and conveyed to the students in its entirety or the manner in which it was intended to be communicated.

The teachers had to follow certain institutional norms while preparing the students for assessment. Although the textbook had provided the space for the students to answer the end-text questions in their own words and based on their understanding, the teachers did not allow the students to do so. They used the textbook to mark out answers or dictate answers based on their understanding. Here also the teachers used their discretion to select specific sentences and paragraphs from the textbook. Often the textual knowledge was distorted. Sometimes the textbook was replaced by a guidebook which had already either diluted or misrepresented the textual knowledge based on popular perceptions and

stereotypes. This resulted in the dictated answers in most cases being incomplete, inappropriate or incorrect. The entire process was strictly monitored by the school authorities. The teachers were instructed to ensure that every student completed writing the answers in their notebook and get them signed by their parents. The notebooks were then corrected by the teachers and sent for inspection and official stamping to the Vice-Principal's office. This way the school prepared the students to be ready for examinations.

The specific nature of the transaction of the textbook shaped the manner in which the students engaged with it. While the textbook had clearly created a space for the classroom teaching-learning process to be participatory the students participated in the pedagogic process only when provided that space by the teachers. Students' participation in the classroom was rarely on their own volition and since it merely required them to reproduce factual details, it did not lead to any critical engagement on their part with the textbook. While both the teachers and the students introduced out-of school knowledge, the students' contributions were rarely accepted as legitimate knowledge. Rather it was the teachers' contributions which acquired the status of legitimate knowledge even though on many occasions the relevance of such knowledge remained questionable. On rare instances however such boundaries were successfully transgressed by a small section of very articulate students belonging to the general category who vociferously steered the classroom discourse. On most occasions the vast majority of the students remained largely disengaged and unsettled. This required constant negotiations between the teachers and the taught with the authority relations between the two constantly fluctuating. The situation was strikingly different during the recapitulation phase which saw almost the entire class becoming attentive to copy dictated answers in their notebooks. Years of schooling had perhaps rendered the students familiar to the "examination-textbook link" (Kumar 1988:459) and they thus readily accepted the worthiness of the knowledge and responded accordingly. Yet the dictated answers being incomplete and inappropriate again resulted in the textual knowledge being left inaccessible to the students. They neither felt the need nor were provided the opportunity to engage critically with the textbook.

Thus the specific nature of the transaction of the textbook at JV civics classrooms saw substantial parts of the textbook being either left out or misrepresented. There was also entry of out-of-school knowledge. The students rarely participated in the classroom pedagogic process and even when they did so their contributions were not accepted as legitimate while the teachers' contributions irrespective of their relevance were accepted as valid. The nature of transaction as well as the institutional norms of JV prevented the students from engaging meaningfully with the textbook. On the other hand the dictated answers by the teachers though distorted was accepted as "worthwhile knowledge" (Young 1971:36) by the students. This again left substantial portion of the textual knowledge inaccessible to the students. All this resulted in the construction of what may be referred to as "civics classroom knowledge"– civics knowledge which developed within the classroom through the specific nature of interaction between the teachers, students and the textbook. This knowledge was quite different and distinct from "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46) embodied in the textbook. The subsequent chapter would analyse how this impacted the way the teachers and the students interpreted the textbook.

Chapter Six

Multiple Readings: Teachers' and Students' Perspectives

The previous chapter highlighted how the specific nature of the transaction of the textbook at JV resulted in the construction of what may be referred to as "civics classroom knowledge" which was distinct and different from the "official knowledge" (Apple 2000: 46) in the textbook. This chapter tries to unpack "civics classroom knowledge" by focusing on how and why it takes the shape it does. It attempts to understand how the teachers and students interpret textual knowledge and whether it leads to multiple readings. How this impacts the manner the teachers and students construct some of the marginalized communities is analysed and what influences such constructions is also looked at.

The discussion is supported by interviews with the teachers and students based on how they read and interpreted the chapters *Understanding Marginalization* and *Confronting Marginalization* in SPL III. Further, some specific individual and group assignments which the students were asked to submit to the researcher have also been considered for the analysis.

6.1 Teachers' Perspectives

Chapter Five shows that while transacting the "official" civics knowledge the teachers either overlooked the textual content or partially used it. This was observed in relation to certain key concepts and ideas like marginalization, stereotypes associated with the marginalized communities and their relationship with the State. Very often they also introduced out-of-school knowledge. Presented below are excerpts from interviews with the two teachers, KM and MR which clarify their views.

6.1.1 Marginalization

In the class KM had explained marginalization by differentiating between the "mainstream" society and the margin (Chapter Five, Episode 1.1). In this context he had

also referred to different forms of discrimination especially caste-based discrimination. He reiterated his views during the interview.

Interview 1.1

> I: What do you understand by marginalization?
>
> KM: Look there is the main society and there are people who are outside the main society..these people have not been able to keep pace with the main society..they were unable to access education ..the tribals for example used to live in the forest and were never a part of the main society..they were different!
>
> I: In the class you gave the example of Ekalavya..
>
> KM: Yes, teachers often discriminate..they favour one student over another...but as teachers we should treat all students equally..in the villages lower caste children are not treated equally with other students..in Delhi it may not happen ...

During the interview KM explained "marginalization" in terms of the difference between the "main" society and those who were outside that "main" society. He attributed this to the inability of certain groups of people to access fundamental rights especially educational rights. In this context he gave the example of the tribal people who according to him could not become integrated with the "main" society as they lived in the forests. This made it difficult for them to "keep pace with the main society". He also looked at "marginalization" as a form of discrimination which he explained by referring to the unequal treatment meted out to students by teachers. He further explained marginalization in terms of caste-based discrimination which he argued was mainly prevalent in the rural areas.

Though KM drew from the textbook he was unable to grasp the perspective that informed it. He could not explain "marginalization" as a complex concept having multiple dimensions-economic, social, cultural and political. Instead he reduced it to different forms of discrimination like caste-based discrimination. Thus he misunderstood and misinterpreted the text.

6.1.2   Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes

a. Adivasis and Their Lifestyle

While transacting the theme "Adivasis" in class KM did not mention about the stereotypes attached to the Adivasis as given in the textbook (Chapter Five, Episode 2.1).

Further he overlooked the distinctive features of the community with regard to their rich culture and contribution towards settled civilizations -- details which have been highlighted in the textbook to dispel the stereotypes. KM shared his views during the interview.

Interview 2.1

> I: The textbook mentions how the Adivasis have been stereotyped...your comments?
>
> KM: We build this image about Adivasis that they wear this kind of head-dress, they put animal feathers in it.. But nowadays in cities you can hardly find anybody dressed like that …… with education they are slowly getting integrated into society …. But when you go to the interiors you do find people who wear colourful clothes…they actually have no sense of colour, whatever colour they find they wear that…. their dance has no proper step…its local..they just make up something…they apply some colour on their face….
>
> I: Did the Adivasis contribute towards dominant religions?
>
> KM: *Nehi!*..But a lot of conversions took place and who got converted? The STs…those who were very poor....The Christian missionaries have been carrying on this for many years. They would go to very remote areas and set up a church..then if the villagers fell ill they used to give them medicines free of cost. When the villagers used to recover the missionaries would claim that Lord Jesus had cured them..! Along with setting up a church they would provide education for free...gradually when the villagers would get used to getting such help they would convince them to convert to Christianity and assure them of more help. There are a lot of Adivasis who claim to be STs but in reality they are Christians!
>
> I: What about their contribution towards dominant languages?
>
> KM: *Nehi!* Their written language is not so developed. They have spoken languages like Santhali..but …their language is not rich in literature. Some exchange would have happened like in case of Bengali and Santhali. STs have too many dialects but not too many scripts. So intermingling is not possible.

KM seemed aware of the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis as mentioned in the text. (Chapter Two, p.64).He made a clear distinction between Adivasis who continued to live in the forests and exemplified the stereotype and those who have become modernized with education and thus have become integrated with society. However disagreeing with the textbook he argued that the exotic image projected of the Adivasis was false. According to him in reality the Adivasis had no aesthetic sense with regard to clothing and grooming. He was also very dismissive of their cultural traditions like their dance forms. He felt that it was very simplistic and unrefined.

But this was contradictory to the textbook which highlighted the varied dimensions of traditional Adivasi life and society (for instance, their rich cultural heritage in the sphere of religion and language, deep knowledge about the forests and forest resources and symbiotic relationship with settled civilizations) as markers which defied the stereotypes

(Box 8, Annexure III). When specifically questioned KM vehemently negated the textbook and refused to acknowledge the Adivasis' contribution towards settled civilizations. However he highlighted the large-scale conversions among the Adivasis to Christianity bringing in a lot of details not mentioned in the textbook. He grudgingly reiterated how many Adivasis identified themselves as Scheduled Tribes while in reality they were Christians and hence not entitled to benefits. Again contradicting the textbook he refused to accept the existence of a rich literary tradition among the Adivasis but conceded that some exchange would have taken place between the dominant languages and Adivasi languages.

In fact negating the textbook KM attributed the changes in the lifestyle of the Adivasis to an external factor – the influence of modernization. In his opinion the distinctive lifestyle of the Adivasi*s* rendered them "uncivilized", differentiated them from the rest of "civilized society" and resulted in their marginalization. Thus he reinforced the very stereotype which the textbook was trying to dispel. This explains why he made a distinction between Adivasis and human beings in class - "……in the Andamans there are people..when they come face to face with human beings (*manushya*) they shy away…they do not talk!!"

b. Muslims and Madrasa Education

While transacting the relevant theme the teachers did not challenge the stereotypes attached to the Muslims, for instance with regard to their alleged preference for *madrasa* education. KM had used the textual information partially and had brought in his own views on the curriculum used in *madrasas* (Chapter Five, Episode 2.3). MR, on the other hand had overlooked the textual details and pointed to the regressive attitude of the community towards women. Here she introduced a lot of out-of-school knowledge (Chapter Five, Episode 2.2). When asked, the teachers commented as follows.

Interview 2.2

> I: What would you say about the educational status of the Muslims? ...and *madrasa* education?
>
> MR: The Muslims are educationally backward. Moreover according to their religious thinking it is not good for women to study..rather they feel that their duty is to look after the home while their husband should earn...…It's not that all minority communities think like this..the Jains or Parsees are numerically small but educationally far ahead …unlike the Muslims they are not regarded as marginalized!! There's also difference between Hindus and Muslims in terms of education and

religious practices. For all these reasons the Hindus don't like them and don't cooperate with them..and that's why they are marginalized.

Interview 2.3

> I: What would you say about the educational status of the Muslims? ...and *madrasa* education?
>
> KM: Their (Muslims') education is religion based, they prefer to go to *madrasas* where they are taught Urdu, Farsi etc. And not English!... Earlier they used to send the children to *madrasas* and who used to go there – the poor and even now it's the same. The Muslims from educated families ...attend government or private schools.   I don't know from where they (textbook writers) get all this data ..see surveys are done by people who live in urban areas..the textbook authors are also from urban areas. They have no real-life experience of rural India..!!

MR highlighted the low educational status of the Muslims. But digressing from the textbook (Chapter Two, p.68) she drew attention to the community's patriarchal and regressive attitude towards women. This according to her explained why the Muslims were not as developed as other minority communities. She also pointed to the differences that existed between the Hindus and Muslims with regard to education and religious practices. This she noted made the Hindus dislike the Muslims and keep them at a distance and led to the marginalization of the community.

KM argued that as in the past, a large section among the Muslims, especially the poor, still preferred to send their children to *madrasas* while the more well-to-do and educated sections were in favour of the government or private institutions. On this ground he vehemently contested the veracity of the survey mentioned in the textbook as he felt that those were conducted by people from urban areas who lacked an understanding of the situation in rural areas. He challenged the authenticity of the information provided in the textbook by questioning about the background of the textbook authors.

KM expressed his reservation about the curriculum followed in *madrasas*[67] which in his opinion was religion based and thus distinctly different from that taught in regular schools. On another occasion also he expressed similar reservation when he highlighted the disadvantages of studying in a *madrasa*:"..this kind of education will not enable one to master subjects like Hindi, English, and Math. And this will make it difficult for

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[67]Contrary to general perception that *madrasas* provide only religious education Alam points out that "*madrasas* in India have been undergoing vigorous reforms in the recent decades to enable their graduates to keep pace with the fast changing world and meet the requirements of the community at all stages." Many of the well-known *madrasas* according to him include in their curriculum "various modern disciplines, especially English, Hindi, Science, Indian History, Economics almost up to the graduation level." (See Alam at http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/op/2002/04/23/stories/2002042300050100.htm)

students to get admission in colleges and find jobs…There is problem – *garbar* (problem) in their (Muslims') education system". In KM's opinion *madrasas* thus symbolized backwardness and was an obstacle in the path to progress, development and modernization of the community.

Further KM endorsed the views shared by MR regarding the position of Muslim women. During another interaction he drew attention to the relatively high incidence of domestic violence within the Muslim community. He attributed this to the brutal nature of the male members of the community: "Domestic violence is present in all religions but the Muslims are very cruel by nature! They also keep the women in *purdah* (veiling)". These details were not present in the textbook.

c. Muslims and Their Social Customs

In the class KM (Chapter Five, Episode 2.4) overlooked how Muslims were stereotyped because of their social customs like donning the *burqa* and how the same resulted in discrimination and ghettoisation of the community. In fact, contradicting the textbook he argued that such customs provided the Muslims with a distinct identity. During interviews the teachers reacted as follows:

Interview 2.4

> I: The textbook mentions about certain stereotypes associated with the Muslims...your comments?
>
> KM: The Muslims keep the women in *purdah*. Imagine these women have to wear such clothes (*burqa*)[68] even during hot and humid weather here!! Yes, maybe where it originated many years back the weather was different and so such type of clothing was needed..but why here?!!....Yes there are stereotypes-Muslims are those who wear *burqa*, they are not clean, they eat non-veg. So

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[68]Research shows how the *hijab* and the *burqa* act as 'visual identifiers', markers of Muslimness for women belonging to the community even in the Western world. It 'acts as a target and is a symbol suffused with misconceptions of the second-class role of women in Islamic communities, claims of female repression…' (Carr and Haynes 2015:27). Challenging the misconception Abu-Lughod argues for the need to "work against the reductive interpretation of veiling as the quintessential sign of women's unfreedom". Based on her ethnographic research, she points out that the *burqa* is but one of the "many forms of covering, which themselves have different meanings in the communities in which they are used" and thus "veiling itself must not be confused with …lack of agency". While for some the *burqa* offers what Hanna Papanek calls a "portable seclusion" and is regarded as a "liberating invention because it enable(d)s women to move out of segregated living spaces while still observing the basic moral requirements of separating and protecting women from unrelated men" for others, the modern Islamic modest dress that many educated women across the Muslim world have taken on since the mid-1970s now both publicly marks piety and can be read as a sign of educated urban sophistication, a sort of modernity. (Abu-Lughod 2002: 783-790).

the Hindus especially in North India keep them at a distance as there is less awareness among people…it's not the government's fault!

Interview 2.5

> I: The textbook mentions about certain stereotypes associated with the Muslims...your comments?
>
> MR: Stereotypes..well these days there are variations amongst the Muslims. There are many who don't adorn the *burqa*..they mix with others, are in well-placed jobs. But a perception has been created that the Muslims are like this.... But these days there are many who work in corporates, in big companies and hold high posts..they don't wear these kind of clothes !!

Both the teachers acknowledged the existence of stereotypes in public perception vis-à-vis the clothing style of the Muslims. But they shared their own prejudices towards the community by extensively drawing upon out-of-school knowledge. KM commented how the practice of donning the *burqa* and remaining in *purdah* (veiling) among Muslim women was unsuitable for the Indian weather condition and hence an imposition which prevented them from exercising their choice regarding their clothing. Further he highlighted the prejudices shared by Hindus in North India towards the eating habits and level of hygiene followed by the Muslims which acted as a barrier between the two communities. MR acknowledged the diversity that existed among the Muslims with regard to clothing and appearance. According to her the more orthodox and conservative sections of the community preferred wearing traditional outfits while the liberal and modernized sections, especially those who were in well-placed jobs in corporate sectors avoided such practices. This she felt facilitated their interaction with the majority community.

Thus the views shared by the teachers informally revealed their own misconceptions and prejudices towards the Muslims and their preferred mode of education and social customs. These social customs of the Muslims were seen to reflect their orthodoxy and resistance towards modernization which contributed towards their backwardness, prevented their integration into the mainstream and resulted in their marginalization. According to the teachers the State had no role in it. Thus the teachers rejected the official version presented in the textbook and did not accept it as "valid knowledge"(Bernstein 1971:47).

6.1.3 Marginalized Communities and the State

a. Adivasis and Development

The negative impact of the development policies of the State on the Adivasis was acknowledged by the teachers in the class (Chapter Five, Episode 3.1 and 3.2). But MR, digressing from the textbook, highlighted how the same policies have benefited the community leading to their modernization and social mobility. KM on the other hand, differed from the textbook when he held the colonial State responsible for the marginalization of the community and acquitted the post-independent Indian State. They shared their views during interviews.

Interview 3.1

I: The textbook discusses about the impact of the development policies of the State...your comments?

MR: Earlier the Adivasis used to live in remote forests..there were no roads, schools..but when the companies reached there and found that the area was rich in minerals they asked the Adivasis to go away ..as they wanted to start mining...Once the forests were cleared and mining began they needed labourers ..so the tribals got some employment and began to earn money....they built their houses near the factories, opened small shops…the government started schools for the children. So where there was nothing there development began......where there are minerals there development is happening… But where the Adivasis are displaced..that is, where they are made to settle down there nothing is there.. the government has not done anything for them..there are a lot of places like Bastar, Chattisgarh where no development has taken place.. Actually Maoism is spreading because of this…!

Interview 3.2

I: The textbook discusses about the impact of the development policies of the State...your comments?

KM: When the British came they needed agricultural land to collect revenue..they also required wood for laying of railway lines....so they needed forest land. So when they introduced the forest laws they imposed a complete ban and who got affected the most..the Adivasis. They had to give up their work..they used to collect forest products,..and they were not skilled..or educated..so they were exploited...

I: What about the government policies after Independence?

KM: The government needs land …so they take land from the Adivasis but do not give the market rate..…since there was shortage of land, the government had no choice but to acquire forest land and carry on the process of development...... Development has to happen, industries have to be built..so some will get jobs in the industries but not all…so that's why problem is occurring...Yes, they had knowledge about iron ore ...They also had knowledge about plants etc.. they were not dependent on the government as they didn't have too many needs..the government also tried to bring them to the mainstream through education, providing jobs, ..the mid-day meal scheme..but they were unable to become part of the mainstream!

MR appreciated the overall benefits accruing from the development policies of the State on the Adivasis. This in her opinion resulted in marked improvement in their lifestyle in some cases and also enabled the community to come out of their backwardness. At the same time, she held the industrialization policies of the State and other private actors directly responsible for the displacement of the Adivasi*s* and their consequent dispossession and marginalization in some other cases. Further she held the failure of the government (to provide adequate compensation to the Adivasis and rehabilitate them) responsible for the rise of protest movements like Maoism in areas like Chattisgarh and Bastar.

KM agreed that the introduction of colonial forest laws adversely affected their lifestyle resulting in their exploitation. He also admitted that during the post-independent era, the Adivasis were not compensated adequately in the course of the development plans carried out by the State. At the same time he acquitted the State from any responsibility with regard to the marginalization of the Adivasis. In fact he regarded development as indispensable and justified the State's policy. He acknowledged the Adivasis' deep knowledge about forests and mineral resources but refused to consider them as constituting a self-reliant community. Instead he attributed their lack of dependence on the government as a sign of their simplistic lifestyle and backwardness.

Thus both the teachers agreed with the textbook (Box 10, Annexure III) to an extent with regard to the negative impact of the development policies of the State on the Adivasis. But at the same time contradicting their own view and the official view presented by the textbook they endorsed such policies. This reflected their appreciation for the State as the benevolent dispenser of justice and exposed the prejudices they held towards the Adivasis. In fact they held the Adivasis in very poor light. This explains why KM lauded the steps adopted by the government towards the upliftment of the community and held the Adivasis responsible for not becoming integrated into the "mainstream".

b. Dalits and Their Agency

While transacting the textbook in the class MR and KM referred to the enactment of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 (Chapter

Five, Episode 3.3 and 3.4). But they overlooked the very proactive role played by the assertive Dalit groups towards its enactment. Both discussed about the case-study on manual scavengers but ignored the contribution of the *Safai Karamchari Andolan*. When asked during the interview KM clarified his views.

Interview 3.3

> I: Did the Dalits themselves have a role to play in bringing about this law?
>
> KM: When the Constitution was being written or later when amendments were being made, I am not sure if any SC/STs were members of the committee!
>
> I: What about the *Safai Karamchari Andolan*?
>
> KM: Oh that dry latrine story..that has been banned in writing..but in practical life it is very much still there.
>
> I: Was there any protest or not?
>
> KM: Protest didn't happen because they lack awareness...on top of this there's a lot of unemployment, they also don't get enough to fill their stomach!!

KM' response revealed that he did not accept the representation of the Dalits in the textbook as having agency and contributing towards the enactment of the law and the *Safai Karamchari Andolan*. In fact negating the textbook he cited their lack of awareness and employment as well as extreme poverty as reasons which prevented them from putting up resistance and fighting for their cause. This displayed his lack of awareness about Dalits as a community and the biases held by him towards them.

On the whole, the teachers did not regard the textbook as a source of "valid knowledge" (Bernstein 1971:47). They not only overlooked it but negated and questioned it from time to time. Drawing extensively from sources outside the textbook, they viewed the marginalized communities through the prism of their own biases and prejudices. This explains why they held the communities responsible for their marginalized status and even when an example was provided in the textbook that portrayed one of the communities as having agency they refused to acknowledge it.

6.2   The Students' Perspectives

As discussed earlier the students at JV, except on a few occasions, did not get an opportunity to articulate their ideas within the classroom. However during the focus

group discussions they shared their perspectives on marginalization, the marginalized communities and the stereotypes associated with them and their relationship with the State.

6.2.1   Marginalization

Interview 4.1

> I: What is the meaning of "marginalization"?
>
> Diya: Marginalization refers to a situation in which an individual or a group of individuals are treated differently from others...
>
> Geetika: In India ..in the world people ...have different cultures, costumes ..they pray to different gods..they are treated differently.. those in majority think that others are poor ... their culture is different and they discriminate them and don't regard them as their equal!!
>
> Tara: For example the Muslims are discriminated in Hindu society..people think that their culture, food items, clothes, their going to mosques make them different..so people don't like them...

The students explained "marginalization" mainly in relation to the differential treatment meted out to individuals or groups whose cultural habits and practices were markedly different from the majority communities. They attributed this to the biases existing among the majority communities against those in minority especially with regard to their dietary habits, religious beliefs and practices. This often resulted in them being experiencing discrimination. In this context one of them cited the example of the Muslims. While they drew from the textbook to an extent they overlooked other significant details and reduced "marginalization" to another form of discrimination.

6.2.2   Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes

a. Adivasis and Their Lifestyle

Interview 5.1:

> I: The textbook refers to the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis, their lifestyle, social custom....your comments?
>
> Priya: The Adivasis don't have shelters..they build their shelters using trees and plants. What they eat is usually available from the forest like meat..they eat whatever they find-*kuch bhi kha lete hai*!!
>
> Diya: The culture of the Adivasis is very different from us Hindus. The way they dress they look very different from us ..their language is also different. They wear heavy ornaments and clothes made of leaves…their clothes are also very colourful!
>
> Geetika: But there are many among the Adivasis who are employed holding high posts..wear professional clothes, live properly, do everything following proper manners..but even then we think of Adivasis as those who wear colourful clothes.

I: Did they have any contribution towards settled civilizations?

Ishani: The Adivasis used to live in forests and during the pre-colonial period all the kingdoms which existed in India were dependent on them. That time their economic condition was very good. Later..they were separated from the society, because their culture was different, they were closer to nature, they refused to come out of the forests... they were averse to technology……

Tara: They had knowledge about the medicinal plants, which snakes were poisonous, which animals were harmful..!

Anita: We have learnt hunting from them…and how to light a fire with stones... We also came to know how to stitch clothes and many other things!

The students mentioned the close association that the Adivasis had with forests and how they depended on forests for sustenance. The distinctive nature of their cultural traditions which set them apart from people living in cities and villages were also highlighted and their significant contribution towards settled civilizations was discussed. But contradicting the textbook (Box 8, Annexure III) the students traced the contribution of the Adivasis towards settled civilizations to pre-historic times by mentioning how modern societies learnt many skills from the community like hunting and discoveries made by them (e.g. fire).Many details were provided in the textbook to challenge the stereotypes that reduced the Adivasis to a backward community of primitive forest-dwellers. This included the community's rich cultural heritage, deep knowledge about forests and forest resources and their symbiotic relationship with settled civilizations. These details were disregarded by the students. The subsequent marginalization of the Adivasis was also attributed by them to the community's distinctive culture, closeness to nature and resistance towards modernization. Moreover they made a distinction between those Adivasis who fitted the stereotypes – as those "wearing colourful clothes" and engaged in "singing and dancing" – and those who have become modernized having acquired education and being employed in salaried jobs. Therefore unlike the textbook, the students did not visualize the Adivasis as an empowered community and looked at their contribution to the settled civilizations from the same perspective. When asked to write an autobiography describing a day in the life of an Adivasi child some of them reduced the Adivasis to a primitive and exotic community of forest dwellers leading a carefree life (See Box 1 in next page)[69]. The sketch done by the student also reflected the same bias. Thus although the students drew from the textbook they appeared to be

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[69] See Annexure VI for students' writings and sketches.

influenced by the prejudices and biases prevalent in society towards the community. Thus in spite of being aware of the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis, they reinforced the same.

Box 1: Autobiography of an Adivasi Child

Hello, my name is Zingalu Han. My father is the mukhia of my village. His name is Zimbale. I am 14 years old. I do not go to school. I have learned our language Santhali by my mother. My mother don't do anything, she is a housewife. My village is in Sundarban jungle, West Bengal. I help my mother in household, collect the flowers for our god, play with other childrens and live like a Raja. My grandfather, great grandfather etc. all were mukhia of the village. I will also become mukhia when I will be of 25 years. In our village there is no problem of anything. We get all things from jungle. **(Himanish, Class VIII A)**

b. Muslims and the Madrasa Education

Interview 5.2

I: What do you have to say about the educational status of the Muslims? Do they prefer to send their children to *madrasas*?

Arjun: Those parents who want their children to only learn about religion they should send their children to *madrasas*….there they are only taught about Muslim religion, they read only books like Quran….For studying every place should be the same….school is the best place for everyone to learn.

Geetika: But Muslim children study in schools and not *madrasa*..one can't even make out that they are Muslims..they don't wear those caps etc..and so they don't look any different from others..!!

Aparna: Among the Muslims it is seen that the children are unable to continue their education for long..either they do not prefer to get the children educated or they withdraw them from school because of financial problems. There may be some who also don't prefer to send their children to the same school where Hindu children study.... other minorities like Christians ...are quite ahead in the field of education. But in contrast ...the Muslims ...are engaged in very lower level work like carpenter..this may be because of lack of education or because they prefer such work!

I: Why do Muslims face discrimination? Does it lead to their marginalization?

Himanish: Actually the Muslims and Hindus stand in opposition to each other. For this reason the Muslims find it difficult to access many facilities and they become marginalized….Education is a part of this…

Aparna: The discrimination of the minorities which happens is because of some communities..Government can improve the situation to some extent …but in the government too there are people who think similarly..Some Muslim leaders also spread this kind of hatred..one Muslim leader was reported to be announcing that he will not utter "Jai Hind, Jai Bharat"..Now if

you give this kind of a reaction then those belonging to other religious communities will feel that they are saying bad things about their religion..this increases the enmity between the two communities!

Param: The Muslims don't allow the girls to become educated ....they keep their women in *burqa*and do not allow the women to show their face... This is because Muslims feel that if the women are educated then they would not follow these customs!

Drawing extensively from sources outside the textbook, the students eloquently spoke about the differences that existed between them and their counterparts belonging to the Muslim community with regard to education. They clearly expressed their reservation regarding the *madrasa* system of education and pointed out how the curriculum followed in these institutions was different from that followed in regular schools and hence incomplete. These stereotypes were contradicted and challenged by a few students.

The low educational status of the Muslims was also discussed at length. At one level such discussions also appeared to be influenced by similar prejudices and misconceptions prevalent among the majority community vis-a-vis the Muslims. This was evident when they drew a linkage between the community's low educational status to their reluctance to get children educated especially in schools attended by Hindus and their regressive attitude towards women's education. At another level the students were able to critically look at the issue when they attributed the problem to their lack of financial resources.

The students appeared aware of the feeling of mutual mistrust, animosity and lack of cooperation that existed between the Muslims and Hindus. This they felt made it difficult for the Muslims to access certain facilities, prevented their integration into the mainstream and contributed towards their marginalization. They mentioned how such prejudices were often exploited by the political class to incite violence and hatred among the two communities.

Thus although the students made peripheral references to the textbook, they provided explanations and information drawn extensively from outside, thereby almost bypassing the textbook. The manner in which the students responded also appeared to be influenced by what the teachers shared in the classroom (Episode 2.1 and 2.2). Occasionally, however, they challenged the stereotypes.

c. Muslims and Their Social Customs

Interview 5.3:

> I: The textbook mentions about certain stereotypes associated with the Muslims...the way they dress..what do you have to say?
>
> Prabhat: When we see a Muslim man with a long beard wearing a *topi* (traditional cap) we say – *mullah hai! (*that is a *mullah*)
>
> Arjun: It's only the Indians who have been given complete freedom – *chut*– to the people to wear any kind of clothes. The Muslims don't enjoy that freedom…the men have to   wear their cap and *kurta* and the women their *burqa*….if they don't they will be reprimanded…so they need freedom from this!
>
> Smriti: It's not really true. Many times we have seen Muslims without a long beard or topi. They wear the topi only during offering *namaz* (prayer).They do that to hide their identity. These days many Muslim women have taken to modern, Western styles of clothing like jeans/top/*kurta*!
>
> I: The textbook mentions how the Muslims experience discrimination because of their social customs..any comments?
>
> Tara: The Muslims go to mosques, ...offer *namaz*. All this is completely different from our culture!!..that's why they are in a minority and are also marginalized!!
>
> Anita: In some areas where there are Pandits, Buddhists..they are vegetarians.. But the Muslims kill animals in front of us and consume them..we consider this a sin- *paap*. Then people think that these people(Muslims) are going to destroy our religion –*humare dharm ke khilaf hai!*
>
> Smriti: Our weddings are very different..Amongst Hindus there are customs like the *saat pheres* (going round the holy fire seven times) and the *saat vachans* (taking seven oaths)....in their tradition the *qazi* asks the bride and groom thrice if they have agreed to marry each other – "*quabul hai?*" and they simply have to say *"quabul hai"* three times and the marriage will be solemnized.

The stereotypes attached to Muslims with regard to their social customs that set them apart from other communities also informed how the students viewed the community. Most of the students mentioned about the distinct way of dressing followed by the Muslims (Box 11, Annexure III) which not only defined their identity but enabled people

Drawing by a Student

to immediately identify them as Muslims and keep them at a distance. They thus hinted at the discrimination experienced by the community though they did not categorically mention it. Some characterized the practice as an infringement on an individual's right to freedom of choice. While participating in an activity (designed by the researcher) whereby the students had to describe the lifestyle of members belonging to various religious communities in India they showed similar biases. Given here is an example of how one group represented the Muslims.

However the constructions of the Muslim men wearing a *kurta,* cap and sporting a long beard and women wearing *burqa* were dismissed as stereotypes by a few students. Such clothing among Muslim according to them was restricted to special occasions like offering of *namaz.* The example of many Muslim women having adopted more modern westernised style of clothing was also cited by them. These details were not provided in the textbook.

Digressing from the textbook the students referred to the different religious traditions of the Muslims which set them apart from the Hindus. They mentioned about the distinct food habits of the Muslims, especially their consumption of "non-vegetarian food"[70] which was considered a taboo and a "serious crime" amongst Hindus and prompted them to keep the Muslims at a distance. Customs and practices related to marriage constituted another area which, the students felt provided a distinct identity to the Muslims. Such differences in their opinion widened the distance between the Hindus and the Muslims and often resulted in the marginalization of the latter.

Thus while the students hinted at the discrimination faced by the Muslims owing to their distinct social customs they did not hold the majority community responsible for their marginalization. Rather they attributed this to these very customs. Influenced both by what they learnt in class (Episode 2.4) and prejudices existing in society they completely ignored the textbook and reinforced the stereotypes associated with the community.

6.2.3   *Marginalized Communities and the State*

Interview 6.1

> I: The textbook discusses about the development policies of the State...how it has impacted the Adivasis..any comments?
>
> Geetika: ...in cities they face difficulties in finding work..they have to live on the footpath and take up menial jobs –*chote kaam* like shoe-polishing for very meagre amount of money..they even resort to begging..They take up work as domestic helps in rich people's houses, as cobblers..they are forced to send their children to work as labours..they even perform on the road-side..doing cartwheel, walking on ropes etc.
>
> I: Is it then alright to introduce development the policies?
>
> Smriti: Development has to happen..But to balance that the government should do something- give jobs to the Adivasis. They should be provided houses, jobs in the factories…there should be a

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[70]Consumption of non-vegetarian food is a taboo among many upper-caste Hindu communities, especially Brahmins in the northern, western and southern regions of India.

health plan for the children. The government should open a school nearby so that their children can get good education....and hospital also..

The chapter *Understanding Marginalization* was extremely critical of the developmental policies of the State especially with regard to the devastation and catastrophic changes such policies had brought about in the life of the Adivasis (Box 10 Annexure III). The responses provided by the students however did not indicate that they shared the same criticism. They seemed aware of the difficulties arising in the life of the Adivasi*s* as a result of the policies. They also acknowledged the existential problems confronting the community in their struggle to eke out a living once displaced from their original habitat and were empathetic towards their plight. However they considered the developmental policies as indispensable. At the same time, taking a completely different position from the teachers, they expected the State to provide adequate compensation to the Adivasis and rehabilitate them.

Thus the students agreed with the textbook with regard to the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis as also the adverse impact of development on the community. They also endorsed the policies while expecting the government to rehabilitate those displaced. However they introduced a lot of out-of-school knowledge drawing from popular perceptions rather than the textbook and thus re-interpreted the textbook.

a. The Reservation Policy

Interview 6.2

I: What do you think of the reservation policy?

Geetika: I find the reservation policy unfair! Because of this policy those from the general category. Those who are studious get left behind while those (from Dalit community) who are weak in studies or *kamzor* get jobs!!

Smriti: This is very, very, very wrong!!What happens is when admission is announced in schools many of the students from the general category do not get admission because of reservation but those from the SC/ST and OBC categories get admission. This happens even in case of jobs. Those SC/STs who are educated, who have money they still get reservation. On the other hand if there are candidates from the general category who are poor but are educated and have the requisite marks they do not!

Amitosh: Those SC/STs who get jobs through reservation…their caste certificates should be cancelled once they get their jobs…otherwise they would be taking undue advantage –*galat faida uthayenge*.

Prerna: But those from the lower castes..the SC/ST and OBC categories have come up very late…. they did not get education..It's only recently that they are getting education..

Sunil: The SC/STs do not manage to get too many seats..the general category students are able to clear the entrance examinations at one go. They often pay bribe..but the SC/STs don't have too much money and they are also not very educated…The cut-off point should be there for the SC/STs as they do not have all the facilities.

An earlier discussion shows that the reservation policy was closely debated in the class on different occasions (Episodes 5.1 and 5.2). During the focus group interview a similar situation arose which saw the different groups of students vociferously discussing the advantages and the disadvantages of the policy (Box 15, Annexure II). Those belonging to the general category were strongly critical of it. They pointed out how it was disadvantageous for their community, especially those who were meritorious but poor. In their opinion, the policy provided an undue advantage to those from the "lower castes" at the cost of the more deserving students from the general category. They felt that everybody was equal and hence argued for some changes in the implementation of the policy.

These views were however countered by a small section of Scheduled Caste students (namely Sunil and Priya). They strongly argued in favour of the reservation policy in order to address the discrimination experienced by the Dalits over generations. They believed that the Dalits did not have the same facilities and resources as those from the general category and hence argued in favour of continuing the policy.

Thus like the teachers the students also interpreted the textbook in diverse ways – disagreeing, contradicting, negating, bypassing and reinterpreting it in the process. While they reinforced many of the stereotypes there were occasions when they were able to overcome the same stereotypes and look at the issue from a wider perspective and rationalize.

6.3   Unpacking the Teachers' and Students' Constructions of the Marginalized Communities

The above discussion shows that the teachers and the students read and interpreted the textbook in multiple ways. They also introduced a substantial amount of out-of school knowledge. Where did the teachers and the students source this information from? What influenced them to disagree, ignore or contest the textual knowledge that resulted in

perspectives and constructions of the marginalized communities which were distinct and different from the textbook? The following discussion would attempt to unpack this.

6.3.1   Marginalization

The discussion in Chapter Five and the interviews with one of the teachers and a few students reveal that they looked at marginalization as a form of discrimination. KM especially looked at it as an extension of caste–based discrimination. Here it needs to be remembered that KM was an upper caste Hindu belonging to a middle class family in North India. For him caste was a prominent aspect of his daily life and shaped human interactions, relationships and daily discourse. Moreover having spent his life in urban areas like Delhi he would not have had any close interaction with Adivasi life and society. In his imagination often the difference between the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes appeared blurred and this explains why he frequently equated one with the other and attributed the marginalization of the Adivasi*s* to the widespread prevalence of caste discrimination in India.

KM also appeared to be deeply influenced by memories of his lived experiences at the individual level – incidents in his childhood, people and situations he had encountered in the process of growing up and conversations he had with people in his day-to-day life. All this contoured the way he looked at these issues and read the textbooks.KM for instance was influenced by his personal experiences of having been witness to cases of caste-based discrimination on different occasions. Being unclear about the distinction between Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes he equated the marginalization of the Adivasis to caste-based discrimination. During a conversation he shared how he had encountered a young child (from a backward caste) in his ancestral village who was forced to proclaim his caste identity as per the instructions of his teacher (from an upper caste background) on the fear of being punished.

> KM: When I was a student at Benaras I was visiting my village..there was …a young boy ..a student of class1 or 2.. I just told him:"Get your notebooks.Let me see what you are studying".. I saw that along with his name his caste (Scheduled Caste) was also written on the notebook!..so I cut out his caste name and told him:"This is not your name!"....The child was very scared ....he said: "*Guruji* has written that and he will beat me up!"

The majority of the students in the two classes were also Hindus from North India and belonged to the general category. As in the case of the two teachers caste was also an integral part of their socio-cultural milieu and regulated their relationships and interactions within their family, neighbourhood and community. They were also aware of their identity as Hindus and the socio-economic and cultural differences that existed between them and other religious communities especially the Muslims. Many of them mentioned how such differences often led to a trust deficit between the two communities resulting in the Muslims being discriminated. This explains why they looked at marginalization as a form of discrimination. In other words the teachers' and students' understanding of marginalization was shaped more by out-of-school knowledge rather than the "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46) embedded in the textbook.

6.3.2 Marginalized Communities and Stereotypes

a. The Adivasis

As discussed in Chapter One (p.9) the Adivasis are stereotyped in popular discourses as a primitive community of forest-dwellers. Such discourses find reflection in some of the earlier NCERT civics textbooks (1975 − 2004) (Box 7, Annexure III). The manner in which the teachers described the Adivasis in the class and during the interviews[71] revealed a striking similarity with such portrayals. This showed that their understanding was conspicuously different from the way Adivasis were described in SPL III. It needs to be noted that both the teachers were familiar with the earlier textbooks. While KM admitted to having used them during his long tenure of teaching, MR shared that she was familiar with these textbooks, having used them for some competitive examinations. They also agreed that the earlier textbooks were qualitatively better than the SPL series. It is thus quite likely that KM and MR were to a large extent influenced by the representation of the Adivasis in the NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2004). The stereotypes prevalent in popular perceptions about the community perhaps also shaped the way they constructed the Adivasis.

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[71]See interview 2.1 in this chapter.

It has also been mentioned in Chapter One how the Adivasis have been constructed in popular discourses as "backward Hindus" who needed to be gradually integrated into Hinduism. This view propagated by the RSS and its affiliate organizations has been quite popular among Hindus and influenced the way they perceived the Adivasis and their conversion to Christianity. KM had highlighted both in the class and during the interview how the Christian missionaries carried out large-scale conversion among the Adivasis, something which was also mentioned in the textbook. Being part of the majority community he appeared to have already imbibed the prejudices prevalent in the popular discourses in the larger society vis-a-vis the Adivasis and their conversion to Christianity. His views were further crystallized by his personal lived experience. During the interview he shared his experience of having seen Christian missionaries at work in his home town during his childhood.

> KM: When we were small we used to see Christian missionaries distributing small booklets among our neighbours. These booklets would carry two questions at the back along with the address of the sender. If one wished one could read the booklet and send a reply to the given address along with answers to the questions. Then they used to send thicker books without any charge..these Christian missionaries spend a lot of money..!!

This explains the displeasure KM expressed about the Adivasis, especially those who had converted to Christianity. He complained that they were taking undue advantage by identifying themselves as Scheduled Tribes and Christians at the same time. During the interview KM argued: "Many of our STs in the North-East are Christians. They go to church. But they are taking benefit from here as STs and at the same time are availing of benefits from the church".

Being located in a metro like Delhi the students had no direct interaction with the Adivasis either within their neighbourhood or community. There were also no Scheduled Tribe students in their class and it is unlikely that they would have interacted with the few present in the school. Under such circumstances it is probable that they were largely influenced by the stereotypical representation of the Adivasis in popular television channels like the National Geographic and Discovery which reflected the developed nations' perception of third world societies, especially tribal societies. On the other hand their engagement with the SPL textbook was minimal. This explains why the students imagined the Adivasis as an exotic, primeval community of forest-dwellers leading a

lifestyle which was very different from people living in cities and villages. Geetika shared: "I have seen on the Discovery Channel how the tribals put fans made of colourful leaves and wear heavy ornaments!"When questioned as to where they have sourced the information from, the students shouted in a chorus: "Discovery! National Geographic!!"

The Adivasis have been constructed in SPL III as an empowered community of forest dwellers with a rich cultural heritage and having made significant contribution towards the development of settled civilizations. However this was not the way they were viewed by the teachers and students. They were largely influenced by the prevalent perceptions of the Adivasis within their socio-cultural milieu which was also endorsed by popular media, earlier civics textbooks and some personal experiences. This could be why the teachers overlooked such information while transacting the textbook in the class and negated the same during the interviews. This also helps us to understand why the students largely ignored the textual information.

b. The Muslims

It has been argued in Chapter One how the popular discourses, mainstream media and school textbooks have constructed the Muslims in stereotypical ways. It would not be incorrect to argue that the teachers' and the students' ideas about the Muslims, were to a very large extent shaped by their exposure to such prevalent discourses which made them look at the Muslims from the perspective of a majority community.[72] It further helped to reinforce the stereotypes vis-à-vis the community. For instance in spite of having any direct interaction with Muslims MR was able to confidently comment at length about the "deplorable" condition of Muslim women within the community. She shared that she usually sourced the information from magazines, newspaper articles and television:

> MR:..I have no practical experience with that section (Muslims)…I have sourced this information from magazines, articles in newspapers..especially those magazines which are useful for taking competitive examinations like ...Chronicle..Also articles in newspapers like the Hindu..then the books on Economics..and...television.

The students also appeared to be largely influenced by the electronic and print media. Drawing from their exposure to popular television serials, they commented on the

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[72] See Chapter One pp.10-11.

marriage customs and traditions of the Muslims which they felt were very different from that of the Hindus.

> Ishani: Hindus do not marry within the same family or kin group…sometimes the bride's and groom's families don't even know each other..but I have seen on the TV that amongst Muslims, if there is a daughter in a family she is married to the mother's brother's son or the sister's son!![73]

The students further referred to the media reportage on various current and past political developments, for instance the numerous violent communal riots that have occurred in the recent past and issues like "love-jehad" which made them aware of the tenuous relationship between the Hindus and Muslims. It reinforced the image of the Muslims as violent, fanatic and having links with terrorist outfits.

> Smriti:..there was a report in the television news about a shooter named Tara who married a person... only after marriage, she got to know that he was a Muslim! He kept forcing her to convert to Islam …broke her backbone…got her bitten by dogs... Actually he was connected to some terrorist organization..!!

Some of the students even traced the animosity between the two communities to history, to memories of Partition as well as to the current strained relationship between the two countries – stories that they have seen on television or read about in history books. Referring to the Partition and the holocaust which followed Shilpa mentioned how "the Indians sent the people of Pakistan (those who were in India) properly to Pakistan" but "the people of Pakistan sent dead bodies to India by train". Smriti attributed the Partition of India to Jinnah and the Muslims and their demand for a separate country about which she had read in a book.[74]

Based on reportage on television channels like Nat Geo the students also argued that Pakistan was a nurturing ground for various terrorist outfits involved in kidnapping of innocent people both tourists and civilians and training the youth to carry out terrorist activities.

> Prabhat: The Nat Geo channel..shows that the tourists who visit Pakistan..are captured and trained .. Software engineers in big companies..are kidnapped by terrorists who ask for ransom so that they can run their camps ..Pakistan trains the terrorists!!

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[73]The custom of cross-cousin marriages though prevalent among the Muslims and some Hindu communities in Southern India is considered a taboo amongst the Hindus in Northern and Eastern India.
[74]In this instance the student was referring to a book by a reputed private publisher. Following the above conversation she was requested to bring the same book to the school. However, an inspection of the textual content by the researcher did not reveal any evidence as pointed out by her.

Moreover KM and MR were upper caste Hindus and resided in predominantly Hindu dominated localities. While KM had some indirect interaction with Muslim neighbours in his ancestral village MR shared that she had no such experience. The students too belonged to the majority Hindu community. Although many of them resided in localities where there were a few Muslim families, from the conversations with the students it appeared that they did not have much interaction with their Muslim neighbours whom they saw from a distance, or heard about from other Hindu neighbours. The school where the teachers and the students spent a substantial amount of time was no different. The academic and non-academic staff in the school, barring a few, belonged to the majority Hindu community. There were also no Muslim students in the two classes which were observed. Although there were a few in the school, in general they were in a minority and were outnumbered by the Hindus who constituted the majority. The teachers and the students thus had little direct interaction with members of the Muslim community regularly. Under such circumstances it was quite possible that they echoed the popular perceptions prevalent within the majority community.

> Anita: I have seen that the Muslims get very irritated with the Indians-Hindus…*chidte hai*!! For example when we pray to god we fold our hands while they turn their hands in the opposite direction and pray…we wash our hands in one direction - *sidha* (straight, from elbows downwards) but they do it in the opposite direction –*ulta* (downwards from the wrist to the elbow)! Actually such feeling is there among the Hindus also….The Muslims do everything differently-..like we pray twice a day..they pray five times !!

Mention needs to be made of the hidden curriculum of the school as reflected in the school culture which has already been discussed in Chapter Four. The mission document available on the school's official website highlighted the importance of promoting national integration through recognition of the pluralist character of the Indian society and polity. Yet the school's internal dynamics provided space to many celebrations, rituals and symbolisms all of which moulded the ethos of the school towards a more majoritarian, Hinduised culture. For instance the school lobby was decorated, among other things, with idols of Hindu deities like Saraswati and Ganesha. The idols were worshipped periodically with traditional Hindu rituals. Once during the period of fieldwork a large clay idol of Saraswati was installed on a stone pedestal near the school

entrance and the event was celebrated with a *pranpratistha* ceremony[75] and sweets were distributed as *prashad*[76]to all staff members and students[77]. However many of the students and teachers did not find this contradictory but felt it was alright for students to seek blessings from the deity. Ishani commented- "There is no harm in keeping a statue of goddess Saraswati because it is believed that she brings good wishes for all students whether she is a Hindu or belongs to any other religion."

The lobby being the most visible space to outsiders, was decorated with a huge painting of *Bharatmata*[78] being propitiated by children from various religious backgrounds – Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Sikhism. It seemed to project Hinduism as the normative Indian ethos placing all other religions in the periphery. The Friday morning assembly was special in nature, and was used as a forum to highlight the significance of the national holidays among other things. It was observed that prior to Diwali – one of the major Hindu festivals, one student lucidly read out an elaborate one-page write-up highlighting the significance of each of the five days of Diwali. This was followed by a short speech by the Principal who emphasized the need to adhere to safety measures while bursting crackers. A similar fanfare was not observed on the occasion of other festivals like Muharram, one of the major Islamic festivals. Though it included a write-up on the significance of the festival the content when read out by two senior girls, appeared disorganized, incoherent and filled with innumerable grammatical errors. When asked, the students shared that they had sourced the information from an internet website. Though they were unable to explain it, one girl nonchalantly shared: "I am not a Muslim..how will I know the meaning of all this!"

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[75]It is a traditional Hindu ceremony whereby the idol when installed for the first time in a place is brought to life through the performance of rituals like recitation of religious hymns, and worshipping the idol with offerings of flower, fruits, sweets by a priest who always belongs to the highest caste.

[76]*Prasad* is a religious offering in Hinduism and Sikhism. It usually consists of a food item like fruit or sweet and is consumed by the devotee later.

[77] Rituals like *pooja* appear to be popular in many schools in India. Farooqui notes the following about her visit to a government school in Delhi 'Two idols of Saraswati, posters of Krishna and other goddesses and lamps with *rangoli* around them adorned the principal's office. In many other schools special prayers (*pooja and havan*) are organized before public examinations. (Farooqui 2012:59)

[78] The figure of *Bharatmata* or Mother India is regarded as a symbolic representation of the Indian nation. Its origin is traceable to the late 19th century anti-colonial movement when it was used by the nationalist leaders as a rallying symbol to evoke nationalist sentiments among fellow Indians. She is depicted as a Hindu goddess wearing a saffron coloured sari, gold jewellery, holding the Indian national flag and is often accompanied by a lion.

The daily morning assembly often included the collective singing of a school prayer, either the popular Sanskrit *sloka Asotoma Sadgamaya* or the *Gayatri mantra*. The Independence Day celebrations, ostensibly a secular affair began with a patriotic song in Hindi *Jaya Jaya Devi Bharatamata* (Ode to thee Goddess Mother India). It concluded with the chanting of a Sanskrit *sloka* from the Upanishads[79] - *PurnaMada, purnamidam, purnapurnamudasatte*. All the chants, although spiritual in nature had a distinct Hindu religious overtone. The exclusion of content from other religions like Islam, Christianity, Sikhism or Buddhism further confirmed the non-secular character of the selection.

The curriculum for co-curricular activities included among other things *rakhi*-making[80] and *rangoli* designing. The students undertook the school pledge in Sanskrit once a week and the school, celebrated a Sanskrit Week in which the students took part in different competitive events, which included recitation of *slokas* (hymns) from the Hindu scripture, the Bhagavat Gita, in Sanskrit.

Based on ethnographic studies, Farooqui observes how some "rituals, symbols and practices gain legitimacy and "official" status by becoming a part of the school calendar and environment, while some others are, consciously or otherwise, denied that space" (Farooqui 2012:59). This she notes offers "covert and hidden messages of acceptance of some groups and non-acceptance of others" (ibid.). This was evident at JV also where all the displays, rituals and performances, having a distinct Hindu symbolism directly and indirectly conveyed a message which projected the Hindu way of life as synonymous with the Indian way of life. In such a situation, a Hindu emerged as the proto-type of the normative Indian thereby overshadowing or excluding all other identities. But most of the time, the teachers and students remained in denial. Manjula Sachdeva, the CCA coordinator vociferously emphasized the school's non-partisan, secular character:

> *Rakhi* and *rangoli* have nothing religious about them! Learning to design *rangolis* enhances the students' aesthetic and creative skills. *Rakhi* is celebrated by Hindus and Muslims alike. We at JV

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[79] The Upanishads are a collection of texts in Sanskrit and contain some of the central philosophical ideas of Hinduism.

[80] *Rakhi* or *Raksha Bandhan* is a Hindu festival which celebrates the bonding between a brother and sister when a sister ties a ritual thread around the brother's wrist wishing for his long life and well-being and the brother takes a vow to protect his sister in return. Though the festival has a secular aspect and is celebrated by certain sections of Sikhs and Jains (two of the many minority communities in India) it is most popular as a religious festival among the Hindus.

treat all students equally, we make no difference in terms of their caste or religion.. We are all Indians!

While it was difficult to establish a direct link between the majoritarian bias in the school culture and the teachers' and students' attitude *vis-a-vis* the Muslims yet such a possibility could not be ruled out.

The teachers and the students appeared to be largely drawing from their lived experiences which they interpreted through the perspective of a majority community. KM for instance shared about a case of domestic violence which he had heard from his neighbour in his native village which convinced him about the brutal nature of Muslim men:

> I have not seen but heard from neighbours in my village.…. a pit was dug on the ground and a Muslim woman was dumped into the pit by her husband! She had to remain there till the neighbours came and rescued her!!

KM's disapproval of the *madrasa* system of education was similarly influenced by what he saw in his native village. He spoke about a *madrasa* there where the poor Muslim children were provided religious education in *"Arbi"* (Arabic) and *"Pharsi"* (Persian) and not taught English or Hindi. This gave him the confidence to challenge the textual information.

Some of the students were able to develop some idea about the Muslim community, their lifestyle and customs having travelled to other parts of the country. Tara shared about her experience of having seen "Muslim schools" during her family visit to Jammu and Kashmir:

> When I had gone for a trip to Jammu and Kashmir with my family I had seen that there are Muslim schools... There they are taught about Muslim religion..their prayer is different…not like our prayer, *asotoma sadgamayo*…their uniform is also different…the boys wear long *kurta, pyajama* and cap- *topi*. The girls wear a white scarf around their head and *kurta pyajama*.

Yet they were unable to accept such differences as a reflection of the multicultural nature of the country. Rather they regarded any other culture, like that of the Muslims as not only different but inferior in nature.

It has been mentioned earlier how the students were critical about the status of women within the Muslim community which according to them also contributed towards the

marginalization of the community as a whole. Here also they appeared to be drawing from their lived experience. Neha commented:

> The Muslims are very protective about their women..they stop going to school after a certain age. I have a friend..she's in class nine now..she is already been married!!

Based on their lived experiences, the students were influenced by the perceived strained relationship between the Hindus and Muslims. Aparna shared about her experience of having befriended a Muslim girl in her tuition class and how she was debarred by her family from mingling with her Hindu classmates. The students further perceived the relationship between the two communities as tenuous, irreconcilable and fraught with animosity. This according to them was reflected in the problems that arose out of "love marriages" between the two communities, often resulting in "honour killings". Smriti shared -

> In our neighbourhood there was a Hindu girl who was in love with a Muslim boy from her college. She was a decent girl and the boy was also in a good job with the Bihar Police…. But when they got married the parents killed the girl…!

It appears from the above discussion that even when the students and teachers were not direct witness to many of the incidents they were aware of the discussions happening around the issues within their families and neighbourhood as also in the media. Belonging to Hindu families and living in Hindu - dominated neighbourhoods they were likely to have imbibed the prevalent bias of the majority community against the Muslims.

This explains why many of the students were resentful of what they perceived as "privileges" enjoyed exclusively by the Muslims like polygamy and special privileges for minorities. Geetika voiced her grievances: "….the Muslims can marry as many times as they want to but Hindus can marry only once…then there is nothing for the Hindus..like the way there is reservation for the minorities everywhere!"Her views were reiterated inside the class by KM, who drew attention the special status provided to Jammu and Kashmir and the absence of Uniform Civil Code among the Muslims as some of the privileges enjoyed by the community.

6.3.3 *Marginalized Communities and the State*

a. Adivasis and Development

As discussed earlier the representation of the State in the NCERT textbooks (1975-2004) was idealistic (Box 3, Annexure III). It was constructed as a monolithic, paternalistic and benevolent structure looking after the well-being of its subjects. No mention was made of any lapses on its part that resulted in depriving the citizens from their rightful entitlements. In contrast the SPL series while lauding the role of the State towards the welfare of the citizens was fairly critical about certain developmental policies of the State (Box 10, Annexure III). For the teachers, who were familiar with the earlier textbooks the image of the State as a benevolent paternalistic structure was deeply entrenched in their collective imagination and this explains why they were not critical of the State and its development policies. But at the same time being located in a metropolis like Delhi and having access to different public media like newspaper, television and the internet they were more attuned to the on-going development discourse. This perhaps explains why someone like MR took a more balanced view. She acknowledged the problems arising out of the large-scale industrialization but simultaneously highlighted the positive impact of "development" on the Adivasis.

The students drew on their lived experience of having seen children struggling for survival on the streets of Delhi. Presuming them to be Adivasis they shared how those children were engaged in odd jobs and hence were empathetic towards them.

> Priya: I have seen people painting footpath…in films!
> Anita: The Adivasi children dance on the road!
> Priya: In many places like in Saket ..I have seen them selling flowers!

But while being critical of the development policies of the State, they endorsed the same as essential and indispensable. Being located in an urban context like Delhi they were exposed to a particular kind of "development" discourse made even more popular by the many electoral campaigns on media and public spaces. Therefore it was only natural that these representatives of an aspirational, burgeoning middle class would support State policies that upheld the interests of the dominant classes at the cost of de-recognizing the

basic needs of the vast masses of the rural and urban poor and other disenfranchised communities. Even when they asked for the rehabilitation of the Adivasis they appealed to the magnanimity of the State as the benevolent dispenser of justice rather than demanding from the State what were the Adivasis' rightful entitlements as citizens. This explains why they did not overtly blame the State for the marginalization of the Adivasis but attributed it to their "inherent backwardness"- their primitive lifestyle, and their resistance to modernization.

b. The Reservation Policy and Dalit Agency

To understand why a section of the students were resentful of the reservation policy one has to keep in mind the dominant discourses in their socio-cultural milieu. This has been discussed in detail in Chapter One (pp.11-12).Similar arguments were voiced by many of the general category students who wanted the policy to be abolished on the ground that it negatively impacted the prospects of meritorious students from the general category and provided an undue advantage to those from the reserved category.

These ideas became stronger under the influence of their lived experiences. Belonging to lower middle and middle class families they shared the anxiety and grievances of their family members about their future prospects in the sphere of higher education and career. This explains their resentment towards what they considered an "undue additional advantage" available to their counterparts belonging to well-off SC/ST families. Smriti (a general category student) recounted:

> I am talking about the medical entrance exams in 2001…my father had appeared for it..he had cleared the exam but he didn't get a seat. Because out of the 9 seats, 8 were reserved for the SC/ST and OBC candidates while only 1 seat was open for those belonging to the general category[81].

These students also based their arguments on what they had seen from individual lived experiences or their familiarity with similar issues in the media like newspapers and television. According to them the reservation policy was often misused by those from the "lower castes" many of whom were affluent and hence in their opinion, undeserving.

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[81]Under the reservation policy every institute of higher education reserves a specific number of seats for admitting different categories of students as per the order of the government. Therefore the situation which the student spoke about would not have happened. It is more likely that the matter was often discussed within the family and was misconstrued.

They argued that the reservation policy should be meant for those who were from economically disadvantaged sections of the society while those who were well-placed, even if they belonged to the SC/ST communities, should be made to opt for open competition. Amitosh commented: "There's one uncle in my neighbourhood. He's a ST and he became an IAS through reservation. His son always tops in his studies ... recently he appeared for the MBA entrance examination and got admission by showing his ST certificate!!" He also picked up a similar example from among his classmates. Pointing to one of his classmates, Sunil, a SC student from a well-to-do family he argued: "For instance, Sunil..he's a SC and he has access to all kinds of facilities. Now if someone like him gets the benefit of reservation, won't it be too easy for him?" Drawing from reportage in the print and electronic media the students questioned the validity of the difference in cut off points set up for entrance examinations in various institutions of higher education. Arjun argued: "..the SC/STs will pass even if they score 60% while those from the general category will have to score 80% and above....this is unfair!!I keep reading about these issues in the newspaper".

The foregoing discussion has explained how the teachers, especially KM looked at marginalization as a form of caste-based discrimination. He was also confused about the distinction between Adivasis and Dalits and placed them in the same category as Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes. In his opinion this was a vulnerable group of people who were subjected to discrimination over centuries. This was repeatedly mentioned by him during transacting lessons. Drawing from his cultural repertoire KM very often referred to anecdotes from epics like Mahabharata[82] and instructed the students to refer to literary works of renowned Hindi writers like Premchand to understand how caste-based discrimination resulted in the marginalization of the Adivasis and Dalits. He was also influenced by the portrayal of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Tribes in the earlier civics textbooks and by his lived experiences of having seen instances of caste-based discrimination in his native village. All this confirmed his perception of the group as a powerless group of people. This explains why he found it difficult to visualize the community differently – having agency and fighting to reclaim their rights.

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[82]See episode 2.1.1, chapter 5.

6.4 Conclusion

The foregoing discussion provides an insight into how the textual knowledge was accessed, interpreted and engaged with by the teachers and students. The teachers and the students drew only partially from the textbook and did not always agree with it. Rather they tended to digress from it, leaving out textual content, making substantial additions in terms of new and different ideas and often negating, reinterpreting and contesting the civics knowledge as represented in the text. While the textbook encouraged a range of perspectives the expectation was that the content would be engaged with as intended, that is in its entirety along with the pedagogical tools. This was not done. Thus there was a mismatch between the textual content and its transaction. The "civics classroom knowledge" which emerged included out of text content, stereotypes and prejudices brought in by the teachers and was actually in many ways a distortion of the "official knowledge" (Apple2000:46) embedded in the text. As the interviews with the students indicate, space was also created for them to engage with the textbook in ways which was contradictory to what was intended by the textbook authors. Their engagement with the textbook remained minimal and they drew extensively from out of text content which was similarly textured with biased and stereotypical perceptions about the marginalized communities. This resulted in perspectives which were varied and diverse. Such differences were evident not only between the textbook and those who read it, that is, the teachers and the students but also amongst the readers themselves - between the two teachers, between the teachers and the students as well as within the different groups of students. There were also a few instances when the students questioned many of the stereotypes.

This chapter has also attempted to analyse some of the factors which resulted in multiple readings of the textbook. The textual knowledge constituted for the teachers and the students what can be termed as authorised or approved knowledge. However, the textbook was clearly not the only factor which shaped the way they participated in the meaning-making process. Rather it was open to diverse influences - the specificities of the socio-cultural milieu within which the teachers and the students were located, the dominant discourses prevalent within that milieu as also in the media and older textbooks. The hidden curriculum of the school as also the memories of their personal lived experiences contributed towards shaping their perceptions. All these coalesced to

form a "cultural schemata" (Porat 2004:965) and provided the teachers and the students with a lens through which they read, transacted and interpreted the textbook. Being part of this socio-cultural context they easily imbibed the prejudices, stereotypes and perceptions *vis-à-vis* the marginalized communities and the State prevalent within that milieu and the textbook was unable to disrupt that. This explains why the classroom became a site for the playing out of "cultural politics" (Apple 2000:59) resulting in constructions of the marginalized communities and the State which were very different from the way they have been portrayed in the textbook. The fact that the teachers' prejudices and biases mediated the transaction of the text also raises the larger question of whether and how they were prepared and trained to deliver the textbook. Further questions also arise about the nature of the textbook itself given the fact it was almost entirely disavowed by the students who relied more on knowledge drawn from outside the text. Some of these questions have been taken up in the chapter that follows.

Chapter Seven

Transacting the SPL Textbooks: Teacher Preparation
and Textbook Development

The selective manner in which the teachers transacted the textbook and the fact that they barely used some of the pedagogical tools present in it need serious attention. Further very often they appeared to not agree with the perspective of the authors with issues related to marginalization, the stereotypes attached to the marginalized communities and the role of the State in their marginalization. This raises serious questions as to how they were prepared or if at all they were prepared to transact the new textbooks in the manner it was envisaged by the authors. This was because the SPL textbooks were introduced based on certain radical shifts suggested by the NCF 2005 both in terms of content and pedagogical approach. This necessitated the teachers to be adequately trained. The textbook development process also becomes significant in this context as it requires a deep understanding of the realities in the ground level in which the textbooks were to be transacted. It helps in gauging the feasibility of implementing the new perspectives and pedagogic styles within classrooms. This chapter, which is based on data collected through one-to-one interactions with some of the teachers at JV and some members of the Textbook Writing Committee (TWC) at NCERT as well as focus group discussions with a select group of students in the two classes at JV, would explore these questions.

7.1   The Textbook and Teacher Training

The discussions in Chapters Two and Three show that the SPL series was very different from the earlier NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2004) which had been in use prior to the introduction of the NCF 2005. KM in his long teaching career spanning over more than two and a half decades had been transacting these textbooks in the classroom. MR, being much younger had not used these textbooks during her career but admitted to being familiar with them. Transaction of the SPL series which was conceptualized and designed from a very different pedagogical perspective and conceptual framework, therefore, necessitated the teachers to be adequately trained. Conversations with the teacher

educators, some members of the TWC and teachers themselves revealed the inadequacies in both the initial training and in-service teacher professional development processes.

7.1.1 *"Teleconferencing is not training!"*

The members of the TWC acknowledged that following the NCF 2005 some kind of initial training was organized by NCERT prior to introducing the textbooks in schools. One of the models adopted was the *Cascade Model* as part of the standardised teacher professional development process. This model which followed a centralized approach was aimed at disseminating information and skills among a large population of teachers in a scaled manner through workshops and training sessions. A small group of teachers were selected and imparted intensive training through exploration of new concepts and skills. They were then expected to serve as "master trainers" and train their peers through demonstration and modelling of skills. While it had a lot of potential being a one-time event which was not followed by on-going support it did not lead to effective transformation in classroom practices. According to the TWC members since it flowed through channels of less experienced teachers by the time it percolated down and reached the target group the crucial focus became diluted and lost its impact. As one of the TWC members, M1 shared:

> A cascading mode of training is at best a carbon copy and not a photocopy....after the first page the later pages do not have the same clarity....in a cascading model as you go further down the impact becomes lesser....!

The second way in which the initial training was conducted was following the *Open Distance Learning mode* through televised conferences. During such sessions academicians or civil society professionals who were the chief advisors to the TWC were invited to interact with teachers who were gathered in different regional training centres of the NCERT. While these sessions could accommodate a far larger number of teachers these were also not very effective for a variety of reasons. According to another member of the same committee (M2) thousands of teachers underwent such training in different regional centres across the country. But as she pointed out a televised mode restricted to a specific duration could not facilitate enough meaningful interaction between the trainer and the trainees. Therefore it was not as effective as a face-face interactive session.

Moreover she added that many of these teachers being on contractual service were unable to continue with their jobs and left.

Other members of the TWC who were interviewed also said that teachers were not trained adequately to transact lessons. For instance M3 who had been engaged in training thousands of teachers over the past few decades, pointed out that the televised conferences conducted at the initial stage merely provided a kind of orientation and therefore could not be considered as training. He commented: "Tele-conferencing is not training..it cannot serve the same purpose as face-to-face training...at best these were orientation workshops...one needs to take the teacher through the entire journey...!" He argued that no training happened and that the "textbooks were introduced without any training!"

7.1.2 "I don't do much...I just sit at the back and relax!!"

As part of the continuous in-service professional development programmes for teachers mandated by CBSE the JVS also conducted a twenty-one day training programme (twelve days during summer vacation and ten days during winter vacation) in each subject annually. According to some of the JVS spokespersons who were interviewed such trainings were held at their Zonal Institutes of Education and Training (ZIETs) located in different parts of India. It was mandatory for all subject teachers to attend these trainings once in every six years. In the trainings conducted, topics like gender sensitization, Right to Education Act, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) were included. Besides, teachers were required to identify subject specific issues in the areas of content and pedagogy by filling up a need analysis form prior to the workshops. Following this experts from leading universities and educational research institutes were invited to deliver lectures and conduct workshops. Along with this, many teachers (master trainers) were asked to deliver demo-lessons on their "strong areas" (chapters they had taught in an innovative way or were confident to explain the underlying concepts) for the benefit of other colleagues. During the course of the training the teachers were also made to appear for a pre-test, mid-test and post-test based on the

textbooks and their learning from the workshops. This was aimed at assessing their progress.

Talking to the JVS officials revealed that there was definitely a structure and a system in place for conducting in-service training[83]. However when asked to share details about the content of the training especially in the context of the social studies textbooks it emerged that they had no understanding of the shifts introduced by NCF 2005 regarding the perspective, content and pedagogy. This was evident when Lata Sehgal, who was in charge of co-ordinating the training for social studies two years ago, shared the dilemmas that the JVS underwent while organizing training and how they dealt with the same:

> See earlier the textbooks were based on rote-learning but the new textbooks are application – based....related to real-life situations. So often we wondered what to teach...have we at all taught anything as there are only examples. Many of the teachers also misused this...they took resort to play-way method but the basics got missed out in the process. So now we do what is called "Back to Basics" whereby we focus on key concepts and ideas in each chapter and train the teachers to explain them.

The analysis in Chapter Two and Three shows that the SPL series definitely dealt with a range of concepts including some very complex ones like "secularism" and "marginalization". But these were not presented as definitions following conventional pedagogical approach to be learnt through rote memorisation. Instead these were explained using creative expressions like storyboards and examples along with in-text and end-text questions. It was expected that teachers would engage the students in a discussion and a range of answers would emerge through a process of deliberation and debate. The students were also provided the space to answer the questions in their own words. This was in accordance with the constructivist approach (Chapter One, p.23). Seghal having no clarity about what this approach was confused the same with "play-way method" and "activity-based learning". She complained that the textbooks lacked basic information about key concepts. Hence she highlighted the need to return to conventional pedagogic practices where the teachers, as the principal epistemic authority explained concepts to students who were then expected to passively listen and reproduce the same as answers in examinations.

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[83] Attempts to obtain further clarity regarding the content of the workshops did not yield much result as the JVS officials appeared reticent to divulge more details.

Observation of classroom processes at JV (Chapter Five) has revealed that the teachers did not use the textual content and the pedagogical tools given in the textbook as envisaged by the authors. The interviews (Chapter Six) further indicate their disapproval of the SPL series. But most importantly it raises serious concerns about the quality of in-service training that they were provided with for transacting the SPL series.

Teachers at JV when asked to share their experience of training in relation to the NCF 2005 textbooks and the SPL series in particular were unable to recollect having attended any workshop geared towards the specific themes like marginalization or gender or Constructivist pedagogy. In general the teachers appeared lukewarm in their response regarding the relevance of the workshops. In their opinion it was something which they had to undergo as part of their routine and nothing more. Rajesh Mishra, one of the senior teachers for social studies commented: "We are the ones who have to deal with the actual problems at the ground level..in the classrooms..So when I attend these workshops I don't do much...I just sit at the back and relax!!" Some of the teachers also questioned the relevance of the workshops which they felt were often inappropriate, unnecessarily heavy in content and did not address the real concerns of the teachers. KM shared:

> When we have these trainings people from universities, NCERT come..like one person came from Delhi University and gave a long lecture on the French Revolution..Now we don't want to know so much about the French Revolution!..Tell us what is needed...what will we do with so much information on the French Revolution?

When asked to specify if they were having any difficulty in transacting the textbooks with regard to the content, pedagogy or language the teachers always answered in the negative. They only echoed what Seghal said about the textbooks having "too many examples and stories" and lacking in "actual matter". In this context they often referred to the earlier NCERT civics textbooks which they felt had adequate "matter" and hence were "better". This indicated that they had not grasped the difference between the earlier textbooks and the new ones in terms of content and pedagogical perspectives. Ideally the in-service training programmes should have addressed the shifts introduced by the NCF 2005 with regard to the new perspectives introduced in terms of textual content and pedagogical style. But in the absence of proper understanding on the part of the school authorities (i.e. those in charge of in-service training at JVS) regarding these shifts the

trainings were conceptualized inappropriately. Hence these were unable to equip the teachers with the requisite skills and conceptual understanding to transact the new textbooks. This explained why the teachers took little interest in the workshops. Being incompetent to handle the new textbooks they fell back on conventional pedagogic practices "internalized over long periods" (Batra 2005:4352).

7.1.3 *"Is there nothing good about my India?"*

It has been highlighted in Chapter Three how the NCF 2005 envisaged a very different role for the teachers which was clearly articulated in the "Introductory Note for Teachers" provided in each of the SPL textbooks. The teachers were not only expected to overcome the urge to follow the "textbook culture" and transform the classroom pedagogic process by meaningfully engaging children in the process of knowledge generation. They were also were expected to evolve into reflective practitioners and critical pedagogues capable of mediating the textual perspective with regard to issues of inequality based on caste, religion, ethnicity and gender. Ability to handle the diversity present in the classroom with the required sensitivity was another expectation from them. But for expectations to get translated into a reality inside the classrooms it was extremely crucial that teachers were prepared accordingly. It has been mentioned earlier that currently the responsibility of organizing in-service professional development programmes for teachers rests with individual schools and clusters of schools (e.g. JVS). Therefore the school leaders like Principals and master trainers (very often some senior teachers) also needed to be trained to understand the significance of introducing specific changes in the manner such training programmes were conceptualized.

Batra has argued that while the NCF 2005 envisioned drastic transformations in terms of classroom pedagogic practices such a vision was based on "several assumptions about the teacher" (2015:52)[84]. Such assumptions were made without giving enough thought as to how teachers were to be prepared. The foregoing discussion has given an indication of the gaps that characterised the existing teacher training processes in schools. These gaps explain why the teachers in JV civics classrooms transacted lessons on "marginalization"

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[84]See Chapter Two p.50

by completely disavowing the pedagogical approach of the textbook. Conversations with the TWC members provided further insights into the reasons behind the teachers' resistance to the shifts in the SPL series both in terms of content and pedagogy.

Members of the TWC drew attention to how the teachers were extremely unhappy with the manner the SPL series had dealt with issues relating to gender, discrimination and marginalization. Inclusion of such themes according to the teachers presented a very bleak picture of Indian society. One member (M4) shared how teachers during training sessions put forward their grievances by asking: "Is there nothing good about my India? Is India so bad? You are presenting a very bleak picture!" According to the members the teachers found it difficult to face reality and accept that socially, culturally, economically there was oppression. What depressed the teachers most was that they had to convey these ideas to the students. Often they regarded such content as a personal attack on them or the community they belonged to. M2 mentioned about a woman teacher who shared her predicament while transacting the textbooks:

> One woman teacher said- "When I stand as a teacher I don't feel pride as a professional after reading this book..maybe they will realize that I have also suffered this..maybe I was married against my choice..I was not as confident as boys as I grew up".

The members attributed the reluctance among the teachers to deal with issues like "marginalization" to the fact that such issues had never been part of textual content earlier. This has been discussed in detail in Chapter Two. For teachers to be reflective and think critically it was essential for them to be trained to do so. Teachers also needed to be equipped to theorise on contemporary socio-economic realities like issues related to inequality, discrimination and marginalization. But as Batra points out such discussions had never been part of a critical academic engagement in conventional teacher education curriculum. The NCF 2005 also did not provide adequate directions as to how such issues were to be addressed (Chapter One, pp. 28-29). Moreover as the forgoing discussion reveals the in-service training programmes did not engage with such issues seriously. This explains why the teachers were reticent to acknowledge the existence of caste and caste-based discrimination in Indian society. For the teachers the suggestion in the SPL textbooks that the caste or community they belonged to was implicated in marginalization of certain other communities was something of an anathema for them. They believed that

as teachers it was their duty to highlight the positive aspects of the Indian society to the students and emphasize on ideas like "equality" and "harmony" in their lives. M4 commented:

> "Look there is this resistance to the very idea of marginalization amongst teachers. ....With my experience in training I have seen that teachers want to talk about ...we are all equal..we have no class, *aur Delhi me toh koi caste hi nehi hai*..and as teachers we should only talk about equality....Also the system is overtly apolitical but covertly political.. with urbanization there's this push to invisibilize hierarchy, to speak a language which has a normativity of harmony....in fact there has never been a serious attempt at the level of the schools to be reflective!"

The members also explained the inability of the teachers to think critically in terms of their lack of professionalism. This in their opinion prevented them from taking their job seriously and regarding the classroom as a "serious space" where it was possible to theorize on realities. Rather they regarded it as a "very light space" meant for simply gathering information. This showed that their attitude towards pedagogic innovations was very "pedestrian", "un-academic" and "commonplace". They were unable to regard the classroom as a space where new ideas or insights could be developed, something could be challenged and conflicts could be addressed.

Some of the members pointed out that the teachers approached the training programmes with a similar casual approach. For them it was just another ritual which needed to be somehow completed apart from the various other routine activities that they had to engage with as part of their job. This explained the absence of punctuality and seriousness with which they attended the workshops. M2 narrated one such experience.

> In one of the trainings my ex-student called me two years ago. The training was scheduled to begin at 7.45 a.m...when I reached nobody was there, not even my student. Then at 8.45 four persons came, then at 9.45 my own student came..till 11.15 teachers kept coming. And every time someone entered he/she would ask- *Woho register kahan hai?*(Where is the register?) *Chaye samosa ho geya?* (Is the tea-break over? *Aaj samosa hai ki aur kuch?* (What's there today as snacks?)

However the members also acknowledged the problems that the teachers were facing and tried to explain the teachers' resistance towards change and innovation as a symptom of the larger structural problems related to salary, promotions and tenure of the job. According to them many of the teachers were temporary employees trapped within an "exploitative structure" where they were "made to do all kinds of work". For them thus

the scenario was neither motivating nor financially attractive. This explained why they were not interested in teaching the SPL series as intended by the authors.

7.1.4 "It's a Structural Problem!"

The members of the TWC unequivocally blamed the absence of a planned and well – structured teacher development programme for the resistance displayed by teachers to accept any transformation in the manner textbooks were conceptualized and written. They argued that in the absence of a dialogue it was not possible for the teachers to accept anything new or develop a different perspective. According to M3 the teachers had never heard of marginalization or read about it but at the same time they had their own perspectives on issues like caste and social justice. This explained the resistance they had towards issues like discrimination and marginalization. Referring to his experience of working with teachers at the state level M3 explained:

> "We used to have the same problem with our teachers..they would say that you are abusing the Brahmins! So we had to explain that no we are not doing so...Brahmanvad is a historical process..with time we need people to understand that it's not about blaming a caste group but there's a hegemony of a certain thought processes which goes centuries back in history.. such abstract notions require a fair amount of dialogue! So I don't blame the teachers at all...there has been no real dialogue!"

Serious concerns were raised by the members regarding the arbitrary and *ad hoc* manner in-service teacher training programmes were conducted by schools. According to M2 in-service teacher training ideally speaking should be conceptualized and conducted in a planned manner. This was meant to ensure that some experienced individuals or institutes were allowed to conceptualize the entire module with relevant experiences and appropriate readings. But while the schools sometimes invited some trainers from outside, for instance from universities and colleges it was done in a very arbitrary fashion. Most often trainings were conducted by their own trainers who were usually some senior teachers who had been appointed as master trainers though their own understanding might be misplaced. Conversation with some JVS officials and school leaders confirmed this. Members like M3 defined the inadequacies in the in-service training programmes as more of "a structural problem". According to him while the NCERT prepared textbooks it did not have the institutional mandate to conduct training. On the other hand although the CBSE had thousands of schools affiliated to it, its role

was limited to conducting examinations in the secondary and senior secondary levels and it had left the individual schools to conduct training. This explained why the trainings organized by NCERT were poorly attended. M3 shared how on one occasion when NCERT had organized training in one of the RIs (Regional Institutes) out of thousand schools the representatives of only 10 schools had turned up.

Therefore an urgent need for establishing an institutional framework that would enable the drawing in of adequate academic resources towards teacher training was highlighted by the TWC. M3 suggested that certain macro-processes needed to be established whereby the NCERT and CBSE would be required to work together and set up resource groups at the district level consisting of college and university professionals as well as resource teachers from the districts. Such resource teams then could be entrusted with the responsibility to conduct training at the district level. He suggested that while the NCERT should oversee the process of training, it would be the responsibility of CBSE to ensure that such trainings were attended by the schools under its affiliation. According to him this way it would be possible to train a large number of teachers.

7.2   Teachers and their Social Class Bias towards Students

Batra (2005) discusses that the majority of the teachers in the schools across India belonged to the upper castes and general categories and therefore needed to be prepared to address the diversity in Indian classrooms. While the conventional teacher education programmes were not designed to address this issue even the NCF 2005 did not provide any direction as to how such issues can be dealt with (Chapter One, pp.28-29). This was also reflected in JV in the manner the teachers looked at the students and their parents as well as the perceptions they had about themselves as teachers.

7.2.1   *"Aaj kaal Teaching mein Maza nehi aata!"*

It has been discussed earlier how at JV, discipline and punishment were looked at by the teachers and the school authorities as ways to achieve the larger goal of education, that of moulding the students into good citizens. This explains why the school management held the students in a very poor light and why the teachers often complained about the

students' lack of interest in studies and the absence of discipline among them. They strongly believed that it was their duty to inculcate in the students certain moral values and habits through discipline and punishment (Chapter Four, pp.122-132).

The teachers further looked upon themselves as selfless *gurus* whose duty was to give their best while teaching the students through sheer hard work. KM argued: "….I am really not concerned as to who's doing what..I just do what I have to do..have been in this profession for the last 24-25 years!! ..There are a few children who are sincere-*aachhe hain*..they will hopefully benefit". Quite a few social studies teachers shared how their well-intentioned efforts to discipline the students were often misconstrued by the students and parents. KM commented:

> These students are never interested in studying. These days there's no enjoyment in teaching-*maza nehi aata hai!* In desperation sometimes I have to scold them..even spank them once or twice..*ek-do thappar bhi lagana padhta hai.* And then parents lodge complaints against the teachers. ...Actually all this is happening because of the influence of television and newspaper.

7.2.2 *"The Boy's Father is a Cook!"*

Chapter Four also highlights how the teachers attributed the lack of discipline and absence of interest in studies among the students to bad parenting. It needs to be remembered that although relatively well educated most of the fathers at JV were employed as lower level salaried employees in the government or private sectors while the majority of the mothers were homemakers. There were also a sizable number of students from the reserved categories (mainly SCs and OBCs). There thus existed in the school a marked difference between the teaching community of JV and the student community in terms of their class and caste background. This explains why the teachers were judgemental about the students' parental background. They very often spoke disparagingly about the parents to the researcher and even in front of the students. According to Ipshita, the art teacher, good parenting for such "not highly educated parents" meant giving indulgence to the children by "investing a lot of money" and allowing the students to carry a lot of cash to school.

Very often the teachers would question the moral character of the parents. For example, once while complaining about a student in his class, Rajesh Mishra raised an allegation about the character of his parent:

> This boy's father is a cook in a university mess…and believe it or not they have *paneer* almost daily for lunch and dinner..now you or I cannot afford that..that is because he lifts a lot of food from the hostel mess…..so what do you expect from the boy?!!

All this indicated the existence of a strong social class bias among the teachers vis-à-vis the students and their parents. This largely influenced the manner in which they transacted the textbook. Their reluctance to allow the students to participate in the classroom pedagogic discourse stemmed from their belief that the students, excepting a few, were disinterested in studies could not think on their own and were incapable of answering the questions in their own language. A similar view was held by the school management. This explains why the school instituted the elaborate practice of making the teachers dictate answers and finally getting the notebooks stamped by the Vice-Principal. Often the teachers were heard discussing about the incapability of the parents to provide academic support to their children to make up for which the school and the teachers had to put in extra effort.

> Nina Dobhal: Look the parents of the students are mostly clerks, cooks…so they can't help with the homework..therefore most of the written work is done in class. The students are made to copy answers from the blackboard..even the holiday home work is completed only when the students come back to school after the holidays!!

Thus it appears that the manner in which the teachers at JV transacted the textbook was to a very large extent influenced by the inadequacies in the in-service teacher training process, and the gaps in the teacher preparation process.

7.3 The Textbook: Problems of Implementation

Chapter Two and Three have also pointed out some of the gaps in the SPL textbooks. The following discussion which is based on conversations with the teachers, teacher educators and members of the Textbook Writing Committee aims to provide a deeper insight into the gaps as well as the practical problems why the textbook (SPL III) could not be transacted in accordance with the pedagogical perspective prescribed by it.

7.3.1 Digging the "Fish Bowl": An Impossible Task

Teachers, students and members of the TWC commented on the sheer vastness of the social studies syllabus and the difficulties it created. The SPL series in particular consisted of complex concepts like marginalization, secularism and social justice. Explaining each of these concepts with the help of the various pedagogical tools included in the chapters and engaging the students in the pedagogical process through discussion and debate would have required a considerable amount of time. But as pointed out earlier that civics or Social and Political Life constituted only one of the components of social studies (as taught in the middle school level in all schools affiliated to CBSE) and was allotted a specific number of teaching periods per term in one academic year. Under the CCE system which defined the assessment pattern in all CBSE affiliated schools it was mandatory for the teachers to complete a specific number of chapters per term in each of the three areas of social studies. On the one hand, the total time allotted for social studies was fixed and had to be distributed equally between history, geography and civics. Moreover the teachers had to operate within the boundaries of certain institutional norms (Chapter 5, pp.166-171). They also had to attend to various official duties other than teaching like coordinating training camps held in the school for teachers and accompanying the students to various inter-school competitions organized in other JV schools. All this left the teachers with very little time to engage with the textbook in depth. Research has also drawn attention to the issues of "accountability" and "managerialism" in the area of school education (Gupta and Ahmad 2016).

M1 argued that concepts like marginalization, secularism were like "fish bowls" which required one to get deeper into the concepts to fully grasp them. Since teachers did not have the luxury of time it was only expected that "if they can't handle something or don't agree they will simply skip it" or avoid discussing them. Faced with constraint of time the primary concern of the teachers thus, was to "complete the syllabus" which was followed by dictation of answers. Hence it was logistically unviable for the teachers to transact the textbook as per the expectations of the authors. Therefore, they had no choice but to leave out the different pedagogic devices like storyboards and visuals. During an interview MR shared:

MR: I discuss these (storyboards, visuals) when I have the time. But if I have to complete the syllabus before an examination then I just leave these out..I am usually running behind schedule to complete the syllabus…there are so many occasions when I can't take the class as I am put on official duty to attend to various different things other than teaching!![85]

7.3.2   *"Too many words to tell so little"*

Moreover many of these abstract and difficult concepts in the SPL series (e.g. marginalization) were not provided with a definition (Chapter Three, p. 94). Rather the textbooks contained examples and pedagogical tools like storyboards to explain the same. It was expected that the teachers and the students would arrive at an understanding of these concepts with the help of the examples and storyboards and explain them in their own words. However the teachers were clearly not trained to do so. This was evident in the manner KM defined "marginalization" and dictated the same to the students. It was incomplete and inappropriate (Chapter 5, pp.145-148 and 167).

The absence of definitions and the presence of storyboards and examples actually made the textbook unpalatable to the teachers and students alike. During conversations the teachers shared the difficulties they experienced as practitioners while explaining textual content to the students. In this context they appeared to be influenced by their experience of using the earlier NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2004) which have been referred to in the earlier chapters. They felt that the earlier textbooks were better organized and more informative which enabled the students to grasp a concept well and that helped them in the long run. KM commented:

The earlier textbooks were better in that they were more systematic…there was more matter. For instance certain concepts were explained in details like how a bill is passed..once a student was able to grasp the concept he would remember till the very end..in the higher classes also..what one needed to study that was given in the textbooks.

KM argued that the new textbooks contained "a lot of examples" which made it easier for them to engage the students. But he pointed out that the "matter" contained in them was inadequate which made it difficult for the students to find answers and write on their own. Being accustomed to using very different kinds of textbooks he appeared to be

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[85] On one occasion many of the teachers were found sitting in the computer lab and assisting students to create an email account as per the directive given by the Prime Minister's Office which wanted to directly communicate with the students prior to the Teacher's Day celebrations when the Prime Minister was to address the students.

completely averse to a pedagogical approach which seemed to challenge the established practice of one "right" answer which the students were expected to rote-learn and reproduce during examinations. That students can be enabled to think on their own and answer questions independently in their own language was something beyond his imagination. He argued:

> These textbooks have a lot of examples, stories…but the students get lost in that..*ulajh jata hai*…main facts are very less…for example there are questions in the textbooks which the students are expected to think and answer …but the matter is not provided in the textbook…now the students can't think like that …so how will they write? If the matter is there in the textbook then only they can look for answers in the textbook and write..but that doesn't happen!"

According to him a textbook should simply provide the basic facts and allow the teachers to explain the same with examples of their choice. Moreover as an experienced teacher he felt that he knew his subject well and also had his own opinion about issues discussed in the textbook. He therefore was against following the textbook verbatim: "The textbook says a lot of things but I have my own ideas – *vichar*! So I interpret the textbook accordingly..I don't follow it unthinkingly!!"

The students also voiced their dissatisfaction with the SPL textbook. In their opinion the content in the textbook was unnecessarily long but insufficient in facts and often lacked clarity. Himanish commented: "The biggest problem with the textbook is that the content is too long…actually facts are very less but the explanation is too lengthy…they don't explain anything to the point. Everything is explained in a round-about manner-*ghuma-phirake bataya jata hai*". They further spoke about the difficulties they faced while trying to read the chapters on their own and the manner they coped with the same. Himanish shared: "I don't understand and then I don't feel like studying! I try to remember the main points but because it's too lengthy a lot of things get left out in between". Priyanka added: "I don't read the chapters. I just memorize the questions and answers -- question-answer *yaad karleti hoon.* ….when I sit down to study I begin by reading one paragraph..after that I find it difficult to understand..I feel sleepy..I can't help it!!"

While the textbooks were lengthy they needed to be handled differently. And for that to happen it was crucial that the teachers were appropriately trained. But that did not

happen. This was primarily the reason why the textbooks were unpalatable to both the teachers and students. Being inadequately prepared to transact the textbooks the teachers reverted to the familiar pedagogic practices of explaining textual content without providing much space for students' participation. This was followed by dictation of notes. The students too were not provided the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the textbook. At the same time they were expected to answer questions in a specific manner. Being unable to negotiate the textbook independently they thus had no option but to resort to memorize dictated answers.

7.3.3   *Placement of Pedagogic Tools within the Textbook*

The placement of specific pedagogic tools within the textbook and the nature of questions also need to be examined to understand if these shaped the way the teachers transacted the textbook. For instance Chapter Five (pp.151-152) shows how both KM and MR did not try to dispel the prevalent stereotype regarding the Muslims' alleged preference for *madrasa* education. In fact during interviews (Chapter Six, pp.181-183) they held the community's alleged preference for *madrasa* education as one of the key factors leading to their marginalization and thus reinforced the stereotype. They also ignored the photograph depicting a Muslim boy in regular school uniform attending school (Chapter Three p.89). Similarly they overlooked the photograph showing a few *burqa*-clad Muslim women participating in a public rally which was included in the textbook to highlight the stereotypes attached to the custom of donning the *burqa*(Chapter Three, p. 88). In fact during the class and in the interactions outside the class the teachers and students expressed their disapproval towards the custom and regarded it as symptomatic of the regressive attitude of the community. As pointed out in Chapter Three in both cases the photographs were inappropriately placed within the textbook. This could be one of the possible reasons why they were overlooked by KM and MR.

Chapter Five (Episode 2.1) shows, how KM while discussing about the lifestyle, social structure and culture of the Adivasis, ignored many details mentioned in the textbook. Similarly while explaining about the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 (Chapter Five, Episode 3.3) MR did not refer to the contribution made by some of the assertive

Dalit groups in South India towards the enactment of the law. It is important to keep in mind that the information in both cases was unfamiliar and completely contradictory to the stereotypes associated with the two communities. But in both the cases the information was not accompanied by any in-text question which if present perhaps could have drawn the attention of the teachers and could have been used by them to gauge if the students have comprehended the information or not. This could be a possible reason behind such omissions.

7.3.4 *Language of the Textbook: A Barrier*

Chapter Three pointed out that the language of the SPL series was difficult and at times abstruse (p.95). Teachers pointed to the presence of many words in the textbooks which were difficult to comprehend for the students. MR argued that since it was not practically feasible for them to explain every difficult word such words were usually overlooked by the students. This made it even more difficult for them to comprehend the textual content.

> MR: See these textbooks are fine..there are a lot of examples, new data... But there are a lot of words in these new textbooks which the students don't understand. Now we can't take each and every line and go on explaining all the difficult words…so those are left unexplained….and then the students don't pay attention to these words!

The difficulty of comprehending the language of the textbook was perhaps made more complex by the fact that in spite of coming from a non-English speaking background, the majority of the students chose to use the English version of the textbook. They were pressurized by the parents who felt that that it would make their children "proficient in English". But not being proficient in the language, both spoken and written, they had difficulty in comprehending the textbook independently even after the teachers explained it in Hindi. Social studies being a content-heavy subject the task was made even more arduous. During an interview, Aparna, one of the students, discussed the multiple problems they had to face while negotiating the textbooks independently. She mentioned about her confusion to decipher difficult words with the help of a dictionary since it usually provided multiple meanings for a single word. According to her although each chapter in the textbooks usually provided a glossary of difficult words, not all such words were included in it. Moreover,   very often the explanation in the glossary itself contained words which they found incomprehensible (Chapter Three, p.96).

M1 however provided a different perspective. According to him the situation would not have been very different even if the students had decided to use the Hindi version of the textbook. He argued that the language of the textbook being "tough" the Hindi version was bound to be riddled with the same problem. He agreed that while it was necessary for the students to be taken to a higher level there had to be a limit to the extent they could be pushed. Moreover he mentioned that not only the students even the teachers had difficulty with the language and it required a lot of effort and perseverance on their part to explain concepts like secularism, and marginalization. He shared:

> For instance the chapter on Secularism has one sentence- "The State maintains a principled distance" ....first of all not all teachers understand what State is..then to explain "principled distance"..is very difficult ..Now this is not a university where you give lectures..again terms like "intra-community" and "inter-community" – one requires a lot of effort to explain all this, not just time but perseverance!!

A few other members of the TWC, however, attributed the problem to the poor quality of teachers and their inability to use the textbook judiciously. According to them the textbooks had sufficient examples in the form of story-boards and case-studies which if explained properly would have easily enabled the teachers to convey the meaning of difficult concepts and words to the students.M5 commented:

> It is difficult to say that the language of the textbooks was acting as a barrier …it all depends on the quality of the teachers..I can understand a child not being able to decipher meaning of words like "morally reprehensible". But there's no reason why a teacher couldn't understand and explain…...there are many examples in the textbook..even the example that is given around scavenging..will itself be able to explain the word "repugnant"|. When an author writes a textbook the expectation is that a teacher in the JV schools is a better trained teacher!!

The members further attributed the problem of incomprehension faced by the students to the problematic teaching of languages (English/Hindi) practiced in the schools which resulted in the poor level of language of the students. In their opinion the main problem arose because teachers did not allow the children to write or read and think about what they read. They argued that the language classroom was not used to guess the meaning of the word but was usually reduced to "knowing word meaning". They questioned the teachers' proficiency level in English which according to them was very poor. They also justified the usage of concept words like "marginalization" and difficult words like "repugnant" in the textbook as they felt that replacing them with simpler words or phrases would have led to dilution of the meaning and seriousness of the issues. M3

commented: "We worked very hard to think of alternatives, words which convey the same meaning. But one can't dilute the meaning...we wanted them to feel, experience these words in English...!" She also pointed out that the storyboards and case-studies which were present in the textbooks did not contain any difficult word and were included precisely for the purpose of enabling the teachers and students to decipher the difficult concepts and words.

The NCERT textbooks are always meant to be used across the length and breadth of the country by millions of students and hundreds of teachers coming from diverse socio-economic and cultural contexts and equipped with a varying degree of expertise. But as the discussion here reveals this reality of the classroom situation was not taken into account by some members of the TWC though they were partially correct in their critique of the way language is usually taught in schools. It was also presumed that the teachers would readily adopt the shifts in the pedagogical approach. But the in reality most of the pedagogic tools were left unused by the teachers at JV (Chapter Five).

Interaction with some of the other members of the committee revealed that the textbooks did not undergo a "round of language editing" after they had been reviewed by the students. M2 acknowledged the need to make the language "easier" and "comprehensible" since the textbooks were meant to be read by students and teachers across the country where everybody did not come from an English-speaking background or were not equally proficient in the language. He suggested that the textbooks needed to be subjected to a process of revision but highlighted the importance of involving those who were initially responsible for conceptualizing and writing them.

7.3.5   One "Right" Answer versus Many

According to the pedagogical framework of the SPL textbooks the "Introductory Note to Teachers" provided clear instructions to the teachers to create an atmosphere that was conducive to make the children feel confident to answer the questions in their own words based on their understanding of the textbook (Chapter Three). This was aimed at discouraging the students from resorting to rote-learning as also to do away with the practice of one "right" answer and thereby provide space for "a range of correct answers"

(SPL II: xiii). Chapter Five, however, shows that the students were not provided the opportunity to write the answers in their own words. Instead the answers were dictated to them by the teachers from the textbook as per the institutional norms at JV. Sometimes a guidebook was also used. There were several reasons for this.

The foregoing discussion shows that the teachers were not adequately trained to deliver the new textbooks. There was also a resistance on their part to actively engage the students in the pedagogic process. This stemmed from their deeply entrenched social class bias which made them believe that the students were incapable of thinking independently and contributing towards the process of knowledge construction. The students on their own admission had difficulty in negotiating with the textbook independently because of the difficulty they encountered with the language and complexity of the textual content. The teachers were also pressurized by paucity of time and the institutional norms of the school according to which they had to make the students examination – ready within a specified time. Under such circumstances they felt that dictating answers from the textbook or guidebook was the safest way to ensure that the students performed well in the examinations.

However as discussed in Chapter Five even the dictated answers were in many cases found to be incorrect or incomplete and thus inappropriate. Apart from the gaps in in-service teacher training programmes one reason could be the way information was organized within the textbook and the manner some of the end-text questions were framed. For instance in case of the following questions the required information was found to be dispersed throughout the chapter.

List two reasons why the Adivasis are becoming increasingly marginalized.

Imagine you are watching the Republic Day parade on TV with a friend and she remarks "Look at these tribals. They look so exotic. And they seem to be dancing all the time". List three things that you would tell her about the life of the Adivasis in India.

Although the first question was a comprehension level question the answer to it was supposed to be drawn from the storyboard (Dadu) and two sub-themes titled "Adivasis

and Stereotypes" and "Adivasis and Development" which were spread over four pages in the chapter *Understanding Marginalization*. Even in case of the second question, meant to assess the students on their ability to reason, the information was similarly dispersed. Moreover in both cases the information was new and unfamiliar and also challenged certain deeply entrenched prejudices associated with the Adivasis. As pointed out by the Ekalavya team it helps if such ideas were accompanied by basic comprehension questions (Chapter One, pp.30-31). This facilitated the process of comprehension by students. The information excepting in the case of the Dadu storyboard was not also accompanied by basic comprehension level in-text questions which if present would have enabled the teachers and the students to assimilate the ideas. The second question, an end-text one, was also aimed at testing the students on their ability to reason. Further it was filled with ambiguity. Retrieving the information in both cases was therefore not only time-consuming but required the teachers to be proficient enough to be able to comprehend the ideas presented in the textbook and then dictate the same to the students. They were definitely not equipped for this. This perhaps explains why the questions were misinterpreted both at the level of the guidebook and the teacher. In fact KM who did not refer to a guidebook also misinterpreted the questions and provided incorrect answers which reinforced the very stereotypes which the textbook was trying to dispel.

Was the textbook misinterpreted because it provided that space for the students and teachers to come up with a "range of answers"? The critiques of the constructivist approach argue that an open-ended textbook which allows space for multiple perspectives and a "range of answers" from the students can always lead to gross misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the textual content. As pointed out in Chapter One (p.23) research has also highlighted the challenges involved in the implementation of the Constructivist approach specifically with regard to assessment and evaluation. The SPL series for instance encouraged the teachers to use "a common evaluation scheme" (SPL II: xiii) to assess "a range of correct answers". But it provided no further explanation as to what that scheme exactly was and therefore was unable to address the issue of setting standards. M1 for instance was very critical of the constructivist approach and questioned the feasibility of implementing it in a classroom.

M1: Under the Constructivist approach there could be ten different correct answers. So in a class of 40 students, will you accept 40 different correct answers? Can all be given the same marks…? This requires a lot of effort from the teachers. …. Can students actually express their views in exams?

Questioning the feasibility of implementing the Constructivist approach in classrooms he further argued that since the CBSE expected the answers to be written in a specific way. Since the students also wanted to score marks the teachers had no alternative but to dictate answers from the textbook and guidebooks.

M1: Teachers say that the Board expects answers in a particular way, with little variation…students also want to score good marks…so when the school asks for correct answers students go to guide books…the problem lies elsewhere…all curriculum writers, textbook authors preach about constructivism but they fall quiet when asked about assessment!!

Some other members of the TWC however, had a different opinion. They argued that new perspectives in the area of textual content and pedagogy became fruitful only if such reforms were accompanied by corresponding changes in the area of assessment. Since assessment was central to the system, and public examinations guided the way teachers taught in the classroom it was very crucial that any change in the textbook was followed by appropriate changes in the assessment system. Chapter One points out how in the case of Ekalavya the assessment system actually was aligned to the goals of the textbook and included diverse range of questions. However in case of SPL, although the textbooks had undergone radical shifts as per the guidelines of the NCF 2005 similar innovations were not introduced in the area of assessment. The CCE system attempted to bring about some changes in the form of formative and summative assessments through the introduction of diverse methods of assessment like presentations and group projects. Yet the mainstay of assessment continued to be the pen and paper examinations whereby the students were evaluated on the basis of their ability to reproduce verbatim what was there in the textbook. M2 commented: "Assessment actually guides teachers..in a large system assessment is so ingrained that if you don't change assessment nothing will change..!"

The importance of engaging the teachers in a dialogue through training has already been discussed earlier in this chapter.M2 also highlighted the same specifically in the context of a textbook which did not insist on one correct answer but encouraged students to come up with a range of correct answers. Since this created the possibility of the textual content to be misinterpreted by the teachers M2 suggested that allowing the teachers to share

their viewpoint during training, however contradictory to the textbook was the best way to ensure cohesion of ideas. But this did not materialize in the case of the SPL textbooks.

> M2: See this can happen….this can also be overcome through interaction and dialogue..by engaging them (teachers) continuously…It is your view and you get a chance to share it in a meeting (training) ..then there will be a cohesion. Without that it is not possible….if it goes the other way round then you have to develop some safeguards…. I have seen from experience that few teachers actually change!!

7.4 The Textbook Development Process

It is also important to consider here the textbook development process. The discussion in Chapter One (p.30) regarding the development of Social science curriculum by Ekalavya highlighted how the conceptualization and writing of textual material was accompanied by regular interactions with teachers, field testing of developed material and observation of classroom processes where the developed material was transacted. This allowed the textbook writers to identify the gaps and rectify the same with feedback from the teachers and the field. Since the conceptualization of the SPL series was to a very large extent informed by the Ekalavya textbooks it becomes important to understand to what extent the writing of the textbooks followed a similar procedure. Conversation with the members of the TWC revealed that one of the key factors why the development of the SPL series could not be done following a similar procedure was the constraint of time. Since Ekalavya did not have a national focus and was done on a smaller scale it grew organically. NCF 2005 on the other hand was done on a much larger scale and within a much shorter time-frame. M6 shared: "In case of SPL, the problem was time constraint. The schedule was prepared by NCERT collectively for all the textbooks and the mandate was that in one year one textbook should be ready". The shortage of time also made the task of conceptualizing the ideas and putting them down on paper very difficult. According to M7 "To build up a cohesive idea about concepts and how to roll it out in the form of textbooks was itself time-consuming". This perhaps explains why regular field-testing and observation of classrooms were not possible.

The TWC included a few teachers from government and private schools. The idea behind including teachers was to ensure that the textbooks did not remain distanced from the ground reality. The role of the teachers however remained limited to developing

questions and activities and vetting out if a certain idea or activity was implementable or not. Thus the teachers did not contribute in terms of ideas nor did they write the chapters. M6 shared:

> The members of the team especially the academicians and members of civil society did make an effort to involve the teachers. But the teachers themselves did not have that kind of an exposure and hence their contribution or involvement was not much.

According to M7 the involvement of the teachers was not "immersive" and they "found it difficult to grasp the overall perspective". She felt that one big factor for this was the constraint of time: "We ourselves struggled to arrive at a common understanding of ideas...also a lot of exchanges took place over email and we met at different places...so it was very difficult to coordinate". She further mentioned that paucity of time also made it difficult to identify good teachers.

Field testing ensures that the textbook is not distanced from the ground reality and also allows teachers to pilot developed material in their own schools. But the limited time-frame in case of SPL made it difficult to conduct field-testing of developed material in a systematic fashion. Rather it was left for the individual members to try out different chapters and as M6 pointed out it was not a "schematic part" of the textbook development process. He shared that wherever field- testing was conducted in Delhi and Punjab it yielded valuable feedback:

> In Delhi the urban students were unhappy with rural content..they felt it was unnecessary. In Punjab on the other hand, teachers and students argued that the textbook was relatively difficult and language was terse. Concepts like secularism were found to be difficult and abstract... yes there is a lot of abstraction."

However the members appeared divided in their opinion about the importance of conducting field trials. According to M4 field trials were not made a schematic part considering the diverse composition of the textbook writing committee. She commented:

> Look the team consisted of people from diverse fields – academicians having an education ethnographic background, NGOs who brought in their expertise and strengths of having worked in the field for many years.. there were people who had developed textbooks and implemented the same in classrooms... so the need for piloting was not felt!

She further informed that piloting was carried out only in case of those themes about which there were some doubts as to when it was most appropriate to introduce them. Hence authors of individual chapters were allotted that responsibility.

The textbook development process thus was filled with certain gaps which even though acknowledged by the TWC could not be addressed mainly owing to the constraint of time. This was one of the reasons which resulted in the textbook being transacted and interpreted in the manner which was not envisaged by the authors.

7.5 The Exam-Textbook Linkage

The discussion in Chapter Five shows that the students at JV engaged with the textbook only when they had to copy and learn the "right" answer prior to examinations. But for them copying the "right" answer in their notebooks was not enough to succeed in the examinations. They were also expected to reproduce the same during the examinations. This required them to "learn" – *yaad karna* - the answers. However the nature of the textual content as also the medium of instruction influenced the manner in which the students engaged with the textbook to "learn" the "right" answer. In conversations outside the class the students candidly shared the various strategies they adopted to prepare for the examinations as well as the difficulties they encountered during the process of preparation.

7.5.1 *Strategizing to Learn*

Earlier it has been discussed how the students at JV faced difficulties in comprehending the textual content of SPL. This however did not deter them from seeking solutions to the problem. Conversations with the students revealed that they rarely limited themselves to the textbook and classroom teaching to understand a specific chapter and learn the "right" answers. Rather they resorted to various strategies ranging from consulting textbooks published by private publishers, seeking external help in the form of private tuition, using guide-books and looking up the internet. Satish said: "I rarely study from one book....I use three-four books. My father usually buys me these books..if I don't understand from one, then I use the second one, then the third one..finally I get to understand!!"Another student Vikas shared that he usually possessed both the Hindi and English versions of the same textbook and depended on his tutor at home to explain everything to him in Hindi. Anita, his classmate explained how she used multiple strategies to master the textbook. This included listening to the teacher in class, reading the textbook on her own and

making notes of the main points in a rough notebook, asking the teacher in school or the tutor and finally looking up a guidebook or the internet.

As mentioned earlier copying the "right" answer as per the instructions given by the teachers was not the ultimate goal of the students or the teachers in JV. The students were expected to "learn" the "right" answer and regurgitate the same in the answer script during the examinations. Though the teachers on a few occasions asked the students to write the answer in their own language only a very few were able to do so. The fact that the school followed an elaborate procedure whereby the teachers used the textbook or the guidebook to dictate answers which were further scrutinized by the school authorities set a certain benchmark which the students were expected to follow. But the students' hold on the language being poor made the task of learning the answer very arduous. Often, the language of the textbook made it difficult for them to comprehend many of the words used. Hence they had no option but to memorize the answers. For this also diverse strategies were followed by the students. This included reading the textbook repeatedly and highlighting the main points, consulting a dictionary to decipher the meaning of difficult words, taking help from relatives and finally memorizing the answers. Anita shared: "When I make the notes I try to read them properly, revise them and then I try to memorize them. Then I take up the question and answers which ma'am has made us write. …Then I memorize the answers also". The students further highlighted the problems they had to face while trying to learn the answers from the textbook and explained the reasons that forced them to memorize them. Himanish argued:

> "When sir makes us mark out sentences in the textbook, sometimes the complete answer is not there. And if we write the same answer in the exams our marks get deducted. Sir then tells us to make our own points and write. ..When we read we do understand on our own many a times. But if we write answers in our own language sir gives us less marks. He tells us that he wants us to write the same answers as he has dictated. That's why we are forced to memorize the answers..."

7.5.2   Subverting the Examination System: Cheating

The pressure of passing the examination and scoring good marks being the ultimate goal for all students, most of them often took resort to unfair means like cheating inside the examination-hall. The students of both the classes candidly and nonchalantly shared the various strategies they adopted during examinations. They mentioned how they co-ordinated with their friends from other classes and visited the washroom at the same time

during the examinations to discuss answers. Sometimes they would hide the textbooks or guidebooks in strategic places inside the washroom and would go there to consult the same. Anuj commented: "One can easily score 40-50 marks from the bathroom!" The students mentioned about preparing chits or *farrey* which they hid inside their body and took them out during opportune moments to copy the answers. A few confessed how they themselves did not resort to cheating but helped their classmates in doing so. Smriti shared:

> I used to help others to cheat..Like students from behind would say.."Tell the answer"..then I would drop the water bottle deliberately and along with that the answer sheet…the students behind me would then read the answer and return the answer sheet..we would never write our names on the answer sheet..we would use a pencil..

The foregoing discussion shows that though the textbook was present in the life of the students as a "symbol of bureaucratic control" (Kumar 1988:453) it acquired importance and a life in a specific context – during the examinations. The earlier discussion shows that the students did not engage with the textbook as the teachers transacted the lessons in the class. They refused to read the chapter at home and come to the school; they did not read it in the class when the teacher instructed them to do so or follow a storyboard. They thus remained disengaged with the pedagogic process choosing to pay attention only when the teacher made them copy questions and answers from the textbook/guidebook or instructed them to mark out specific sentences in the same.

Socialized into understanding the "examination-textbook link" (Kumar 1988 :459) they took refuge in the textbook only when they had to "learn" the "right" answers before the examinations, the focus being "clearly on the retention of 'authentic' sentences for reproduction" (Thapan 2006:4198) in the examination. Even then they were selective in their reading. They scooped out only what they regarded were the key points related to the questions and answers which they had to memorize. They left out the rest of the textual content which they found difficult to comprehend owing to the language barrier. Often they by-passed the textbook and learnt the answers from the guide-books available in the market or the dictated answers provided by the teachers. Moreover neither the answers learnt from the textbook nor the dictated notes were "retained beyond the examination for which they [were] clearly meant" (ibid).Rather the students copied the

dictated answers and learnt the same "with the express purpose of merely repeating them in the annual examinations" and thus had "no further interest in them" (Thapan 2009:12). Again many of them instead of going through the textbook or the guide book resorted to cheating thereby reducing their engagement with the textbook to the minimum. Hence all the pedagogic tools embedded in the textbook which were intended to enable the students to think critically about issues and concerns and to connect the same with their lived experiences were left untouched. The manner in which the students interpreted the textual knowledge with regard to the marginalized communities showed their "complete disavowal of privileging the authority of the textbook" and they did not "actually remember very much of what [was] written in texts" (ibid.). This perhaps explains why they interpreted the textual knowledge the way they did and why their interpretations differed from the textbook.

7.6   Conclusion

The foregoing discussion analyses the reasons that led to the selective manner in which the textbook, Social and Political Life III was transacted by the teachers and interpreted in diverse ways by the students at JV. The discussion in this chapter reveals that the curricular reforms introduced by NCF 2005 were not accompanied by similar reforms in the arena of teacher professional development processes. This left the teachers unequipped and unprepared to handle the innovative teaching practices embedded in the Social and Political Life textbooks. Being habituated to transacting the textbook through conventional pedagogic practices like lecture and dictation of notes they continued to remain averse to the idea of engaging in debate and discussion with the students who they considered to be incapable of any independent thinking. Their social location further rendered them resistant to discussions on issues like marginalization and they were unwilling to question the *status quo* on discrimination and social inequities based on caste, community and religion.

The radical shifts in the textbook as exemplified by the inclusion of a range of pedagogical tools certainly opened up the possibility of making the classroom teaching-learning process participatory. It also discouraged the practice of rote-learning by

creating space for the introduction of multiple perspectives by the students through a culture of debate and discussion. However as the foregoing discussion shows, the specific context of the classroom was not conducive to such transformative pedagogic practices. The paucity of time allotted for teaching of civics and the pressure of completing the syllabus made it practically difficult for the teachers to engage the students in dialogue and deliberation. The assessment system based on textbook centric questions which encouraged the students to reproduce verbatim the textual content made it almost impossible to shift from the practice of memorizing one "right" answer to arriving at a range of "right" answers evolved through a process of dialogue. At the same time the sheer vastness of the textual content and the difficulty level of the language used created a barrier between the students and the textbook and they had little choice other than taking recourse to diverse strategies ranging from taking external help to cheating to pass the examination. This resulted in selective reading of the textual content and all the pedagogical tools that were meant to encourage critical engagement with it were left unutilized.

It is paradoxical that the SPL series attempted to unfold a pedagogic space so far unavailable to the teachers and the students and make it accessible for them and yet the context in which it was transacted made it almost impossible for them to avail of it. Being inadequately trained the teachers became averse to such new ideas. On the other hand the students, trapped within an educational genre that only expected them to regurgitate textual information in routine examinations through memorization, failed to look beyond the "examination-textbook link" (Kumar 1988:459). Under the circumstances the nature of the textbook itself, with its vastness and complexity of content, difficulty level of language and openness of pedagogic perspective rendered it inaccessible and unpalatable to both the teacher and the taught. This inadvertently created a space for intrusion of ideas and information from sources outside the textbook. Such ideas were also contradictory to those projected through the textbooks.

Attention also needs to be drawn to the process of textbook development which contributed significantly to the way it was transacted and engaged with. The absence of processes like asking the teachers for regular feedback on the developed textual material,

getting the same field –tested, collecting data from classrooms to gauge the feasibility of implementing the developed material and negligible involvement of teachers in the textbook development process distanced the textbook from the ground realities. The conceptualization and development of textual content thus was based on a series of assumptions about how children learn, how teachers transact the textbook and how they needed to be trained. This explains why the textbook in spite of being well-intended and imaginative in its presentation of content and pedagogical perspective, largely remained unpopular with the teachers and students.

Chapter Eight
Summary and Conclusions

Textbooks are cultural tools. The prescribed textbooks especially those that are State-sponsored reflect the aspirations as to how ideas of the nation and citizenship are to be imagined. Viewed as the repository of "official knowledge" (Apple 2000:46) they are seen as instruments to transform students into "good citizens" who can contribute towards national development. Schools often regarded as the "Ideological State Apparatus [es]" which are meant to mould and shape the minds and thoughts of students through their overt and hidden curriculum are seen as playing a significant role here (Althusser 1971:153). Ideas of nation and citizenship which get constructed in this process are usually fragmented and help create a division between an "ideal citizen"- one who is educated, obedient, responsible and patriotic and one who is not. This often results in the denigration of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized who then are marked as the "other" in the national imagination to be despised, feared, stigmatized and kept at a distance (Sundar 2007; Benei 2008).

India as a nation has been imagined differently over the years. But whether it is the Nehruvian ideal of "unity in diversity" or the idea of a *Hindu Rashtra* privileged by the Hindu right or the aspiration for India to develop into a major global economy and political entity of reckoning, the poor and the disenfranchised have by and large been constructed as the "other" (Parekh 2006; Menon 2016; Guru 2016). This idea of the "other" usually includes the large masses of rural and urban poor as well as specific marginalized communities like the Adivasis, Dalits and Muslims who are regarded as incapable of adequately contributing towards nation building. Often their loyalty towards the nation state is held suspect. They thus tend to be stereotyped and demonized. This process of vilification and demonization has been and continues to be accentuated by prevalent popular and political discourses, the media. as well as State policies which claim to be pro-development but are often anti-poor (Xaxa 2006; Farooqui 2012; Oommen 2014). Such "othering" also happens through school curriculum and textbooks as well as through the process of schooling as highlighted by a number of studies (Jain

2004, Advani 2009, Bhog *et al.* 2010; Farooqui 2012; Sundar 2004; Kumar 1989; Talib 1992).

Citizenship within a democracy is not just a matter of duty but a question rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Under the Constitution of India every citizen, irrespective of her class, gender, religion, caste and ethnicity has been granted a legal status, is entitled to a range of rights and is expected to develop a sense of identity and belonging (Jayal 2013:2). Can a textbook which is designed differently bring in some changes in the way ideas of the nation, citizenship and identity are imagined? The present study is premised on this important question.

The NCF 2005, it is argued has introduced certain radical shifts which are especially visible in social science (Batra, 2010). Within this framework citizenship education has been situated within the perspectives of human rights and critical pedagogy and issues of equality and social justice are included to bring in the perspectives of the marginalized communities. Attempts have also been made towards "multiple ways of imagining the Indian nation" and emphasizing gender concerns (NCERT 2006:3). Besides, space is created for learners to participate in the construction of knowledge. The present study examines the middle school civics textbooks, namely the Social and Political Life (SPL) series to understand to what extent such new perspectives have been given a concrete shape.

These textual reforms according to the NCF 2005 were aimed at introducing substantial changes in the way teaching and learning happen within classrooms. As the review of literature reveals, existing scholarship in the area of educational studies and textbook research has adequately focused on how prescribed curricula and textbooks represent what is considered as "official"or approved educational knowledge and construct specific notions of citizenship (Saigol, 2000; Jain, 2004; Advani 2009; Bhog *et al* 2010; Manjrekar, 2014). Some scholars have examined the connection between school culture and constructions of citizenship (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Paul Willis 1977; McLaren 1986; Sundar 2004; Froerer 2007; Benei 2008; Gogoi 2014). Classroom pedagogic processes and construction of knowledge have also received scholarly attention

(Sarangapani 2003). But not much focus has been given to the role of textbooks and their transaction by teachers towards constructions of citizenship and the nation, especially in the context of India. This aspect of schooling and its connection with constructions of citizenship become important in the light of the radically different way civics or citizenship education has been conceptualized within NCF 2005. Therefore the questions that need attention are: How do teachers transact civics knowledge and do they transact it in accordance with the content and pedagogical perspective of the civics textbooks? What emerges as "civics classroom knowledge"? How do the teachers and students interpret the textual knowledge with reference to ideas of citizenship, nation and State? Does it lead to multiple readings and how do these relate with the textbook civics knowledge? What factors influence the transaction and interpretation of the textbook by the teachers? What factors influence the manner in which the students engage with the textbook? What factors inside and outside the classroom shape the construction of "civics classroom knowledge"? The present study has revolved around these questions.

The study is informed by a range of theoretical frameworks and has been conducted in two stages. In the first stage a few chapters from the SPL textbooks were selected. Using Apple's (2000) notion of "official knowledge" as well as the guiding principles of the NCF 2005 these chapters were analysed to understand how ideas of nation and citizenship have been constructed. Special attention was given to examine the constructions of citizenship in relation to the marginalized communities namely Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits. Informed by the NCF 2005, especially the constructivist approach and critical pedagogy, as also the textbook itself an analysis of the pedagogical perspective of the textbooks was undertaken.

The second stage focused on the dynamics of classroom teaching-learning processes with specific reference to the transaction of the civics textbook. Two sections of Class VIII of a reputed school were chosen and data was collected through observation of classroom processes, focus group interviews with students, and interviews with teachers and some members of the NCERT textbook writing committee. Data relating to transactions and interpretations of four chapters in SPL III (namely *Understanding Secularism, Understanding Marginalization, Confronting Marginalization, and Public Facilities*) was

later analysed drawing from multiple theoretical frameworks. It was important to understand the nature of civics knowledge that emerged within the classroom. For this "civics classroom knowledge" (informed by Keddie's idea of "classroom knowledge") was used as a construct. This became useful to analyse to what extent the civics knowledge was drawn from the textbook and to what extent it was different. Classroom pedagogic processes, especially what constituted legitimate knowledge (from the perspective of teachers) and how students participated in it have been examined with reference to Bernstein's concept of "framing" (1971). Further using Apple's idea of "cultural politics" (2000) and Bernstein's notion of "expressive culture" (1966) as frames the study has analysed how teachers and students interpreted textual knowledge and what factors outside the classroom influenced these readings. The methodological tool that informed the analysis of data collected in both the stages was thematic content analysis (Krippendorp 2004).

The government school where the study was conducted was affiliated to CBSE. The student population consisted mainly of children of government employees. A limited number of seats was also provided to children whose parents worked in the private sector. The school was equipped with adequate number of classrooms and trained teachers (PGTs and TGTs) along with other amenities like computer and science laboratories, a library, an auditorium, a playground, and outdoor and indoor sports facilities. The teachers were mainly Hindus from northern India though there were a few who belonged to some of the minority communities and hailed from other states such as Bihar and West Bengal. The majority of the students were Hindu and belonged to the general category from northern India though there were some OBCs, SCs and STs. There were a few students from the minority communities such as Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Buddhists. The children belonged to relatively well-educated families with the father being the main breadwinner while the mothers were mostly homemakers.

The forgoing discussion reveals how civics as a subject of school education originated and evolved over the years in the Indian context (Saigol 2000; Jain 2004; Kumar 2005;Madan 2010). It also highlights how curriculum and textbooks constitute a site where changing regimes of political power stake their claim by ushering in contesting

visions of the nation, State and citizenship in line with their differing ideologies (Jain 2004; Advani 2009; Bhog *et al*; Batra 2015). A comparison between the civics textbooks (published by NCERT between 1975 and 2000) and the current SPL series (based on NCF 2005) explains this through the shifting portrayal of the nation, State and citizenship. The discussion which follows summarizes the key findings and highlights the main conclusions.

8.1   The SPL Textbooks and Pedagogy

Based on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005, the SPL series represents the nation as having a pluralist culture consisting of people from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds. They are also represented as belonging to different social strata, having diverse modes of livelihood and living standards. But this diversity is not shown to necessarily lead to harmonious co-existence among individuals and communities. Rather very often it is shown to give rise to inequalities, discrimination and exclusions arising out of socio-economic differences based on caste, class, religion, gender and ethnicity. The rural and urban spaces in the SPL textbooks are not presented as contrasts - idyllic locations bereft of any problems or places burdened with innumerable drawbacks. Rather both are deeply stratified in terms of class, living standards and livelihood practices which are shown to sometimes lead to conflicts over resources like land and water. While people are engaged in a range of economic activities the problems that confront them are also highlighted (e.g. lack of regular income, absence of safety and security in workplaces). Attention is also drawn to the absence of basic facilities like healthcare and unequal distribution of water as well as the existence of caste–based discrimination and communal violence. Thus unlike the NCERT civics textbooks (1975-2004) which presented the Indian socio-cultural space as flattened and homogeneous(Advani 2009), the SPL series makes a serious attempt to endorse its composite character but at the same time highlights the multifarious existential problems that contour the lives of citizens. Some communities (e.g. Buddhists, Jains), groups (people with disability) and regions (e.g. North-East India) however are either under-represented or remain conspicuous by their absence.

The textbooks make a concerted effort to address gender concerns. Using diverse pedagogical tools like storyboards and case-studies they explain how gender stereotypes are socially constructed and not biologically inherited. Women appear in a variety of roles contributing to the family's income and the development of the nation just like their male counterparts. The focus in the textbooks is not restricted to a few prominent women (unlike the earlier civics textbooks) and their contribution but shifts to ordinary women from diverse socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. Their struggles in daily life and the resistance put up by them to reclaim their rights are also highlighted. Further questions are raised about the devaluation of women within the home, family and workplace. Research has pointed out how gender concerns were usually placed within the "patriarchal nationalistic frame"(NCERT 2006:vi) in school textbooks published by NCERT (1975-2000), state boards and private publishers (Saigol 2000; Advani 2009; Bhog *et al* 2010).The SPL series succeeds to a large extent in challenging this portrayal. However the textbooks overlook issues related to discrimination and sexual harassment that women encounter at the workplace and in the larger society. Gender concerns also remain confined within male/female binaries.

The question of citizenship and how it is often thwarted by the larger society and the State itself is especially focused on in the SPL textbooks in the context of the some of the most marginalized communities. The Adivasis, Dalits and Muslims are discussed in detail in SPL III and the textbook attempts to present issues of inequality, discrimination and marginalization from their perspectives and experiences. It makes an attempt to dispel the stereotypes attached to these communities and examines the reasons leading to their marginalization. Further it draws attention to the resistance put up by them to safeguard their rights against certain State policies and societal discrimination. The textbooks thus succeed to a large extent in trying to awaken in the learner "a real concern for social justice" (NCERT 2006:4) for the vulnerable communities. This is in contrast to earlier civics textbooks which treated issues like poverty, caste-based discrimination as impediments in the path of the nation's development process that could be addressed by policy changes (Jain 2004; Bhog *et al* 2010). However the SPL series does not highlight the contributions of iconic figures and ordinary citizens from among the Adivasis and

Muslims, overlooks the institutionalization of caste-based discrimination and fails to problematize the marginalized status of the Muslims.

Unlike in the earlier textbooks, the "ideal" citizen in the SPL series is not unthinkingly loyal, obedient and patriotic (Jain 2004). Being invested with agency she displays a resolve to withstand societal pressure and is capable of reclaiming her fundamental rights when these are challenged by individuals, larger society and the State itself. A number of instances are cited when ordinary citizens are shown to put up a fight to reclaim their rights either individually by approaching the police or judiciary or through collaborative endeavours like social movements. Citizenship in these textbooks is thus conceived in terms of rights and not just duties. The SPL series also marks a departure from the earlier civics textbooks in its depiction of the society and polity in a more realistic manner thereby exposing the cleavages arising out of institutional and systemic failures and social inequalities based on class, caste, gender, ethnicity and religion (Jain 2004: Bhog *et al* 2010). However in spite of pointing to the lapses in functioning of the State apparatuses, the State itself emerges as a paternalistic and benign deliverer of justice.

A distinct pedagogical approach that informs the textbooks is spelt out in the ".. Introductory Note to Teachers" provided in each of the SPL textbooks. The Note provides a series of guidelines as to how the textbooks are expected to be transacted from the perspective of the textbook authors. A perusal of the textbooks reveal the presence of diverse pedagogical tools like storyboards, stories, case-studies, visuals and in-text and end-text questions. These definitely create space for the learners to engage with various social and political issues critically and analyse them from multiple perspectives. This has the potential to transform the classroom teaching-learning process from a teacher-driven one to one which is democratic, participatory and recognizes the agency of the learner as a constructor of knowledge. The SPL textbooks thus present a contrast to the earlier textbooks which maintained a similar narrative style that provided description of themes like the "Making of the Indian Constitution" and "Fundamental Rights". The earlier textbooks also contained questions which being factual and descriptive in nature, rarely encouraged the students to think critically about relevant social, political and economic issues (Jain 2004; Madan 2010; Bhog *et al* 2010). The in-text and end-text

questions in the SPL textbooks on the other hand are designed to enable the teachers gauge if the learners have understood the concepts embedded in the storyboards, case-studies and the main text. These are also aimed at allowing the teachers evaluate the students on a range of skills like the ability to reason and draw inferences. Further there is an attempt to discourage the practice of rote learning by encouraging the students to answer questions in their own words based on their understanding of concepts and thus create space for a range of "right" answers. Batra and Nawani (2010) have advocated the relevance of pedagogical tools like these in the context of the social science textbooks published by Ekalvaya, Madhya Pradesh. The SPL textbooks are designed with a similar approach..

A distinct role for the teachers is also envisaged by the SPL textbooks. The teacher is expected to make the textual knowledge relatable to the diverse groups of students by providing relevant local examples in accordance with the ideas and concepts presented in the textbook. She/he is also expected to handle the themes of discrimination, marginalization and social justice with the required sensitivity and maturity and provide a safe environment for students from such communities to share their ideas without fear of being ridiculed.

Batra and Nawani(2010) had raised concerns as to how the absence of definitions can hamper the understanding of abstract concepts in the context of the Ekalavya social science textbooks. They had also pointed out how visuals were not well integrated in the textbooks. Similar problems are noticeable in the case of the SPL textbooks. The SPL textbooks include quite a few abstract concepts but do not provide definitions while some of the visuals are not well-integrated with the main text and can be easily overlooked. The in-text and end-text questions are sometimes ambiguous and many a time new and unfamiliar concepts are not accompanied by basic questions that facilitate comprehension. Besides, the language remains difficult and complex. Taken together the number of pedagogical tools in each chapter is far too many. What was clear in the analysis of the text book was that it was critical that teachers were adequately trained and equipped with the requisite skills and understanding of concepts. If this was not done it was difficult to expect that they would be able to transact the textbooks as envisaged by

the authors. Batra (2015) has highlighted this. The constraint of time under which the teachers operate also needed to be taken into consideration. However the gaps notwithstanding, the SPL series has been largely successful in reflecting the radical shifts introduced by the NCF 2005 both in terms of content and pedagogy.

8.2   The Construction of "Civics Classroom Knowledge"

Observation of classroom processes at JV reveals that the textbook was present in every learning situation in the class. The teachers and students had their personal copy of the SPL textbook. The teachers carried it to the class daily and kept it open on their table while teaching. But they took liberty at every phase of the teaching-learning process to introduce out-of school knowledge. The main text as well as most of the pedagogical tools (e.g. storyboards, case-studies) was partially used. Many were overlooked. Often these were interpreted differently. The visuals and in-text questions were not used at all. This limited the opportunity for the teachers to explain and engage in meaningful discussion and deliberation about concepts like "secularism" or "marginalization". The textbook thus was only selectively transacted. What was conveyed to the students emerged as a distorted version of the official textual knowledge and therefore very different from what the authors had intended to be communicated. The dominant pedagogic practice followed in the classroom remained confined to a rigid question-answer format. It certainly allowed the students some space for participation in the teaching-learning process. But since on most occasions they were asked to respond to questions that expected them to merely recall factual details they were required to engage with the textbook only superficially. They also participated passively by following specific instructions given by the teachers. In other words the students participated in the pedagogic process only at the behest of the teachers and not when they wanted to. While both the teachers and students introduced out-of school knowledge, it was only the teachers' contributions which were accepted as legitimate. The contribution of the students rarely acquired the same validity except when the teachers approved them.

Answers to questions were routinely marked out in the textbooks by the teachers. Dictation of answers from textbooks was another preferred mode of equipping the

students with "right" answers which they were expected to memorize as they prepared for examinations. This was according to the rigid norms instituted by the school management at JV. But the teachers used their discretion to select specific sentences and paragraphs from the textbook. This was noticed even in case of questions which required the students to look for answers outside the textbook or answer the questions in their own words. However the specific nature of the textbook was not suitable for such practices. While many of the difficult concepts were explained in the textbook through examples and other creative expressions like storyboards, these were not followed by precise definitions. It was expected that the teachers and students would read through these examples, explanations and creative expressions and deduce the answers based on their understanding. But the teachers were clearly not equipped to do that. This often pushed them to resort to guidebooks and draw upon ideas based on popular perceptions or biases.

On most occasions the majority of the students chose to remain largely disengaged from the pedagogic process. Constant negotiations were thus required between the teachers and the taught and the authority relations between the two were fluid. The situation changed during the revision phase when almost the entire class was completely attentive as students busied themselves with copying dictated answers in their notebooks. Here students appeared to be acutely aware of what Kumar calls the "examination-textbook link" (1988:459).For them the dictated answers constituted "worthwhile" knowledge (Young 1971:34). Yet when examined, the answers that were dictated were found to be filled with many inaccuracies and gaps. They also contradicted the textbook. Moreover what was accessed was also misrepresented. The teachers distorted and left out the textual knowledge As students on their part were expected during examinations to reproduce verbatim answers dictated by teachers they lacked the interest to engage meaningfully with the textbook. Thus the official civics knowledge was never accessed in its entirety by the teachers and students.

The dictation of answers was followed by a strict process of inspection when the notebooks of the students (with the dictated answers) had to be checked and stamped by the school authorities. - this way the school in its anxiety to meet new management and accountability processes (Gupta and Ahmad2016; Jain *et al* 2018) that were seen to

ensure success of students in examinations created conditions that compounded the lack of meaningful engagement with the SPL/ civics textbooks. Thus the transaction of the textbook in the JV civics classroom was constrained by a specific format and rigid institutional norms. Within this format while teachers randomly introduced out-of-school knowledge they also overlooked substantial part of the textual content and pedagogical tools. Often the textual knowledge was distorted. Although occasionally the students were allowed to bring in out-of-school knowledge based on their lived experiences, such knowledge was usually ignored or dismissed. On the other hand teachers' viewed the non textual knowledge that they brought in was relevant and legitimate. Students did not question the legitimacy of teachers' knowledge irrespective of how relevant it was. As mentioned classroom participation by the students remained minimal and took place only at the behest of the teacher. .. Overall the transaction of the textbook was rigidly "framed" (Bernstein 1971:61). The civics classroom knowledge that emerged through a mediation between the teachers, textbook, guidebook and the students (though only minimally) was thus distinctly different from the official civics knowledge embedded in the textbook. This has been referred to in this study as "civics classroom knowledge".

The textbook was read and interpreted by the teachers and students in "multiple" ways. While they partially drew from the textbook they deviated from it and overlooked substantial part of the textual content. They also introduced new and different ideas and sometimes even challenged and contradicted those highlighted in the text. As for the students they appeared to have completely disavowed the textual knowledge and drew extensively from outside. The perspectives that emerged were thus varied and diverse. Not only did the teachers and students disagree with the textbook they often differed amongst themselves. For instance, negating the textbook the teachers and the students did not consider the Adivasis as an empowered community of forest dwellers endowed with a rich cultural heritage in the sphere of religion and language and who had significantly contributed towards the development of settled civilizations. Instead they regarded them as a homogeneous community of primeval forest-dwellers. While they accepted that the unplanned development policies of the State had resulted in large-scale displacement and dispossession of the Adivasis yet they endorsed such policies. One of the teachers however accepted that the excesses accruing from the policies had in certain cases led to

violent unrest among the Adivasis. Some of the students also felt that the government should work out a rehabilitation programme for the community. But on the whole the teachers and students located the causes behind the marginalization of the Adivasis within the community itself -- their distinct lifestyle and their resistance towards modernization and progress.

Contradicting the textbooks and drawing extensively from sources outside it, the majority of the students and teachers attributed the marginalization of the Muslims to their "not so normal" customs and practices, their alleged preference for *madrasa* education and their regressive attitude and treatment of women. The textbook was challenged by a section of the students, especially those belonging to the general category who expressed their strong disapproval for the reservation policy. This was not accepted by a few students belonging to the reserved categories who strongly supported the introduction of such policies to address the marginalization of the Dalits. The textual knowledge was also contested by the teachers. They refused to accept that the Dalits had a role to play in reclaiming their rights by enforcing the State to introduce specific legislations and adopting requisite measures to curb their exploitation.

What is significant is that the textbook was clearly not the main source from where the teachers and the students drew their ideas. Rather they were influenced by a range of factors - popular discourses in the media and those prevalent within their specific socio-cultural contexts, the earlier civics textbooks and the hidden curriculum of the school as also their lived realities. All these came together to shape their imagination and it was through this prism that they read, transacted and interpreted the textbook. Thus in Porat's words they "culturally comprehend[ed]" it (Porat 2004). This to some extent may explain why the teachers and students constructed the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits very differently from the way they have been portrayed in the textbook. The variations noticeable between and among the teachers and students notwithstanding, by and large, their constructions of these communities were broadly similar. Being part of a larger socio-cultural milieu they readily accepted and endorsed the prejudices and the stereotypes associated with the marginalized communities prevalent within popular discourses. What needs to be kept in mind is that the new textbooks were unable to

disrupt such notions. Instead it created a space for intrusion of ideas that resulted in "cultural politics" (Apple 2000: 59).

8.3   Teacher Preparation and Textbook Development

The innovative features of the textbook as highlighted in the "Introductory Note to the Teachers' (SPL III) has certainly opened up the possibility of making the classroom pedagogic process participatory. It also discourages the practice of rote-learning by creating space for sharing of multiple perspectives by the students through a culture of debate and discussion. However as the foregoing discussion shows, the specific context of the classroom at JV did not facilitate the implementation of such transformative pedagogic practices. Constantly pressurized by the task of "completing the syllabus" and burdened with other "official" duties other than teaching, the teachers could afford little time to meaningfully engage the students in debate and deliberation. Institutional practices in the school compounded what Bernstein (1971) refers to as the rigid framing of teaching-learning practices. Students were rarely provided the opportunity to bring in their lived experiences into the classroom or answer questions in their own words although the textbook often demanded so. The assessment system based on textbook centric questions which only accepted one "right" answer discouraged the students to think independently and answer the questions in their own words. At the same time the sheer vastness of the textual content, the complexity of the language and the abstract nature of some of the concepts introduced in the textbook without precise definitions (e.g. "marginalization") made it difficult for the students to negotiate it independently. They thus had no option but to take recourse to diverse strategies. This included memorizing dictated answers from the textbook or guidebook, resorting to external help like internet websites, private tuition and even cheating to pass examination. These were some of the important factors that resulted in the selective reading of the textual content by the students.

Teacher preparation was another major obstacle. Keeping the transformative changes suggested by the NCF 2005 especially in social science, what was absolutely critical was that the teachers were adequately prepared to transact the textbooks. This required them

to understand the radical shifts in perspective both in terms of textual content and pedagogic style. Also it must be remembered that the teachers were used to the earlier text books which they transacted following a very different pedagogic style.But the curricular reforms introduced by NCF 2005 were not accompanied by similar reforms in the arena of teacher training. This has been pointed out by Batra (2005; 2015). Neither the initial trainings conducted by NCERT nor the in-service professional development processes planned by the school offered opportunities to the teachers to meaningfully engage with the textbooks. This left them unequipped to handle the shifts in perspective, introduction of new and complex concepts and teaching practices embedded in the Social and Political Life textbooks. As a result the teachers who were trained to transact textbooks through conventional pedagogic practices like lecture and dictation of notes were averse to the idea of engaging in debate and discussion with the students. They felt the students were not equipped to think independently and answer questions on their own. Being ill-conceived and randomly organized, the teacher training processes were also not able to equip the teachers to question the *status quo* on discrimination and social inequities based on caste, community and religion. Thus their own prejudices against marginalized communities (in this case SC/STs and Muslims) remained undisturbed. This explains why the teachers not only negated the textual context but very often contested it and questioned the veracity of the official civics knowledge related to the marginalized condition of the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits.

Since the assessment system did not undergo similar transformation the students, failed to look beyond the "examination-textbook link" (Kumar 1988) and did not show any interest in engaging with the textbooks. Like the teachers they also were unable to look beyond the stereotypes and biases attached to the marginalized communities and regarded them as the "other". Under the circumstances the nature of the textbook itself, with its vastness and complexity of content, difficulty level of language and open-ness of pedagogic perspective rendered it inaccessible and unpalatable to both the teacher and the taught. This inadvertently created a space for intrusion of ideas and information from sources outside the textbook that tended to contradict the ideas embedded in it.

8.4   Emerging Concerns

Ideas of "other-ness" and exclusionary perceptions of the "ideal" citizen are deeply entrenched in the imagination of the Indian nation. Within this imagination largely monopolized by the dominant groups in the society, the constructions of the poor and disenfranchised (e.g. the Adivasis, Muslims and Dalits) continue to be mired in stigma, stereotypes and prejudices (Xaxa 2006; Banerjee 2009; Oommen 2014). A chasm exists between the constitutional definition of citizenship and its practices in reality (Jayal 2013). This chasm is rapidly becoming wider in an increasingly polarised public sphere today as seen in the continuous targeted persecution of marginalized communities especially over the last few years. This is fomented everyday by images and newsfeed (bordering on "fake news") favoured by the electronic and print media, social media as well as popular discourses. In this context the very idea of India as an inclusive and pluralist society envisioned by the leaders of the Independence movement (Cohn 1971; Parekh 2006) and guaranteed by the Constitution (Jayal 2013) is under severe threat. Under such circumstances it becomes important to understand how civics knowledge is to be designed in order to address such new challenges.

Textual reforms cannot by themselves transform classroom pedagogic processes. For such changes to materialize it is crucial that reforms in the arena of textbooks are accompanied by certain systemic changes in the way teachers are prepared. Batra has emphasized that the teachers constitute the crucial link or mediator between the textbook and the students (Batra 2005:4347). This requires them to be intellectually aligned to every innovation and change introduced in the arena of textbooks and curriculum. Research has highlighted how both the pre-service and in-service teacher preparation programmes are confined within conventional pedagogic practices (Kumar 2005; Batra 2005). The NCF 2005 has also been critiqued for being based on wide assumptions and not having engaged adequately with the question of teacher preparation (Batra 2015). The present study has reiterated this and gone further to show how the in-service trainings conducted at the school level were ill-conceived. Observation of classroom practices and interviews with teachers and textbook writing committee members show that the teachers were not adequately trained to handle issues like inequality and marginalization.

Currently the in-service programme, being left in the hands of individual schools and institutions has been reduced to nothing but random exercises or routine, meaningless rituals that have to be somehow completed. This was shared by most of the members of the NCERT's textbook writing committee who were interviewed by the researcher. It was also evident from the conversation that the researcher had with some of the officials of JVS and one of the organizers of in-service training conducted by JVS. It has also been argued that the curriculum for teacher education, both pre-service and in-service, does not include contemporary socio-political and economic issues which form the backdrop in which education is located in the Indian context (Batra 2005). Further the composition of the teaching community has been largely restricted to the dominant groups in the society (ibid.). But with the introduction of the Right to Education Act the classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse in nature. This makes it extremely important for teachers to develop an understanding of issues like inequality, discrimination, marginalization and social justice. Such issues as the analysis of the SPL series reveals have also found significant mention in the school textbooks. Therefore to enable teachers to transact such textbooks it is crucial that the teacher preparation processes, both pre-service and in-service are re-designed.

Further textbooks cannot be equated with a curriculum which encompasses the entire experience of education from textbooks, its transaction in the classroom as well as assessment and evaluation. All this needs attention. "Official knowledge" as conceived by Apple (2000) or "valid" knowledge as defined by Bernstein (1971) help in understanding and interpreting what is approved as content of curriculum and textbooks. But in the light of the radical shifts introduced by the NCF 2005 the very idea of "official knowledge" has been redefined and space has been created for the entry of outside knowledge into the classroom. But can any out-of-school knowledge be integrated into the fold of the official textual knowledge without being aligned to it? Such concerns were raised even when the NCF 2005 was being conceptualized. Batra (2015) discusses how questions were asked about the validity of child–centred practices and locally derived knowledge. Of particular concern was the legitimacy given to local knowledge since it opened up the possibility of the entry of "obscurantist" and regressive ideas privileged by religious forces into the classrooms (ibid.:52). Saxena (2006) as discussed earlier also

expressed disapproval about constructivist pedagogic practices in the context of science education.

As the observation of civics lessons at JV show the out-of–school knowledge that was brought in by the teachers at JV was unfiltered and not aligned to the textbook. In fact it was contrary to the idea of citizenship as embedded in the Constitution of India, NCF 2005 and the SPL textbooks. It was also drawn heavily from popular discourses with all its entrenched notions of stereotypes and prejudices. There was also the shadow of the earlier civics textbooks and the guidebook. The civics knowledge which evolved within the classroom thus negated the perspective and content of the official textbook. None the less it was considered legitimate by the teachers and "worthwhile" by students as it was presented to them in a form that would see them through the examinations (Young 1971). Thus Apple's idea of "official knowledge" (2000) and "valid transmission of knowledge" within the Bernsteinian frame (1971:47) need to be engaged with in the light of the new textbook and its radical text and pedagogy. The construct of "civics classroom knowledge" is hence useful to understand what emerges as knowledge within the classroom as a result of a relatively open text book and complexity of the school and out of school processes. This then raises the question as to how "official", "valid" and "worthwhile" knowledge (Apple 2000; Bernstein 1971; Young 1971) need to be engaged with in research on textbooks and their transaction. This study which analyses specific themes in the textbook and their transaction provides some insights into the complexity of these processes. .

The manner in which the textbooks were conceptualized and written also requires attention. The reflections by the Ekalavya Team (Ekalavya 2010) have suggested the significance of conducting background research followed by systematic field trials of developed textual material, teacher workshops and observation of classrooms to weed out and modify concepts and ideas that were difficult and socially sensitive in a specific context. Data collated through such triangulation of evidence has also proven to facilitate meaningful revision of developed textual material before finally introducing them in classrooms. But time was a constraint in the case of the writing of the SPL textbooks under NCERT. This was shared by one of the members of the textbook writing

committee. Each of the textbooks had to be written and published within a year's time. This made it virtually impossible for the authors to include field –testing of developed textual material, gathering feedback from teachers about the feasibility of operationalizing certain ideas and concepts in the classroom and revising the developed material informed by such feedback. The need for systematic field testing was also often not acknowledged. Consisting of a diverse group of people, ranging from academics, social activists, legal practitioners, educationists and members of civil society some of the team members felt that they had adequate experience at the grassroots level related to gender, marginalized communities and discrimination. It appears to have been presumed that the teachers would be competent and would not have any difficulty either in grasping the concepts or understanding the language of the textbooks. It was also felt that the inclusion of pedagogic tools like storyboards, case-studies and visuals would enable the children to negotiate the textbooks independently. The findings of the study however reveal that such expectations were misplaced and did not match the ground reality given the specific school and classroom context within which the text books were transacted.

The diversity of both teachers and students also poses its own issues. Coming from a wide range of socio-economic and cultural contexts and having a diverse range of abilities and competencies offer challenges and constraints in the transaction, comprehension and interpretation of new textbooks. This calls for a rethinking of assumptions of schooling that inform the production of textbooks, usually written by scholars in the university. The success of the Ekalavya textbooks has been attributed to a number of factors including the active involvement of teachers in the entire process of production of the textbook and their regular participation in trainings and workshops. This was evident from the reflections by the Ekalavya team (2010) as also during the interaction of the researcher with a few of the team members. The experience of Ekalavya would be important in any such endeavours in the future.

Textbook reforms must be accompanied by relevant changes in the assessment and evaluation systems. The study highlights that although the NCF 2005 does include certain guidelines regarding how assessment needs to be designed much has been left unaddressed. The SPL series definitely focuses on the need to wean away teachers and

students from a system of teaching-learning that is driven by public examinations. It also provides a space which allows the teaching-learning process to be participatory and experiential. This is reflected in the manner the textbook is designed. However such pedagogic shifts are not accompanied by similar changes in the assessment system which continues to be revolving around pen and paper examinations. As seen teaching is still mainly reduced to lecturing and dictating answers from textbooks or guidebooks and where students are judged on their ability to reproduce verbatim such dictated answers. Examinations still rule the roost. This explains why the teachers at JV under the instruction of the school management resorted to dictating answers to the students who received them seriously for the sole purpose of reproducing them during examinations. This was noticed even when the CCE was in operation. Therefore for textual innovations to become fruitful it is essential to bring about some systemic reforms with regard to assessment.

School culture and institutional norms influence how textbooks are transacted in classrooms. With the introduction of neo-liberal frameworks since the 1990s, managerialism and new norms of accountability have been making their influence felt within school systems in the name of improving the efficiency of teachers. A number of studies have highlighted this (Gupta and Ahmad 2016; Jain *et al*. 2018). Teachers in JV were increasingly being overburdened with paper-work and other such issues. Further as mentioned JV has also instituted its own norms and regulations to monitor student performance and regulate teacher efficiency. Being constantly under pressure to teach in a specific way the teachers at JV had little time to devote to teaching or experimenting with new ideas and pedagogic practices, often resorting to guide books and "folk pedagogies" (Batra 2005). Where teachers are increasingly being reduced to instruments to deliver handed–down orders from top meaningful engagement with the text book is likely to suffer. Textbooks reforms hence cannot be introduced in isolation.

There is no doubt that the students at JV were greatly influenced by the dominant discourses in their socio-cultural milieu, popular media and their lived experiences and easily imbibed many of the stereotypical notions about the marginalized communities whom they viewed through these frames. And yet there were quite a few occasions when

they were able to reflect on issues of discrimination, marginalization and social justice through a wider lens. This enabled them to question many of the prevalent stereotypes associated with the marginalized communities. They were also able to sift through layers of misinformation to understand that many of the inter-community disputes that erupted in the recent past were politically instigated. This reflects their interest on civic concerns and their maturity and sensitivity to critically engage with deep-rooted prejudices and rationalize. However such insights were drawn more from their lived experiences rather than from the textbook. But this suggests that if the text book (SPL series) was engaged with meaningfully it would have enabled young students to think critically about larger issues and evolve into "sensitive, interrogative, deliberative and transformative citizens" (NCERT 2006:4).

Thus the SPL series definitely has succeeded in setting a template for change and showing that it is possible to conceptualize social sciences in general and civics in particular from a different perspective. It has also shown the need to evolve appropriate pedagogical perspectives and tools to facilitate the transaction and learning of such knowledge. However as the study points out there is a need to create systemic conditions for the textbook to address the challenges of institutional contexts in which civics is transacted and for preparation of teachers who will be able to facilitate a deep engagement with it by students. This study has analysed "official" civics knowledge in the new textbook, as well its transaction in one school. This points to the need for greater theoretical engagement and empirical research in diverse contexts in order to understand what are extremely complex pedagogical and institutional processes.

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ANNEXURE I

Table 2: Details of Use of SPL Chapters/Units in Thesis

SPL No.	Unit Name & Number*	Chapter Name & Number in SPL**	Focus of Analysis & Chapter Number in Thesis***
I	*Diversity (1)*	*Diversity (1)* *Diversity and Discrimination (2)*	Text – **Chapter 2**
I	*Local Government and Administration (3)*	*Panchayati Raj (5)* *Rural Administration (6)* *Urban Administration (7)*	Text- **Chapter 2**
I	*Livelihoods (4)*	*Rural Livelihood (8)* *Urban Livelihood (9)*	Text **– Chapter 2**
II	*Equality in Indian Democracy (1)*	*On Equality (1)*	Text**– Chapter 2**
II	*State Government (2)*	*Role of the Government in Health (2)* *How the State Works (3)*	Text**– Chapter 2**
II	*Gender (3)*	*Growing Up as Boys and Girls (4)* *Women Change the World (5)*	Text**– Chapter 2**
II	*Struggles for Equality (1 continued)*	*Struggles for Equality (10)*	Text**– Chapter 2**
III	*The Indian Constitution and Secularism (1)*	*Understanding Secularism (2)*	Text &Transaction in Classroom**– Chapters 2, 3, 5**
III	*Social Justice and the Marginalized (4)*	*Understanding Marginalization (7)* *Confronting Marginalization (8)*	Text, Transaction in Classroom & Interpretation by Teachers/Students – **Chapters 2, 3,5, 6,7**
III	*Economic Presence of the Government (5)*	*Public Facilities (9)*	Text & Transaction in Classroom**– Chapters 2,3,5**

* Numbers in brackets indicate Unit Number in SPL I-III

** Numbers in brackets indicate Chapter Numbers in SPL I-III

*** Numbers indicate Chapters in Thesis

ANNEXURE II

Table 1: Schedule of Interviews conducted at JV

Name of Interviewee	No. of Interviews	Nature of Interview	Mode of interaction	Duration of Each Session	Time
Keshav Mishra	5	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Nov 2014 - Feb 2015 Feb to Aug 2016
Mahumita Roy	3	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Nov 2014 - Feb 2015
Ipshita Mitra	2	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Nov 2014 - Feb 2015
Students of Class VIII A	16	Focus Group	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Nov 2014 - Feb 2015 Feb to Aug 2016
Students of Class VIII B	11	Focus Group	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Nov 2014 - Feb 2015 Feb to Aug 2016
Principal	1	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Feb to Aug 2016
Vice-Principal	1	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	1 hour approx.	Feb to Aug 2016
Member 1 (TWC)*	1	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	3 hours approx.	May 2017
Member 2 (TWC)*	3	One-to-one	Telephonic Conversation	1 hour approx.	May to August 2017 Feb 2019
Member 3 (TWC)*	1	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	2 hours approx.	May 2017
Member 4 (TWC)*	2	One-to-one	Face-to-Face	2 hours approx.	August 2017 April 2019
Member 5 (TWC)*	1	One-to-one	Telephonic Conversation	1 hour approx.	August 2017
Member 6 (TWC)*	1	One-to-one	Telephonic Conversation	1 hour approx.	Feb 2019
Member 7 (TWC)*	1	One-to-one	Telephonic Conversation	1 hour approx.	Feb 2019
Member 8 (TWC)*	1	One-to-one	Telephonic Conversation	1 hour approx.	Feb 2019
JVS Official	1	One-to-one	Face-to-face	1 hour approx.	Feb 2019
JVS Resource Person	1	One-to-one	Telephonic Conversation	1 hour approx.	Feb 2019
University Professor	1	One-to-one	Face-to-face	1 hour approx.	Feb 2019

*Textbook Writing Committee

ANNEXURE III

Excerpts and Images from NCERT (1975-2004) and SPL I-III

Box 1

Source: NCERT 2002: 143-154

Box 2

Source: SPL I, p. 70

Box 3

> *Welfare of the Scheduled Castes and The Scheduled Tribes*
> *Special efforts are being made to provide education to the tribal people. They are being given special facilities to raise their standard of living. Science and technology is also gradually reaching them to change their lifestyle....seats are being reserved for them in schools and colleges. Health services are being provided to them by the government..Seats are also reserved for them in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assemblies.*

Source: NCERT 1989:41-43

Box 4

> *The Constitution of India recognizes the right to water as being part of the Right to Life under Article 21.This means that it is the right of every person, whether rich or poor, to have sufficient amounts of water to fulfil his/her daily needs at a price that he/she can afford.......Like water, there are other essential facilities that need to be provided for everyone. Last year you read about two other such facilities: healthcare and sanitation. Similarly, there are things like electricity, public transport, schools and colleges that are also necessary. These are known as public facilities.*

Source: SPL III: 109

Box 5

> *The responsibility to provide public facilities... must be that of the government...in reality..there is great shortage of such facilities....Water supply in Chennai, as we saw...is marked by shortages...The burden of shortfalls in water supply falls mostly on the poor. The middle class, when faced with water shortages, are able to cope through a variety of private means such as digging bore wells, buying water from tankers and using bottled water for drinking....In rural areas, water is needed both for human use and for use by the cattle. The sources of water are wells, hand pumps, ponds and sometimes overhead tanks. Much of these are privately owned. Compared to the urban areas, there is even greater shortage of public water supply in rural areas*

Source: SPL III: 113

Box 6

To be marginalized is to be forced to occupy the sides or fringes and thus not be at the centre of things. ...If you are not like most people in your class, that is, if your taste in music or films is different, if your accent marks you out. from others, if you are less chatty than others in your class, if you don't play the same sport that many of your classmates like, if you dress differently, the chances are that you will not be considered to be 'in' by your peers. So often, you end up feeling that you are 'not with it'-as if what you say, feel and think and how you act are not quite right or acceptable to others.

As in the classroom, in the social environment too, groups of people or communities may have the experience of being excluded. Their marginalization can be because they speak a different language, follow different customs or belong to a different religious group from the majority community. They may also feel marginalized because they are poor, considered to be of 'low' social status and viewed as being less human than others. Sometimes, marginalized groups are viewed with hostility and fear. This sense of difference and exclusion leads to communities not having access to resources and opportunities and in their ability to assert their rights. They experience a sense of disadvantage and powerlessness vis-à-vis more powerful and dominant sections of society who own land, are wealthy, better educated and politically powerful. Thus, marginalization is seldom experienced in one sphere. Economic, social, cultural and political factors work together to make certain groups in society feel marginalized.

Source: SPL III: 80

Box 7

The Scheduled Tribes

India has different kinds of tribes spread over the entire country .... They are extremely poor and most of them are illiterate. In these conditions they are subjected to exploitation by others. Many of them are led to embrace other religions, especially Christianity, in the hope that they can improve their status by doing so...The tribals live a simple life, very close to nature. They are generally associated with forests and mountains...In their simple lifestyle, the customs play a very important role. Music and dance are invariably part of their daily life......Instead of forcing them to break off from their identity, conditions should be created where they are able to preserve their identity and at the same time become part of modern India. They should be helped to develop scientific attitude. Education should equip them to accept an idea or principle on the basis of reasoning and not on the basis of blind faith or superstition. ....

Source: NCERT 1989: 40-42

Box 8

Adivasis-the term literally means 'original inhabitants'-are communities who lived, and often continue to live, in close association with forests. Around 8 per cent of India's population is Adivasi and many of India's most important mining and industrial centres are located in Adivasi areas –Jamshedpur, Rourkela, Bokaro and Bhilai among others. Adivasis are not a homogeneous population: there are over 500 different Adivasi groups in Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and in the north-eastern states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. A state like Orissa is home to more than 60 different tribal groups.

Scheduled Tribes is a term used for Adivasis used by the Indian government in various official documents. There is an official list of tribes. Scheduled Tribes are often grouped together with Scheduled Castes in the category Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Adivasi societies are also most distinctive because there is often very little hierarchy among them. This makes them radically different from communities organized around principles of jati-varna (caste) or those that are ruled by kings.

Adivasis practice a range of tribal religions that are different from Islam, Hinduism and Christianity. These often involve the worship of ancestors, village and nature spirits…. Adivasis have been influenced by different surrounding religions like Shakta, Buddhist, Vaishnav, Bhakti and Christianity. Simultaneously, Adivasi religions themselves have influenced dominant religions of the empires around them, for example, the Jagannath cult of Orissa and Shakti and Tantric traditions in Bengal and Assam.During the nineteenth century substantial numbers of Adivasis converted to Christianity, which has emerged as a very important religion in modern Adivasi history.

Adivasis have their own languages (most of them radically different from and possibly as old as Sanskrit), which have often deeply influenced the formation of mainstream Indian languages like Bengali. Santhali has the largest number of speakers and has a significant body of publications including magazines on the internet or in e-zines'.

Source: SPL III: 83-84

Box 9

..forests were absolutely crucial to the development of all empires and settled civilizations in India. Metal ores like iron and copper,..coal and diamonds, invaluable timber, most medicinal herbs and animal products… and animals themselves..all came from forests..the continuation of life depended heavily on forests, that help recharge many of India's rivers… Forests covered the major part of our country till the nineteenth century and the Adivasis had a deep knowledge of, access to, as well as control over most of these vast tracts…. This meant that they were not ruled by, large States and empires. Instead, often empires heavily depended on Adivasis for the crucial access to forest resources.

Source: SPL III: 84-85

Box 10

..for the past 200 years Adivasis have been increasingly forced - through economic changes, forest policies and political force applied by the State and private industry – to migrate to lives as workers in plantations, at construction sites, in industries and as domestic workers..Forest lands have been cleared for timber and to get land for agriculture and industry. Adivasis have also lived in areas that are rich in minerals and other natural resources. These are taken over for mining and other large industrial projects. ...Huge tracts of their lands have also gone under the waters of hundreds of dams that have been built in independent India. In the North-east, their lands remain highly militarized and war-torn. India has 54 national parks and 372 wildlife sanctuaries ..These are areas where tribals originally lived but were evicted from. .... Having gradually lost access to their traditional homelands, many Adivasis have migrated to cities in search of work...for very low wages ..Thus they get caught in a cycle of poverty and deprivation.45 per cent of tribal groups in rural areas and 35 per cent in urban areas live below the poverty line. This leads to deprivation in other areas. Many tribal children are malnourished. Literacy rates among tribals are also very low.

Source: SPL III: 85-87

Box 11

Economic and social marginalization experienced by Muslims has other dimensions as well. Like other minorities, Muslim customs and practices are sometimes quite distinct from what is seen as the mainstream. Some – not all – Muslims may wear a burqa, sport a long beard, wear a fez and these become ways to identify all Muslims. Because of this they tend to be identified differently and some people think they are not like the 'rest of us'. Often this becomes an excuse to treat them unfairly and discriminate against them...This social marginalization of Muslims in some instances has led to them migrating from places where they have lived, often leading to the ghettoisation of the community. Sometimes, this prejudice leads to hatred and violence

Source: SPL III: 89-90

Box 12

The Scheduled Castes

The people of the so-called lower castes were oppressed and exploited by those who belonged to the so-called higher castes. A very large number of the so-called lower castes were never allowed to become part of the society in the real sense...Society was unjust to them....Even now nearly 90 percent of the scheduled castes live in the rural areas. They continue to be economically dependent on the upper castes and other rich classes. Since they continue to be poor they remain objects of exploitation. ....

Source: NCERT: 1989: 40-42

Box 13

> This Act (The SC/ST Act) was framed in 1989 in response to demands made by Dalits and others that the government must take seriously the ill-treatment and humiliation Dalits and tribal groups face in an everyday sense. ....in many parts of southern India, a number of assertive Dalit groups came into being and asserted their rights -- they refused to perform their so-called caste duties and insisted on being treated equally.....Dalit groups demanded new laws that would list the various sorts of violence against Dalits and prescribe stringent punishment for those who indulge in them

Box 14

> The Indian Constitution mandates that the Indian State be secular. According to the Constitution, only a secular State can realise its objectives to ensure the following:
>
> 1. That one religious community does not dominate another;
> 2. That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community;
> 3. That the State does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals.
>
> The Indian State works in various ways to prevent the above domination. First it uses a strategy of distancing itself from religion...In India government spaces like law courts, police stations, government schools and offices are not supposed to display or promote any one religion....The second way in which Indian secularism works to prevent the above domination is through a strategy of non-interference...in order to respect the sentiments of all religions and not interfere with religious practices the State makes certain exceptions for particular religious communities. .....The third way in which Indian secularism works to prevent the domination listed earlier is through a strategy of intervention. You read earlier .... about untouchability. This is a good example where members of the same religion(upper caste Hindus) dominate other members('lower castes') within it. In order to prevent this religion-based exclusion and discrimination of 'lower castes', the Indian Constitution bans untouchability.

Box 15

As part of their effort to implement the Constitution, both state and central governments create specific schemes for implementation in tribal areas or in areas that have a high Dalit population. For example, the government provides for free or subsidized hostels for students of Dalit and Adivasi communities so that they can avail of education facilities that may not be available in their localities. ..the government also operates through laws to ensure that concrete steps are taken to end inequity in the system. One such law/policy is the reservation policy... The laws which reserve seats in education and government employment for Dalits and Adivasis are based on an important argument – that in a society like ours, where for centuries sections of populations have been denied opportunities to learn and to work in order to develop new skills or vocations, a democratic government needs to step in and assist these sections........

Governments across India have their own list of Scheduled Castes (or Dalits), Scheduled Tribes and backward and most backward castes. The central government too has a list. Students applying to educational institutions and those applying for posts in government are expected to furnish proof of their caste and tribe certificates........

For admission to colleges, especially to institutes of professional education such as medical colleges, governments define a set of 'cut off' marks. This means that not all Dalit and tribal candidates can qualify for admission, but only those who have done reasonably well and secured marks above the cut-off point.

Source: SPL III: 97

Samples of Songs and Prayers used at JV
(Source: School Diary for Students)

> **SCHOOL PRAYER IS DEAR TO ME**
> **BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT BEGINNING**

ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय। तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय। मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय।।

विद्यालय प्रार्थना

1. दया कर दान विद्या का हमें परमात्मा देना,
   दया करना हमारी आत्मा में शुद्धता देना।

1- हमारे ध्यान में आओ, प्रभु आँखों में बस जाओ।
   अंधेरे दिल में आ करके, परम ज्योति जगा देना।
   दया कर दान ....

2- बहा दो ज्ञान की गंगा, दिलों में प्रेम का सागर।
   हमें आपस में मिलजुल कर, प्रभु रहना सिखा देना।
   दया कर दान ....

3- हमारा कर्म हो सेवा, हमारा धर्म हो सेवा।
   सदा ईमान हो सेवा व सेवक जन बना देना।।
   दया कर दान ....

4- वतन के वास्ते जीना, वतन के वास्ते मरना।
   वतन पर जाँ फिदा करना, प्रभु हमको सिखा देना।।
   दया कर दान ....
   दया करना हमारी आत्मा में शुद्धता देना।

♦2. ओ३म् सहनाववतु, सहनौ भुनक्तु सहवीर्यं करवावहै।
   तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै।
   ओ३म् शान्तिः! शान्तिः!! शान्तिः!!!

संस्कृत प्रार्थना

दयां कृत्वा प्रभो! विद्या हि अरभ्यं सदा देया,
सदाऽस्माकं हि चितेषु दयस्व शुद्धता नेया।

प्रभो आयातु नः ध्याने, वसतु नेत्रेष्वस्माकम्
तमोयुक्तेषु हृदयेषु, परा आभा समादेया।।
दयां कृत्वा ....

प्रवाह्य प्रेमगङ्गां च, हृदि त्वं स्नेहसिन्धुञ्च।
मिथः सम्मिल्य वासस्य प्रभो शिक्षा सदा देया।
दयां कृत्वा ....

सदा नः कर्मसेवा स्यात् सदा नः धर्मसेवा स्यात्
सदा शीलं हि सेवा स्यात्, परा निष्ठा समादेया।।
दयां कृत्वा ....

भवेन्मे जीवनं भगवन् तथा मरणं हि देशाय,
तदर्थं जीवनत्यागः प्रभो! शिक्षा इयं देया।
दयां कृत्वा प्रभो!.................

♦1. (हे परब्रह्म!) मुझे असत्य से सत्य की ओर ले जाओ, मुझे अज्ञानरूपी अन्धकार से ज्ञानरूपी प्रकाश की ओर ले जाओ, मुझे मृत्यु से अमरता की ओर ले जाओ।

♦2. हे पूर्ण ब्रह्मपरमात्मन्। हम दोनों (गुरु-शिष्य) की साथ-साथ रक्षा करें। हम दोनों का साथ-साथ पालन करें। हम दोनों साथ-साथ ही शक्ति प्राप्त करें। हम दोनों की पढ़ी हुई विद्या तेजोमयी हो। हम दोनों परस्पर द्वेष न करें। हे परमात्मन्! हमारे तीनों तापों की निवृत्ति हो। परब्रह्म शान्ति स्वरूप है! शान्तिस्वरूप है! अतः सर्वत्र शान्ति प्रसारित हो।

विद्यालय-गीत

भारत का स्वर्णिम गौरव केन्द्रीय विद्यालय लाएगा ।
तक्षशिला, नालन्दा का इतिहास लौटकर आएगा ।।

1. शिक्षा-उपवन के हम नये फ़ल, संस्कृति सरिता के नये कूल ।
   हम ज्योति दीप जागृत प्रबुद्ध, हट जाओ तम के धूल-शूल ।।
   'तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय' यह मंत्र विश्व में छाएगा । भारत का...

2. तन अनेक पर एक प्राण, स्वर अनेक पर एक गान ।
   हम कण-कण पर छा जाएंगे, बनकर भारत का स्वाभिमान ।।
   'तत् त्वं पूषन् अपावृणु' यह छंद ज्योति बरसाएगा । भारत का...

3. हम भविष्य, हम नये चरण, हम आशा की नई किरण ।
   हम नूतन निर्माण सखे, हम नया जोश, हम नई लगन ।।
   मिलकर अपना कदम उठेगा, पथ मंजिल बन जाएगा । भारत का...

4. समता के गीत गुंजाएँगे, ममता की लोरी गाएँगे ।
   हिमगिरि से सागर तट तक, हम एक प्राण हो जाएँगे ।।
   प्रांत-प्रांत का हर बच्चा भारतवासी कहलाएगा । भारत का...

अणुव्रत गीत

नैतिकता की सुरसरिता में
जन जन मन पावन हो
संयम मय जीवन हो -2
अपने से अपना अनुशासन अनुव्रत की परिभाषा -2
वर्ण जाति या सम्प्रदाय से मुक्त धर्म की भाषा
छोटे-छोटे संकल्पों से मानस परिवर्तन हो
संयम मय जीवन हो ....
मैत्री भाव हमारा सबसे प्रतिदिन बढ़ता जाए
समता, सह-अस्तित्व, समन्वय, नीति सफलता पाए -2
शुद्ध साध्य के लिए नियोजित मात्र शुद्ध साधन हो
संयम मय जीवन हो ....
विद्यार्थी या शिक्षक हो मज़दूर और व्यापारी
नर हो नारी, बनें नीतिमय, जीवन चर्या सारी ....
कथनी करनी की समानता में गीतशील चरण हो
संयम मय जीवन हो ....
नैतिकता की सुरसरिता ....

हर देश में तू

हर देश में तू हर भेष में तू,
तेरे नाम अनेक तू एक ही है
तेरी रंगभूमि यह विश्व धरा,
सब खेल में मेल में तू ही तू है।

सागर से उठा बादल बन के
बादल से फूटा जल हो करके।
फिर नहर बना नदिया गहरी।
तेरे भिन्न प्रकार तू एक ही है।।

चींटी से भी अणु परमाणु बना,
सब जीव जगत का रूप लिया।
कहीं पर्वत वृक्ष विशाल बना,
सौन्दर्य तेरा तू एक ही है।।

राष्ट्र-गान

जन-गण-मन अधिनायक जय हे, भारत-भाग्य विधाता ।
पंजाब सिंध, गुजरात मराठा, द्राविड़ उत्कल बंग ।
विंध्य हिमाचल, यमुना गंगा, उच्छल जलधि तरंग ।
तव शुभ नामे जागे, तव शुभ आशीष माँगे ।
गाहे तव जय गाथा ।
जन-गण मंगलदायक जय हे, भारत भाग्य विधाता ।
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, जय-जय-जय-जय हे ।

संगठन सूक्त

ओ३म् संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे, संजानानां उपासते ।।
समानीव: आकूति: समाना हृदयानि व: ।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा व: सुसहासति ।

सारे जहाँ से अच्छा

कवि- प्रो० इकबाल
संगीत- पं० रवि शंकर

सारे जहाँ से अच्छा, हिन्दोस्तां हमारा ।
हम बुलबुलें हैं इसकी, ये गुलिस्तां हमारा ।।

1. पर्वत वो सबसे ऊँचा, हमसाया आसमां का ।
   वो संतरी हमारा, वो पासवाँ हमारा ।।
   सारे ....

2. गोदी में खेलती हैं, जिसकी हजारों नदियाँ ।
   गुलशन है जिसके दम स,रश्के जिना हमारा ।।
   सारे ....

3. मज़हब नहीं सिखाता, आपस में बैर रखना ।
   हिन्दी हैं हम, वतन हैं, हिन्दोस्तां हमारा ।।

राष्ट्र गीत

महान कवि बंकिम चन्द्र चटर्जी के गीत वन्दे मातरम को राष्ट्रीय गीत घोषित कर भारत सरकार ने इसे राष्ट्र गान के बराबर दर्जा दिया है । इसे सर्वप्रथम भारतीय कांग्रेस अधिवेशन में 1896 में गाया गया

वन्दे मातरम् वन्दे मातरम् ।।

सुजलाम् सुफलाम् मलयजशीतलाम् ।
शस्य श्यामलाम्, मातरम् ।
वन्दे मातरम् ....

शुभ्र ज्योत्स्ना पुलकित यामिनीम् ।
फुल्ल कुसुमित द्रुमदल शोभिनीम् ।
सुहासिनीम् सुमधुर भाषिणीम् ।
सुखदाम् वरदाम् मातरम् ।
वन्दे मातरम् ....

गुजराती गीत

कवि- नीलू मजूमदार
संगीत- कानु घोष

1. आकाश गंगा सूर्य चन्द्र तारा,
   संध्या ऊषा कोई ना नथि ।

1. कोनि भूमि कोनि नदी कोनि सागर धारा,
   भेद केवल शब्द आमारा नेतमारा ।

2. एज हास्य, एज रूदन, आश ए निराशा,
   एज मानव ऊर्मि, पण भिन्न भाषा ।

3. मेघधनु अन्दर ना होय कदी जंगो,
   सुन्दरता काज वन्या विविध रंगो ।

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जय जन भारत... *(हिन्दी गीत)*

जय जन भारत जन मन अभिमत जनगण तंत्र विधाता।
जनगण तंत्र विधाता।।

1. गौरव भाल हिमालय उज्ज्वल, हृदय हार गंगा जल
कटि विन्ध्याचल, सिंधु चरणतल, महिमा शाश्वत गाता।।
जय जन भारत ....

2. हरे खेत लहरें नद निर्झर, जीवन शोभा उर्वर
विश्व कर्म रत, कोटि बाहुकर, अगणित पद ध्रुव पथ पर ॥
जय जन भारत ......

3. प्रथम सभ्यता ज्ञाता, साम ध्वनित गुण गाता
जय नव मानवता निर्माता, सत्य अहिंसा दाता
जय हे, जय हे, जय हे, शान्ति अधिष्ठाता ..।।
जय जन भारत ....
जन गण तंत्र विधाता, जन गण तंत्र विधाता ..

सुमित्रा नंदन पंत

समूह गीत

हम होंगे कामयाब-3 एक दिन-ऽऽ
हो हो मन में है विश्वास पूरा है विश्वास
हम होंगे कामयाब एक दिन-ऽऽ

1. होगी शान्ति चारों ओर-3 एक दिन,
हो हो मन में ....
होगी शान्ति ....

2. हम चलेंगे साथ-साथ, डाल हाथों में हाथ
हम चलेंगे साथ एक दिन-ऽऽ
हो हो मन में है विश्वास ....
हम चलेंगे साथ ....

3. नहीं डर किसी का आज
नहीं भय किसी का आज
नहीं डर किसी का आज के दिन-ऽऽ
हो हो मन में ....
नहीं डर किसी ....
हम होंगे ....

संस्कृत गीत सरस्वती वंदना

कवि- डॉ० हरीराम आचार्य
संगीत- सतीश भाटिया

जय जय हे भगवति सुर भारती, तव चरणौ प्रणमामः।
नाद ब्रह्ममयी जय वागेश्वरी, शरणं तव गच्छामः।

1. त्वमसि शरण्या त्रिभुवन धन्या, सुर मुनि वंदित चरणा।
नव रस मधुरा कविता मुखरा, स्मित रुचि रुचिरा भरणा।
जय जय..............

2. आसीना भव मानस हंसे, कुंद तुहिन शशि धवले।
हर जडतां कुरु बुद्धि विकासं, सित पंकज तनु विमले।
जय जय ....

3. ललित कलामयि ज्ञान विभामयि, वीणा पुस्तक धारिणी।
मतिरस्ताम् नो तव पद कमले, अयि कुंठा विष हारिणी।।
जय जय ....

बंगाली गीत

धौनो धान्ये पुष्पे भौरा आमादेर एई वोशुन्धौरा।
ताहार माझे आछे देश ऐक शौकोल देशेरशेरा।
ओजे शौप्नो दिये तोईरी शेजे
श्रृति दिये घेरा।

ऐमोन देशटि कोथाय खुजे पाबेनाको तुमि।
ओजे शौकोल देशेर रानी शेजे
आमार जौन्मोभूमि, शेजे आमार जौन्मोभूमि।
चौन्द्रो शुर्जो ग्रहो तारा कोथाय ऐमोन उजौल धारा।
कोथाय ऐमोन खेले तोड़ित ऐमोन कालो मेघे।
तारा पाखीर डाके घुमिये पौड़े पाखीर डाकें जेंगे।
ऐमोन देशटि।

ऐतो सिनग्धो नोदि काहार कोथाय ऐमोन शुभ्रो पहाड़।
कोथाय ऐमोन होरित खेत्रो आकाश तौले मेशे।
ऐमोन धानेर ओपोर ढेऊँ खेले जाय बाताश काहार देशे
ऐमोन देशटि।

पुष्पे-पुष्पे भौरा शाखी कुँजे-कुँजे गाहे पाखी।
गुँजोरिया आछे ओलि पुँजे-पुँजे धेये।
तारा फूलेर ओपोर धुमिये पौड़े फूलेर मोधु खेये।
ऐमोन देशटि।

भायेर भायेर ऐतौ स्नेहो कोथाय गेले पाने केहो।
ओमा तोमार चौरोन दुटि बोक्खे आमार धोरि।
आमार एई देशेते जौन्मो जैनो एई देशेतेई मोरि।
एमोन देशटि।

मलयालम गीत

कवि– पी० भास्करण
संगीत– एम० बी० श्रीनिवासन

जन्मकारिणी भारतम्-कर्म मेदिनी भारतम
नन्मलाम जनकोडितम अम्मयागिय भारतम।
जन्मकारिणी ....
तलइल मन्यणि मामल चूड़िय तंगकिरीडवुम,
उड़लिल स्स्य श्यामल शाद्बल कोमल कन्युगवुम।
कलुत्तिल नाना नदिगल चात्तय पोन्मणि मालगलुम,
काणुग-काणुग जन्म भुविन कोमल मलरमेनी।
जन्मकारिणी ....
नाना भाषगलमृतम पोलीयुम नावुम पुंजिरियम,
नाना देशक्कररडे नाना वेशतिन्नेलिम।
वीरपुरादन संस्कारत्तिन वेराइ्म मण्णुम
पारिल शांति वलत्तुम वृत्तियुम अम्मदन नेट्टम।
जन्मकारिणी ....

तेलेगु गीत

कवि–डॉ० दशरथी,
संगीत–एम० बी० श्रीनिवासन

पिल्लारा-पापल्लारा, रेपटि भारत पौरूल्लारा
पेद्दलके ओक दारिनी चूपे, पिन्नल्लारा पिल्लल्लारा
1. मी कन्नुल्लो पुन्नमि जाबिलि उन्नाड-उन्नाडु
   पौयुन्नाडु।
मी मनसुल्लो देवुडु उन्नाडु-उन्नाडु अंतउन्नाडु
भारत मातुक मुद्दुल पापलु-मीरेले, मीरेलेमीरेले
अम्मकु मीपे अन्तेलेनि प्रेमेले-
पिल्लारा – पापल्लारा ....
2. भारत देशम ओकटे इल्लु भारत मातुक (मीरे
   कल्ल)
जातिपताकुम पैकेमरेसि जाति गौरवम कापाडडि।
बडिलो बयट्टा अन्ता कलिसि, भारतीयुलै मेलगडि।
कन्याकुमारिकी कास्मीरानिकी अन्योन्यतनु पेन्यंडि-
पिल्लल्लारा – पापल्लारा ....

We shall overcome, we shall overcome,
We shall overcome some day
Oh – O deep in our hearts, we do believe that
We shall overcome some day.
We shall live in peace, we shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace some day
Oh – O deep in our hearts, we do believe that
We shall live in peace, some day.
We'll walk hand in hand, we'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand some day.
Oh – O deep in our hearts, we do believe that
We'll walk hand in hand, some day.
We are not afraid, we are not afraid,
We are not afraid today,
Oh – O deep in our hearts we do believe that
We shall overcome someday

ANNEXURE V

Sample Questions and Answers from a Guidebook for the chapter Understanding Marginalization (SPL III)

Q1. List two reasons why Adivasis are becoming increasingly marginalised.

Ans. (i) Adivasis love to lead their life in their own way, without any interference from the other.

(ii) They usually resist changes or new ideas.

Q2. Imagine that you are watching the Republic Day Parade on TV with a friend and she remarks "Look at these tribals. They look so exotic. And they seem to be dancing all the time". List three things you would tell her about the lives of Adivasi*s* in India.

Ans. Three things about the lives of Adivasis in India.

 (i) They love to wear colourful dresses.
 (ii) They are very close to forests.
 (iii) They have their own languages, Santhali is one of them.

Samples of Students Work as given by the Researcher

Ipshita Pradhan
VIII - 'C'

.I am Ipshita Pradhan. I belong to a Adivasi Community. I am 13 yrs old. I live in Vasant Vihar, Delhi. We I came to Delhi 6 yrs ago with my brother and parents. My father used to work as a farmer when we used to live in village. My mother used to go to forest everyday for cutting trees for wood and bushes for selling as medines. Me and my elder brother used to go to village school and helped our parents at home.

Now, as we have come to Delhi, my father f works as a Govt. employee as he is a little educated and my mother runs a small hotel. Me and my brother go to school but sometimes we face difficulties as students in our class sometimes teases us as we know a little English and Hindi. as we have studied in a Hindi - medium school.

But, Yes now, my father gets enough money to run our livelihood and we are trying to learn English and adjust with our other classmates.

Earlier we used
to lead our lives
in forests.

Now we are developing
coming to cities for
work and getting
educated.

Kshitij Kumar
VIII-B

I am a Adivasi boy. I ~~belong to~~ live ~~near~~ in forest in Rajasthan. at Jaipur. I live in a ~~small slum~~ cave with my parents. ~~We have~~ ~~a small plot~~ We have ~~our~~ land of about 2 acre ~~of our~~ which are of our foreyfathers. We ~~eat~~ fruits by gathering from the forests. ~~My father generally~~ We generally worship our land. My father and mother makes dresses for dancing. We generally ~~days~~ invited on the occasion of Independence Day for dancing.

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ANNEXURE VII

Questionnaires for Interview

A. *FOR STUDENTS: READING TEXTBOOKS/DISCIPLINE/ASSEMBLY*

- How are the chapters taught in class?

- How do you study from the textbook?

- Do you read the entire chapter on your own?

- Do you find the chapters interesting?

- Do you face any difficulties while reading the chapters?

- What do you think are the problems in the chapters?

- Does the glossary help you understand the chapters better?

- Do the stories help you understand the content of the chapters?

- How do you strategize to study before examinations?

- While studying for examinations, do you try to understand the content or just try do memorize answers?

- Do you take external help like guidebooks/tuition/internet/other textbooks/books?

- What helps you score better in examinations?

- What do you think about the discipline in your school? Is there a lot of discipline in your school?

- Do you think children need to be strictly disciplined?

- What do you think about the school uniform? Is it important? Is the school strict about the way you dress?

- What do you feel about the assembly? How important is it?

- Does the school celebrate festivals? Which festivals are celebrated and how?

- What do you think of the punishment system in your school?

B. FOR STUDENTS: UNBERSTANDING OF TEXTBOOK

- What is marginalization?

- The textbook talks about two communities, Adivasis and Muslims. Why do you think they are regarded as marginalized?

- What are some of the stereotypes associated with the Adivasis/Muslims?

- Do you think the stereotypes about Muslims and Adivasis are true?

- How have the Adivasis contributed to our culture?

- How is their society different from ours?

- What are the pros and cons of a society like that of the Adivasis?

- What do you think about the development policies of the State? What do you feel about the displacement of Adivasis?

- What do you think the State needs to do when they displace the Adivasis?

- Why are the Muslims regarded as a minority community?

- Why are they considered a marginalized community?

- Why are the Dalits considered as a marginalized community?

- What do you think of the reservation policy?

C. FOR TEACHERS: UNBERSTANDING OF TEXTBOOK/QUALITY OF TEXTBOOK/TEACHING

- Why do you think communities like the Muslims and Adivasis are regarded as marginalized?

- Do you think the stereotypes about these marginalized communities are actually true?

- What does the textbook say about the lifestyle of the Adivasis?

- What does the textbook say about the social structure of the Adivasis? Do they have a caste-system?

- One section in the chapter talks about the cultural heritage of the Adivasis in language and religion. Explain. Did they have any contribution to dominant languages and religion?

- What do you think about the development policies of the Indian State? How did it impact the Adivasis?

- How long have you been teaching for?

- What do you think of these new textbooks?

- Do you face any difficulty while using these textbooks?

- How do you prepare yourself to teach these chapters in class?

- Do you think the students face any difficulty while using these textbooks?

- Tell me about teacher – training. Do you remember attending any training workshop when the textbooks were introduced? Your experience about that.

- In-service training: How often do you attend such workshops? Do you find them useful in teaching these textbooks?

- Do you use guidebooks for your classes?

D. FOR MEMBERS OF TEXTBOOK WRITING COMMITTEE

- How were the textbooks (Social and Political Life series) conceptualized and written? Explain the process.

- Who were some of the people involved?

- To what extent were the developed text material field-tested in real classrooms?

- Was it possible to incorporate such feedback into the textbook writing process?

- What do you think of the language of the textbooks? Do you think it has been pitched at the appropriate level?

- What was the involvement of teachers in the textbook development process?

- The textbook consists of abstract concepts like marginalization and sometimes such concepts are not provided with definitions. Do you feel this can lead to difficulty in understanding among the students?

- Were you involved in the initial and in-service training of teachers in relation to these textbooks? Please share your experiences.