EDUCATION, DIFFERENTIATION AND DISTINCTION AMONG THE URBAN POOR: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF A SLUM IN DELHI

Thesis submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Sriti Ganguly

Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies

School of Social Sciences

Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi-110067

2020

ZAKIR HUSAIN CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL STUDIES
UGC-CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDY (CAS)
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067

Declaration

December 30, 2020

I, Sriti Ganguly, declare that this thesis entitled, *Education, Differentiation and Distinction among the Urban Poor: A Sociological Study of a Slum in Delhi*, submitted by me in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University, is my bonafide work. I further declare that this thesis has not been submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.

Sriti Ganguly

Certificate

We recommend that this thesis be placed before the examiner(s) for evaluation and award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Prof. S. Srinivasa Rao
Chairperson, ZHCES

Prof. S. Srinivasa Rao
Chairperson

Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067

Prof. S. Srinivasa Rao
Supervisor

Dr. S. SRINIVASA RAO

Professor
Zakir Husain Centre fo Educational Studies
School of Social Scienc›s
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067

Acknowledgements

When the pandemic arrived in February 2020 in India, 4 months before my scheduled submission, doubts crept in my mind about the completion of this thesis. My University shutdown announcing “till further notice” and an atmosphere of uncertainty loomed all over the world. However, here I am, writing the acknowledgement for an almost finished thesis, ready for submission. I choose to call it ‘almost finished’ because there is so much more I feel I could have done to enhance it. But then a research enterprise is perhaps never complete. But in anxious and uncertain times that the whole of humanity is faced with in the year 2020, one thing that has kept me motivated is my mother’s desire to have this thesis submitted. While I have received love and support from every person I am close to, it is my mother’s heartfelt desire that has always pushed me even in moments of biggest doubts and disillusionment. As this long and grueling journey comes to fruition and my studentship ends (at least formally), I must say that I will remain forever indebted to ma and baba and to my brother as well for supporting my education at every stage and in every way they could. Without them I would not be here writing an acknowledgement for a PhD thesis.

I would also like to sincerely thank Prof. S. Srinivasa Rao for the unflinching support, guidance and friendship he has offered to me during my eight years in JNU. Without his deep engagement with my topics, whether at the level of MPhil or PhD, the research and writing I have undertaken would not have been a fruitful and enriching journey. Sir has not only worked with me on my thesis and dissertation but also constantly motivated me to present and publish my work. Sir’s astute observations, insights and meticulous feedback has also helped me emerge as a better writer.

I would like to also thank my respondents from Govindpuri who gave their invaluable time to make this work possible. I hope I have been able to retain their voice and agency in telling the stories about their lives and aspirations. This pandemic may have changed the lives of many of my respondents who were already in precarious situations and changed in ways I, as a person with many privileges, can only imagine and make an attempt to understand, though never fully.

It was difficult for me to write in the final stages of work, sitting at home, isolated and distant from my colleagues and my university. I could not access the library at a stage when I needed it the most. But I would like to thank my in-laws and Manprit for giving me space, physical and emotional support, wholeheartedly, to be able to write in a peaceful atmosphere. They helped me survive the most challenging times of lockdown and a long period of home confinement. Manprit's endless humour, love and optimism has kept me going in these last few years and I thank him for bearing with me.

Zakir Husain Centre and all my professors will always remain close to my heart. Prof. Geetha Nambissan has always given thought-provoking suggestions that have enriched this thesis. I made some wonderful friends during my term in JNU and the charchas and debates with them over chai helped me grow in many ways- Sundaresha, Smriti, Aparna, Bianca, Meghna. They have stood by me in all good and tough times.

Lastly, as my journey with this wonderful institution ends, I believe I have spent some of the most memorable times on this beautiful and serene campus that has offered solitude and freedom to muse, contemplate and admire beauty and allowed me *to be me*. And, perhaps, JNU was the only place that offered unlimited supply of chai to a tea lover like me for a meager INR 5 per cup and I am going to dearly miss this privilege.

Sriti Ganguly

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

List of Maps, Tables and Figures

Chapter 1 Introduction……………………………………………………………………1-30

Chapter 2 Theoretical Underpinnings, Methodology and Reflections from the Field…31-55

Chapter 3 Production of a Cluster of Urban Poverty: Govindpuri in South Delhi…….56-100

Chapter 4 Education, Work and Income: Descriptive Profile of Sample Households…101-131

Chapter 5 Education as a Site of Difference: Aspirations and Choices……………132-165

Chapter 6 Educated Poor and the Pursuit of Distinction…………………………..166-199

Chapter 7 Gendered Nature of Distinction: Mothering and Education of Children in the Urban Poor Neighbourhood……………………………………………200-222

Chapter 8 Summary and Conclusion: Does Education Matter in Understanding Difference and Distinction among the Poor?...223-242

Annexure I

List of Abbreviations

AAP	Aam Aadmi Party
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CGDR	Centre for Global Development Research
DDA	Delhi Development Authority
DUSIB	Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board
EWS	Economically Weaker Section
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Organization
JJC	Jhuggi Jhopri Cluster
MBA	Masters in Business Administration
MCA	Master in Computer Application
MCD	Municipal Corporation of Delhi
MLM	Multi level Marketing
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NCR	National Capital Region
NCT	National Capital Territory
NDMC	New Delhi Municipal Corporation
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OBC	Other Backward Classes(castes)
RTE	Right to Education
RTI	Right to Information
RWA	Residents Welfare Association
SC	Scheduled Caste
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
ST	Scheduled Tribe
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Maps, Tables and Pictures

Maps and Charts

Map 1.1 Distribution of Slum Population in Delhi

Map 2.1 Location and Size of JJ clusters in Delhi

Map 3.1 Map showing the camps and surrounding markets, localities and landmarks (developed by the researcher)

Chart 3.1 Places of Origin of Settlers

Tables

Table 2.1. Number of JJ Clusters in Delhi

Table 3.1 Social Composition of the Clusters

Table 3.2. Distribution of Below Poverty Line Households in the Cluster

Table 3.3. Places of Origin

Table 3.4 . Reasons for Migration

Table 4.1. Educational Level of Parents in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru camp

Table 4.2. Comparative Educational Levels of Parents in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru

Table 4.3. Cross Classification of Occupation and Education of Fathers

Table 4.4. Cluster wise Economic Activities of Fathers

Table 4.5. Broad Classification of Economic Activities of Fathers

Table 4.6. Cross Classification of Economic Activities with Educational Levels of Mothers

Table 4.7. Activities of mothers in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru camp

Table 4.8. Broad Classification of Activities of Mothers

Table 5.1 Schools by Management around the Govindpuri JJ Cluster

Table 5.2 Private Unaided Schools around the Govindpuri JJ Cluster

Table 5.3. Schools accessed by the parents in the Govindpuri JJ Cluster

Table 5.4. Recognition Status and Fee Charged by the Private Schools

Figures

Figure 3.1 Guru Ravidas Marg

Figure 3.2 Shops selling tarpaulin sheets in Navjeevan Camp

Figure 3.3 A single room household of three members in present day Govindpuri

Figure 3.4 Satellite image showing location of the camps and the areas around it

Figure 3.5 Satellite image of the in-situ rehabilitation site and the newly constructed complex

Figure 5.1. An image of an unrecognized private school

Figure 5.2 Nirankari Public School (Reproduced from the school's official website)

Figure 6.1 and 6.2 Book shelves in a respondent’s house

Figure 6.3 Floor tiles in one of the households

Figure 6.4 Bureau and an upholstered Sofa

Figure 6.5 Timetable for children in one household

Figure 7.1 Mothers with their school children in the afternoon

Chapter 1

Introduction

The preamble to the India Habitat National Report published in 2016 emphasizes upon the role of urbanization and cities in bringing socio-economic transformation, reiterates its commitment to achieve urban equity and eradicate poverty and promote "inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all; productivity, competitiveness, diversification and innovation; and urban resilience" (India Habitat Report, 2016, p.19). Although the Report is titled *India Habitat Report*, urban India remains its primary focus. According to this Report, 171 million people were added to India's urban spaces between 1996 and 2015. The United Nations (2014) estimates that much of the population increase in India between 2015 and 2030 will take place in urban areas during which 164 million people will be added to its urban base. Further, in the decade 2001-11, the number of towns and cities increased from 5161 to 7933 and the urban population increased from 286.1 million to 377.1 million making it 31 percent of the total population of the country.

Further, the India Habitat Report (2016) adds that between 2004-05 and 2011-12, India has "lifted over 15 million persons out of poverty in the urban areas" (p.19) and the slum population has dipped to 17.4 per cent from 2001 to 2011. The urban poverty levels are said to have decreased from 25.7 per cent in 2004–05 to about 13.7 per cent in 2011–12. While the Report celebrates the idea that increasing urbanization is linked to economic growth as 60% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) contribution comes from the 31 percent urban population[1], it also acknowledges the linkage of poverty and urbanization.

However, whether high economic growth leads to reduction in urban poverty is a highly contested subject among scholars. Similarly, the number of poor and measurement of poverty also remains a debatable issue. Therefore, interest of our study, did not lie in the debates around measurement or definition of poverty but in a sociological understanding of how internally

[1] Urban is not restricted to cities alone but includes towns and newly emerging urban centres also.

differentiated the poor as a category is and how education acts as a marker of such differentiation within what is often construed as a monolith category in the policy or popular parlance.

Urban poverty has received considerable attention from economists, geographers, sociologists, development experts and political scientists who have covered a wide range of issues including access to services such as shelter, water, sanitation, electricity, roads as lack of access to these often become defining characteristics of the poor. Several studies have also dealt with aspects of 'legal' and 'illegal' status of spaces occupied by the urban poor and related issues of evictions and resettlement. Lemanski and Marx (2015) point out that urban poverty in the cities of the Global South particularly, started gaining attention in the late 1980s and early 1990s. There are certain factors, according to them, that led to this growth of interest, such as recognition of the fact that economic growth was not leading to reduction in poverty and that there was a visible movement of people from rural to urban and it was not certain whether poverty was due to movement of poor people to cities or the cities were leading to impoverishment (Lemanski and Marx, 2015).

However, despite of having a large volume of work, the heterogeneous nature of the poor still remains under-researched. Scholars have pointed out that the category of urban poor is not a homogeneous one and there is considerable heterogeneity arising from multiple identities, ways of life, aspirations, decision making and overall worldviews[2] (Salcedo and Rasse, 2012; Small and Newman, 2001; Yatzimirsky, 2013). Similarly, Gans (1968) points out: "Despite a middle-class inclination on the part of researchers to view the poor as homogeneous, all available studies indicate that there is as much variety among them as among the affluent. Some have been poor for generations, others are poor only periodically; some are downwardly mobile; others are upwardly mobile" (p.206). Salcedo and Rasse (2012) argue that while literature acknowledges heterogeneity of the poor, *"there have been very few attempts at generating descriptions of the multiple cultures that coexist in poor neighbourhoods*" (p.96, emphasis added). Moreover, "Poor neighbourhoods are culturally heterogeneous, and so they also contain a heterogeneous array of behaviours and outcomes" (Small, Harding and Lamont, 2010, p.10).

[2] In the United States, one of the central debates around urban poverty is: whether similar structural conditions produce a homogeneous culture or whether difference or subcultures can be found (Salcedo and Rasse, 2012).

In India, the spaces with highest concentration of urban poor such as the slums and squatter settlements, or in policy terms '*Jhuggi Jhopri* (JJ) Clusters', are inhabited by a socially, economically and educationally diverse group of population. Based on an ethnographic study in a squatter settlement in Delhi, Haider (2000) writes that while they may be apparently segregated from the non-poor on the basis of wealth, the socio-spatial pattern within the settlement show that each, "cluster is split into ghettos: regional ghettos and within these, caste ghettos and within these, kinship ghettos. There is, therefore, segregation within segregation" (p.44). Similarly, Dharavi, labelled as the "largest slum" in the city of Mumbai with an "overwhelming" Dalit population shows a pattern of segregation along caste, religious and regional lines (Nijman, 2009). Saglio-Yatzimirsky (2013) corroborates this by pointing out how the heterogeneous character of Dharavi is reflected in its differentiation by economic and social classes and "diverse dynamics of social mobility" (p.9)[3]. Further, Saglio-Yatzimirsky (2013) also makes a significant point which prompted us to look into education as a differentiating marker of urban poor. According to her, "urban values" and "new status-related dynamics based on money and education" (p.215) has led to the emergence of small middle class among leather workers, albeit a minority. These lines resonates with our study as we found a small section of what we call an emerging middle class trying to differentiate and distinguish themselves based on their educated status and its associated lifestyle and practices. Their claims to distinction were based on economic and cultural capital and they were always strategizing to convert one into another.

Although the spaces of urban poverty often emerge as poor migrants are attracted to the cities in search for better opportunities for livelihood and this may be one of the primary reasons, cities are also equated with opportunities for schooling and education as the notion of 'city-bred' is associated with being 'better educated' or what in Weberian terms may be called 'cultivated'. Education, therefore, might provide one of the ways to redefine oneself, especially among socially marginalized groups that are overrepresented in slums and squatters of India, namely,

[3] She also highlights the construction of identities and status considerations among the different communities that inhabit this slum space which is now a valuable land for real estate developers. The attempts of status redefinition and assertions often get translated into change of surnames, "myths of origin, codes of conduct and specific cultural practices" (Saglio-Yatzimirsky, 2013, p.9). The status claims of superiority vis-à-vis the inferiority of others among these communities is based upon traditional caste-based statuses, nature of occupation, ownership of trade/business and so on.

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Muslims[4]. An important question that Saglio-Yatzimirsky (2013) raises in her book and becomes relevant in the context of the present study as well is: “how does the redefinition of the migrants’ identities work in the new urban context” (p.89)? Our study goes a step further to identify what role education plays in redefinition of identities.

In this backdrop, the study set out with the objective to situate and capture the multitude of lifestyles, aspirations and strategies to negotiate with poverty and the centrality of education in such negotiations. We aimed to explore the meanings attributed to education and different notions of what it means to be ‘educated’ and ‘uneducated’ in a poor neighbourhood and how such notions create differentiation and distinction among the poor? What kinds of boundaries are erected - symbolic, spatial or material - to maintain distinction and difference? Does education play a role for certain families to create symbolic difference from other families, say, for example, in terms of choice of schools, lifestyles or possession of material goods? Therefore, the varying choices and lifestyles help in understanding the variations within the poor as a category. The urban space or more specifically, the city remains the backdrop against which these aspects are discussed.

Lifestyles, tastes and dispositions were identified by Pierre Bourdieu (1984) as markers of class difference and distinctions[5]. Bourdieu, however, focuses his analysis more on studying the difference the middle and working class and the fractions within the middle class. Therefore, the differentiation that can exist within the working class is left unexplored. This is where our study tries to find its relevance.

I. Unpacking the terms: ‘Poverty’ and ‘Poor’

The definition of poverty is fraught with complexities. Broadly, poverty definitions include two types: absolute poverty and relative poverty where the former relies on a minimum subsistence criterion, the latter looks at poverty in relation to the standard of living of the whole society.

[4] D’Souza (1979) argues that if the ecological structure of the city is taken as a representation of the social structure, then the slums house the most socially and culturally marginal groups. This explains the concentration of Dalits (both Hindus and Muslims) in the slum areas. This also explains the pace of integration of the slum dwellers with the other social groups in the city. The non-Dalits or higher castes among the poor take less time to exit and get integrated as compared to the Dalits.

[5] It is important to mention that Bourdieu differs from Weber in the sense that the former stressed that “classes always appear as status groups” (Gartman, 1991, p.423)

People can also be either in a temporary state of 'transient' poverty or 'chronic' poverty that persists for a long time[6].

However, most scholars now agree that a universal definition of poverty is not possible and setting uniform criteria for definition is contentious. Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2014) point out that a narrow definition of poverty shapes the responses to it. "Inappropriate definitions and measurements", they argue, lead to "underestimation of poverty" (p.2). For example, less than 1 per cent of the urban population of China, the Middle East and North Africa, and East Europe and Central Asia, according to Mitlin and Satterthwaite, came to be defined as poor under the international criterion of dollar-a-day poverty line (ibid.). Similarly, Guruswamy and Abraham (2006) argue that many urban dwellers not falling under the definition of poor as set by poverty lines continue to live in inhospitable housing, lack health and sanitation and are disease ridden or are at its risk. They argue that once this definition is expanded to go beyond the minimum calorie intake and includes access to basic services a larger population will come under the ambit of the new definition[7].

Lemanski (2016) reviews the changing definitions and approach to understanding poverty in the last 50 years. The approach has evolved from its emphasis on economic deficiency in 1960s and 1970s to basic needs in 1970s and 1980s. The multi-dimensionality of poverty and recognizing the voices of poor approach has been dominant since the 1990s. In 1997, Amartya Sen's "capability approach" to poverty was adopted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Human Development Index or Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) was formulated (later renaming of HDI). MPI bases its measure of deprivation on three criteria: health (child mortality and nutrition), education (years of schooling and school enrolments), and living standards (access to water, sanitation, electricity, type of cooking fuel, housing floor, and number of assets owned).

While the debates around indicators of poverty remain important to reveal the existing disparities, count the number of poor and address poverty, they do not fall within the purview of

[6] The "chronically poor" are defined as those who have "experienced poverty for a period of five years, given that this is a significant period of time in an individual's lifecourse" (Hulme and Shepherd cited in Rose and Dyer, 2008, 8).
[7] They argue that this line based on caloric norm excludes the "other essentials of life" such as nutritious diet, drinking water, shelter and sanitation, essential clothing and education (p.5).

this study as they offer little insight into the diversity and heterogeneity of this group labelled as 'poor'. However, before delving into the sociological perspectives on the poor it is important to discuss briefly some characteristics of urban poverty laid out by scholars.

Characteristics of Poverty and Poor

Wratten (1995) gave four characteristics of urban poverty: 1) "environmental and health risks" owing to proximity to hazardous industries, congestion, lack of urban services 2) "vulnerability arising from commercial exchange" 3) "social diversity, fragmentation and crime" as social ties characteristic of rural life weaken and lack of family stability 4) "vulnerability arising from the intervention of the state and police" (Wratten 1995 cited in Lemanski and Marx, 2015, p. 4). These characteristics list aspects which are distinctly urban in nature such as the diminishing ties of solidarity and fragmentation assumed to be characterizing the urban milieu. However, the Indian experience shows that largely the poor living in urban settlements organize themselves along caste and kinship line and derive social, emotional and economic support from their caste and kin networks. When migrants step into the city these affiliations help most of them to find shelter and basic support till the time they gain some foothold in the urban space.

Satterthwaite (2015) also provides eight features of urban poverty and life of the urban poor: "inadequate income", "inadequate, unstable risky asset base", "inadequate shelter", "inadequate provision of 'public' infrastructure", "inadequate provision for basic services limited or no safety net", "inadequate protection of poor groups" "poorer groups voicelessness and powerlessness" and lastly, "high prices paid for many necessities" (p.5). While these definitions mostly focus on inadequacies of wealth and material needs, sociological perspectives delve into cultures, norms, expectations and aspirations of the poor. These perspectives also concern themselves with understanding poverty and the poor with respect to the class and status stratification. For example, Rossi and Blum (1968) offer a list of some of the essential characteristics of the poor based on the review of qualitative studies. These features are broadly based on the lines of "labour force participation, occupational participation, family and interpersonal relations, community characteristics, relationship to larger society, value orientations" (p.39)[8]. In terms of

[8] The list includes 1) long periods of unemployment or irregular nature of employment 2) employed persons hold jobs at the "lowest levels of skills, for example, domestic service, unskilled labour, menial service jobs and farm labour" 3) unstable marital relationships involving divorce, desertion and separation and large number of female headed households.

relationship to the larger society it is said that the poor are to some extent alienated from it and there prevails a “sense of helplessness”, “low need achievement” and “low levels of aspirations for the self” (ibid). Some of these perspectives and their limitations have been discussed in greater detail in the next section.

II. Sociological Perspectives on Poverty and Poor

There is lot of ambiguity in the nomenclature used to refer to the group at the bottom of the societal class hierarchy. One comes across several terms in the literature such as “poor”, “low-income” and “lower-class”, some of these being used interchangeably at times. Some other terms that add to the confusion are ‘working poor’ and ‘working class’. Working class[9] is broadly defined as a class that sells its labour power, particularly physical labour power. It constitutes largely the manual or blue-collar workers and can be further distinguished on the basis of skills into skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour. They can also be differentiated into categories such as: 1) those who are in low-income, formal sector jobs and also a part of unions and 2) those who are employed in insecure, low-paying jobs.

In sociological parlance, particularly in the Weberian scheme of class stratification, the poor or “paupers” fall in the category of negatively privileged, propertied class or propertyless (Gerth and Mills, 1948). Property or lack of property, as per Weber, was the basis of all class situations. Weber offered a classification of three types of classes- 1) property class based on ownership and differences of property, 2) commercial class based on marketability of goods and services and 3) social classes which constitutes a totality of class situations within which mobility is possible.

The category of the poor is mostly defined by what is ‘lacking’ or ‘deficient’. Coser (1965), for instance, argues that the poor are stigmatized and degraded the moment the society defines them as ‘poor’, by their lack of something and in need of assistance just as a mental patient is stigmatized when defined a mental patient. The act of giving aid or assistance to the poor is an asymmetrical relationship or “unilateral relationship of dependence” as the poor is not able to reciprocate or contribute to society which, however, is a highly questionable argument. Now most scholars recognize how much the urban poor contribute to the city’s economy and the language has shifted from dependence to recognition of inter-dependence. However, the

[9] This definition is based on Sage Dictionary of Sociology (2006)

definition based on deficiency, often judged from the standards of middle class or non-poor lifestyle, found expression in the early works of many scholars.

Charles Stokes (1962), for instance, defined the poor on the lines of ability. In his theorization of two types of slums - slums of hope and slums of despair - he distinguished between the characteristics of these two spaces and their inhabitants. Slums of hope, according to him, are inhabited by those migrants or what he calls "strangers" who come to the city in search of work and are not yet fully integrated with the city life and social groups. The slums of despair, on the other hand, are home to the poor who do not meet a minimum ability or income standard set by the city. While the former may gradually disappear with rise in economic growth and level of integration, slums of despair remain. "The poor are not integrated because of an ability barrier which tends to separate the city populace into those who will be fully utilized in the economic and social life of the city and those who will not be regarded as being of the required level of social development" (Stokes, 1962, p. 188). This again defines the poor in a language of deficiency rather than looking at poverty as a larger problem of structural inequality. Who sets and how one sets this "required level" are questions worth asking.

a. *The culture and structure debate*

One of the most discussed as well as contested conceptual understanding of poverty in anthropology and sociology is Oscar Lewis' (1968) 'culture of poverty'. Lewis (1968), based on his study of Latin American slums, offered a thesis which not only describes the characteristics of the poor in slums but also how the internalization of these traits reproduces poverty or makes it difficult to escape it. He defined "culture of poverty" as a "subculture of Western society' or a 'way of life' which has its own 'structure and rationale' that is passed on from generation to generation" (Lewis, 1968, p.187). The "culture of poverty", according to him, looks beyond poverty as a deprivation or disorganization, but "something positive" that helps the poor to cope with their existential situation. He further added that it transcends rural-urban as well as national boundaries, for example, what is typically believed to be attributes in African-American ghettos

of United States (such as women headed households) emerging from their history of slavery were also found in San Juan, Mexico[10].

A crucial element of culture of poverty identified by him was the "disengagement and non-integration" of the poor with the societal institutions. He pointed out some seventy interconnected "social, economic and psychological traits" discernable in this culture or way of life. Among other traits of the poor, "fatalism", "low levels of aspiration", "helplessness", "dependence" and "inferiority" were listed as some important attributes found in such individuals who are socialized in this kind of subculture. It is thus by way of socialization this culture reproduces or "perpetuates" itself with each subsequent generation.

It was also stressed by Lewis (1968) that there are certain conditions under which the culture of poverty emerges such as in a "class stratified, highly individuated, capitalistic society" (p.188). In the context of India, Lewis (1968) himself noted that due to the presence of caste and clan system this sort of culture may not emerge. In a study of a slum (Peta) in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, Rao et al (1991) support this with their findings. The authors dispute the common perception that slum communities are disorganized. They write: "in its essential characteristics the area is somewhat like a large village with its own socio-economic and political set-up and at the same time closely interlinked with the wider social organisation and culture of the city (Rao et. al., 1991, p.319). Weibe (1975) in his study of a slum in Chennai reported similar findings that the residents were well organized, connected to the local life outside the slum and affiliated to political parties.

Therefore, the concept of 'culture of poverty' and the attributes of the poor which prevents them from taking advantage of a changing situation have faced criticism from many scholars later. Rossi and Blum (1968), for example, cast doubt over the intergenerational transmission of culture of poverty and argue that "some poverty is 'inherited', but life chances are reshuffled sufficiently in each generation to allow a large proportion of the children of the poor to move out" (p.43). Secondly, they also point out that Lewis' definition is not clear about whether the poor show more of those characteristics that are listed as one goes down the stratification system

[10] Lewis contends that what is believed to distinctive of African American life and is attributed to their history of slavery are actually characteristics of culture of poverty which can be found in other communities as well.

("greatest difference model") or they are the only ones who display such characteristics ("only difference model").

The authors argue that the culture of poverty is perhaps an explanation of how poverty or difference is maintained rather than how it is generated for the answer to the latter question lies in the larger stratification system. Therefore, they focus their discussion on understanding how the poor are different from the non-poor and why they are different. The usage of "how" reflects that the authors are speaking of a degree of difference rather than polar oppositions, which is why they argue that "the poor are different, but the difference appears mainly to be a matter of degree rather than of kind"[11] (Rossi and Blum 1968: 39). However, their discussion too is limited to point out differences between the poor and non-poor where the former is treated as a homogenous category and internal differences within it are not discussed.

Gans (1968) argues that most of the studies on poverty are dominated by a perspective that is middle and upper class (as a large number of researchers belong to these classes) in nature and often ends up pathologizing, criminalizing or passing a moral judgement on the poor. He critiques the cultural explanation arguing that it blames the poor for their inability to escape poverty rather than look at the 'affluent culture and ways of life' that constrain the poor. Gans tries to introduce an alternative perspective for the researchers on poverty: "to look at the poor as an economically and politically deprived population whose behaviour, values - and pathologies - are adaptations to their existential situation, just as the behaviour, values, pathologies of the affluent are adaptations to their existential situation" (1968, p.205).

Although several other scholars have criticized Lewis for "blaming the victim", a careful reading reveals that the latter does mention that a culture of poverty can be found among the poor in societies where there is existence in the dominant class of a set of values…that explains low economic status as the result of personal inadequacies or inferiority (Lewis, 1968, p.188). Harvey and Reed (1996) review criticisms levelled against Lewis (1968) and place them in the ideological and political context of its time. They revisit and emphasize on some of the useful insights given by Lewis, challenging criticisms such as "blaming the victim" by arguing that "the

[11] For an explanation of how difference in socio-economic status and resultant behaviour is generated they look at three broad processes- the basic socio-economic status levels, reaction to these differences and the processes that maintain socio-economic differences.

poor did more than passively adapt to a pre-established social niche, they constructed collective responses to it and shaped poverty's life space so as to ease the pain of living poor" (p.482). Nevertheless, Lewis' proposition ends up homogenizing the poor and does not look at the multiplicity of cultures that can exist among the poor.

One of the persistent debates on poverty and poor has been then, whether the poor subscribe to "mainstream" culture or common values of the society or they have a subculture of their own. At a broader level, it is a debate about, as Rodman (1963) discusses, whether there is a "common value system" or "class differentiated value system". He tries to resolve this dichotomy with his concept of "lower class value-stretch" .i.e. "the lower-class person, without abandoning the general values of the society[12], develops an alternative set of values" (Rodman, 1963, p.209). These additional set of values help them to adjust with their existential circumstances or to avoid getting frustrated with the unattainability of these goals.

Valentine (1968) also tries to resolve this debate by formulating three models, based on a review of existing literature, which attempts to describe poverty and the poor. The first model, "self-perpetuating sub-society with a defective, unhealthy subculture", according to him, is very similar to the thesis of culture of poverty proposed by Lewis and other studies that validate it. The second model is "externally oppressed sub-society with an imposed, exploited subculture" that locates poverty in the unequal structure of the whole society where poverty is maintained in the interest of the privileged groups (Valentine, 1968, p. 167). While the first model calls for "directed culture change through social work, psychiatry, and education" (ibid), the second model calls for a radical change in the societal structure and complete redistribution of wealth. The third model, "heterogeneous sub-society with variable, adaptive subcultures" (Valentine, 1968, p.167), is somewhat a synthesis of the above two but also a more nuanced one. It proposes that subscription to both mainstream culture and subculture/s can be found among the poor. Similarly, traits of organization and disorganization, elements of helplessness and positive aspirations are present. Valentine (1968) acknowledges that the boundaries between the three types of knowledge are fluid and the three are overlapping.

[12] Values such as high income, educational and occupational achievement.

One theorist who acknowledges the difference that can exist within the poor is Miller (1964) who offers a classification based on a combination of class (income security/insecurity) and status (family stability/instability)[13]. What emerge from the combination are four fluid categories of poor - 1) the Stable Poor, 2) the Strained, 3) the Copers and 4) the Unstable (Miller, 1964, p. 8). Both the Stable and Strained Poor have economic security, the only point of difference being that the latter experience family instability. The Copers on the other hand are economically unstable but they have stable family relationships. The Unstable Poor are most vulnerable as they are both economically insecure and unstable in terms of family relations. As it has been mentioned, these categories are fluid and there may be movement from one to another and, within each type, there might be further variations. While this kind of differentiation within the poor based on family stability and economic stability is present, one based on education or how education or no education can be a basis of differentiation is absent.

Some points that emerge from the discussion of these classical perspectives are 1) whether the poor subscribe to so called "mainstream" culture or they have a subculture of their own such as "culture of poverty" or "ghetto culture" 2) the explanation for poverty lies in the culture of the poor or in the larger societal stratification which has also translated into two views of social change: "the situational view of social change and cultural view of social change" (Gans, 1968, p.206). The contemporary researchers on the poverty have tried to critique some of these polarizing positions and introduce more nuanced approaches to understanding of the poor.

b. Contemporary Perspectives

The sociological literature on urban poverty in the United States has focussed primarily on three aspects: family, neighbourhood and culture (Small and Newman 2001). There is a plethora of studies on what is popularly known as 'neighbourhood effects', studying the influence of residential context on health, education, adolescent/youth behaviour and various other outcomes. This large body of studies primarily focus on disadvantaged, segregated neighbourhoods having concentration of racial minorities or poor immigrants, to examine how and to what extent the socio-spatial contexts individuals find themselves in, such as how concentrated poverty, crime or violence shapes their attitudes and opportunities in life. The studies on neighbourhood effects,

[13] Familial stability patterns are characterized by families coping with their problems - the children are being fed, though not necessarily on a schedule; the family meets its obligations so that it is not forced to keep on the move; children are not getting into much more trouble than other children of the neighbourhood.

although vast in volume, have been critiqued for methodological and conceptual limitations. In fact, the very idea of influence of neighbourhood and to what extent a neighbourhood influences individuals and families has been challenged. The family studies of the poor include studies of the phenomena of "out of wedlock births" and "teenage births". In the context of culture and poverty, Small and Newman (2001) raise three important questions worthy of thought[14]. First, pertains to how one defines culture. Most contemporary sociologists follow Swidler's definition of culture as a "tool kit of habits, skills and lifestyles from which people construct strategies of action" (cited in Small and Newman, 2001, p. 35). Secondly, whether this culture is a homogenous one and thirdly, whether it differs from 'other forms' of culture'[15].

Small, Harding and Lamont (2010) write that culture is back in poverty scholarship now but in ways different from Oscar Lewis's "culture of poverty" theory because the new generation of researchers conceptualize culture in a different manner. This new generation not only avoids the "old distinction" between "structural" and "cultural" explanations of poverty but also reject the ideas that "members of a group or a nation share 'a culture' or that group's culture is more or less coherent or internally consistent (Small, Harding and Lamont, 2010, p. 3). They suggest a set of overlapping cultural concepts that are used by many contemporary sociologists such as "values, frames, repertoires, narratives, cultural capital, symbolic boundaries and institutions" (Small, Harding and Lamont, 2010, p. 8).

Small, Harding and Lamont (2010) also argue that it is important to bring culture back in the study of poor for three different reasons: to understand 1) "why people respond to poverty the way they do" 2) "how they cope with it" 3) thirdly how they escape it"? These questions also become relevant for our study especially when we relate it to education.

Thus, the study considers this aspect of poverty that education is "both part of the definition of poverty, as well as potentially part of the solution for people to break out of the cycle of poverty" (Rose and Dyer 2008: p. 8). However, Rose and Dyer (2008) note the importance of

[14] They also highlight an important point that poverty researchers and those interested in studying culture should keep in mind i.e. the former has evolved with the contribution from economists, development experts, political scientists, sociologists, and social workers while the latter has been looked by anthropologists, historians and sociologists, and the two concepts have evolved distinctly.
[15] The third aspect constitutes theories like Ogbu's (1987, 1990) and Massey and Denton's oppositional culture where they have argued that poor African Americans develop a kind of oppositional culture to the white middle class values and norms of school success and mobility. However, later works have challenged the 'oppositional culture' and 'acting white' theses of these scholars.

sociological theories of Paulo Freire and Pierre Bourdieu on how education in form of formal schooling often reproduces and maintains the inequalities.

III. Differentiation and Distinction among the Poor and Education

Salcedo and others (2012) point out that in Chilean scholarship on poverty (particularly from 1960s to 1980s) a similar debate persisted about homogeneity of poor as a group and recognition of difference within the same structural conditions. For their own study, Salcedo and others (2012) developed a three-fold typology based on three themes: 1) narratives about future expectations where expectations for the future can have a sense of fatalism or hopefulness 2) repertoire of available strategies and, 3) narratives about projects for upward mobility (p.104). Upward mobility projects may include both individualistic/family based or collectivistic/communitarian projects. What are worth mentioning are the five types of urban poor households that emerge from the narratives of future expectations: organized, dependent, ghettoized, hopeless, and "moyenized[16]". Moyenized families, a group significant for our study, the authors pointed out, will always create a symbolic boundary between themselves and their neighbours in different ways such as condemnation of their neighbour's lifestyles or behaviour or adopting strategies such as sending their children to private schools. This last category of families is especially relevant as it hints at distinction and distance claimed on the basis of lifestyles and choice of schooling.

In the context of studies on urban poor in Korean society, Kim (1995) also notes that most scholars have treated the category as an homogenous one and pitted it against the larger society and environment, neglecting the "internal heterogeneity and differentiation within the urban poor" (p. 184). The author therefore studies the internal differentiation among the poor by exploring different survival strategies. For example, families either increase income by working harder and longer, or by minimising the expenditure on housing and clothing. Kim (1995) notes the desire of parents to give their children better education, where education cost is not compromised as part of minimizing expenditure and thus often leads to accumulation of debt. Therefore, under such circumstances hopes for inter-generational mobility with the help of education is high although these aspirations are often thwarted by existential conditions.

[16] This is a term the authors have borrowed from Oberti and Preteceille (2004) to describe "certain urban poor families in Brazil that, despite being poor, possess expectations and values, and behave like middle class families". Since Oberti and Preteceille (2004) work is available in French only, the original article could not be referred to.

In India, Lynch (1991) in his study of a Bombay slum (presently Mumbai) provides an interesting typology of the slum dwellers- Kumbhars (potters), Adi-Dravida (plotters)[17] and Muslims (prodders) that highlights differentiation existing within the poor. These categories emerged from the differences pertaining to occupations, levels of education, political and religious affiliations and importantly, the community's worldviews, therefore revealing how within the same structural conditions, different cultural orientations are found. A comparison of literacy rates (defined as fourth standard level and above) for the three ethnic groups showed that 53 per cent potters, 70 per cent Adi- Dravidas and 32 per cent Muslims were literate. The three ethnic groups also had their own mediators or voluntary associations for representing their economic and political interests, negotiating for services and resolving conflicts[18]. An interesting difference was reflected in the newspaper reading habits of the three communities. While 63 per cent of Adi-Dravidas reported that they read newspapers daily, it was 50 per cent among Muslims and 37 per cent among Gujarati Hindu potters. The Tamil speaking Adi-Dravidas were found to be better educated and put emphasis on it owing to their link with Ambedkarite ideology and influence of political parties such as Dravida Munetra Kazagham (DMK) and Republican Party of India (RPI). Lynch (1991) writes that the "important symbolic markers" in their part of slum were reading rooms with newspapers, party offices, *chawl* committee offices.

Elements of difference and distinction can also manifest in how spatial boundaries are drawn within the settlement. One example of this can be found in Auyero's (1999) study of lived experiences of residents of one of the largest slums in Argentina. He examines and correlates the macro structural forces of underemployment and unemployment, state policies with the subjective micro experiences of those affected by it in the slums. What is interesting is that while a "territorial stigma" is attached to the slum like it is attached to many poor neighbourhoods across the world, within the slum, the residents have demarcations of "forbidden zones" that they claimed invite bad reputation for the whole[19].

---

[17] This is a label used to categorize the Adi Dravidas, a Dalit group who migrated from Tamil Nadu. Lynch (1991) writes that this group lacked special knowledge of any craft but use wit and cleverness to get a job in the highly competitive market of Bombay.

[18] The Hindu religious potters trusted only their caste leaders/social workers than the "godless politicians" who were supported by and mediated on the behalf of Adi-Dravidas. The Muslims, found to be the poorest among the three, on the other hand relied on the local *seths* and businessmen.

[19] Auyero terms this as 'stigma displacement', a phrase coined by sociologist Erving Goffman (1963).

Even the spatial location of the settlement in the city and the opportunities available or the presence of middle and upper middle classes are considered as producing this heterogeneity in the experiences of the poor (Salcedo and Rasse 2012; Salcedo and Torres 2004). For example, the study mentioned above uses a comparative framework in which three different types of neighbourhoods of the poor, "one highly segregated, one including middle classes in the surrounding area, and one surrounded by wealthy neighbours" are compared (Salcedo and Rasse, 2012, p. 103). In another article, Salcedo and Torres (2004) discuss findings from a study conducted in two settlements located in close spatial proximity separated by gates and walls - a gated community and a poor neighbourhood. The authors discuss the "social impact of a gated community" on the poor by exploring how the rise of these exclusive spaces is perceived and how the poor perceive some positive changes brought in their lives including quality of life, employment, abatement of social stigma attached to poor neighbourhoods and increase of land value (Salcedo and Torres, 2004). In fact, the findings challenge the apparent homogeneity of the gated communities as well, revealing class and status differences within.

IV. Spaces of Urban Poverty and the Indian Context: A Review of Research

Space, particularly access to living space, has been an important and defining aspect of poverty and the poor in sociological research. In highlighting the importance of space in the study of poverty, Lemanski and Marx (2015) list "three kinds of spatiality". Firstly, how the space of the city itself plays a role in "emergence and perpetuation of poverty". Secondly, poverty is multi-sited and multi-dimensional which implies that poor people experience deprivation in many spaces and in many ways, therefore, there is a need to study the multiple sites such as spaces of work or schools/educational institutions where the poor can experience deprivation. Thirdly, the positionality of the poverty researchers is important in shaping the perspective on poverty and its study, such as the studies about poverty in Global South. The third aspect of positionality of the poverty researchers and the knowledge produced about urban space and poverty has been discussed in detail by Lombard (2015) who argues that the very nature of knowledge that is produced about urban informal spaces including the representations and tags of being 'illegal' further marginalize the already marginalized.

In the context of India, Chaudhuri (2013) writes: "The urban poor are largely understood as living in overcrowded and dilapidated slums or in squatters built on pavements, along railway

tracks, under bridges, besides canals or on ill-drained marshlands and any vacant land available to them in urban areas"(p.45). Under Section-3 of the Slum Area Improvement and Clearance Act,1956, in India "slums have been defined as mainly those residential areas where dwellings are in any respect unfit for human habitation by reasons of dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangements and designs of such buildings, narrowness or faulty arrangement of streets, lack of ventilation, light, sanitation facilities or any combination of these factors which are detrimental to safety, health and morals" (Primary Census Abstract for Slums, 2011). Further, three different types of slums have been categorized and defined in Census of India, namely, 1) Notified, 2) Recognized and 3) Identified[20].

The slums are most frequently associated as sites of poverty and every space housing the poor migrants is labelled as a slum in layperson discourse. Although slums are spaces where poor are largely concentrated, scholars like Arabindoo (2011) and Gilbert (2007) argue that not all who live in slums are poor and not all poor live in slums. But often slum line is confused with poverty line. Therefore, it is important to engage with this spatial category.

According to Ranga and Rao (1991) slums in the cities emerge in three ways. First, when poor migrants, mostly unskilled, come to the cities in search of work, they settle on vacant land or some site close to their work which are often "illegal" in the eyes of the civic bodies. Newcomers, owing to their kin and village network, come and settle in these squatter settlements for a sense of emotional, social and economic security in the alien urban environment. Too poor to afford urban facilities of cheap housing, water and sanitation they survive on public facilities. Second, buildings in old parts of the city start deteriorating and due to neglect from municipal bodies begin to show slum-like conditions. A similar situation is said to be found in the *chawls* of industrial workers and sweepers' colonies of municipalities. Third, as the city expands, the villages situated on the margins get incorporated within the city. In this case, the agricultural land of the village is put to urban use and the places of habitation, due to lack of urban infrastructure, begin to resemble a slum.

[20] 1) "Notified slums include all specified areas in a town or city notified as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act including a "Slum Act" 2) all areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration, Housing and Slum Boards, which may have not been formally notified as slum under any act are the Recognized slums 3) identified slums are defined as a compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities" (Primary Census Abstract for Slum, Census 2011) available at https://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-Documents/Slum-26-09-13.pdf

While physically these areas labelled as slums may be similar, the profiles of inhabitants vary and this distinction is clear in Naidu's (2006) study. She draws attention to the fact that many old city areas are legally notified as slums whereas there is a significant difference between the social, economic and educational profiles of inhabitants of what she calls "dilapidated houses[21]" and slums. For instance, the walled city in both Hyderabad and Delhi, both Naidu (2006) and Shaw (2012) point out, has been declared a slum as they are characterised by congestion and dilapidated structures. While economic situation of families may not be significantly different, differences in educational preferences and choices, aspirations, and lifestyles make them distinct. The downwardly mobile population of old walled city areas, whom she calls the 'respectable' poor, for example, believe in the promise of formal education and would not be willing to take manual labour based or daily wage jobs as opposed to the squatter dwellers. However, a point that is important to make here is that this analysis again homogenizes the squatter dwellers. Our own study found that notions of respect and formal education as a pathway to achieve it is prevalent even among the squatter dwellers.

Arabindoo (2011) stresses on the need to qualitatively explore both the "heterogeneity of the urban poor and the spaces they inhabit" (p. 638). He calls for mapping of the multiple spaces of poverty in the cities such as the resettlement colonies at the peripheries of the city where the slum-dwellers are located after demolition which not only disrupts the networks and social ties urban poor have in the city but also further marginalizes them in terms of job opportunities. Sen (2006) draws attention to how relocation has a severe impact on the livelihoods of the poor who are again pushed into poverty echoing Lemanski and Marx's (2015) point that the city itself perpetuates poverty. Calling the resettlement sites as spaces of "advanced marginality", Rao (2010) also adds that very few urban poor who are evicted are actually rehabilitated and rest are rendered homeless. The impermanence of place and insecurity attached to it for the urban poor has also gained considerable attention from scholars and activists. Arabindoo (2011) points out how eviction of the poor in the post liberalisation era has been more in the interest of grabbing land for real estate development by private developers than rehabilitation of the evicted poor. Discussions on eviction of the poor particularly in cities like Delhi and Mumbai are dominant in the available literature.

---

[21]As per Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), "certain areas as slums, where with the passage of time, the buildings have become dilapidated and the basic civic services are missing" (Official Website of DUSIB).

The sites of poverty in India are complex due to its caste, religion, linguistic and regional diversity. The fact that these variations can produce different conditions, strategies and outcomes for the population living "within the same conditions" is beginning to capture the imagination of scholars. Schenk (2010), for example, studies the diversity of slums in Kolkata on the lines of religion, language and caste arguing that "religion and language are stronger factors than caste diversity in determining slums' social and economic characteristics" (p.93) although he acknowledges that studies on the effect of caste on shaping life in slums is limited. Language determines the ease of finding occupations and getting integrated with the urban environment whereas religion i.e. being a Hindu or Muslim determines occupational decisions, "each may choose employment in a sector that the other is unlikely to join" (Schenk, 2010, p. 102). In fact, gender is another dimension that shapes the lived experiences in the city and men and women can experience their living space and the urban environment quite differently. This aspect has been highlighted by both Yatzimirsky (2013) and Haider (2000).

Most of the early writings in India by urban sociologists (See for example, Desai and Pillai (1970) edited *Slums and Urbanization*) have studied slums in different parts of the metropolitan cities of Kolkata, Chennai, Pune, Delhi and Mumbai. But these studies are largely statistical in nature and do not go beyond the exploration of the physical and socio-economic characteristics of slums. Secondly, several of these studies begin analysing slums as a problem - as haphazardly built disease-prone sites of overcrowding, congestion, poor sanitation- one that needs to be cured.

Barring a few, most studies do not capture the complex nature and heterogeneity of the slum as a space. As Ranga and Rao (1991) point out "most studies on slums centre around their structural form and offer structural explanation" (p.309). The more recent studies, however, approach the slums and urban poor in a different way (See for instance Datta, 2012; Vedeld and Siddham, 2002). These studies have not only begun to capture the diversity of the slum space but they are more situated in the discourse of urban poor's right to the city space, recognize the significant contribution they make to functioning of the city in form of numerous and diverse services and the discrimination and stigmatization they face at the hands of planners, municipal bodies and middle and upper middle classes.

V. Poverty and the Poor in Delhi

a. Statistical Profile

In the latest Census (2011), Delhi's total population was recorded as 16.8 million persons as against 13.8 million in 2001, reflecting a decadal growth rate of 20.96 %[22]. The 2011 Census also reveals that only 2.5 percentage of Delhi has remained rural and rest 97.5% is urban. Delhi also attracts a huge population of migrants from other states. Economic Survey of Delhi (2014-15) reveals that the bordering states of Uttar Pradesh (43.13) followed by Bihar (13.63) and Haryana (10.43) account for the highest number of migrants and employment remains the major reason. While a large population of migrants from the neighbouring states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan are from rural regions, migrants from other far off states are from urban areas.

As per Census 2011 presented in Statistical Abstract of Delhi 2014, Delhi's total slum population is 17,85,390 out of which 41.38 per cent reside in notified slums, and 58.61 per cent in identified slums. The population in recognized slums is shown nil. This total slum population constitutes 27.04 per cent of Scheduled Caste population. The population of literates in slums is 65.51 per cent and remaining 34.84 per cent are non-literate (Statistical Abstract of Delhi 2014).

According to Economic Survey of Delhi 2014-15, 9.91 per cent of Delhi's population is considered to be below poverty line in 2011-12 as compared to all India figure of 21.9 per cent. According to this report the population below poverty has declined from 14.2 per cent in 2009-10 to 9.91 per cent in 2011-12. A similar trend was noticed earlier when it fell from 14.6 per cent in 1993-94 to 8.2 per cent in 1999-2000.

b. Types of Settlements and Evolution of slums

If one were to look at different types of residential spaces in Delhi, there are 8 major types of settlements namely, JJ clusters, JJ resettlement colonies, slum designated areas, unauthorized colonies, planned colonies, regularized-unauthorized colonies, urban villages, rural villages (Bhan, 2009; Datta, 2012). According to recent statistics, almost half of Delhi's population lived

---

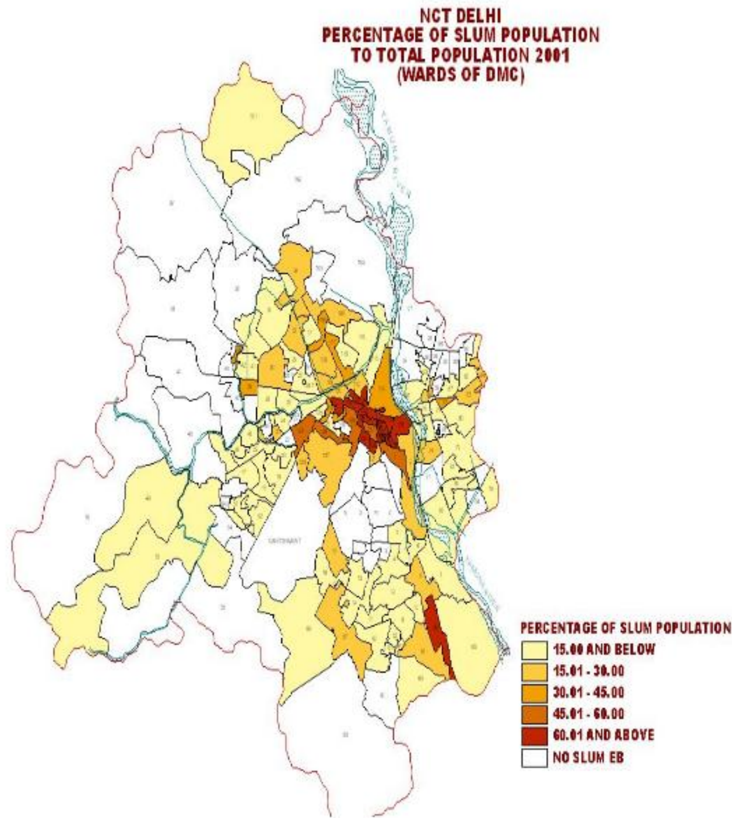
[22]Statistical Abstract of Delhi, 2012

in illegal settlements; either in unauthorised colonies[23], whose existence is not officially recognised, or in squatter settlements which are more permanently threatened with demolition (Vidal et al. cited in Vedeld and Siddham 2002). The poor in the city are largely concentrated in JJ clusters, JJ resettlement colonies, and slum designated areas. According to the Centre for Global Development Research Private Limited (CGDR) report 56 percent of squatters in Delhi are located near the residential areas and 40 percent are found along the road side.

Priya (2006) discusses the formation of three kinds of slums in Delhi, beginning from 1912. She delves into the history of town planning in Delhi under the British rule and construction of New Delhi under the aegis of Edwin L. Lutyen in 1912. This was a time when there was almost 28 per cent addition to Old Delhi's population leading to over-congestion and there was barely any effort on part of the British government to reconstruct or expand this part. As the poor started concentrating in the old buildings like *katras* and *mohallas*, the affluent moved towards better-off areas, leading to the dilapidation of the old buildings. The rural-urban migration in the post-independence period led to emergence of squatters or *jhuggi- jhompris*. The removal of squatters and relocation of the selected displaced population in the peripheries of the cities led to the emergence of resettlement colonies as the "third kind of slums in Delhi" (p. 234). Priya (2006) argues that if "environmental sanitation and access to basic amenities are important criteria" then the scarce availability or unavailability of facilities at resettlement colonies characterize them as "planned" slums.

What is evident from the Map 1.1 is that the highest concentration of slum population is in the inner core area of Delhi, i.e. the old city area. It needs to be reiterated that the entire population living in the areas highlighted as slums may not be poor as slum is defined more in terms of physical conditions and congestion. According to CGDR's report on New Delhi, "There are approximately 319 *katras* in the walled city area with about 3000 buildings or properties. These areas are very old and notified as slums but do not resemble the state of slums found in other parts of Delhi outside the walled city" (p.1). This again forces us to see how often a monolith category of slum itself is in fact internally differentiated.

[23] It is important to emphasize that the squatters are not the only 'illegally' occupied spaces if illegal status qualifies for demolition. Soni (2000) has studied how luxurious farmhouses built near Mehrauli like Sainik Farms (south of Mehrauli-Badarpur road), Ruchi Vihar (behind Vasant Kunj), Andheria Bagh (near Mehrauli) also have a similar status in the eyes of law.



Map 1.1: Distribution of Slum Population in Delhi

Source: Official Website of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, Government of India[24]

c. Review of Research on the Poor in Delhi City

Much of the scholarly literature on urban poor in Delhi and spaces of poverty has discussed how the poor figure in the imagination of the non poor comprising middle and upper middle classes and urban planning bodies. This imagination is intricately linked with the idea of the city, of how to make the city appear as a planned or world-class or global city, a vision that is explicitly expressed in Delhi's Master Plan for 2021 (Baviskar, 2006; Dupont, 2011; Ghertner, 2012). Therefore, these imaginaries have also shaped certain policies towards the poor and their spaces of habitation in the city. The scholars working on Delhi's urban space, and on the city's so-called planned and unplanned areas have discussed and critiqued the very way in which the urban poor and the spaces occupied by them have been represented because these depictions have

[24] Available at http://www.censusindia.gov.in/maps/Town_maps/Delhi_slum_population.aspx

subsequently become the basis on which large scale eviction and displacement of the poor has taken place.

The spaces occupied by the poor, homeless and the working classes are mostly regarded as space of filth, crime, lawlessness, drugs , illiteracy. This is not unique to Delhi as literature on slums and squatter settlements not only from other parts of the country rather the across the globe shows similar tendencies.

Scholars have attempted to dispel some of these myths surrounding the urban poor and their lack of literacy and tryst with "dangerous" and "illegal" activities. Mehra and Batra (2006) and Soni (2000) for example, draw our attention to the fact that stigma of "illegal" or "unauthorized" is always attached to the squatters of poor migrants where in reality the extravagant farmhouses of the elites in Sainik farms in Delhi are not stigmatized for being unauthorized. Similarly, in the context of high rise gated communities for the elites in the metropolitan fringes, Roy (2005) also points out "unlike squatter settlements such forms of high-end informality usually enjoy premium infrastructure and guaranteed security of tenure" (p.149). She further writes: "the planning and legal apparatus of the state has the power to determine what is informal and what is not, and to determine which forms of informality will thrive and which will disappear" (Roy 2005, p.149). In fact, with regard to crucial resources such as water, Truelove and Mawdsley (2011) discuss that the poor are always accused of water theft and wastage for their "ignorance" and lack of so-called legal access to water. On the other hand, Delhi's middle classes are held as the ideal, "law abiding citizens" whose responsible use of water can help in sustainability. Based on Government of India's reports and research studies, Truelove and Mawdsley (2011) highlight that in reality the poor's water consumption is very low, often below the standard prescribed for survival (p.417). The crux of their paper is that the theft and wastage of water prevails across classes and is not restricted to the poor alone who are unfairly criminalized and denied a sense of being a citizen of a city they help in building and maintaining.

Several other writings dwell upon the violence entailed in the very vision and process of "making Delhi a world class city" (Baviskar 2006; Ghertner 2012) and this vision corresponds to transforming Delhi into a "slum free city". Dupont (2011) examines the vision of restructuring the urban space of the capital and the fate of those who may not fit into this imagination. She traces the post-liberalization growth of malls, corporate hospitals, gated colonies or townships,

the emergence of SEZs and EPZs in Delhi and the NCR comprising Gurgaon and Noida. Echoing other scholars, her study looks at the consequences of the global city model for the poor in Delhi. She notes that from 1990s, since the time Delhi government adopted a new slum policy, till 2007, around 65,000 squatter families were evicted and relocated in resettlement colonies on the rural fringes, 30 kilometres from the city centre, disrupting their social and economic life.

Middle class imagination of civility and public order in the urban space does not include the urban poor or the spaces. Ghertner (2012) discusses the RWAs'[25] construction of slums as "nuisance", "as zones of incivility that violate normalized codes of urban conduct and appearance" (p.1162). These everyday discourses on slums, what he calls "nuisance talk" translate into official policy. Chakraborti (2008) examines the impact of Bhagidari scheme[26] of citizen participation on the urban poor in Delhi which altered the role and power of the RWAs and the middle classes whose interests these associations represent in a significant way as they began to participate in urban policy making and influence decisions.

Fernandes (2010) relies upon Gilmore's concept of "forgotten places" to describe spaces of acute poverty in rural and urban areas which are "abandoned, yet intensely occupied by the state" (p.266). They are abandoned in the sense that the state completely overlooks the absence of urban services and "occupied" in a sense that state's presence is felt in the form of surveillance, evictions and demolitions.

Mehra and Batra (2006) delve into Delhi's history to trace why slums have come to be viewed as places of dirt and disorder. After the rebellion of 1857 and Delhi's establishment as the capital of British India the colonial administrators began to feel threatened by the spatial structure and life in the old city of Shahjanabad. Planning and order had to be introduced to what they perceived as dirty, diseased and chaotic place of the natives. By 1936 the old city areas became a designated slum and the administrators developed New Delhi as an "orderly" space for themselves, away

[25] RWAs are neighbourhood associations in housing colonies and apartments. Chakraborti points out that these neighbourhood associations started emerging after Indira Gandhi's assassination due to concerns for security. Thus, neighbourhood security has been its prime concern since the beginning.

[26] It was introduced in the year 2000 by the Delhi Government for participatory governance and provided a platform to bring together Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), trade associations, urban civic bodies such as Delhi Development Authority, Municipal Corporation and local political representatives for improving civic services and governance.

from the presumed haphazardness and disorderliness. This imagination of the British has somewhat been carried over to the post-independence period like a colonial hangover. Like the "natives" signified dirt and chaos for the colonial elites, the poor of the city have come to signify the same for the middle and upper classes of the city, the latter almost assuming the role as neo-colonialists.

In recent times, as Baviskar (2002) and Bhan (2009) note that Delhi is witnessing a new kind of process that is shaping the city. This is also what Baviskar calls "bourgeois environmentalism[27]" where the poor are seen as an embodiment of the conditions they live in and therefore, have to be removed from the sight to make the city 'hygienic', enhance its beauty and aesthetics. Dooling discusses a similar concept of "ecological gentrification" which is defined "as the implementation of an environmental planning agenda related to public green spaces that leads to the displacement or exclusion of the most economically vulnerable human population-homeless people while espousing an environmental ethic" (Dooling cited in Yatzimirsky and Landy, 2014, p.1). What differentiates these "post millennial evictions"[28], a phrase that Bhan uses, from the past evictions is that the former are being carried out on High Court or Supreme Court's ruling in response to Public Interest Litigations filed by the dominant classes of the city.

Furthermore, Mehra and Batra (2006) argue that the change in approach towards the poor in the city from before 1990s and post 1990s has to be seen in the larger context of economic liberalization and privatization which was accompanied by the following changes: the rise of the middle class and their consumption, the inflow of global capital and construction of malls, flyovers, multiplexes and gated communities to pursue the goal of making of the "world class city" and the deterioration of air and water quality of the city and overall environment due to "rapid growth and unbridled consumption" (p.8). The urban restructuring that emerged with the introduction of the policy of economic liberalization and rise of new middle classes is not

[27] Amita Baviskar uses this phrase to describe the environmentalism that includes relocation or closure of polluting industries which has affected the lives of some two million workers in Delhi. This environmentalism has emerged from middle and upper class concerns about hygiene and safety that again demands removal of squatters and slums whose population ironically provides services to these very people. For a more detailed discussion see Baviskar's (2002) 'The Politics of the City'.

[28]Bhan (2009) uses this term to refer to the evictions that have taken place from 1990 onward. According to him, in the period between 1990 and 2003, 51,461 homes and then again from 2004 to 2007 about 45,000 homes were demolished. Importantly, less than 25 per cent of these homeless have been resettled.

particular to Delhi but as Donner (2012) notes, was happening in other metro cities as well like Bangalore and Kolkata. Donner (2012) writes:

> What applied to Mumbai and Delhi became soon apparent in other cities as well, namely that urban politics after liberalization would be driven by the needs of a global middle class of Indian origin and that this new scenario defined citizenship to the exclusion of the urban poor, often in terms of middle class livelihoods and consumption practices through the language of "needs," "demands," and "markets." (p.135)

The rise of the middle class and its purchasing power and participation in consumption gradually began to coincide with the image of the city as the global or world class city. Schindler (2013), however, differs from the dominant view that relationship between the poor and the middle classes are only antagonistic arguing that growing demand of the middle classes for services of the poor "allows the former to practice particular lifestyles, while the urban poor are able to secure livelihoods" (ibid.). Schindler (2013) argues that instead of completely excluding the poor from the urban space, the new middle class seeks to regulate and restrict their presence. "In the course of their interactions with the new middle class, the poor are able to gain access to cultural capital with which they occasionally make convincing claims to belonging in the world-class city" (Schindler 2013: p.570).

It is not as if the poor men and women in the urban slums and squatter settlements do not aspire for consumer goods offered by the increasingly globalizing society around them, even if it is not affordable to them. Zabiliute (2016) explores the aspirations of poor young men living in one squatter settlement of Delhi through the case studies of two individuals. The author examines the activity of 'wandering in a mall' to give an insight into their aspirations for commodities for middle and upper class consumption while the families see such activities such as 'wandering' or 'time pass' as unproductive and waste of time. These commodities also seem to give a sense of belonging to the city.

In a series titled 'Changing face of Indian slums'[29] *The Hindu* documented stories of changing values, aspirations and styles of life in the slum dwellers of Indian cities. From creating a gym for keeping the youth particularly boys away from crime and drugs and keep up with the fitness obsession of the larger society in a city like Delhi (*The Hindu* May 30 2016) to the struggle of mothers with the use of Right To Information (RTI) to get their children enrolled in private schools under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) quota so that they can provide the "best education" to their children (*The Hindu* June 9 2016).

What is evident is that the available literature looks at issues of rights of poor to shelter and services, the attitude of the non-poor towards them, the relationship of the poor with the non-poor as well as the state. In doing so, the literature dwells upon differences between the poor and the non-poor within the city neglecting the heterogeneity that exists within the poor which may be reflected in the varying lifestyles, aspirations, choices, mobility projects and overall worldviews and how education can become a basis of difference and distinction. Therefore, we set off with the following research objectives and questions in this thesis:

Research Objectives

1. To identify how the urban poor are internally differentiated.
2. To examine how education acts as a marker of difference among and within the urban poor.
3. To explore the ways in which education marks distinction among the poor. In other words, to understand the meanings attributed to 'educated' and 'uneducated' among the urban poor and to study how the "educated" poor distinguish themselves and articulate their distinct status.
4. To examine the role women, particularly mothers, play in demonstrating and in producing the differences and distinctions through child rearing and educational choices, decisions and aspirations.

[29] Available at http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/The-changing-face-of-the-Indian slum/article16428217.ece?homepage=true

Specific Research Questions:

1. How are the urban poor differentiated? In other words, in what ways are the poor differentiated in terms of occupation, income, education levels, choice of schools, type of house, and ownership of assets and so on?

2. Does differentiation in terms of education segregate poor in their neighbourhoods?

3. How is the very notion of 'educated' and 'uneducated' socially constructed by the residents? What sets an 'educated' individual or family apart from the 'uneducated' or how are boundaries between the 'educated' and the 'uneducated' erected?

4. How do poor talk and express their existential conditions? Does the language in which aspirations are expressed vary? Does language mark the boundaries between those with education and those without education? And how?

6. How is distinction constructed in sense of disposition, taste and lifestyles and where does education figure in this sense of distinction?

7. How do parenting practices in the settlement reflect the gender based differences? What are the roles, aspirations and everyday negotiations of mothers in supporting the education of their children? And how do the educational aspirations and practices of the educated mother differ?

Organization of Chapters

Chapter 2 of this thesis discusses the theoretical underpinnings this study operates with. It discusses in detail some of the concepts this study uses such as differentiation, distinction and the centrality of education in their formation. For this purpose the study borrows the concepts of difference, distinction and capitals from Bourdieu's (1984) *Distinction*, however, it also highlights where and how it departs. Chapter 2 also discusses the methodological approaches and processes such as the selection of the site, entering the field, how the initial contacts were established, samples were drawn and survey and interviews were conducted in the study. It concludes with the discussion of some challenges and ethical dilemmas almost every field researcher has to grapple with emerging out of one's positionality.

Chapter 3 is an in-depth exploration of the field setting - a multi-generational JJ cluster which is home to a large population of urban poor. This chapter traces the history and evolution of the settlement using primary and secondary research material, describes the social composition of the cluster, the social and spatial organization, the everyday lives, material and social conditions, streets and markets. An effort has been made to paint as thick a description as was possible. In the discussion, the differences based on factors like region, language and gender have also been highlighted along with an exploration of how each group perceives the other and asserts it difference from the others.

Chapter 4 takes the narrative of differentiation forward by delving into the educational and occupation profiles of the residents based on the household survey conducted by the researcher. In doing so, it also highlights the difference in economic activities produced by varying levels of education, not only in terms of income but also in subjectivities and sense of self.

Chapter 5 is an exploration of the parental aspirations and schooling choices of the parents. It is an important chapter in the sense that it contributes to our understanding of the aspirations of the poor and how they are shaped by their past and present contexts. It challenges some of the popular assumptions that paint the poor as hopeless and miserable. It tries to explore how the level of education and intersection of cultural, economic and social capitals produce different aspirations and choices. In this chapter we provide a typology of the poor based on their aspirations.

Chapter 6, another crucial chapter, discusses the aspirations, strategies, tastes and lifestyles of a small section of the poor in this settlement who claimed to be different and distinct based on their educated status or their pursuit of cultural capital. We trace this pursuit and their reconversion strategies for turning one form of capital into another. We highlight, in this chapter, how education is central in their definition of self, in their practices of distinction and distanciation and their project of upward mobility.

Chapter 7 discusses another form of difference i.e. based on gender. From the observation of daily routines and interactions it was found that the mothers in the settlement are more involved with their children's schooling and other activities. This chapter, therefore, discusses their aspirations for their children and how they sometimes go against the norms to support their

children's education. The chapter also looks at how having or not having education produce difference in these practices and aspirations by further exploring and discussing the role the educated mother plays in their children's schooling.

Chapter 8 summarizes the key findings of the study, draws their connection with existing theories and tries to offer concluding arguments and reflections. It also confesses the limitations of this work and highlights the gaps for future research work.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Underpinnings, Methodology and Reflections from the Field

This study is an attempt to understand how a category popularly conceived as homogenous may in fact be internally differentiated. In order to understand the differences between and within social classes we turn to the writings of one of the most important theorists in the discipline of sociology, namely, Pierre Bourdieu and how some features of his works can help us to examine and make sense of the data from our field setting. The chapter, therefore, first attempts to discuss in detail the theoretical framework that guides this study. While theoretical writings help us in framing the study, its objectives and questions, every field setting from where empirical data is to be collected is unique and presents unanticipated possibilities and challenges that a researcher has to deal with. Therefore, the second objective of the chapter is to discuss how the researcher selected the site of the study, approached the respondents for data collection and was confronted with certain challenges and dilemmas during the course of this research. The discussion is organized in the following order: 1. The theoretical underpinnings of the study; 2. Methods and methodological approach and; 3. Reflections from the field.

I. Theory and Literature Review

The most influential work on the concept of difference and distinction remains that of the French sociologist and anthropologist, Pierre Bourdieu's *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Since its publication (in 1979 and English translation in 1984), the work has influenced several generations of scholars interested in the study of class and social and cultural reproduction. Its reach can be gauged from the fact that although the empirical universe of the book is France of the 1960s and it was influenced by the social and political context of the time, scholars in Europe and America have widely applied his concepts to the study of their own social contexts. Similarly, although our study is set in a significantly different geographical, temporal and social context; there are important concepts and arguments from *Distinction* that are relevant to understand inter and intra-class differentiation within and through the site of education. This

chapter discusses some key ideas from his treatise on capitals, class fractions and classifications for the conceptual understanding as well as for chalking out the point from where our work departs from Bourdieu.

The idea of difference has been central to Bourdieu's work. In a lecture delivered by him in 1987 which was later published as an article, he said:

> "the social world can be conceived as a multi-dimensional space that can be constructed empirically by discovering the main factors of differentiation which account for the difference observed in a given social universe, or, in other words, by discovering the powers or forms of capital which are or can become efficient, like aces in a game of cards, in this particular universe, that is, in the struggle (or competition) for the appropriation of scarce goods of which this universe is the site" (p.4, emphasis added).

The keywords, "capital", "struggle/competition" and "scarce" are important in the understanding of the arguments made by the scholar. Bourdieu broadened as well as deepened our understanding of class and how each class differentiates itself based on the volume and composition of the capital that is inherited, cultivated, acquired and diversified. The three forms of capitals or powers that he speaks of in the lines quoted above are: economic, cultural and social capital and it is the volume, distribution and interplay of these three that brings profits and symbolic distinction for its possessor and differentiates her from others. In addition to the material and monetary aspects of economic capital such as wealth and property, Bourdieu brings in the nuances of non-economic aspects into the analysis of class with the notion of cultural and social capital. Economists, Bourdieu (1986) asserted, reduce everything to material/monetary exchange and it ignores what he calls "transubstantiation" i.e. manifestation of material capital into social and cultural capital and vice-versa.

Social capital is defined by Bourdieu (1984) as a "capital of social connections" (p.122) which can be understood as networks of friends, co-workers, members of alumni associations etc., and the ability to mobilize these connections for one's profit i.e., converting social capital into economic capital. The volume of social capital of an individual depends upon the volume of capitals possessed by those who form a part of his/her network.

On the other hand, Bourdieu identifies three different states in which cultural capital can exist - objectified, embodied and institutionalized. The objectified cultural capital consists of cultural goods and Bourdieu cites the example of books, paintings or other works of art. In its embodied form it entails dispositions, tastes and practices such as trips to museums, galleries or theatre (which itself is categorized as high or mediocre). It is important to note that it is not merely enough to possess the cultural goods, one also has to possess the art of appropriating them in a way that is considered "legitimate". This is where the embodied cultural capital becomes significant, for example, how to hold a glass of wine or appreciate a photograph or painting. Though scholars have debated how practices come to be legitimized or institutionalized (see Lamont and Lareau 1988) it is usually the dominant and powerful groups who legitimize these practices. This brings us to the last form of cultural capital i.e., in its institutionalized form and institutions that confer legitimacy.

Cultural capital in its institutionalized state exists in the form of degrees and diplomas or any educational credentials sanctioned or rendered legitimate by institutions like schools and universities. Here the role of education and educational institutions becomes significant because they confer on the educated not only a formal degree but also reinforce and further cultivate intangible properties such as manners, linguistic abilities, diction, pronunciation, gestures, tastes and appreciation for works of high art such as a sculpture or a musical composition. Since these properties are embodied they are rendered indestructible and powerful. It is important to note that educational institutions reinforce these properties that are already acquired in the families from dominant classes. Highlighting a limitation of economic determinism, Bourdieu argues that economists in their analysis only consider capital as primarily monetary investment made on the education and the monetary returns this investment yields for the individual and the society and in doing so they "let slip the best hidden and socially most determinant educational investment, namely, the domestic transmission of cultural capital" (Bourdieu 1986: p.48).

Thus, for Bourdieu, the two sites where cultural capital is transmitted and fostered are the home and the school. A child from a dominant class who along with economic capital inherits manners, competencies, tastes and this familiarity with "high" or "legitimate" culture (albeit arbitrarily chosen) is then rewarded by the school. In Bourdieu's words, the schools and

universities function as "institutions of legitimation" and play a role in inter-generational reproduction of inequalities, as conservative forces rather than neutral and liberating forces.

By bringing in the concept of cultural capital Bourdieu also critiques the notion of talent or gift or "precocity" and the naturalness of such talents. Competencies and tastes that are acquired in the home and the school over a period of time and with active investments are wrongly disguised as innate, he points out. It is the inter-generational transfer of accumulated advantages of the dominant classes and as opposed to the accumulated, historical, disadvantages of the working classes that determine scholastic performance and success rather than "natural" ability.

Bourdieu (1998) explains this in another study titled *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power* where he examines in great detail how 'academic classifications' are carried out by teachers and school staff where teachers' judgment of students' talent and intelligence is evident from the adjectives they use to categorize children. Teachers "consciously or unconsciously distinguish between 'natural' ease of expression composed of fluency and elegant of constraint, and 'forced' ease common among lower middle and working class students, which reflects the effort to conform…" (Bourdieu, 1974, p. 40). Again, highlighting the role of the elite families in transmission of capitals, Bourdieu explains: "What we call ease is the privilege of those who, having imperceptibly acquired their culture through a gradual familiarization in the bosom of the family, have academic culture as their native culture" (Bourdieu, 1998, p.21). This possession of cultivated talent then becomes a marker of distinction.

When the children from working and lower middle classes who lack this labourious work to acquire these competencies in the school, they further get labeled as 'bookish' or 'pedantic'. Bourdieu, hence, asserts that the schools constantly turn "social hierarchies into academic hierarchies" which are reflected in classifications such as these: brilliant/dull, unconstrained/painstaking; distinguished/vulgar; cultivated/pedantic…original/commonplace and so on (Bourdieu 1979). We shall return to how such classifications occur in everyday life and form a part of asserting difference.

a. *Social Class Fractions: Ideas from Sociological Literature*

An important contribution of Bourdieu to the analysis of class is the idea of fractions which makes his work even more relevant for the current study. Bourdieu argues that while the volume of capital differentiates the dominant from the dominated, within the dominant class fractions emerge when one begins to unpack the volume of one's capital and see the distribution of different capitals. While one fraction may be stronger in economic capital the other may be stronger in cultural capital. And there are classes that may be richly endowed with all the three forms of capital. Bourdieu (1984) writes:

> "The differences stemming from the total volume of capital almost always, conceal, both from common awareness and also from 'scientific knowledge' the secondary differences which, within each of the classes defined by their overall volume of capital, separate class fractions, defined by different asset structures, i.e., different distributions of their total capital among different kinds of capital" (p.114).

Bourdieu's approach to class formation, thus also nuances our understanding of class and the existence of intermediate classes between two extremes and internal differentiation within classes. In doing so, Bourdieu's analysis comes closer to Max Weber's theorization of class which recognized intermediate classes rather than the Marxian conceptualization of class as a central contradiction between two groups positioned by their relations to means of production - owners and workers/labourers. Swartz (1997) notes that Bourdieu is "sharply critical of all attempts to conceptualize class primarily in terms of position in the social relations of production" and "neglecting the symbolic dimensions of class relations" (pp. 146-147). But Bourdieu also moves away from the Weberian opposition between class and *Stand* (status groups)[30] (Swartz, 1997; Weininger, 2005). Class for Weber is the market situation of a group whereas status groups are formed on basis of lifestyles or "style of life". While both overlap Weber argued that they can be mutually exclusive. This is where Bourdieu departs from Weber by arguing that "classes always appear as status groups" (Gartman, 1991, p.423). According to

[30] In Economy and Society Roth and Wittich (1978) write in a footnote: since the term 'standisch' derives from a specific historical context, even though Weber uses it often in a generic sense. It appeared appropriate to use the English equivalent "estate," which can denote both the medieval Estates and high social rank. Stand alone, however, will usually be translated as "status group" or "socially privileged group" (p.300).

Swartz (1997) Bourdieu "associates class condition with the fundamental conditions of existence (Weber's "class") but ascribes the properties of class position (Weber's "Status") to symbolic distinctions that emerge from the oppositions and affinities among classes" (p.150). The idea of oppositions/differences and affinities/similarities comes out clearly in Bourdieu's discussion of taste and classifications (discussed later in this chapter).

However, in *Distinction,* Bourdieu focuses more on the tastes and practices of the dominant class and its fractions and how it varies with occupational backgrounds, than the working class and its possible internal fractions. Moreover, several scholars have criticized Bourdieu's interpretation of working class culture as monolithic, characterized by a "culture of necessary". Bourdieu writes: "Necessity imposes a taste for necessity which implies a form of adaptation to and consequently acceptance of the necessary, a resignation to the inevitable... (Bourdieu, 1984, p.372). For example, in the context of working classes' choice of clothing he writes that they have "...a realistic or one might say, functionalist use of clothing. Looking for substance and function rather than form, they seek 'value for money' and choose what will last" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 200).

On the other hand, the taste of the dominant classes is characterized by distance from necessity and thus "basic opposition between the tastes of luxury and tastes of necessity" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.183) is the opposition that differentiates the dominant classes from the working classes. This kind of polarization, however, has been contested. For example, Bennett, Savage and others (2008) map taste and practices of different social classes in music, films, visits to galleries, etc., where they found that while some differences in tastes between professional and working classes are distinctive there are many that also overlap. They argue that one needs to recognize that "some tastes and practices are shared, irrespective of class" (p.201). The practice of what is called "cultural omnivorousness" which argues that the "contemporary privileged middle and upper classes no longer consume only legitimate culture but are better characterised as 'omnivores', happy to graze on both high and low culture" (Friedman, Savage and others, 2015, p.1) also challenges this kind polarization of tastes. Bennett, Savage and others (2008) also add that a "coherent class habitus" may be missing and indicate that internal divisions exist within the working class on the basis of skills and lifestyles. Weininger (2005) also adds in a footnote to his discussion on a Bourdieusian approach to class:

> "Bourdieu would have perhaps had to modify his undeniably harsh depiction of working class cultural dispossession and passivity had he been able to identify the distinct fractions within this class that his theory postulates, since he would then have been compelled to analyze its internecine conflicts" (p.97).

Whether the working class is homogeneous or is internally divided is a subject that has lend itself to debates, with scholars on both sides making claims and counterclaims (See Savage et al 2005 for a discussion pp. 98-99). This is a debated issue because it threatens the ideas of a traditional working class or a proletarian solidarity and class consciousness. For a long time the binary of "us" and "them" posited a homogenous working class against a rich dominant class. However, whether notions of "us" and "them" exist within the working class is a question that many scholars have explored.

With respect to the British working class and its internal divisions, Savage et al (2005) write that some studies have suggested differences between those who were able to take advantage of demand for their manual skills and those whose skills may be becoming obsolete (p.99). For example, skilled manual workers who are able to take advantage of "internal labour markets and core employment status that had previously and largely been reserved for the salaried middle class...became increasingly distinct from those members of the working class who were subject to unemployment, casualised work..."(ibid). Blokland's (2005) study in a working class neighbourhood in Rotterdam, Netherlands indicates divisions existed on the basis of occupations and religious affiliations. Further, categories of "we" and "them" emerged in the narratives of their respondents based on hygiene, respectability and so on.

There is also growing body of work particularly in the United Kingdom that examines the claims of "decline" or "death" of class. This body of literature focuses on the way, the working classes particularly, identify (or not) with class or with the category of "poor". The distance and difference arise on the basis of notions of hard work, reliance on welfare and binaries of deserving and undeserving poor. Newman (1999) explores how the working poor in Harlem distinguish themselves from the unemployed poor, asserting a "moral superiority" over the latter. She writes: "ideological disputes and inter-personal frictions emerge out of these close relations,

as workers denigrate those who rely on welfare and in turn the jobless "diss" the low-wage workers for displays of subservience" (Newman, 2002, p.1580). Similarly, Lamont (2010) discusses how the working poor in the US distinguish themselves from the non-working poor by claiming "hard work, responsibility and self-sufficiency" (p.12) as markers of distinction (Lamont cited in Small, Harding and Lamont 2010). Interestingly, the French working class did not draw such strict boundaries and the writers attribute this difference to the larger "political and cultural traditions" between American and French society.

A similar kind of study was undertaken by Shildrick and Macdonald (2013) in England which analysed "poverty talk" i.e. how working class talk about poverty and whether they identify themselves as poor or not. Interestingly, the respondents of a working class neighbourhood did not think of or classify themselves as "poor". For some, poverty was to be found in Asia or Africa whereas their own struggles were termed as "financial hardships". "Managing', in particular, was a term that carried great resonance and was frequently used as a counterpoint to 'being poor' (Shildrick and Macdonald, 2013, p.289). What the authors point out is that a kind of "othering" takes place within the working class in the dichotomy of "us and them" (difference is asserted from "a nameless mass of 'Others" p.291) and between 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor. The respondents distanced themselves from the 'undeserving poor' whom they believed did not work hard enough or could not manage properly and therefore thrived on welfare benefits. The Shildrick and Macdonald (2013) argue that this is not only an attempt at dissociating oneself or one's family from the stigma of poverty but an example of how the larger discourse of 'undeserving poor' prevailing in British society has been imbibed by few among the working class. It is interesting to note how the distinctions between 'us' and 'them' are also forged on the basis of mothering styles or the kind of diet that is given to the children.

Beverly Skeggs' (2002) work with working class women in Britain is inspired by Bourdieu and using his framework of capitals she analyses "distinctions within the working class" (p.76). She argues that the attempts at differentiation and pursuit of respectability, a concept she used throughout, has to be seen in the light of how poor, working class mothers have been negatively constructed, pathologized and represented. Skeggs' work becomes relevant to the discussion of mothering practices of working class in Chapter 7 of this thesis. Respectability she argues, therefore, is usually a concern of those "who are not seen to have it" (Skeggs, 2002, p.2). It is a

“signifier of class” as “it informs how we speak, who we speak to, how we classify others, what we study and how we know who we are (or are not)” (Skeggs, 2002, 1). Therefore, the “(dis)identification” and “dissimulations” and claims of “respectable distinctions” by the working class women in her study have to be seen in this light. Drawing upon Bourdieu’s concept of distinction, Skeggs (2002) explores the “improvement discourse” among working class women who wanted to improve their appearance including clothing, bodies and disposition and homes, consumption and leisure. “Class was configured through the improvement discourse because in order to improve they had to differentiate themselves from those who did not or could not improve” (Skeggs 2002: p.82).

Skeggs writes: “The real working class of these women is something from which they are desperately trying to escape. It is why they are doing college courses. They want to be seen as different (Skeggs 2002: p.76)”. The course that Skeggs’ respondents pursue is a “caring course” that “educates” working class women to become “responsible” housewives by caring for the family and contributing to the society. This again is rooted in the idea of “deficiency” of working classes and sees women as bearing the responsibility of caring.

Hence an important takeaway from the literature on dis-identification and distancing within the working class relates to the everyday discourses among people, policymakers and politicians around the poor that stigmatize the poor. In both Skeggs’(2002) study and that of Shildrick and Macdonald (2013) we see attempts to distance from such stigmatizing portraits.

While these studies have looked at the internal differentiation by having or not having formal education which might mediate some of these practices and claims of distinction has not been looked at. And this is where the present study’s objective to understand the internal divisions within the poor becomes relevant. In our study of differentiation within the poor we focus primarily on education as a cultural capital and how it is being pursued and acquired by a small section among the urban poor to construct a distinct status and to achieve social mobility. However, the other two forms of capital and how the three interact with each other and how our participants seek to convert one into another is equally important.

b. Reconversion strategies and idea of scarcity

Social actors also strategise to convert one form of capital into another and diversify its composition and increase their volume. This is what Bourdieu (1984) calls "reconversion strategies" i.e. "permanent actions and reactions whereby each group strives to maintain or change its position in the social structure" (p.157). An example for this can be found in Nambissan (2009) where she draws attention toward the reconversion strategies of "new rich', businessmen and farmers from the middle castes who had benefited from the early policies of the independent Indian state encouraging agriculture and industry" (p.286) to convert this economic capital into cultural capital by investing in education, particularly in English medium schooling, for their children. Therefore, a fraction that is rich in economic capital strategizes to convert it into cultural and social capital. Similarly, cultural capital in the form of a degree from an esteemed college or university then helps the social actor to convert it into economic gains. Reconversion of capitals is a useful concept for the present study as well (discussed in Chapter 6).

The dominant classes also have to keep investing in maintaining their distinct status because the classes which were hitherto deprived or less endowed with capitals will eventually come to possess the capitals owned by the classes above them. As soon as they come to acquire the same capitals (over a period of time) on which the dominant classes or its fractions' claims to distinction rests, the element of scarcity or exclusivity is threatened. Therefore, the dominant classes have to constantly find new ways to differentiate itself and retain its position in the hierarchy. The idea of "scarcity", "exclusivity" and "distinctiveness" are important keywords in understanding how Bourdieu analyses class distinction as it is defined by this quality of being scarce as opposed to popular or common. Fundamentally, it is the scarcity of resources and the competition to maintain this scarcity that helps an agent of the dominant class to assert its distinct status. This is clear from the following point which Bourdieu (1984) makes:

> "whenever the attempts of the initially most disadvantaged groups to come into possession of the assets previously possessed by groups immediately above them in the social hierarchy or immediately ahead of them in the race are more or less counterbalanced, at all levels, by the efforts of better-placed groups to maintain the scarcity and distinctiveness of their assets"(p.161).

Bourdieu also explains this point in the context of education:

> "When class fractions who previously made little use of the school system enter the race for academic qualifications, the effect is to force the groups whose reproduction was mainly or exclusively achieved through education to step up their investments so as to maintain the relative scarcity of their qualifications, and consequently their position in the class structure"(p.133).

Here two points are significant. One, the hierarchy is perpetuated as the classes endowed with capitals keep investing for conservation of their status quo and keeping their distinguished qualities intact. Second, the scarcity and exclusivity is contextual and relational and has to be seen in the social environment in which agent lives and what is valued by the agents. This becomes clearer when we look at another quote by Bourdieu (1986): "…the specifically symbolic logic of distinction … (e.g. *being able to write in a world of illiterates)* derives a scarcity value from its position in the distribution of cultural capital and yields profits of distinction for its owner" (p. 49, emphasis added). Going by Bourdieu's example, if being educated is highly valued in a slum settlement, a site of our study, with a population with no or less education, the few members possessing an undergraduate degree or a diploma will be distinguished members.

The idea of rarity/ scarcity /distinctiveness is also understood more clearly when placed in direct opposition to the practices defined as "vulgar" or "massy", "popular" because they are "easy and common" which brings us to the ideas of classification and opposition in Bourdieu's (1984) theoretical apparatus:

> "in cultural consumption, the main opposition , by overall capital value is between the practices designated by their rarity as distinguished those of the fractions richest in both economic and cultural capital and the practices socially identified as vulgar because they both easy and common...(p.176)".

Here a relational aspect in understanding of class is highlighted and the construction of class difference based on opposition or negation is what we will now turn to in the next section.

c. *Taste and Classification in Everyday Life*

The foregoing discussion has already established Bourdieu's argument that taste and sensibilities are socially and economically determined. What often appears inherent or innate is in fact, cultivated. The second characteristic of taste highlighted by him is that it is based on the "first and foremost distastes, disgust provoked by horror or visceral intolerance ('sick-making') of the tastes of others" (1984, p.56). One's own superior taste is defined in relation to the inferiority of someone else's taste. It entails construction of the class 'other' whose taste and preferences are despised and thus help in asserting one's difference. For example, "the light, the refined and the delicate" as opposed to "taste for the heavy, the fat and the coarse" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.185). As Lamont and Lareau (1988) also explain: "Cultural legitimacy is attributed to specific practices in contrast to other practices; the value of each element of a system being defined in relation to the other elements of this same system" (p.157). This classification based on "opposition" and "negation" of other's taste is all pervasive in our everyday lives and how we construct and classify. For this reason, Bourdieu insists we analyse not just the taste in "high" forms of art but even everyday taste and practices around our vital needs such as food and clothing.

> "the dual meaning of the word 'taste' which usually serves to justify the illusions of spontaneous generation which this cultivated disposition tends to produce by presenting itself in the guise of an innate disposition must serve for once to remind us that taste in the sense of the faculty of immediately and intuitively judging aesthetic values is inseparable from taste in the sense of the capacity to discern the flavours of foods which implies a preference for some of them" (Bourdieu, 1984, p.99).

Significantly, therefore, in his analysis he brings the everydayness of class, i.e., how class is embodied, lived and performed everyday. Even how people look at their own bodies or invest time and effort on "cultivating their bodies" are all part of this everyday performance of class and struggle for maintaining the distinct status. As one moves up the social hierarchy one can observe how the treatment and presentation of the body also changes. The body, "gesture, posture, behaviour" (Bourdieu 1984: p.192), itself becomes an important marker of social class. In *Distinction* Bourdieu draws our attention even to finer details of classed behaviour like how

one blows their nose or sneezes or whether the laughter is repressed or a loud belly laugh. According to Weininger (2005):

> "For Bourdieu… the aesthetic sensibility that orients actors' everyday choices in matters of food, clothing, sports, art and music, and which extends to things as seemingly trivial as their bodily posture serves as a vehicle through which they symbolize their social similarity with and their social difference from one another. Through the minutiae of everyday consumption, in other words, each individual continuously classifies him- or herself, and simultaneously, all others as alike or different" (p.98, emphasis added).

Distinction gives the reader a detailed analysis of taste and choices of food (including spending on food, "of treating, serving, presenting, offering" (Bourdieu, 1984 p.193), furniture, clothing, beauty care, music, sports, politics, theatre, films and so on. This is where it is important to discuss our point of departure from Bourdieu's work. This departure is necessary for two reasons: one, as discussed earlier Bourdieu's work is largely focussed on the dominant classes and their fractions. Two, it is set in a different time and social context where one has to take into account realities of caste and gender as well. Therefore, while we borrow some key ideas such as of capitals, scarcity, classification and categorization for its explanatory power, we have to look for different markers of distinction in an urban poor settlement in India. For this purpose, Sara Dickey's (2016) longitudinal ethnography *Class in Urban India* where she unpacks how class is experienced and performed in everyday life and how people categorize themselves and others into "people like us" and "people like them" is useful. It is important to note that Dickey's work is also inspired by Bourdieu's notions of capitals and looks at the lives of low-income groups (or an emerging middle class). In our study, therefore, we discuss markers of difference and distinction that not only emerged from the social contexts of the poor but those which foreground the centrality of education. We look at intra class differences and how these differences are mediated by formal education. For example, how respondents differentiated the educated from the uneducated based on disposition, language, clothing, friendships and social networks, lifestyle and overall worldviews.

II. Accessing the field and data collection

While we are aware that all urban poor do not live in slums and all those who live in slums are not poor (as discussed in the Introduction), we chose the slum as a site for fieldwork as it is where the urban poor are largely concentrated in a city and offer us a starting point. A slum with a more settled than a nomadic or a "floating population" (Ranga and Rao 1991) was chosen to suit the purpose of this study. Map 2.1 indicates the size of clusters as per the number of *jhuggies* each site constitutes in Delhi and Table 2.1 provides a list of 675 JJ clusters with the number of households mentioned in each[31].

Table 2.1: Number of JJ Clusters in Delhi

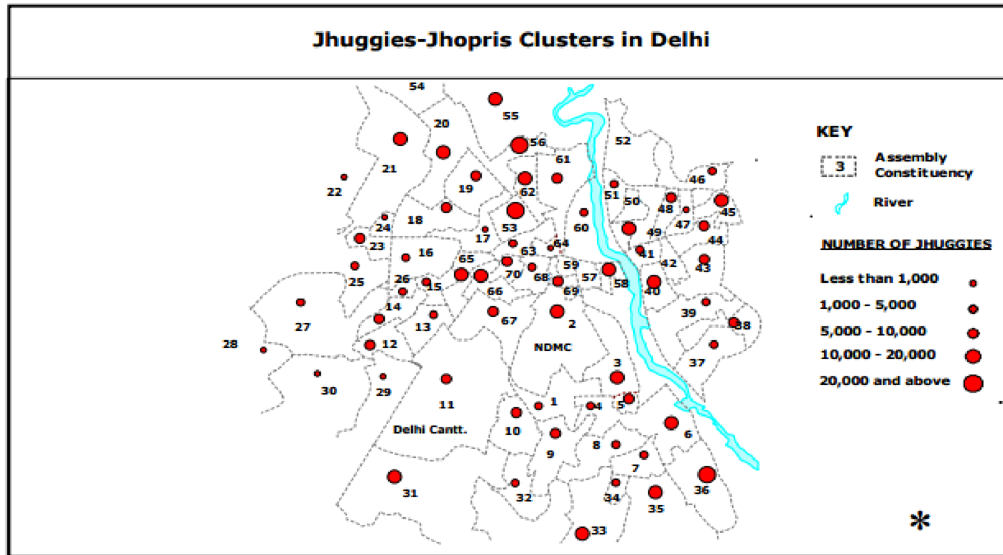
Number of Households Range	Number of JJ Clusters
0-100	185
101-500	312
501-1000	111
1001-1500	34
1501-2000	15
2001-2500	3
2501-3000	4
3001-3500	2
3501-4000	3
4001-4500	Nil
4501-5000	3
5000 and above	2
10,000 and above	1
Total	**675**

Source: Developed by the researcher based on the data available at Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board's official website

As per the available list, clusters having households in the range of 4500 to 5000 include three, namely, Govind Puri, Kalkaji (South Delhi); Kusumpur Pahari Block-B, Vasant Vihar (South Delhi); and Janta Mazdoor Camp, Zafrabad Part-II (North East). Clusters having over 5000

[31] http://delhishelterboard.in/main/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/jjc_list_for_website.pdf

households are Janta Jeewan Tigri Part-I (South Delhi) and Shahbad Daulatpur Block-A, E & F (North West).



Source: Slum Wing MCD-Design and Planning Cell

Map 2.1 Location and size of JJ clusters in Delhi

For our study, the Govindpuri cluster in South Delhi which emerged roughly around the late 1970s was chosen for the fieldwork. It comprises three camps (Chapter 3 discusses the taxonomies in detail) or cluster of *jhuggies*: Bhoomiheen, Navjeevan and Nehru camp. Govindpuri was selected primarily because of accessibility. The researcher was aware of the NGO which operates a low fee school for the slum dwellers inside the slum and had some previous experience of volunteering in the NGO. Since the NGO had good presence among the slum dwellers, when the researcher approached the NGO and explained the purpose of the study and sought their help in getting entry into the community, the staff agreed to assist her. The following sections provide details of how the site was accessed, data was collected, what methods were used in collection of data and the challenges faced.

a. Accessing/Entering the Field Site:

As mentioned earlier, the initial attempt as a researcher to gain entry into the slum community was via a non-governmental organization (NGO) that runs a low-fee recognized private school in

Bhoomiheen camp and draws children from poor backgrounds from the Govindpuri slum as well as other nearby clusters. The NGO has been running this school in the neighbourhood since the 1990s, using alternative pedagogies to teach children and is well known among the residents. It also runs an early childhood care centre for the children and imparts vocational training to women. The researcher joined the school as a volunteer in 2017 and taught spoken English to a small group of children aged between five and eight year old for about two months. In the meanwhile, she also accompanied the NGO staff for weekly surveys and awareness drives to enrol out-of-school children in their school. However, these exercises were not helpful for the researcher to establish contact with the residents, therefore, she began visiting the *jhuggis* on her own and interacting with the residents, especially the women who were available in the mornings and afternoons.

Houses in slums are arranged in such a way that for outsiders, particularly, from non-slum areas it can appear as a confusing maze difficult to navigate at first. This nature of spatial and social organization can be understood when one dwells into how a JJ Cluster is produced (production of the settlement is discussed elaborately in Chapter 3). A small group of families come and set up their abode on a vacant government owned land in the city where they are later joined by more individuals from their own villages who build their *jhuggies* wherever they find space. Usually the initial settlers occupy larger space while the later migrants have to settle down in whatever space remains to be occupied. The researcher would thus often lose her way in this labyrinth looking for a particular house or trying to find her way out of the slum and was guided in those times by the residents.

A slum is also a place where the streets are animated with activities of the inhabitants, men and women moving in and out of the slum for work, children leaving for and coming back from school, women scuttling to fill water, hawkers calling out to people and some inhabitants just roaming about in the streets (*galis*). The researcher found several women sitting on the thresholds waiting for water supply and sought permission to speak to them. Contacts were also established with the shopkeepers in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan camp and some conversations took place within the setting of the shops. It seldom happened that the residents would sit and speak to the researcher. Most of the time they would carry on with their business and simultaneously provided answers to the questions asked. Women would continue to cook / wash

/ clean the house during the interaction. The few respondents who were interviewed in the shops would also attend to the customers while speaking. The researcher visited the slum at different times of the day - mornings, afternoons and late evenings.

b. Data collection phase

Data was collected in two parts. The initial few days in the settlement were spent in generally speaking to the residents and the NGO staff about the age of the settlement and the spatial distribution of the different groups which were settled in the three camps. This was followed by a small survey of about 90 households using snowball technique to get a sense of the diverse origins, socio-economic backgrounds, livelihoods, schooling, and educational aspirations for their children and general outlook towards education. Complete and reliable data was, however available for only 84 households. Out of these 65 were Hindus and 18 were from other religious backgrounds (Muslims 16, Sikh 1, Christian 1). An interview schedule (Annexure 1) was created to capture the household profiles including details on number of family members, ownership status of the house (whether rented or owned), duration of stay, place of origin, education of family members, number of children enrolled in schools, type of school, occupation of parents. Qualitative responses such as educational aspirations, everyday life and struggles, perceptions and evaluations of schools were also collected during this survey. The purpose of the household survey was to capture and quantify the aspects along which differences can exist in the space. During the survey and informal interactions, data was also gathered about the emergence and evolution of this settlement.

The samples were chosen based on snowball and purposive sample, however, attempts to reach out to people regularly on the streets or sometimes going door to door also enabled the researcher to get a diverse set of respondents from different, linguistic, regional and educational, occupational backgrounds. It is important to acknowledge that the researcher was introduced to several respondents by Lalita who teaches primary sections in the tuition centres run for the slum children by Carmel Community Church. As she was accustomed to going from door to door in search of students to enrol in the centre, she was a friendly face for the residents and it helped the researcher in establishing contact and rapport with some families.

Since a considerable amount of time is spent outdoors by the residents it is hard not to get noticed or evoke curiosity. The researcher met Lalita when the latter had come to collect her water container at another resident's house whom the researcher was speaking to at the time and who supplied water to the neighbours. Lalita inquired about the purpose of the survey like several other residents ("*ab yeh kis cheez ka survey hai*, also suggesting how they are accustomed to being surveyed). Later Lalita agreed to talk to the researcher, invited the latter home, also agreeing to participate in the survey. This is how contacts were built with several other respondents as they would join the ongoing conversations or come up to the researcher to enquire about the purpose of the study. Another respondent who helped in introducing the researcher to her neighbours and acquaintances was Ritu. She is a yoga trainer and works part-time as a private tutor and is also pursuing M.A (Hindi) from Indira Gandhi National Open University.

In both the cases the relationships became more reciprocal over a period of time. Lalita is also one of the few women who herself took initiatives to keep in touch with the researcher. Once she also reached out to the latter when a letter had to be drafted for a bank. She also sought information on how to get a housing loan or purchase a laptop for her daughter. When Lalita became a multilevel marketer, she requested the researcher to become a part of her network, an offer which had to be politely declined. Ritu also kept in touch and on occasions shared her personal struggles and sought advice.

In the second phase of the research, a much smaller sample of seven families from the household survey was chosen based on their ownership of assets and property outside the slum, housing quality, schooling of their children and investment on education and aspirations and strategies for education. These are also families who categorically identified themselves as being "different" from the rest and having a different worldview (*soch*). In-depth interviews were conducted with these respondents with the help of an interview-guide comprising broad themes such as attitudes to education, schooling choices, aspirations. It is here an attempt was made to understand their constructions of the 'educated' and 'uneducated' based on different markers. These respondents were interviewed two to three times for duration of one to two hours each time. After the first round of interviews some patterns were identified and respondents were probed on those ideas on the next visit. During the course of the research two families out of seven also moved out of the

slum into a nearby accommodation in the authorized part of Govindpuri. Of these two, the researcher was able to make a visit to the new accommodation of one family and observe the difference in their old and new ways of material conditions. The qualitative data collected from these interviews forms the backbone of Chapter 6 where the aspect of distinction has been elaborately dealt with.

It is important to note that although two distinct phases of data collection have been mentioned, in reality there were overlaps. A combination of survey, observation, semi-structured interviews and informal interactions was undertaken to collect data from field and build a descriptive account of the settlement, its socio-spatial makeup, daily lives, routines and practices. The researcher also visited Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) and collected data from the survey conducted by the organization in the JJ clusters existing in different parts of the city. DUSIB's data helped in building a demographic profile of the Govindpuri cluster including the population, their caste and religious backgrounds, the places of origin in the settlement in Chapter 3. This was substantiated and integrated with the researcher' own survey and qualitative interviews conducted over a period of one year. Interviews were transcribed as verbatim and looked over and over again to identify themes as well as gaps. At the same time the objectives of the research were kept in mind to ensure that the data was in sync with them. Several times the researcher again went back to some of the respondents to find answers to fill these gaps. Reading existing empirical works simultaneously also helped the researcher to identify themes which went unnoticed while interviewing or looking at the transcribed data. This exercise definitely helped the researcher in identifying relevant data and in its interpretations.

Another noteworthy point is that an important theme can unravel during the fieldwork which was previously unanticipated, say, at the time of developing a research proposal. For example, the aspirations and mothering activities of urban poor mothers and the gender based differences was previously unforeseen and took shape as an idea for a full fledged chapter (Chapter 7) only during the course of research.

Other than this the researcher also regularly observed display pictures and status updates of some of the young respondents (19-29 years old) who were added on social media like Whatsapp. This is a generation which was active on Whatsapp, regularly updated their profile pictures and status which gave the researcher insight into their activities, likes and dislikes. This was one of the

ways to interpret how they want to be seen by others. It gave some interesting ideas about their choice of clothing, hairstyles, role models, travel, gadgets and their taste in music and films, ideas about relationships, political views and importantly, how they presented themselves on a social media platform (discussed in Chapter 6).

III. Fieldwork Challenges and Reflections

A fieldworker has to grapple with several challenges and dilemmas during the course of research. There are moments of intense disappointment as well as moments of deep satisfaction. There were unproductive days when respondents would hardly open up and show lack of interest in sharing their information and opinions. In such cases the interaction lasted for 10-15 minutes and the researcher had to leave gauging that the respondent was not very keen on having a conversation. But again, there were days when a single respondent would freely speak to the researcher for duration of two to three hours sharing the ebbs and flows of their life, leaving the researcher with a sense of satisfaction. This section discusses a few challenges, predicaments and reflections from the fieldwork conducted in the Govindpuri cluster.

One of the challenges was in getting access to the respondents due to their tight and intense work schedules. Women who were employed as factory workers, vegetable vendors, domestic workers, or teachers were only available to talk in the afternoon during their break when they would visit home to prepare lunch, ferry their kids to or back from school or tuition. The researcher was always asked to visit them between 12 pm and 1 pm. Also a crucial time of the day for women particularly was when they had to get water from bore wells or public taps and this was also a time when they were reluctant to talk.

Men were mostly unavailable during the day to have a conversation except the elderly or middle aged men who were shopkeepers or young males who were either roaming about or huddled in one corner of some street. Most of the men returned late in the evening or at night and hence, many were only available on Sundays. Not only the physical absence of males made it difficult to access them, the gendered codes of behaviour also made it a challenge to approach them sometimes. Even if once in a while men were found at home they would go out of the house, leaving their wives to talk or retreat into the adjoining room (if available) in the presence of a

female researcher. This sometimes caused anxiety as the researcher increasingly felt that a large number of respondents were women which may present a skewed narrative.

A strong sense of discomfort and hesitation was felt by the researcher when asking questions about income or possession of household assets and this arose out of the apprehension that it might make them suspicious about the ramifications of the study. The slum dwellers are a highly vulnerable population and always under perpetual threat of eviction and displacement. Therefore, asking questions about the ownership status of the house, assets such as television, air-conditioner, and washing machine etc., can be threatening. They may also perceive it as a threat to their entitlements to government welfare services.

Family members sometimes suspected the researcher to be an employee from the government and this notion was immediately associated with their so called "illegal" occupancy status on a government owned land. As we have discussed in Chapter 3 the talks over demolition of the slum were ongoing since 2003 and relocation of "eligible residents" in the newly built apartments was due in 2018. Therefore, often an unspoken sense of suspicion combined with vulnerability lurked that the researcher might be somehow related to the government and the data may in some way impact their life negatively. Therefore, the researcher had to constantly reassure them that the study was only for academic purpose and the data that was being collected was in no way going to harm them and their entitlements to services or their current residential status. As another researcher who has worked in the same settlement previously wrote:

> "On one hand, slum-dwellers are aware that if they are not representative of slum living (poor living conditions, lack of education and other basic facilities), they will not be beneficiaries of grants and schemes under various government projects. On the other hand, they have to negotiate with stereotypes and prejudices in their everyday lives because of these representations which makes them circumspect when it comes to interactions with middle class city dwellers" (Chandola 2010, unpublished thesis).

Such dynamics also occasionally raised questions about the validity of the information that was being shared. For example, one respondent stated that her husband was a daily wage labourer, however, observation of her housing condition and household assets such a flat screen television

and a microwave gave a different impression. Another respondent did not share the fact that she used to sew garments on piece wage rate at home. It was brought to the researcher's notice by her neighbour who happened to drop by. Therefore, whatever information was given pertaining to income had to be correlated with observations. What is more important to note about these instances of holding back some information is that it reveals their precarious conditions and how there is always a looming threat of losing whatever little they possessed like their *jhuggi* or ration card.

Another challenge was to convince the participants that this study was different from the previous surveys that may have been undertaken in the slum. Slums are popular sites for surveys, be it for documents like ration card, health services and schemes, or for educational purposes. Rumours about a survey to ascertain the eligibility of residents for a flat in the resettlement colony was also doing rounds at the time of this fieldwork (discussed elaborately in the Chapter 3). Therefore, residents were very used to the idea of a surveyor knocking their doors once in a while. When the researcher shared with one of her close respondents, Meena, that women are often too busy to talk, the latter responded:

> "They are busy and also because people keep coming for surveys but nobody benefits from them. So people think what is the point of sharing information…energy…they (surveyors) tell people to send children to schools, enrol in courses. Some educated parents still interact with them [surveyors] but the others who are not educated find it boring and refuse to talk".

Meena's point about frequent surveys that do not bring about much change in the lives of slum dwellers (mostly in terms of changes in material conditions like better civic services or education) is a point that has persistently nagged the researcher as well. This is a significant question when one is researching groups located on the margins of society. It has made the researcher often wonder whether this study too is another exploitative exercise from which respondents will not gain anything.

To ensure a smooth and uninterrupted interview process the researcher always avoided sitting outside or on the threshold during interviews where there was a possibility of getting interrupted

by neighbours inquiring about the researcher's presence or the purpose of the study. It also made it difficult for the respondents to talk freely in the presence of neighbours about details like incomes and share personal stories. Sometimes curious and suspicious glances of bystanders were enough to unsettle both the interviewer and the interviewee. However, such times when the researcher had to stand at the doorstep and talk to the respondent were rare. Most of the interviews were conducted inside the house which not only allowed for some privacy but also observation of their material conditions. However, the indoor conversations were also sometimes interrupted when a neighbour dropped by which is usual in a highly dense slum neighbourhood without clearly demarcated private and public space. On such occasions although the respondents were hesitant to share family income, lengthy discussions took place over topics like domestic violence (a shared experience of women), water woes, their struggles to sustain the household, trials and tribulations of getting their children educated.

What is interesting is that in many households, small children were around and they promptly interjected and responded to some of the questions asked by the researcher, such as their school or tuition fee. In one household, for instance, the daughters had good command over English and were quick to read the schedule. They in fact facilitated the interview and offered to fill up the details in the interview schedule when their parents started sharing the details with the researcher.

All the respondents who were visited by the researcher were polite and most of them extended warmth and hospitality with the offer of tea. Whenever tea was offered, somebody from the family mostly a child was sent to a nearby shop to get milk and biscuits which also perhaps reveals something about their stocks and calculated purchasing of consumables. In fact, the data that emerged from the informal conversations over tea proved to be most insightful as they spoke more freely. Therefore, offer for having tea from the family's side was never declined as it always meant that the ice had been somewhat broken and the researcher could linger for some more time. The second moment of comfort was when the participants agreed to exchange contact numbers.

As Ocejo (2013) points out, an ethnographer has to transcend different social boundaries between him/her and the research participants to be able to build a relationship of trust and get in-depth data for the research. Social boundaries are primarily based on gender, caste, class, age,

education and spatial location. In this case the most prominent form of social boundary was that of class. Respondents always enquired about the social and educational background of the researcher and to establish a reciprocal relationship and trust it was important to share correct information. But as a resident of an upper middle class colony, the residential location placed the researcher in a certain class position as soon as the details about residential and family background were shared.

Once in a while the respondents took into account the researcher's class position while drawing some comparisons with their own lives. To quote one instance, once a woman remarked that her single room will be equivalent to size of the bathroom in the colony where the researcher resides. A remark of this nature immediately exposes the operation of power in the relationship that the researcher was trying to build even when the researcher was not even intending to show these seeming symbols of power. On another occasion, a middle aged midday meal worker shared that she is not educated enough to be even able to check what the researching might be recording in the survey instrument. But there were times when this knowledge-based power was made to tilt in their favour like a respondent assumed a middle class city-dweller to be ignorant and mockingly remarked: "she would not know how a Neem tree looks like?"

Since the settlement is also a highly gendered space, confusions arose over the "appropriate" attire to be worn for the field visits and this dilemma arose both from the researcher's consciousness about class and gender position. Several women and young girls in the slum mentioned that there were dress codes for women and anyone who wore trendy clothes like jeans or skirts or sleeveless dresses were ridiculed for lacking "modesty". Men and women also often expressed surprise at the fact how a female can go around the slum alone especially without a male companion to "keep her safe".

One key challenge pertained to writing and representation of worldviews, everyday life, strategies and practices of people living on the margins authentically without further stigmatizing and reinforcing existing stereotypes about them. "Ethnography presents sociologists with a unique set of methodological tools to analyze social worlds…demystify city settings, and portray misunderstood and misrepresented groups in ways that provide details and explanations that stretch beyond common conceptions and stereotypes" (Ocejo, 2013, 12). Efforts had to be made to avoid either romanticizing or criminalizing them and be as objective as possible in narrating

their stories. While conscious efforts were made to avoid influencing the collection and analysis of data with middle class perspectives it may not have been possible to avoid it entirely. As a middle class resident of South Delhi the researcher had grown up listening to the stereotyped views about Govindpuri and other slums in Delhi. She has several times crossed the slum gazing at the shops, houses, activities like people struggling to get a bucket of water from a tanker. Again efforts were made to go with an open mind, entry into the slum with sociological lens, a systematic inquiry and listening to their accounts challenged some of her perceptions about slum life and its residents which were formed over the years.

Lastly, as Thieme (2017) writes about ethnography, "At best, we can attempt to capture fragments of lives, impressions and experiences that may be shared and yet individually felt" (p.220). This is true in the case of the present study as well. Often while going through field notes and interview data the researcher has felt that perhaps a particular question could have been posed differently, or a response could have been probed a little more and so on. Gaps remain and the study has perhaps only managed to capture fragments of people's lives as Thieme (2017) puts it and there is much more left to explore, examine and understand about their lives.

Chapter 3

Production of a Cluster of Urban Poverty: Govindpuri in South Delhi

I. Introduction

A *jhuggi* is a small, makeshift hut made mostly from materials like bamboo and plastic sheets. Dupont and Ramanathan (2008) write, "precarious forms of housing, self-made structures fabricated from salvaged materials, i.e. flimsy, makeshift shelters, cramped shacks and huts are called *jhuggi-jhopris* in Delhi, which when grouped together in certain areas constitute *bastis* or *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters" (p.2). Precariousness of *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters[32] (JJCs) results not only from the material conditions of existence but poor health, education, and subjective well-being but also from a constant threat of eviction. Such settlements often survive for over 10 to 15 years and the makeshift huts are converted into *pukka* houses using brick and mortar but the designation of JJC assigned to them remains unchanged. As per Census 2011 estimates, there are about 420,000 households under the category of JJCs, which is about 15 per cent of the Delhi's population (Sheikh and Banda, 2014). In Delhi, these clusters are governed by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) which is responsible for keeping detailed records about JJCs and their eviction and resettlement.

JJ clusters are situated on lands owned by public agencies like the Delhi Development Authority (DDA), the Railways or the Central Public Works Department (CPWD). They also come up near drains (*nallahs*), waste dumps, along pavements and in public parks. Importantly, *jhuggis* always emerge near construction sites, markets or industries which draw their workforce from these settlements. Since these shelters are set up without permission they are labeled as "encroachments" on public land. The term 'squatters' which is interchangeably used to refer to these settlements also means occupation of land without legal permission or right over it. But

[32] According to a Policy Brief brought out by the Centre for Policy Research (2014), the *jhuggi jhopri* cluster (JJC) is said to be one of the seven types of 'unplanned' settlement designated as such by the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) (p.1).

how do these clusters emerge, grow and evolve into large settlements in the cities? What is the everyday life in these settlements? On what basis does group formation and boundary making take place within such large clusters? How are social groups spatially and socially organized? What is the role of the state in the production and evolution of such spaces? These are some of the questions this chapter tries to answer by taking Govindpuri JJ Cluster as a case. The chapter attempts to build a socio-historical picture of Govindpuri by delving into the evolution of this settlement from the time makeshift shelters came up on a rocky and barren land to the present day when two-three storeyed *pukka* houses of varying kinds dot the same landscape. It provides an ethnographic account of social and physical space of the settlement, everyday lives, sounds and sights that characterize it, the conflicts, negotiations, relationships, and interactions of the residents within and with the world outside.

II. Govindpuri JJ Cluster: Formation, Structure and Demographic Characteristics:

Origins and Structure of the Squatter Settlement

A JJ Cluster often emerges when workers are brought or drawn from other states to engage in the construction of infrastructure or when the city hosts large scale events of national importance like the Asian Games of 1982 or Common Wealth Games in 2010. A significant population of the Yamuna Pushta settlement in Delhi which was demolished, displacing 150,000 people comprised largely of construction workers "who were brought to Delhi by labour contractors during the Asian Games in 1982 and settled in Pushta" (Menon-Sen and Bhan, 2008, p.2). Similarly, Narayanan (2019) traces the history of Jagdamba Camp, another JJ Cluster in South Delhi to the period of 1960s and 1970s when migrants came to Delhi for the construction of Apeejay School. Through the caste and village networks more people are drawn to the sites and the population begins to swell. This is a pan-Indian phenomenon and Neuwirth (2004) captures the production of such spaces in the following paragraph:

> "This is a common practice in India: construction workers living on-site, in improvised hovels that they build themselves. When the job finished and the lease expired, some of the people simply refused to move. Slowly, others joined them on their small plot, and soon theirs was a colony of 300 families" (p.104).

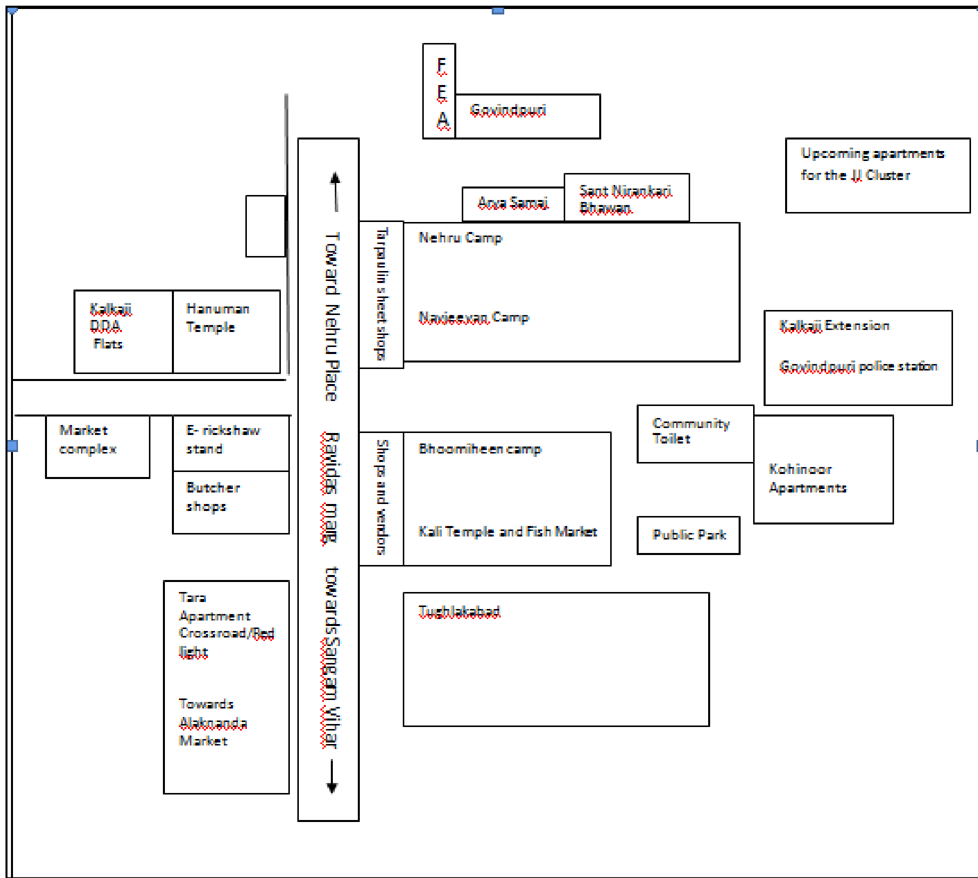
In popular discourse such spaces are classified as 'unplanned' and 'informal' spaces in the city, however, such binary categories of planned/unplanned or formal/informal are highly contested in the circles of urban planning and theory. Informal also gets easily and often wrongly conflated with 'illegal' and the squatter and slum dweller become stigmatized as illegal encroacher. However, scholars challenge these assumptions and associations and point out that the middle class and elites of the city also engage in informality and so-called illegality but it is only the poor and dispossessed who are criminalized and made to pay a heavy price for it (Soni 2000). Take for example, the middle class view of residents living in Yamuna Pushta:

> "the residents of Pushta were painted as illegal migrants from Bangladesh (despite the fact the majority were registered as voters and had ration cards) as beggars and petty criminals (Despite the fact that they were almost all entrepreneurs or workers in the informal sector), or as people who made the city dirty (despite the fact that many were municipal sweepers, rag pickers and garbage recyclers and thus actively involved in keeping the city clean" (Menon-Sen and Bhan, 2008, p.3).

Dupont and Ramanathan (2008) point out that, instead of labeling the slum dwellers as squatters, encroachers or illegal migrants, it is important to critique urban governance and its inability to provide affordable housing for the poor and low income groups. "The latter had no other choice but to occupy vacant lands, essentially public, and opt for self constructed makeshift housing (jhuggi-jhopris), one-room huts consolidated with time, leading to the creation of slums" (Dupont and Ramanathan, 2008, p.6).

As per the survey conducted by Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB, hereafter) in 2012, the JJ Cluster in South Delhi's Govindpuri area is one of the three largest clusters in the city, having close to 6,500 households. The land on which this cluster exists belongs to Delhi Development Authority (DDA) which is the "single largest landowning agency in Delhi, and 48% of the land currently occupied by the 701 identified *jhuggi-jhopri* clusters across the capital belongs to this central government agency" (DUSIB cited in Dupont, Banda and others, 2014, p.40).

Govindpuri came up as a resettlement colony where refugees from Pakistan and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) after the Indian partition in 1947 and liberation war for Bangladesh in 1971 were rehabilitated (Chandola, 2010; Randolph, 2013[33]). There are two types of residential settlements in Govindpuri - one, the authorized colonies of lower middle class residents known as Govindpuri and Govindpuri Extension and two, the unauthorized *jhuggi-jhopri* cluster which provides housing for the poor and is the field setting of this study (See Map 3.1). The JJ Cluster itself constitutes three camps- Bhoomiheen (landless), Navjeevan (New life) and Nehru (named after the first Prime Minister of Independent India).



Map 3.1 Map showing the camps and surrounding markets, localities and landmarks (developed by the researcher)

According to Basu (1988), these *jhuggis* sprung up around 1977 and at that time number of households/ *jhuggis* in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru camps were 2060 and 3801

[33] See 'Delhi choosing high-rise over consultative planning despite national consensus on slums' available at http://globalurbanist.com/2013/05/21/delhi-choosing-high-rise, accessed on 23 November 2019

respectively. The participants in the current study shared that all the three camps came up simultaneously, however, some were of the view that Bhoomiheen camp is the oldest. Bhoomiheen camp is spread over an area of 29,813 square metres, and Navjeevan and Nehru camps together constitute about 45,342 square metres (DUSIB 2012).

Each camp is divided into different blocks. There are four blocks in Bhoomiheen camp (A, B, C, D), six in Navjeevan camp (A ,B ,C ,D ,E, F) and four in Nehru camp (A, B, C, D) (Sriraman 2014). The researcher was told that these blocks were assigned by Community Aid and Sponsorship Program (CASP), an NGO that was active in the cluster in the 1980s and introduced programmes, primarily on educating the poor children. As per DUSIB's (2012) estimate the number of households in the cluster are 2126 in Bhoomiheen camp and 4513 in Navjeevan-Nehru camp. In the year 2012, the total population in Bhoomiheen camp was 9076 and 20,253 in Navjeevan-Nehru camp which puts the total slum population as 29,329 persons.

What these numbers do not tell us is how a cluster of this size with a large population comes into existence. Rather it is in the memories of oldest residents one finds stories of how the settlement sprung up. Phoolan Devi was only 15 when she came to Govindpuri from Itawa, Uttar Pradesh in the 1980s and reminisced that there was nothing except a few *jhuggis*/huts of initial settlers made of plastic sheets, thatch, mats (*chatai*), etc. The land on which her two storeyed *pukka* house stands today was described by her as a barren land with wild bushes and ditches, conjuring up an image of an urban forest (*sara jungle tha*, in the words of several respondents like her). Before her arrival, Phoolan Devi's husband, Ghanshyam, was the first member to come to Delhi and join his brother-in-law (Phoolan's brother) who was already living in a rented accommodation in the authorized colony of Govindpuri and working in a garment export factory in the same area. Ghanshyam also joined the export factory as a tailor. Later Ghanshyam's brothers from the village also migrated and joined the same line of work which shows that the presence of these small and large units of production in Govindpuri drew these migrants who were in search for better livelihood opportunities. When Phoolan Devi joined her husband they set up their shack in the vacant land. Chandola (2010) mentions that some of the earliest migrants of Navjeevan and Bhoomiheen camps first settled in the legal part of Govindpuri as the rent was really low but when it started going up they began settling in the vacant land belonging to the DDA.

> "There were several motives for this, economic reasons being one of them: residents could save money on rent, electricity and water; as slum-dwellers, they did not have to pay taxes; and livelihoods were easily accessible from nearby factories. However, along with these rationalizations, the shift into the slums was seen as a strategic move to acquire resettled land in due course" (Chandola, 2010, p.106).

Several respondents shared that at that time some local leaders or *pradhans* dominated the distribution of land for *jhuggis* and they sold *jhuggis* to the newcomers and thus facilitated the emergence of this cluster. The initial settlers called their extended family and co-villagers and asked them to settle down around them.

What was recurrent in the narratives of the old residents is that they found themselves on a inhabitable land that was rocky, wild and sometimes even used as a burial ground for the dead. Gradually through their own labour they cleared the wilderness to set up their shacks, a process which Datta (2012) calls "domestication of public land" (p.52). These small, single room *jhuggies* in the initial years housed around 9 to 10 family members. More permanent structures started emerging when residents salvaged stones, bricks and mud from nearby areas to build their homes. Phoolan Devi, for instance, shared that she used to bring home one or two bricks whenever she used to go to defecate in the open ground situated near the cluster. Datta (2012) writes: "by building many homes, and living similar lifestyles, the earliest settlers then were not only staking their claims to a piece of the city, they were pioneering the production of squatter settlements in the city (p.51)

a. Nomenclatures and Taxonomies: Jhuggi, camp and colony

The name, Bhoomiheen, meaning landless, aptly captures the precariousness and sense of dispossession of a large number of poor migrants who live in such settlements across the city. Navjeevan meaning "new life" has a more optimistic tone and reflects the hopes of migrants to carve a new and better life in the city. Sriraman (2012) in her study found that all the three camps were named by the residents themselves. While the choice of the name, Bhoomiheen is self-explanatory, Navjeevan, she notes, was named after one of the oldest and socially active

resident's son. On the other hand, one of her interlocutors had this to say about the choice of naming the third camp after the first Prime Minister of India:

> If the other two camp-names had an intimate connection with the residents and their self-perception, Nehru camp surely had no resonance for the communities staying in the cluster? Suresh replied, "you have any number of trusts, hospitals named after leaders that influential people like – like Gandhi trust, Gandhi hospital, why can't we similarly choose to name our camps after leaders *we like*? (Sriraman, 2012, 202) [34](italics in original).

In Delhi, there are several other camps named after influential political leaders, like Gandhi camp, Indira camp or Ambedkar camp. In fact, there are other camps located in different parts of the city bearing the same name as Nehru camp. Not only this, one finds camps named after castes and communities such as Balmiki camp and Harijan Camp[35], which is suggestive that a large population in these settlements are Dalits. Names like Rajasthani colony or Madrasi Camp are also found, signifying the concentration of a regional/linguistic group as its inhabitants. A "camp" is a designation given by DUSIB to JJ clusters identified for removal and relocation. The word holds the connotation of a state of temporariness, impermanence or "transience" [a term borrowed from Datta (2012)] which is a constant source of anxiety in the lives of its residents.

The respondents of this study referred to their neighbourhood mostly as "*jhuggi*", occasionally as *jhopad patti* and sometimes as "*basti*" or "camp" in their conversations with the researcher while acknowledging at the same time that *pukka* houses have replaced the actual makeshift structures called "*jhuggis*". The local understanding of their tenure rights and the distinction between 'illegal camp' and 'legal colony' was evident from the interviews. One respondent said that their neighbourhood cannot be called a colony because it is an unauthorized settlement sitting on government owned land and hence it is called a camp. The authorized settlements around the cluster are colonies, he added. Given below is another exchange between two respondents:

---

[34] http://hdl.handle.net/10603/31686

[35] See DUSIB's list of JJ Clusters available at http://delhishelterboard.in/main/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/List-of-JJ-675-Clusters1.pdf

"Usha: approximately after one year the *jhuggi* will be demolished.
Researcher: is it?
Usha : that's what we have heard…because it is a camp.
Veena: This is a camp…not our land (*vyaktigoto*[36] *jomin na)*...this is government's land".

This conversation took place in January 2018 and as per the respondent the *jhuggis* were slated to be demolished after one year. However, as we speak one year later in December 2020 the *jhuggis* remain intact. But what this reinforces is that the talk of the impending and inevitable demolition keeps making round in the settlement. This sense of impermanence and precariousness permeates into every aspect of the survival of residents whether it is access to opportunities for socio-economic betterment or daily amenities like water. Moreover, material investment in the house is always threatened by the impending eviction.

What is curious is that the "camp" status of Govindpuri JJC has remained for almost 40 years since these three camps originated in the late 1970s. This is the same decade when the infamous slum demolition and relocation drive in Delhi was most intense under the National Emergency (1975-1977) imposed by then Government of India. By the next decade, in the 1990s, Delhi's slum policy underwent a change and it was decided that that no squatters would be demolished without an alternative site for relocation, an aspect we shall return to later in the section on the role of state. The decade of 1990s also coincides with a significant event that is part of the collective memory of the residents i.e. the massive fire in Bhoomiheen camp caused reportedly by a gas cylinder explosion. The fire burnt down several *katcha jhuggis* made of raw materials in this camp. According to an excerpt from a news report in Nair's (2003) book, Govindpuri fire broke out in 1991 and 16 deaths, mostly of young children, aged between one and ten years old were reported. This incident got wide media coverage and caught the attention of the ministers and Delhi administration. The news report stated that while the politicians showed concern over the "deteriorating conditions of the Capital's slums… he was non-committal on the demand of the local MP to provide 25 yard residential plots to each family" (The Statesman, 1 October 1991 cited in Nair, 2003, 295). In this respect, Nair (2003) makes an interesting analysis of the official

[36] Meaning personal or private.

and media narratives about such events where the role of human agency in the making of such disasters is underplayed and attributed to "natural kind" like fire or "acts of god" and state's responsibility of providing decent housing for the low income groups is absolved.

After this incident all the homes in the affected areas were rebuilt as *pukka* and semi-pukka houses with the help from the government in order to secure their homes from such calamities. Even in this case some residents complained that the financial compensation was not equally distributed and was appropriated by those who were locally more powerful in the slum.

The outbreak of fire and the damage it caused to the life and property of these residents is not an isolated incident but is common in squatter settlements and is a repeated reminder of the vulnerabilities that pervade their lives (The Guardian, 5 September 2018)[37]. The building materials used by the poor often make them susceptible to fires. Secondly, fire spreads rapidly in a thick settlement causing considerable damage to the already scarce assets, money as well as important documents like ration cards for a group that has very little in terms of insurance. There is another theory that often such fires are deliberately caused by the authorities to get rid of the *jhuggis* (Neuwirth, 2004). Rebuilding homes and lives including getting new documents after fires, natural calamities or state driven demolitions is an economically taxing and time consuming exercise for the poor.

But who are these people whom we club together under the label of 'urban poor'. In the following section we unpack both the neighbourhood and the category.

b. Social Composition

i. Caste and Class Convergence

In this section, we will discuss the social composition of the cluster (Table 3.1) and see what insights it offers about the nature of Indian slums and socio-spatial hierarchies. It needs to be mentioned that data for only 2089 and 4450 households in Bhoomiheen camp and Navjeevan-Nehru, respectively, are available.

[37] See Devastated and destroyed: Delhi slums struggle to recover from frequent fires at https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/sep/05/devastated-destroyed-delhi-slums-recover-fires accessed on 29 October 2019

Table 3.1 Social Composition of the Clusters				
	Bhoomiheen	(%)	Navjeevan-Nehru	(%)
Total	2089		4450	
General	364	17.42	1114	25.03
SC	1125	53.85	1888	42.43
ST	13	0.62	60	1.35
OBC	587	28.10	1388	31.19
Minorities(out of total)	186	8.90	1010	22.70

In Bhoomiheen camp, 53.85 per cent are Scheduled Castes (SCs), 28.10 per cent are Other Backward Classes (OBCs), 17.42 per cent are general/others category. Only 0.62 per cent are Scheduled Tribes (STs). While minorities constitute 8.90 per cent of the population in Bhoomiheen, 22.70 per cent of the total population in Navjeevan-Nehru camp are minorities[38] largely Muslims. In Navjeevan-Nehru 42.43 per cent are SCs and 31.19 per cent OBCs and 25.03 per cent are general/other category. STs constitute 1.28 per cent of the population. Therefore, 81.95 per cent of the population in Bhoomiheen comprises of SCs and OBCs. Similarly, about 73.78 per cent in Navjeevan and Nehru are SCs and OBCs. The Dalit communities living in these camps are Koli, Teli, Pasi, Saroj, Mahavar, Namashudra (from West Bengal), Chamars/Jatavs, Mehtar/Balmiki (from states like UP and Haryana).

The fact that a large population of these clusters is constituted by SCs, OBCs and STs is a trend found in all poor neighbourhoods across the country and highlights the intersection of caste and wealth based segregation. As per World Bank (2016)[39] while SCs and STs form only 28 per cent of India’s population, 43 per cent of the poor are SC and ST. It adds that poverty is highest among Scheduled Tribes. Wit (2017) corroborates: “generally poverty in India is highest among SCs and tribes, followed by Muslims” (p.28). In a study of squatter settlement in Delhi with a population of approximately between 12,000 to 16,000 Haider (2000) points out that 75 per cent of the population are Dalits. Ayyar and Khandare write that Dalits constitute a majority in the slum population in Mumbai.

[38] In Bhoomiheen camp there 172 Muslim households out of total 2090 household. In Navjeevan-Nehru there are 957 Muslim and 40 Christian households out of 4450 total households.
[39] See https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2016/05/27/india-s-poverty-profile

According to Census 2011, the population of SCs in the slums in India have witnessed a decadal growth of 38 per cent from 2001 to 2011. Their percentage share to the total slum population has increased from 18.5 per cent in 2001 to 20.4 per cent in 2011. Similarly, the Scheduled Tribe population witnessed 51.8 per cent decadal growth. Percentage of STs to total slum population has increased from 2.8 per cent in 2001 to 3.4 per cent in 2011. Therefore, SCs and STs together constitute 23.8 per cent of the slum population which is a testament to the fact that caste and class overlaps and Dalits and tribals are socially, spatially and economically marginalized. According to the Census of India's 2011 estimates, NCT of Delhi has about 25.1-30.0 percent of scheduled caste population living in slums (Primary Census Abstract for Slum Census of India 2011).

Ahmad (2012)[40] argues that policymakers often make attempts to address housing shortage through programmes and policies, however, this has to go hand in hand with improving the socio-economic conditions of marginalized population. This is because housing inequality coincides with the socio-economic inequality and social exclusion which explains why the Dalits and Muslims are found in more numbers in slum like settlements. According to Ahmad, National Sample Survey Organization's 2010 data shows that "the Dalits were highly concentrated in slums (23 percent), followed by the minority (19 percent), while only 11 percent of the majority of the population were living in slums"[41].

This also shows that socio-spatial inequalities and segregation continue to prevail in cities as opposed to the commonly held belief that cities are more equal spaces than villages and it is class that takes precedence over other forms of identity. The overlap of caste and class in segregation of Dalits in cities like Delhi are not very different from the resource deprived caste ghettos of rural India.

ii. Poverty and Slums: Are all of them poor?

It is also important to mention that only 56.44 per cent of the total households in the cluster have reported to be Below Poverty Line. As table 3.2 indicates, number of Below Poverty Line (BPL) households in Bhoomiheen camp are 927 out of 2089 total households which is 44.38 per cent.

[40] https://unu.edu/publications/articles/housing-inequality-amongst-disadvantaged-communities-in-indian-cities.html
[41] ibid

In the other two camps, the number of BPL households are 2764 out of 4450 total households which is 62.11 per cent.

Table 3.2. Distribution of Below Poverty Line Households in the Cluster						
	Bhoomiheen			Navjeevan-Nehru		
	Total households	BPL households	(%)	Total households	BPL households	(%)
General	364	159	43.68	1114	720	64.63
SC	1125	512	45.51	1888	1180	62.5
ST	13	6	46.15	60	27	45
OBC	587	250	42.59	1388	837	60.30
Minorities(out of total)	186	73	39.25	1010	599	59.30

However, at the same time it is also important to mention that around 30 per cent of the population lies above the official poverty line and this scenario merits some discussion as it allows us to revisit both the concepts of slum and poverty. First, this figure challenges the representation and discourse of slums as sites of poverty. Several scholars have cautioned that slum line should not be conflated with poverty line (Arabindoo, 2011, Bhan and Jana, 2013, Gilbert, 2007). This figure reflects that there is heterogeneity and intra-class variations among the slum dwellers and the fact that all those who live in the slums may not be below poverty line. It may be useful to also recall what Gans (1968) pointed out about the poor that some are periodically poor while others are chronically poor; some are downwardly mobile while others are upwardly mobile. The table indicates, therefore, that there could be a small upwardly mobile population even among SCs and OBCs. In our study we aimed to study if this intra caste and class variation is produced by the interplay of education, economic and social capital.

However, and at the same time, it also forces us to rethink the definition and measurement of poverty itself. A poverty line is the "minimum monetary requirement of a person per month…for maintaining a minimum standard of living" (Economic Survey of Delhi, 2018-19, p.364). In urban Delhi the per capita per month is INR 1134 and rural is INR 1145 as per the 2011-12 figures. While income remains one of the defining variables of poverty, scholars are increasingly realizing the importance of studying non-material dimensions of poverty that shape the lives of poor. Therefore, only income based poverty measures are now considered inadequate and a multidimensional view of poverty that takes into account variables such as education, health,

access to public services like safe drinking water etc., is emphasized upon. Another perspective on understanding of poverty provided by Philipsen (2007) entails the idea of a safety net. She writes: “One characteristic of poverty, however, is the absence of a “safety net,” and, instead, the real possibility that one unfortunate event such as an accident or medical emergency produces economically catastrophic consequences” (Philipsen, 2007, p.270). She further adds that many “suffer from the effects of growing up poor: years of malnutrition, physical or mental neglect, and abuse” (ibid).

The present official poverty line set by Indian policymakers, Guruswamy and Abraham (2006) argue, is actually a “starvation line” based upon calories. When this is taken as an indicator of the number of persons below the line the number seems to have reduced over the years. However, when the definition is expanded to include other “essentials of life” such as access to shelter, sanitation, nutritious diet, drinking water, education, health care, clothing the number of poor will go up. These aspects go beyond the idea of mere survival and make it a matter of dignity.

There is also a need to analyse the role of space in poverty and social exclusion. As Landy and Saglio-Yatzimirsky (2014) point out “living in a slum is a factor, not only a sign, of *exclusion*… Living in a slum creates what Bourdieu (1993) called “*effets de lieu*” (site effects), place-generated impacts…” (italics in original, p.11). Slums are highly stigmatized places in the eyes of the middle /upper income groups, planners and policymakers and negative perceptions about slum dwellers can hinder their access to and experiences of educational and economic opportunities. If we turn to sociological literature to understand stigma and its role, Erving Goffman (1986) defined stigma as a “deeply discrediting attribute that can inhibit life chances” (p.3) of the stigmatized and this holds true in case of slum dwellers. Further, something as small as lacking a space to study in a single room house can negatively affect the educational attainment of children and possibilities of improvement in infrastructure is always under threat of demolition. This also justifies why we have taken a spatial definition of the poor. Lack of civic services, security of jobs and income, safety nets and the constant fear of eviction pervade their lives. Therefore, if we do not consider the official poverty measurements and take into account the above conceptualizations of poverty, there is a good chance that a higher number will turn out to be poor. The small remaining number may be upwardly mobile and preparing and

strategizing to escape the settlement. The subsequent chapters explore whether they view education as helping them in this pursuit or not.

iii. Places of Origin and Migration

Metropolises like Delhi and Mumbai are often described as magnets that attract migrants from neighbouring states particularly from the rural areas for the employment opportunities these cities offer. Table 3.3 shows us the different Indian regions the residents of Govindpuri JJC stated as their places of origin/belonging . It shows that a bulk of the population comes from neighbouring state of Uttar Pradesh followed by Bihar, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. In Bhoomiheen camp the majority of population share is formed by people from Uttar Pradesh (41 per cent) and West Bengal (29.79 per cent) followed by Bihar (16.24 per cent). In Navjeevan-Nehru a significant number is again from Uttar Pradesh (59.37 per cent) Bihar (17.48 per cent) and Madhya Pradesh (4.32 per cent). Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan are the neighbouring countries which are mentioned as source of origin.

Table 3.3. Places of Origin

Bhoomiheen Camp			Navjeevan-Nehru Camp		
Uttar Pradesh	856	41	Uttar Pradesh	2639	59.37
West Bengal	622	29.79	Bihar	777	17.48
Bihar	339	16.24	Madhya Pradesh	192	4.32
Madhya Pradesh	81	3.88	Rajasthan	181	4.07
Rajasthan	37	1.77	Uttarakhand	167	3.76
Uttarakhand	20	0.96	West Bengal	122	2.74
Haryana	17	0.81	Tripura	81	1.82
Maharashtra	17	0.81	Nepal	57	1.28
Odisha	15	0.72	Tamil Nadu	38	0.85
Other Indian States	55	2.63	Haryana	30	0.67
Nepal	3	0.14	Other Indian States	119	2.68
Pakistan	3	0.14	Pakistan	17	0.38
Bangladesh	2	0.1	Sri Lanka	1	0.02
Other countries	21	1.01	Other countries	24	0.54
	2088[42]	100.00		4445	100.00

[42] There were 2 households in Bhoomiheen camp and 5 households in Navjeevan-Nehru camp who reported not having migrated from anywhere. Those 7 households have been excluded in this table.

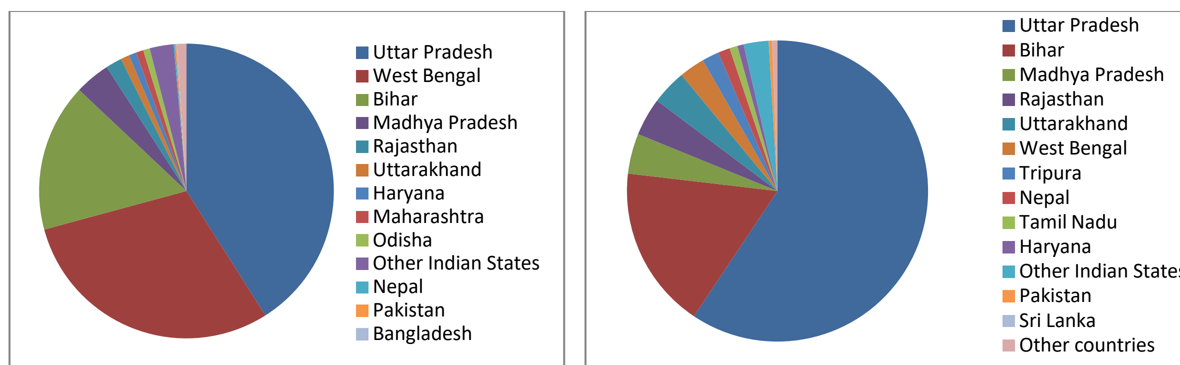


Chart 1.1 Places of Origin of Settlers Bhoomiheen Camps (right), Navjeevan -Nehru Camp (left)

Table 3.4 . Reasons for Migration				
Reasons for Migration	Number of Households			
	Bhoomiheen Camp		Navjeevan-Nehru camp	
Low Wage	1324	63.35	1039	23.35
Unemployment	713	34.11	3006	67.55
Others[43]	32	1.53	201	4.52
Education	1	0.05	80	1.80
Marriage	5	0.24	71	58
Not Known	10	0.48	23	0.52
Conflict	4	0.19	9	0.20
Debt	1	0.05	5	0.11
Drought	-	-	16	0.36
Total	**2090**	**100.00**	**4450**	**100.00**
Source:DUSIB 2012				

The reasons for migration captured by the DUSIB survey shows that a significant number of migrations were induced by low wage and unemployment (Table 3.4). In Bhoomiheen camp, 63.35 per cent head of the households cited low wage as the cause for migration whereas in the other two camps unemployment was cited by 67.55 per cent of households as the factor for migration. After low and wage and unemployment, education and marriage were the other most cited reasons. It is important to mention that out of 71 household heads who cited marriage as a reason 58 were women.

[43] Details of the factors that come under the category of "others" has not been provided by the DUSIB's survey.

In Nangia and Thorat's (2000) study, factors of migration among the people in Bhoomiheen camp also found search for employment as the major reason . However, an interesting finding in their study is that 174 households out of a total sample of 1407 households from Bhoomiheen camp reported partition, war, riot or communal conflict which forced them to leave, making it the second dominant reason after unemployment.

The linguistic diversity is revealed in Nangia and Thorat's (2000) study who found that more than 15 languages are spoken by the people living in Bhoomiheen camp. As per their survey, language that is spoken most is Hindi followed by Bengali. Other languages include Bhojpuri, Urdu, Maithili, Parsee, Punjabi, Rajasthani, Haryanvi, Gujarati, Odia and Sindhi. The researcher found that a majority of Bengalis in Bhoomiheen camp, particularly, the younger generation of parents and children mostly converse in Hindi and during the interviews and informal meetings with them, the researcher felt that they were more comfortable in conversing in Hindi than Bangla and there was also a strong influence of Hindi on their accent. As opposed to the Bengali migrants in Bhoomiheen camp who conversed in Hindi, the Marathi population from Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh conversed in their mother tongue, Marathi, at home. Their Hindi had a strong influence of the mother tongue.

Almost all the families surveyed shared that they have lived in the camp for almost 25 to 30 years where sons/daughters and grandsons/granddaughters have been living in the slum making it a multigenerational slum. Whether someone who has lived in the city for these many years can still be called a migrant is a question worth asking. The present generation of children and youth more strongly identify themselves as city dwellers, as "*dilliwalas*".

III. Physical Characteristics: Streets, Markets and Homes

The three camps of Govindpuri cluster are situated along the Ravidas Marg which is a broad two-way, busy road where dense traffic is a common sight. The name Ravidas marg is derived from the name of 16th Century Bhakti poet, Guru Ravidas of Punjab who is also venerated by a section of Dalits, particularly the leather workers and his caste followers are termed "Ravidasis". Thus the naming of this road also indicates the presence and assertion of Dalits in this area. It is

also important to mention that, in August 2019, a Ravidas temple[44] situated few metres away from the Govindpuri cluster in Tughlakabad area was demolished by the DDA on the orders of the Supreme Court spurring country wide protests, particularly in parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. In Delhi, residents of Tughlakabad and Govindpuri who were offended by the demolition assembled in large numbers to protests, enough to invite the presence of police forces.

The market on the peripheries of Navjeevan Camp is also known as Ambedkar market, named after Dr. B.R. Ambedkar who vehemently fought against the practice of untouchability and asserted the rights of Dalits to have a life of dignity and prosperity. The presence of Dalits is also indicated by a Balmiki temple in Tughlakabad Extension area, another saint believed to be the author of the Indian epic *Ramayana*, who is followed by a large number of Dalits in north India. Just as the names, Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan are symbolic of the lives of the urban poor, the names of the roads and markets after saints and leaders of anti-caste movements cannot be a mere co-incidence.

On one side of the Ravidas Marg are the Govindpuri JJC and Tughlakabad Extension while on the other side of this road are Kalkaji, Alaknanda, Govindpuri Extension and Chittaranjan Park. Okhla, known for its industrial hub and Nehru Place which is known as the biggest software market in South Asia lie in close proximity. Okhla, in fact, is one of the oldest industrial areas and has about 4500 factories, a large number of them being garment manufacturers for export[45]. Sankaran and Rao (1995) write: "…Okhla Industrial Estate Phase II which shelters numerous small scale and medium scale industrial units of myriad types producing large volume and variety of goods for the home market as also for exports and employing a large labour force, drawn from nearby localities like Govindpuri and the adjoining slums and elsewhere" (p.34). The presence of the industrial estate perhaps also explains why the cluster formed, grew in the first place and managed to thrive over all these years.

[44] Followers of Ravidas believe that the temple was built on a site that was visited by the saint in 1509 during the rule of Sikandar Lodhi in Delhi, however, official records suggests that it was built in 1950s. Nevertheless, it was a institution of significance to the community and its demolition caused massive outrage. (https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/dalit-protest-demolition-ravidas-temple-delhi-tughlakabad-explained-1590482-2019-08-22).

[45] https://scroll.in/article/732336/theres-a-wage-crisis-in-delhis-factories-and-the-modi-governments-new-labour-laws-wont-help

Govindpuri is well connected by public transport and surrounded by markets for groceries, garments, furniture, hardware and a large and varied range of household goods. One can in fact notice every mode of public transport plying on Ravidas road- buses, three-seated as well as six-seated passenger autos, and battery-operated rickshaws. Govindpuri got its own metro station in the year 2010 which is on the Violet line. The whole area is lined with shops, eateries, health centres, and religious institutions. In their study on the informal sector in Delhi, Sankaran and Rao (1995) found 1493 economic activities in Govindpuri area including manufacturing, retail trade, eating establishments, transport/business and financial services, repairing services. The overall strategic location of the Govindpuri JJC was acknowledged by every respondent.

The battery operated e-rickshaws on the roads started plying around 2015, charging INR 10 per passenger per ride, and these have altered the travel choices of working women from the JJC who go to work as domestic workers in nearby areas of Kalkaji, Alaknanda and Chittaranjan Park. While the earlier mode of commute was walking, now the e-rickshaws which allow pooling are economical and have enabled children and women to travel conveniently to schools and workplaces. One can observe the women and children on their way to and from the slum. At the same time the e-rickshaw drivers are mostly men from the camps, largely from the Bengali community of Bhoomiheen camp.

A long, sloping road runs between Navjeevan camp and Bhoomiheen camp, separating the two but the boundaries between Navjeevan and Nehru are hard to draw as they overlap with each other. It is only the address mentioned on the sign boards on the shops that helped the researcher to locate Nehru camp on the first visit. As one approaches the slum from Kalkaji DDA flats, one cannot help but notice the range of shops on the peripheries of Bhoomiheen, Navjeevan and Nehru camps. In Navjeevan camp what immediately attracts the eyes are the bright yellow, green, and red tarpaulin sheets displayed in consecutive shops. Then there are small abattoirs, furniture and woodwork shops, automobile repair workshops, mobile recharge stores, dairies, grocery and general provision stores in both Navjeevan and Nehru camps. On the peripheries of Bhoomiheen camp there are shops for room coolers, steel trunks, bamboo poles, and shops that deal with scrap. These are run in permanent structures where one room of the ground floor serves as the commercial space and situated above are the residential spaces where the owners live.

In front of these permanent shops a long row of push carts are lined up from morning to night selling vegetables, fruits, juices etc. There are two points that need to be mentioned here. First, the socio-economic status of the shopkeepers who run their business from the permanent structures and the vendors is different. The former have higher income as compared to the latter. Second, the life of these vegetable and fruit vendors is not without hassles as they are often harassed by the police and have to negotiate for staying put by paying bribes. The bribes are also paid to the shopkeepers in front of whose shops the vendors park their carts.

Figure 3.1 (Left) Guru Ravidas Marg, Figure 3.2 (Right) Shops selling Tarpaulin sheets in Navjeevan Camp

On both sides of the sloping road that lies between Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan camps, there are abattoirs as well as shops selling stationary, toys, earthenware, and mobile accessories. Due to the presence of many abattoirs livestock can be seen loitering freely around the cluster. The boundaries of the slums are mostly formed by these shops run by the residents. However, a few shop owners in Navjeevan camp were found to be living elsewhere such as in the nearby Sangam Vihar and had only rented these premises to sell their goods. What is important to mention is that all the goods that are sold in the shops are not manufactured in the slums. The vendors and shop owners buy goods in wholesale markets and sell them here. The vegetables, groceries, spices and even the tarpaulin sheets are bought from the Azadpur mandi[46].

[46] Situated in North Delhi it is said to be the "largest wholesale market in the country" for farm produce that started in 1977. See https://www.livemint.com/Companies/gjJxaH733DJ8xwzHGCFQaO/Reader8217s-Choice--The-Azadpur-mandi-never-sleeps.html

As compared to the small, single room shops of the cluster, the shops that are situated across the road, overlooking the cluster are owned by the residents of Kalkaji and Govindpuri Extension which are much bigger in size and have enough space to display their range of goods such as garments, furniture, crockery/utensils etc. Govindpuri is also a popular wholesale market for spices and groceries. A local weekly market that is set up on every Wednesday (known as *budh bazaar*) is a shopping site for the slum dwellers to buy garments and household items.

Walking along the peripheries of the slum one realizes that the air is mixed with smell from abattoirs, livestock and their feces and the open drains. These sights and smells give a sense of the economic activity some residents are engaged in. But the foul smell coming from open drains is a constant reminder of the lack of proper drainage service for the slum dwellers who have been inhabiting the place for the past 35/40 years and significantly contributing to the functioning of the city. On entering the narrow lanes of the cluster the smell gets stronger as open drains run along the alleys. There are multiple entry points to go inside the cluster and for an outsider, locating a house by an address is not an easy task even more because there is no clear housing pattern. This reveals that initial settlers started building homes wherever they found vacant space and gradually built upon those structures.

There are smaller shops inside the cluster mostly selling items for everyday consumption like packaged water and milk, biscuits and groceries, candies, wafers and even items like bangles and cosmetics. But a cluster of shops is located in Bhoomiheen camp and is unique to this camp as the other camps do not have anything parallel to this. This cluster of shops which is popularly known as the fish market (*macchi* market by the locals) or Bengali market demarcates the boundary of the Bengali population living in this camp. Even residents from middle and upper middle class neighbouring colonies especially from Chittaranjan Park, a predominantly Bengali residential area also visit this market to buy fish. In the morning the market is set up inside the camp but moves outside towards the evening. In addition to this, there are two *kali badis* (temples of Hindu goddess popular among the Bengalis) - one close to the fish market and another on the peripheries of the camp. This substantial population of Bengalis living in Bhoomiheen camp has built a distinct sense of community around them by opening shops for items that are typically Bengali like shops selling all sorts of *puja* items, *shakha polas (*conch shell and red coral bangles*)* traditionally worn by married Bengali women and other items used

particularly in Bengali weddings. Other than this there are shops for garments, spices and also a store for gold jewelry. The self sufficiency of this market was emphasized by two Bengali respondents who said: "all arrangements for a wedding can be done in a single day. Everything is available here. One does not need to go out for anything". There is no market of this kind in the other two camps.

Just as the buzz, smell and vibrancy of the fish market, is an important signifier of the Bengali community that is concentrated in Bhoomiheen camp, so is the sound of parrots which are an important marker of the habitation of Marathi speaking fortune tellers or "*totawalas'*[47] in Nehru camp. Large bird cages can be observed outside or inside the houses. The researcher was told that many astrologers have discontinued the use of parrots in their profession since animal activists have filed a petition in the Court calling for its ban[48]. However, many either continue to keep the parrots as pets or still use them in their craft. The fortune tellers and astrologers are also easily distinguishable in the lanes of Nehru camp from their traditional attires: a *white dhoti* and *kurta* with an orange robe around their neck. Similarly, the predominance of Muslims in Navjeevan camp is evident from the presence of mosques, *madarsas* and the sound of Azan (call for prayers) from the mosques. On Friday afternoons the road that divides Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan camp is fully occupied by the Muslim residents offering *namaz*.

As one enters the thick settlement the sound of traffic is drowned by the buzz of activities the residents are engaged in. The cluster itself and the 2 km radius around it is always buzzing with the daily activities of street hawkers, children playing, and women working. Sound from televisions or music from stereos playing inside can also be heard distinctly. In the afternoons, particularly, televisions are always playing in the background and seem to be the most popular mode of everyday entertainment, from English/Japanese cartoons dubbed in Hindi, Bollywood films to Hindi daily soaps were observed. Only in a few households the researcher found members watching Hindi news channels.

[47] This was almost a derogatory name for the community and the researcher was told by one respondent not to use it before the community.

[48] Keeping birds at home and using or hurting them for commercial purposes was banned under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 and a fine of up to INR 25000 for the violator can be levied. See Ban Parrot Fortune Telling In India - say a big NO to Parrot fortune tellers at https://www.change.org/p/ministry-of-forestry-and-wildlife-ban-parrot-fortune-telling-in-india-say-a-big-no-to-parrot-fortune-tellers.

Another important social activity in the everyday life of all the three camps is getting water for drinking and other purposes. This is a highly gendered activity in most of the Indian slums (Roy 2013) as women are mostly seen carrying water from the point of collection such as bore well or public tap or a particular house where a tap is installed to their homes. This water is stored in huge white plastic containers of 20 litres (called *diggi*) which can be noticed inside and outside several homes (at least two to three). This is a time when women can be seen waiting on the thresholds for the arrival of water. One can see maze of pipes; water storage cans queued outside homes and wet pathways as women and sometimes children make several trips to carry water. In summers one also witnesses young men and children (boys mostly) taking bath outside in the streets during this hour. Fetching water is a crucial activity and during this time most women were unavailable to talk and the researcher had to often adjust her visiting hours to suit their availability, avoiding the time period during which water was supplied. Roy (2013) writes how the right to the city and right to water are intertwined for the urban poor in the cities:

> "Sometimes householders, especially the women, walk long distances to an illegal or common water tap, where they stand in queue awaiting their turn to fill water and then carry those containers back to their houses…The absence of legal recognition of these settlements and the corresponding lack of tenure rights of inhabitants can be a major hurdle in the way of securing access to an improved water supply" (p.97).

Potable water is supplied twice a day for about one/two hours in the morning and one hour in the evening. There is a tentative time for the supply of water and women have to always keep a track by checking with the neighbours or listening to the activities happening outside. The public tube wells and bore wells were the most commonly used water sources. This, however, is hard water, as shared by respondents, used only for bathing, cleaning, washing and water coolers. Drinking water was available in few houses where residents managed to get private water connections or at government installed public taps. These residents who had the privilege of owing private water connection (costs about INR 1000/1500 for installation) charged a monthly amount of INR 100/200 monthly for 20/30 liters of water. Drinking water was also available for purchase as packaged water in the market. Water tankers especially in summers was a common sight in Navjeevan camp in the mornings where people were seen crowding over and around it and

struggling to fill their buckets [49]. One respondent in Nehru camp shared that they no longer relied on the tankers as previously some fatal accidents have occurred where one or more persons were crushed under the tanker.

Like water, the slum settlements also lack proper sewerage and Govindpuri cluster is no different. Most of the drains carrying the household waste run along the alleys and were open although some residents had covered them with stone slabs. It was observed that young children from poorer families squatted near the drains. Occasionally it was noticed that the MCD sanitation workers would come, unclog the drains and leave a heap of sewer waste in the middle of the street. The residents explained, these were left to dry and the workers would come another day for collection of this waste. Since the slum is located in a low-lying areas the respondents recalled how, especially in the past, the rainwater flooded their homes and people spent hours in draining the water and unclogging the drains. Other studies on slums across the country paint a similar picture (Wit, 2017).

However, gradual rise in the standard of living and concretization of the structures has made monsoon relatively bearable for the residents in the present time. What emerged as temporary structures made of mats, plastic sheets and bamboo in the late 1970s are today *pukka* houses of bricks and cement having two to three storeys connected with narrow staircases but the expansion of the original homes in a cramped settlement has led to congestion and alleys within the camps are dark and narrow. The ground floors are all painted (an activity undertaken by themselves) in bright blue, pink, green and yellow but the top floors in several houses are still brick and cement which suggests that they were built gradually and some are perhaps still under construction. Almost all houses visited by the researcher had a single or at the most two rooms on one floor where the extra room served as a kitchen. In two or three storeyed houses there were one or two rooms on one floor with kitchen and bathroom on first floor. Makeshift bathrooms have been created by residents in one corner of their room. Only the better off residents had managed to build a separate toilet and bathroom inside the house but the majority went to the community toilets for their daily ablutions. Having a private toilet in the house, therefore, was an important marker of higher economic status within this poor neighbourhood. Similarly, the

[49] Water shortage in the slums has received wide media coverage. In fact the sight of residents jostling around a Jal Board tanker to get a bucket of water is web image popularly found in news about Govindpuri slums.

families which managed to get a private water tap and supplied water to their neighbourhood with a nominal charge were also socially and economically better off among the poor in the slum.

Figure 3.3 A single room household of three members in present day Govindpuri

The main doors of houses are mostly left open as several activities take place on the doorsteps or in the streets. Open doors allow for ventilation for people living in small houses without windows and also allow unrestricted passage for neighbours who drop by to borrow something or simply to have a chat. At the most, curtains are drawn for privacy and to maintain a separation of inside and outside. There was so much activity going on in the alleys that members were either found in the alleys or sitting on their thresholds.

Inside the homes, the living rooms where guests and visitors like the researcher were entertained in the daytime served as a bedroom at night. Therefore, having a separate room to host and entertain visitors was a privilege for few better-off families and an evidence of intra-class

differentiation. In every house the living room either had a single or a double bed and considering the small size of the rooms, the beds occupied most of the space, leaving barely space for any other piece of furniture. The researcher was offered a seat mostly on the bed or sometimes a plastic chair or stool. Similarly, having more furniture like sofas or a bureau or a full size grooming mirror were rare and have been markers of difference within the neighbourhood.

Colour television was present in every house and an important source of leisure and entertainment as it would often play in the background during the interviews but what varied was the size and brand of the televisions. Refrigerator was another item possessed by most of the households. Rare amenities included washing machines and air-conditioners and were possessed by few families only. Every house was well maintained with walls decorated with photos of family members or religious deities. Floors were plastered, walls were painted from inside and in few households families had even used printed gift papers to beautify the walls. Wall and floor tiles again are a marker of privilege. While some residents said they have tiles on walls to prevent seepage on walls, for others it was a marker of status and home decoration. Wooden wall -mount shelves were built to keep television, music systems, crockery and utensils. While some kept the oven and utensils on the floor, others managed to get concrete shelves for keeping ovens and utensils on them. Space is a privilege and an important signifier of wealth and status in the camp.

IV. Social Life and Cultural Life

Sociability is high in a densely packed neighbourhood like Govindpuri JJ Cluster even if several respondents told the researcher that they do not like to socialize with their neighbours and prefer to stay indoors. However, everyday observations showed that there was sociability and neighbourliness at least with the immediate neighbours.

Free movement of women and children was noticed in each other's house and sharing of articles and food items was common. For example, one day when the researcher was interviewing a mother, her neighbour's daughter dropped by and asked for the respondent's smart phone because the girl wanted to take a photograph. It was common during interviews to find women and children from other households who would drop by and take part in the ongoing

conversation and share their views. Since a considerable time is often spent in the *galis* it is hard not to socialize. Men would be always found huddling in one corner and chatting especially near staircases or at the entrance of the *galis*. Water especially was also one of the important aspects on which relationship among women were maintained to share information about water supply and timings.

Gossips about private, domestic affairs including disputes were not uncommon as people living in such a dense settlement, sharing thin walls and spending considerable time on the thresholds and alleys were bound to know about each other's lives. In fact, one respondent shared that one can even smell what is being cooked in the neighbour's house. Similarly, people also knew each other's caste, regional and religious backgrounds. While it was not openly referred to but in passing mentioned in everyday interactions.

This set up also enables surveillance within the neighbourhood as most people notice who is entering the *jhuggis*, the neighbour's home and who is leaving and when. While it can sometimes prevent thefts and robbery, it also reduces the privacy of the people. For example, one respondent, Jharna from Navjeevan camp shared a rumour in the neighbourhood about a married man with a child having an extra marital affair with another girl who also happens to be his partner in running a tuition centre[50].

While village and kinship ties were present, respondents used terms like "*chachi*", "*chachu*", or "*khala*" (terms used for uncle and aunt) even for neighbours who were not related by bloodline. Further, one of the common ways in which women know each other is by their relationship to the child. So often when the researcher mentioned about one resident to another resident by referring to her name, he or she did not recognize, but when they were told "*Rehan ki mummy*" (Rehan's Mother) or "*Bittu ki mummy*" (Bittu's mother), they were able to immediately register who was being referred to. Thus, the very fact that the fictive kinships are in use in the neighbourhood, the sociability within and among the poor is clearly established. It also reminds one that the rural practice of using fictive kinships for everyday interactions provides slum dwellers an opportunity to establish and produce their rural life within these urban settlements.

[50] However, when the researcher asked if she could introduce her to these tutors for an interview she said she barely spoke to anyone around there.

Major festivals like Eid, Muharrum, Ganesh Chathurti, Durga Puja, Dushera, Diwali and so on were celebrated in the cluster. *Ganesh Chaturthi,* a popular festival in Western India is celebrated with much fanfare particularly by the Marathi speaking population of Nehru camp for over 10 days, culminating in the immersion of the idol in the river Yamuna. With the penetration of mobiles, internet and access to social media in the slum, youth are quick in making videos of the celebrations and uploading them on the popular sites like Youtube. There is a temple in the centre of Nehru camp that is considered the supreme authority and acts like a *panchayat* for this community. Idols of Sai Baba, a popular saint in Maharashtra, are common among the Marathi speaking families. In fact, it was observed that in most of their homes fancy and large wooden or marble temples with deities are placed.

In the present time the original structures are expanded, strengthened and beautified even as the settlement retains its "camp" status and lives in fear of an impending demolition. The next section discusses a constant source of anxiety in the lives in the lives of the resident: the threat of demolition of the slum and the settlement's uneasy relationship with the state.

V. Hopes, Vulnerabilities and the Role of the State

Sriraman (2014) in her study provides an account of a memorable day and moment in the history of the cluster when the 8th Prime Minister of India and the leader of Janata Dal (1989-1990), Vishwanath Pratap Singh (popularly known as VP Singh) visited Navjeevan camp on the new year's eve of 1990 to announce that no JJC will be demolished and all the inhabitants will be given ration cards. Thus, in the 1990s, Delhi's slum policy underwent a change wherein it was decided that all the clusters that came up before 31.01.1990 would not be removed without offering any alternative place for dwelling by the government. At the same time, it was decided to prevent any new clusters from emerging. Under Singh's leadership a large scale survey of all the JJCs in Delhi was undertaken for the first time. In the following three months, "every surveyed *jhuggi* resident in Delhi came to possess apart from a ration card, an I-card and a metallic plate or token on which was inscribed a number or an identity for every home"(Sriraman unpublished thesis, 2012, p.198). These metallic plates or tokens which were nailed to a wall of their *jhuggi* and served as formal proof of residence (Ghertner, 2015) was often mentioned by the respondents of this study. The possession of the token is not only

believed to be a proof of residence but it is also proof of right of residents' claim to resettlement from the government.

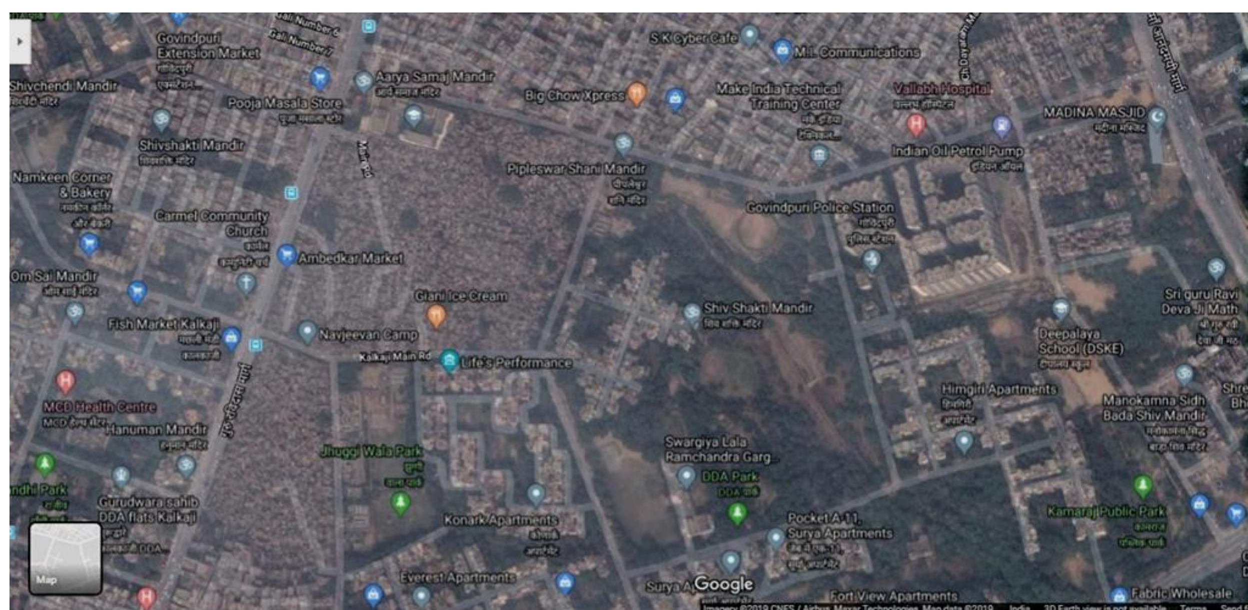


Figure 3.4 Satellite image showing location of the camps and the areas around it

No demolition had taken place in the Govindpuri JJC until 2005 when some *jhuggis* on the peripheries of the camps were demolished and a boundary wall was erected around the cluster almost as if to prevent it from spreading and hide its so –called "ugliness" from the privileged sections of the society. The researcher was told that the owners of demolished *jhuggis* were allotted plots in Narela in North Delhi approximately 50 km away from Govindpuri. However, the displaced families sold their plots and came back to their former residence, a practice not uncommon as the process of resettlement in the past entailed removing *jhuggi* dwellers from their neighbourhoods, social networks and, importantly, workplace and allocating them vacant plots with no basic amenities on the urban peripheries where they are left to fend for themselves. For this reason, the relocated population often sell or sublet their plot and return to their old settlement. Sunil, a resident of Nehru Camp, shared that there was massive protest when authorities came to demolish the *jhuggis* in 2005 and the police personnel were deployed to contain the protest. In the present day one can observe that the boundary wall constructed around the camp has been either appropriated by the existing residents for their own use or torn down in

other places[51]. Since then no demolitions have taken place. However, talks of demolition and promise of new flats for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) under construction in close proximity leaves the residents in a perpetual state of anxiety about their future.

The prospects of rehabilitation in this new housing complex have been making rounds among the residents since 2009, but a sense of uncertainty looms about when they will be moved and who will be eligible to occupy these new flats. This scheme was announced in 2014 and since then several deadlines have been set for the completion of the project according to newspaper reports. The project was to be completed in 2016, however, according to the latest news report it was supposed to be completed in 2019. In Delhi the two major projects of in-situ rehabilitation[52], first of its kind, were conceived by the Congress government in 2013 are Katputli Colony and Kalkaji Extension. In situ rehabilitation promises rehabilitation of the jhuggi dwellers either on the site or within 5 KM radius (Delhi Slum and JJ Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2015). It is loosely translated into "*jahan jhuggi wahin makan*" meaning that the housing will be provided near or on the same location. It is named as "Kalkaji In-Situ Housing Society". The proposal of relocation has been reported in several press articles too. A DDA official was quoted saying:

> "Families living in Navjeevan Camp, Bhoomiheen Camp and other camps will be rehabilitated to this housing project. Initially, we will be able to rehabilitate 3,000 families out of the existing 8,000 families (living in slums of Kalkaji and Govindpuri). After the completion of this project, another housing colony will come up in the area (to accommodate the remaining slum dwellers)"[53] (*India Today*, 19 May 2014).

[51] It is interesting how Auyero (2000) writing about an Argentinian slum in the later 1990s also mentions a similar point: "a 10 foot cement barrier- constructed to hide the slum from the eyes of 'respectable citizens'…disappeared (some of its pieces arepart of the slum houses) …(p.48)

[52] Sheikh and Banda (2014) explain the steps involved in in-situ rehabilitation: The typical in-situ rehabilitation process follows these steps: "1. Residents are surveyed to determine eligibility for the in-situ upgradation scheme. 2. Jhuggis are razed to "clear" the land, and residents found eligible are temporarily moved to a nearby transit camp.3. EWS (economically weaker sections) flats are constructed on the site and provided with basic services. 4. Eligible residents are allotted EWS flats. 5. These residents move into the flats" (p.2).

[53] https://www.indiatoday.in/india/north/story/delhi-slum-dwellers-ews-families-dda-kalkaji-govindpuri-kalkaji-in-situ-housing-society-193480-2014-05-19

Figure 3.5 Satellite image of the in-situ rehabilitation site and the newly constructed complex

If one goes down Baba Fateh Singh Road towards Kalkaji Extension, approximately 200 metres away from Nehru camp, a 14 storeyed residential apartment complex (see Figure 3.5) is under construction, near Govindpuri Police Station. According to numerous newspaper reports, 3024 flats have been built by DDA to relocate 3000 residents from the three camps in its first phase of in-situ rehabilitation. Each of these flats, constructed on an area of 37 square meter, will constitute a bedroom, a living room, a toilet, a kitchen and a balcony and 24 flats out of 3024 are reserved for the DDA officials (*Daily Mail,* 18 May 2014)[54]. Both husband and wife will jointly hold the title of the flat as per DDA.

This project, worth INR 232 crores, was announced in February 2009 which was governing both the Centre and the state at that time and foundations for this complex were laid by late Sheila Dixit, the then Chief Minister of Delhi just before the assembly elections[55] (*The Times of India*, 27 January 2015). It is to be noted that housing for the poor is an agenda on which all political parties vie for votes. For example, in-situ rehabilitation were poll promises in Delhi's Lok Sabha elections in 2014 and the State Assembly polls in 2015. The issue of housing for the urban poor has been in the manifestos of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) which came to power in 2014 as well as Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) which was defeated by AAP. On the other hand, Congress' Ex-

[54] Around 3,000 slum families set for new homes thanks to DDA project https://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-2632029/Around-3-000-slum-families-set-new-homes-thanks-DDA-project.html
[55] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/delhi-elections-2015/top-stories/Delhi-election-2015-Dream-home-promise-fading-slums-to-raise-stink-with-Rahul/articleshow/46024145.cms

President, Rahul Gandhi did a road show in the Kalkaji constituency to attract the support of the *jhuggi* dwellers with the promise of in-situ rehabilitation (The Times of India 27 January 2015). However, the poor can see through these promises and how these are easily forgotten once any political party gains votes and comes to power (The Times of India, 27 January 2015). In another newspaper article, one resident was quoted saying: "It is a *jumla* (false promise) which they *(political parties)* make every election to garner our support. But all political parties conveniently forget about it. We will not fall for this now" *(Hindustan Times,* 7 May 2019, *Emphasis added*).

Nevertheless *jhuggi* owners were clueless as to when they will move and who all will eventually make it to the list. The eligibility for resettlement was supposed to be decided based on a survey conducted in 2013 to identify residents on the basis of a "cut-off date" and all the residents who have documentary proof to show that they were living in this settlement prior to this date will be technically eligible. However, residents said with a sense of fatigue that numerous surveys have been undertaken. Every time a survey is done they anticipate that the *jhuggi* will be demolished but nothing has happened so far. One father from Nehru camp shared that their family was told in 2003 that the camps were going to be demolished. This deterred him from getting his daughter admitted in a nearby private school as they thought investment in a private school might go waste if they have to move in the middle of the term. Another middle aged woman who was born and raised in Bhoomiheen camp recalled: "I am hearing since my childhood that the *jhuggi* will be demolished. It was burnt to ashes [Bhoomiheen camp], then again houses were built". Since then she has been married and is a mother of two adolescents but the status of the camp, bordering on precarity, has remained unchanged.

When the researcher visited Camps in November 2019 respondents shared that a fresh notice for household survey has been put up on the walls rekindling speculations. As per the Delhi Slum Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy 2015, which was approved in 2017 under the AAP government led by Arvind Kejriwal[56], "JJ clusters which have come up before January 1, 2006, will not be removed without rehabilitation and the cut-off date for eligibility for alternative accommodation for JJ dwellers living in these clusters would be February 14, 2015" (Economic Times 16 2015) December. As per a newspaper report: "the houses under the new scheme will

[56] This was a key poll promise by the AAP government (Hindustan Times, 16 December 2017)

not be free. General category beneficiaries will have to pay INR 1.12 lakh for the 25-sq metre flat, while scheduled caste allottees will pay INR 1,000. Above this, INR 30,000 will be charged in both categories as maintenance cost for five years" (Hindustan Times, 16 December 2017). All the *jhuggi* dwellers who came after this date or do not have evidence to prove that they have inhabited this area prior to this date will have no claim over the new flats. The revised cut-off also means that the number of eligible residents will increase from the initial number of 8000 who were identified in 2013. Like one of the newspapers quoted a senior DDA official who said:

> "The number of slum residents has grown tremendously in the last few years. We had divided the slums into three different pockets, which now have a large number of people. In fact, one of the pockets alone has 8,000 families, which was the original number of families that we needed to rehabilitate" (The Times of India 15 May 2019[57]).

This is not a new phenomenon as Ghertner (2015) points out. According to him, from the 1990s onwards, several slum surveys began to identify eligible residents but the entire exercise was mired with challenges:

> "Surveys were tampered with, false names were appended, and between the time when the survey was completed and when the agency obtained the necessary clearances and land appropriations (usually years), the number of people residing in the slum had changed, thus demanding a new survey and setting much of the same process in motion again" (Ghertner, 2015, p.11)

Moreover, the survey is a bigger threat for families living on rent. According to DUSIB's survey, 239 out of 2087 households are tenants in Bhoomiheen camp whereas in Navjeevan-Nehru camps 214 out of 4454 households are tenants. On inquiry, a standard rent paid for a single room in this JJC was somewhere between INR 1500 and INR 2000, exclusive of the electricity charges. The situation is precarious for the newer and poorer migrants living on rent as they

[57]DDA doesn't have enough flats at Kalkaji to take in all available at: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/69333111.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

neither have a secure dwelling nor documents like ration cards , that can give them access to subsidized ration due to lack of a permanent residence proof in the city.

A rehabilitation project like this is rife with several other challenges. Dunu Roy, Director at Hazards Centre, said: "In the previous policy, people were given plots where they could build a house as per their requirement. But now, the government is providing flats which do not meet their requirement as their family size is big" (Hindustan Times, 7 May 2019).This was corroborated by most of the respondents in the study. This holds true for a large number of households who took years to build and expand their homes into two to three storeys to accommodate the growing family. A few families confided that they have managed to invest in dwellings in nearby colonies. When these families were probed about why they continued to live in the slum despite of having an alternative place of living they shared that it was for children's schooling and the facilities that the area provided. Lalita's family, for instance, has invested in a small plot of land in Noida and was making inquiries about home loans to build a two/three storeyed house. This arose from her unwillingness to live in a single room *jhuggi* surrounded by what she called 'a *bad environment'* and her concern for her daughter's safety (*emphasis added*). Many old residents had moved to lower middle class colonies such as LIG flats in areas like Govindpuri Extension, Block TA of Tughlakabad Extension and Sangam Vihar, lower middle class areas located around the slum. At the same time, however, they retained their *jhuggis* for their claim to rehabilitation as the promise of resettlement from the state, a pathway to acquiring a "legal" space in the city is a strong motivation for many to continue to live in the slum (Menon-Sen and Bhan, 2008; Datta, 2012; Ghertner, 2011). One respondent explained:

> "There are crorepatis here who own apartments [flats] but they still live here…it is a mentality (*mansikta*)…they are eating well, wearing good clothes, have a car and bank balance but still they want to live here because they are attached to this place…like I have spent 30 years here, I am attached …another reason for this attachment is the hope of getting a flat…what if someone comes to make an inquiry in our absence and a neighbour gives wrong information. Many people have shifted to a better place and sublet their house in the slum…some have done the opposite…they have sublet the other house and continue to languish here (*pade rehte hain)".*

Respondents like Sunil were apprehensive that, in the current neighbourhood, neighbours are known to each other but once flats are allotted they will all be thrown into a social mix and they might end up living next to a drug addict or alcoholic. One can perhaps also detect a fear pertaining to religious and caste mix although it was not explicitly spoken about. Importantly, it will disrupt the social networks based on caste, kinship and also a shared sense of existential conditions built over 40 years which enables them to survive the hostile living conditions in the city.

Another significant drawback of the scheme that betrays a complete lack of understanding of urban poor's contexts and lived realities is that several *jhuggi* dwellers in all the three camps use a part of their residence as shops which will no longer be possible in the new flats (The Times of India 15 May 2019). While as per the plan there will be a place of worship, a playground and a rain water harvesting system, parking area, these flats will only be for residential purposes. Randolph (2013)[58] aptly captures this aspect:

> "Had DDA engaged in responsible consultation, it may have found that the neighbourhood fish market is one of the most important sources of income for residents. It may have found that the street—easily accessed by everyone in the low-rise settlement—keeps the community safe by connecting neighbours and facilitating an informal system of monitoring…But it is precisely the lack of community consultation in the design process, the unwillingness to take into account slum dwellers unique social, economic, and lifestyle needs, that fuels this cycle"[59].

Therefore, the attitude of many residents towards the rehabilitation project is ridden with apprehension, anxieties and reluctance. Many residents told the researcher that it would have been better if they had legalized the settlement and let the slum dwellers improve their homes. While the idea behind "in-situ rehabilitation" is *"jahan jhuggi wahin makan", but* the residents had a different notion of this idea.

[58] For example, Randolph aptly points out that the planning of such high rise towers for low income does not consider the challenges for the occupants in the top storeys who in the summers will be receiving tremendous heat and may be incapable of installing air conditioners.

[59] See Greg Randolph's 'Delhi choosing high-rise over consultative planning despite national consensus on slums' available at http://globalurbanist.com/2013/05/21/delhi-choosing-high-rise

It is also important to ask why the cluster survived for all these years - did the state just let them be because they fulfill an important economic function? For example, Nijman raises a similar question about Dharavi which the state has allowed to persist for 150 years… "it is hard to imagine, the persistence of slums without active facilitation by the state" (Nijman, 2009, p.14).

VI. Subjective Production of Space and Intra Class Differences

William Foote Whyte (1943) who contributed significantly to the understanding of slum life in his seminal book *Street Corner Society*, wrote that slums have been represented as sites of chaos, disorganization, drugs and crime. "If the city represents the highest development of individualization and hence of social disorganization, some scholars have thought to find in the slums the most striking manifestations of these phenomena that exist within the city" (Whyte 1943:34). However, Whyte (1943) argues that if sociologists move their focus from disorganization to the study of social organization and inter-group relations within slums, such assumptions about the character of slums would change:

> "The problem of sociology in the slum (as elsewhere) is to determine the interrelations of individuals within the in-group and then to observe the relations between the groups that make up the society…Proceeding by this route, he will find many evidences of conflict and maladjustment, but he will not find the chaotic conditions once thought to exist throughout this area" (Whyte, 1943, p.39).

It is true that a JJ Cluster or a neighbourhood of the poor appears homogeneous to an outsider. For a privileged middle or upper class individual a JJC would appear as a sight of haphazardness, however, as one enters the space and begins to interact, this seemingly homogeneous space presents itself as a space where social groups are organized along linguistic, regional and religious lines. For instance, Bhoomiheen camp has a predominance of Bengali speaking population from West and East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Navjeevan camp, on the other hand, has a concentration of Muslims, mostly from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Nehru camp is home to a large population of Marathi speakers from districts like Khandwa and Indore in Madhya Pradesh and Jalgaon in Maharashtra and they present themselves as members

of "Joshi Samaj". Joshis traditionally are a Brahmin community of astrologers from Maharashtra (Kulkarni, 1964). As discussed earlier, a significant proportion of population of Marathi fortune tellers in Nehru camp are engaged in what they called their hereditary occupation of astrology, fortune reading, palmistry and priesthood. Fortune tellers are popular in Southern India particularly in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh (P. Nagaraja, 2003). In Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh they belong to Kambalathu Naicker community, Veduvar caste, or Kuravas (distinct from the tribe called Narikuravas) (The Hindu, 7 August 2017 and The Hindu 15 October 2014). Therefore, one can speculate that the members of this community may also belong to scheduled tribes or other backward castes /classes (Veduvars, in fact, feature in the list of most backward caste), however, at some point of time they may have sanskritized their lifestyles in the urban space and began to affiliate themselves with Joshi community. According to the respondents, shortage of water and most importantly, lack of work in their region brought them to Delhi.

In this community a strong kinship network of aunts, uncles, cousins exists and in everyday conversations they frequently refer to their community in the collective as "*humara samaj*" (our society, our caste). One of the numerous entry points/*galis* leading to their part of the camp has a board that says "*Joshi Samaj Sangathan*". This community of astrologers/soothsayers is spatially clustered in one part of Nehru camp and is known as the "*tota* camp" or (meaning camp of parrot astrologers) among the locals, making it sound almost as if it is another distinct camp within the larger Nehru camp.

A similar kind of spatial clustering of Bengalis in Bhoomiheen camp has also led others to demarcate their area as "Bengali Colony". It is important to mention that it is only the Marathis and Bengalis who are spatially clustered together giving a sense of "community within a community". Rest of the population from the Hindi speaking belt including the Muslims are more or less spatially mixed except in one part of Nehru camp where there was a clustering of a large Muslim family of 6 to 7 households. The symbolic demarcation by the name "tota camp" and "Bengali colony" suggests that the residents engage in their own boundary making process which is different from the official designations like Nehru camp, Navjeevan camp and Bhoomiheen camp.

This reveals internal heterogeneity, spatial segregation and clustering of social groups on the basis of regional and linguistic backgrounds within a slum. Clustering begins when initial settlers are joined by members from the family, relatives and their own village. Ayyar and Khandare (2007) write:

> "…slums might have heterogeneous populations but they live in homogeneous clusters belonging to the neighbourhood dominated by caste and kinship ties. With a passage of time, the densification of neighborhood are webbed and fortified in the form of social networks. These networks are primarily kinship and neighborhood networks. These networks are helpful in numerous ways in negotiating with the civic authorities or accessing information on availability of jobs in the market and so on. Indeed these networks are not only support systems of the urban poor, through, these networks the urban poor can survive in a hostile city life" (p.29).

What is important to note here is the unique nature of such settlements in India. Clusters emerge in the first place through the kinship, caste and village networks. The community, caste and village ties remain intact to a large extent and in fact they provide a sense of comfort, as mentioned in the above quote, "to survive the hostile city". While every poor neighbourhood is unique in its own way, these kind of social networks can be found in slums across the country. This also speaks something about the nature of cities and urbanization in India[60] and recall Whyte's (1943) argument about the nature of cities. It is usually assumed that with urbanization and modernization the close, traditional ties characteristic of rural communities gives way to individualization and formation of impersonal relations. However, as Nijman (2015) points out: "…Indian cities have always maintained a social fabric of communities that mirrors that of the villages…maintenance of ancestral traditions, family ties, and cultural identities, including caste, was a condition for successful adaptation [of slum dwellers] in the city" (p.419). Nijman (2009) further writes that this is a "slum version of gated community: smaller communities within large, dense slum areas" where space is clearly demarcated and "it reflects intense competition for space as well as high ethnic concentration and segregation" (p.12).

[60] Comparison with homeless population in US- subjective well being

Barring a few, all the respondents who were part of the present study had maintained ties with their natal village. Several of them had their extended families as well as some tangible property in the form of land or house in the village. However, almost all of them reported that they do not receive any income from the cultivation of the lands as it all goes in sustaining the family members who are settled in the village. Children accompany the parents to their village during their summer vacations in schools in the months of May and June. Sometimes irregularity, loss of crucial time in school and subsequent dropping out was also attributed to these long breaks when the family would go to the village.

a. Othering and Intra-Class Differences

Communities are also formed through the process of othering and how we create boundaries of *us* and *them*. The residents in all the three camps are aware of how they are perceived by the world outside and the stigma attached to being a slum dweller/ "*jhuggi wala/wali*" in Hindi. They at times also challenged the stigmatization with phrases like : "it may be a *jhuggi* but there are big and beautiful houses inside, all the children are going to schools". Since the study tries to explore the internal differentiation among the urban poor community the researcher tried to gauge how each social group perceives the other and their respective cultures and ways of living. Their perception of the spatial and social 'other' often coincided with the perceptions held by the better off and dominant groups of the city.

While the residents of the three camps may share somewhat similar objective conditions, different cultures co-exist and each linguistic-cultural group holds some stereotypes and prejudices about the other. Symbolic boundaries exist based on perceived notions of morality, crime and deviance, educational levels, way of living, etc. Each camp perceived itself to be better in terms of educational level, lifestyle, and safety as compared to the other two camps. For instance, prejudices towards Navjeevan camp were based on the fact that it had a considerable population of Muslims ("*momnun ilaka*") and this led the Hindu population in Bhoomiheen camp to label them as "dangerous". Gautam, a former resident of Bhoomiheen 2016 shared that Navjeevan and Nehru were "*ganda ilaka*" where thefts of mobiles and jewelry were common. Bhoomiheen camp, according to him, was safer as it had more Bengalis and they were prosperous. Another respondent, Meenu's views about Navjeevan camp and its Muslim population were similar, she said:

> "Their religion is such…they do not study much, they are only sent to read the Quran and learn Urdu. It does not occur to them to make them [children] learn English which is so important these days…they only want to propagate their religion and do not focus on important things [like formal education]".

These perceptions are translated into and were reflected in concerns for the researcher's safety in these areas who was cautioned several times to avoid going to Navjeevan and Nehru camps especially alone as they were thought to be a breeding ground for snatchers, thieves, wayward and drunkard men.

The fortune tellers of Nehru camp or "totawale" as they are locally referred to, were ridiculed by all the others residing in Navjeevan and Bhoomiheen camp and even within Nehru camp itself by other social groups. This could be partly attributed to the absence of intermingling of the Marathi community with the others. The adjectives used for them included "*bekar* , "*gande log*", and "*criminal type*". Several respondents labeled the tota camp as the most backward and regressive of all the other groups and this observation was made by Chandola (2010) as well. Seema, a resident for example, was of the view that girls from the fortune-tellers community were never sent to schools in the past and child marriage was rampant among them. Some of these perceptions were also reproduced in schools and went unchallenged. Meena's son, for example, told me about his school mates from the *totawala* community living in Nehru camp and he was of the view that this group keeps fighting in their "*totewali bhasha*" which basically implies that they spoke Marathi. The othering of totawalas was based on their language and inability of all the other social groups to understand their culture, way of life and therefore, the Marathis were considered "*ajeeb*" (strange, weird).

They were also thought to be people lacking any scruples and conscience and misusing their craft. For example, Sunil shared that a fortune teller misuses his power by telling the client that a particular motor bike is inauspicious and therefore the latter should get rid of it. This, as Sunil believed, happens because the astrologer then comes to possess the motorbike and other expensive items. Some of the oldest inhabitants also spoke of *totawalas* in such a way as if they have invaded the social world of the *jhuggi* and spread like an infection or a colony. It was reflected in the sentences of a respondent who said: "they have spread and come till here"

pointing to his immediate neighbours. Several respondents also added that if any conflict erupts with one member the whole Marathi community gathers in his /her support which shows the existence of a strong sense of solidarity. The fortune tellers maintained caste endogamy and was a closed group that strictly guarded its socio-spatial boundaries, practices and culture. Therefore, both the processes reinforced each other.

Perceptions about women's code of conduct in different communities also came to fore. One middle aged mother from Nehru Camp remarked that neighbours raised their eyebrows if girls, like her own daughter, wore sleeveless shirts. She categorically added it was more because her neighbours were Muslims who had their own norms about appropriateness of a woman's attire. This also points towards a popular stereotype of Muslim families having conservative attitudes towards their women. However, the researcher observed that even in Muslim families young girls complained that their neighbours often chastised them for wearing such dresses. What was evident is that this attitude towards women's attire was more rooted in patriarchy cutting all the religious and caste groups rather than being restricted to one religious community.

A Muslim resident of Navjeevan camp remarked that the Bengalis of Bhoomiheen camp have a "low standard" and their women especially lacked any sense of modesty and shame . For example he said:

> "They are not Bengalis, they are Bangladeshis. If they were Bengalis they would have some standards, they would have been better. They have low standards but after living in Delhi their standard has also become such that they have become eligible to called as Bengalis".

He further went on to say that Bengali women have no sense of modesty as they are open about their sexuality (like not covering themselves properly while taking bath in the open). But he added that they started adopting "civilized" lifestyle or *rehen sehen* after observing the households in middle class localities (predominantly of Bengalis living in the neighboring Chittaranjan Park locality) where they provide domestic services.

Bengali women were looked down upon as they were seen to be open about their sexuality and interacted freely with everyone. While free interaction with other men and women was looked down upon by some respondents, this same freedom was appreciated by other respondents. For

instance, according to Meena, a respondent, Bengalis were more prosperous because there was no restriction on women's mobility and on their decision to take up paid work. She added that because they worked and interacted with other social classes they brought home "mentality" (used in original) on how to raise children, educate them and so on. This freedom she said was not available to women belonging to other regions in the camp including her own family and therefore they lagged behind. This brings us to the gendered notions of morality that dominates the social life of the slum.

b. Gender and Cultural Practices

What emerged in the conservations were notions of morality and attitude towards women's work, attires and mobility. First and foremost, the slum came across as a highly gendered space with codes about how men and women should conduct themselves. Several young women and their daughters were of the view that if a woman wore what were considered typically western clothes (jeans, shirt etc) or short dresses she was looked down or ridiculed by their neighbours for not having "decency". Similarly, as discussed earlier, notions about women's mobility and taking up paid employment prevailed. Several women from Hindi speaking Hindu and Muslim families from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (barring the Bengali women) spoke about cultural barriers to women's gainful employment. Meena from a Sikh family, for example, said:

> "Here what happens is that if the wife is working then people will ask the husband why is his wife going to work, is he himself out of work? They will ask the husband if he has tried to find out whether she is actually going for work or doing something else. They will provoke him and he will return drunk and beat her up. People think if a woman is going out for work she is definitely doing something wrong (*galat kaam*)".

The meaning of "*galat kaam*" or "something wrong/else" was implied i.e. engaged in sex work or having an extra marital affair. Meena also emphasized that it is only the uneducated (*unpad*) who think this way, the *padha likha* or educated do not feel this way. The researcher herself witnessed a domestic brawl between a couple where a drunken husband was fighting and abusing his wife which drew the attention and intervention of many neighbours. One of the neighbours,

Ritu, who was witness to this fight shared that the husband suspects that his wife, a domestic worker, is having an extra marital affair. Grover (2011) highlights similar trends in her work in a slum settlement in Delhi where "martial relationships acquire a different dynamic when the wives start working outside their homes…male suspicion , labeled '*sak'*, manifests itself as women's waged work is primarily linked to the threat of extra-marital affairs and to subversion of male authority" (p.50).

The opposition to work was strong among Muslim families. One Muslim woman in Bhoomiheen camp shared that she was learning stitching from an NGO run centre in the vicinity. However, when she was asked if she will be placed somewhere after completion of this course she was of the view:

> "In our community only the men can go out to work. We (women) cannot go out to work. I am only learning because this is a skill (*hath ka hunar*). So much money is spent on getting clothes stitched for the children. Once I learn I can work on a broken machine…It is such in our family…no woman has ever stepped out to work".

During the fieldwork stories of domestic violence were not unheard of either. Many women shared that their husbands beat them often, especially under the influence of alcohol. Alcoholism and unemployment also often went hand in hand and in such households daily expenses were borne by the female head. The researcher met at least five to six women from Nehru camp who were staying in their natal homes because their husbands were, they alleged, unemployed, alcoholic and physically abusive.

Mahila Panchayats which are common in the slum settlements of Delhi are a platform for discussion of cases of domestic abuse. Several women shared that at some point in their life they were beaten up badly by their husbands. Seema, who is a social worker in the field of disability and has been active in all the three camps, was of the view that what has changed is that now these women no longer endure the abuse and torture and have started working to support themselves. She said, "Now they have found work for themselves and for their family...forget family…the pain that these women have endured…they have started working in *kothis* to support raising their children by themselves".

Among the Marathi community of fortune tellers, marriage outside the "*samaj*" has no sanction and the family was treated like an outcast if a member married outside the "joshi samaj". In such cases, the researcher was told, the family is not invited in any communal programme, marriage or funeral rites etc. The fear of being excommunicated, hence, deters many from sending their daughters to work or finding partners from outside their caste. A woman in her early 60s commented that the ostracization was so severe that in case of death of a family member the "samaj" will not come to touch and lift the dead body. She added that only when a fine of 1100 INR as a "*dand*" (punishment) is paid the body will be touched. As mentioned before there is a caste panchayat that sits in the temple known as *gyan mandir or panch mandir* who makes all these decisions and rituals pertaining to marriage, engagement, disputes, separation/divorce, and even cases of elopement. The elderly members of the community are members of this panchayat. In all the interviews and conversations held with this community "*samaj*" (read caste) was an important and frequently used reference point for the members. One respondent said:

> "Two/three girls from our community eloped with men [from other castes], that is why this is necessary…otherwise we will be separated from our *samaj*…then we will not be involved in any [social/group] activity like marriage…this is how our *samaj* is…live, earn and eat honourably (*izzat*)" .

The notion of "*izzat*" or honour was central to the functioning of the *samaj* and it was tied to women's conduct, mobility within the camp, their choice of partners and employment decisions. In fact girls complained that their decisions to enter paid work or learn some skill outside the domestic sphere are discouraged. A young mother who is a single parent working as a domestic worker shared that going out of the house in a neatly fashion and carrying a mobile invited mockery and labelling (for example, "she has gone to become a madam) by the neighbours who, according to her, had "*gandi soch*" (bad or depraved mentality). For this reason, most of the matches are found within the camp. Many women have their natal kin (*pihar/maika*) as well as (*sasural*) affinal kin in the camp itself.

This kind of criticism of women's conduct and choices, however, was prevalent in all the three camps as is evident the narratives collected from residents across the camps and not peculiar to

the *joshi samaj*. Tacchi and Chandola (2016) write in the context of women using technology in Govindpuri slums:

> "In our initial years of research here (2004-2005) we were witness to a woman being beaten up publicly for watching television (in effect for indulging in leisure when she should have been attending to her household duties), and in another instance a young girl, who was observed publicly talking on her mobile phone – a rarity at that time – was compelled by social pressures to abandon her higher studies. The parents of the girl were keen for her to pursue her education, but neighbours considered the 'uninhibited' freedoms she exercised by attending college unescorted, and using her mobile phone, as immoral. The parents responded to the threat of social ostracization and potential damage to their daughter's reputation".

Rajni's mother added another dimension to the attitudes towards women's work in the Totawala/Joshi Samaj. She opined that it is even acceptable for women to work as domestic helps and cook in middle class homes but getting good education and *naukri* i.e. a salaried job is not approved of as it is a space where men and women freely interact and such interactions are to be discouraged. Even on the streets if a woman is seen interacting with strangers (read men) she will be judged and labeled. A lot of apprehensions about women's code of conduct were also articulated in terms of how unsafe the Capital is for women.

Summary

This chapter tried to build an account of how a 40 year old multi-generational settlement emerged and evolved to produce a cluster of poverty when a small group of people came, settled and domesticated a barren, vacant land to turn it into their home. The cluster grew incrementally into a large settlement of about 6000 households as the initial settlers attracted more from the same families, village and caste network. In the apparent homogeneity, however, diversity exists on the basis of socio-spatial clustering of regional and linguistic groups like the Marathis and Bengalis. "Limitations on vital resources occasionally require slum dwellers of different ethnic backgrounds to mix in oneslum. However, self-segregation has proven to contribute to community strength, and slum dwellers demonstrate a tendency to self-segregate when possible

both within a slum and between slums”(Schenk, 2010, p.97). In addition to this, from housing quality, ownership status of the house, access to urban services, to attires and everyday practices, reflect visible forms of differences. However, subtler differences emerge in how communities perceive each other, construct feelings of “us” and “them” based on caste, culture and religion and symbolically demarcate spaces within the settlement they consider as dangerous and avoidable. This chapter also discussed how the cluster is a highly gendered space, reflected in gender-based division of work such as fetching water or in the norms and attitudes about women’s mobility, work and attire.

Chapter 4

Education, Work and Income: Descriptive Profile of Sample Households

I. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the historical and demographic profile of the Govindpuri JJ Cluster, its caste and class composition, regional and linguistic diversity, and socio-spatial organization. It discussed how in a large and seemingly homogeneous neighbourhood, there is clustering of groups based on language and region. The chapter also delved into how each group perceives the other and how symbolic differences and boundaries are constructed. This chapter goes a step further and explores the levels of education of the parents, status and nature of employment and how and where education and economic activities intersect.

The scholarship on both education and poverty recognizes the relationship between the two. Rose and Dyer (2008) point out, "education is both part of the definition of poverty as well as a solution to break out of the cycle of poverty" (p.8). Similarly, Tilak (2002) writes: "Poverty of education is a principal factor responsible for income poverty; and income poverty, in turn, does not allow the people to overcome poverty of education" (p.198). Thus both the statements highlight the cyclical nature in which education and poverty are connected.

Tilak (2002) discusses the three different approaches in scholarly literature that highlight the link between education and poverty, namely, 1) the human capital approach, 2) the basic needs approach and 3) the human development approach. The human capital theory believes that investment in education will lead to formation of human capital leading to economic progress. This argues that education and training in skills will increase the productivity of the individual which will enhance their own earnings as well as the nation's economic growth. This approach views education in its instrumental role of reducing poverty and creating growth.

The second approach i.e. the basic needs approach considers education as a basic need that helps in fulfillment of other needs such as sanitation, health, water, housing and decisions pertaining to

fertility which then leads to higher productivity and income. Under this approach education is considered a crucial component of the basic needs of the poor and it views education both as means and end.

The third approach that is the human development approach moves away from the instrumental role of education and earlier emphasis on income in measurement of poverty and development. In the 1990s, Amartya Sen and Mahbub ul Haq proposed an alternative approach to the idea of development in which education's role was redefined.

> "The human development approach recognizes education primarily not as an instrument or means of development, but as development itself, while lack of the same constitutes not just a cause of poverty, but poverty itself. Educational deprivation or poverty of education becomes an integral part of human poverty" (Tilak, 2002, p.195).

This approach does not consider education as an instrument to reduce poverty, or just as a means for raising income, but as an end in itself. Sen (1993) further developed the concept of poverty in terms of capabilities, defining capability poverty as lack of freedom, opportunities and choices. Walker and Unterhalter (2007) highlight the core argument underlying the capability approach: "Its central tenet is that in evaluations one must look at each person not as a means to economic growth or social stability but as an end. We must evaluate freedoms for people to be able to make decisions they value and work to remove obstacles to those freedoms, that is, expand people's capabilities" (p.2). Sen's reformulation of the ideas of poverty and development went beyond the income centric approaches and highlighted non-economic dimensions of poverty where education figured as an important component. In the present, the multi-dimensional poverty index is modeled on Sen's capability approach that goes beyond mere income approach and includes "nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing and assets"[61]. However, one point that is important to make is that in this index education is measured in terms of years of schooling and school attendance. Rose and Dyer (2008), however, argue that education's role should not be understood in the limited sense of levels of schooling or skill acquisition but in a

[61] New data challenges traditional notions of 'rich' and 'poor available at https://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2019-MPI-India.html

more broad sense of how it inculcates "self confidence, self-esteem and critical thinking", similar to Sen's idea of capability. This way Rose and Dyer (2008) raise an important point about the nature of education itself and the role of schools and classroom processes. In all the approaches that highlight education's positive role in reducing poverty, education and institutional processes are taken to be value neutral. This is where Bourdieu's (1974) analysis of school as a "conservative force", as a site of reproduction of the dominant class' culture also becomes relevant. Bourdieu argued that the culture of the school and culture of the home of the dominant class is similar. Therefore, while children from the dominant class, due to their predisposition, are able to blend in the school environment, working class children feel alienated in the school. Thus the latter will often find it difficult to complete schooling. School, therefore, reproduces and reinforces the existing social inequalities rather than challenging them.

Although Tilak's (2002) paper does recognize withdrawal of the state from public education and poor infrastructure and teaching in public funded schools accessed by the poor, what it does not highlight is the fact that education is not value neutral.

Having discussed the important ways in which poverty and education are linked, this chapter seeks to explore what kind of difference education produces in the lives of men and women living in a poor neighbourhood? Does education produce differentiation in the occupations and incomes? How are these differences articulated?

This chapter is based on survey data collected from 84 households by the researcher. Since a strict spatial division of Nehru and Navjeevan camp was not possible because their boundaries overlap, they have been presented as one in the tables, as it was done in the previous chapter.

II. Educational Levels of Parents

The fact that education was not an indispensable part of their childhood is reflected in the fact that the parents could vaguely recollect up to which class they have studied. Most of the mothers said they have studied up to 5th/6th (*panchvi/chati*) grade and discontinued due to parental indifference, household poverty, lack of interest and marriage. In case of men household poverty and lack of interest were cited as the main reasons for not finishing school.

According to Nangia and Thorat's (2000) socio-economic and educational survey of Bhoomiheen camp in the late 1990s, 42 per cent of the people were not literate. Of the total non-

literate population the percentage of men was 32.65 per cent and that of women was 53.43 per cent which shows how women in urban slums lag behind men. Further, Nangia and Thorat's (2000) findings show that "around 27 per cent were educated up to primary school, 17.80 per cent up to middle school, 11.19 per cent up to matric level, 1.36 per cent up to class 12th and only 0.42 per cent up to graduation" (p.51). In the reasons listed for drop outs, Nangia and Thorat (2000) found search for job and poverty was highest in case of males i.e. 75.42 per cent which was followed by the death of a family member or father i.e. 57.14 per cent. The most prominent cause of drop out among females, however, was marriage (83.55 per cent) and lack of parental interest (59.38 per cent).

Table 4.1. Educational Level of Parents in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru camp				
Educational Levels	Fathers	%	Mothers	%
1st-5th	11	13.09	23	27.38
6th -8th	23	27.38	24	28.57
9th-10th	24	28.57	9	10.71
11th-12th	6	7.14	7	8.33
Certificates/Diploma	1	1.19	2	2.38
Graduate	3	3.57	2	2.38
No formal education	11	13.10	16	19.05
N.A	5	5.95	1	1.19
Total	84	100.00	84	100.00

Table 4.1 shows that 27.38 per cent of fathers had studied up to middle school and another 28.57 per cent up to secondary level. A bulk of mothers have studied only up to primary (27.38 per cent) and middle school (28.57 per cent). Therefore, in comparison to 28.57 per cent fathers only 10.71 per cent of mothers went beyond elementary school. The table also shows that 13.10 per cent fathers and 19.05 per cent mothers had never been to school or received any formal education again indicating the poorer educational status of women. Overall the educational levels of the parents in the clusters is concentrated in the primary and middle levels.

Within the category of mothers the education levels of Muslim mothers were found to be lower, only concentrated in primary and middle level. Out of 15 Muslim women in the sample only one reported having studied up to the secondary level. The lower status of education of Muslim women shows the intersection of class, religion and gender and is in sync with country wide

trend of Muslim lagging behind. In terms of higher education we barely notice any difference in the two sexes. Only 3 to 4 per cent in the sample had attended college.

Table 4.2. Comparative Educational Levels of Parents in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru (in Percentages)				
Educational levels	Fathers		Mothers	
	Bhoomiheen	Navjeevan-Nehru	Bhoomiheen	Navjeevan-Nehru
1st -5th	10	15.91	21.95	32.56
6th -8th	20	34.09	29.27	27.91
9th -10th	40	18.18	9.76	11.63
11th - 12th	10	4.55	9.76	6.98
Graduate	2.5	4.55	0.00	4.65
Certificates/Diploma	0.00	2.27	4.88	0.00
No formal education	10	15.91	21.95	16.28
N.A	7.5	4.55	2.44	0.00
	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

The comparative data of the two clusters in Table 4.2 shows that about 40 per cent of fathers in Bhoomiheen camp have studied up to secondary level. In comparison, fathers in Navjeevan-Nehru camp have lower levels of education, 18.18 per cent have secondary education while a majority is concentrated in upper primary level. In the case of mothers as well although the gap is not considerable, Bhoomiheen camp seems to fare better.

In terms of educational levels, therefore, we can infer that there are gendered differences in the attainment of education with women lagging behind men. In terms of inter-cluster differences Bhoomiheen camp seems to have relatively higher levels of education compared to Navjeevan-Nehru camp. Since educational levels determine the nature of economic activity to a large extent, individuals with limited education enters into mostly low paying, irregular work which again makes social mobility difficult for the urban poor. This again has an impact on the education of the next generation and a vicious cycle of poverty and educational deprivation is created. The next section will discuss the economic activities fathers and mothers with differing levels of education are engaged in, the nature of the activity and the associated hardships.

As Rose and Dyer (2008) point out : "girls and boys experience different constraints in relation to access to schooling, and these constraints are not necessarily related to poverty"(p.17). Findings from Nangia and Thorat's study as well as the current study undertaken by the researcher both indicate that in poor households while poverty remains a major cause for men to discontinue, gender based factors such as early marriage and lack of interest in girl's education are primary causes behind poor women having low education levels. Nussbaum (2000) writes that there is a strong correlation of poverty and gender inequality which results in failure of "central human capabilities". "In the developing countries as a whole, there are 60% more women than men among illiterate adults; the female school enrollment rate even at the primary level is 13% lower than that of males…" (Nussbaum, 2000, p.3)

III. Fathers: Education, Economic Activities and Nature of Work

An article published by International Labour Organization argues that low levels of education and skills lead to insecure employment in the lowest rung of the informal sector.

> "The level of education is a key factor affecting the level of informality. Globally, when the level of education increases, the level of informality decreases... People who have completed secondary and tertiary education are less likely to be in informal employment compared to workers who have either no education or completed primary education"[62].

The low education levels of the parents is reflected in the economic activities they are engaged in. It is no surprise that a majority of work in the informal sector of employment is a trend among the urban poor. Table 4.3 provides a cross classification of economic activities with the educational levels of the fathers where we notice that only three individuals have undergraduate degrees. A majority of astrologers have completed either primary or middle school. The casual labourers in the sample have either no formal education or are educated upto primary/middle levels. Similar levels of education can be noticed in the case of vendors, painters, plumbers and electricians. The shop assistants, shop owners and sales/delivery/field workers seem to have slightly better status, having studying up to secondary and higher secondary.

[62] More than 60 per cent of the world's employed population are in the informal economy https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_627189/lang--en/index.htm

Table 4.3. Cross Classification of Occupation and Education of Fathers

Activities	1st - 5th	6th - 8th	9th - 10th	11th - 12th	Graduate	Certificate/ Diploma	N.A	No Formal Education
Accountant					100			
Astrologer	25	50					12.5	12.5
Attendant		33.33	33.33				33.33	
Carpenter								100.00
Casual Labourer	33.33	33.33						33.33
Driver	15.38	15.38	30.77		7.69		7.69	23.08
Electrician	50	50						
Field Executive				100				
Mechanic/Technician		50	50					
N.A		100						
Painter		33.33					33.33	33.33
Plumber			50	50				
Sales/Delivery/Field Worker		23.08	38.46	7.69	7.69	7.69		15.38
Security Guard	100							
Self Employed/ Shop Owner		33.33	33.33	33.33				
Self Employed/Printing Press			100					
Shop Assistant		14.29	57.14	14.29				14.29
Tailor	20	30	40					10.00
Unemployed[63]							100	
Vendor	33.33	33.33	33.33					
Welder	50	50						

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in their study on the urban informal sector, Sankaran and Rao (1995) found 1493 economic activities in Govindpuri area including manufacturing, retail trade, eating establishments, transport/business and financial services, repairing services. Table 4.4 shows that there are 26 diverse kinds of activities men in these two clusters are engaged in

[63] This individual was out of work at the time of the field visit. His wife mentioned that he was working at a grocery shop but when the owner passed away he became unemployed. In her words, he was unemployed for the past one month.

for their livelihoods, however, both within and between these categories there are differences in the nature of work as well as incomes.

Driving included auto rickshaws, battery operated four-seated e-rickshaws, cars, and six-seated passenger autos (locally known as shared autos or *phat-phat* in Hindi). A noticeable trend is that a majority of e-rickshaw drivers belong to the Bengali-speaking community from Bhoomiheen camp[64]. The e-rickshaws are stationed on one corner of the junction of Ravidas Marg and they ferry passengers from Govindpuri to the nearest metro station, i.e. the Govindpuri metro station or to the other localities like Chittaranjan Park, charging a fare of 10 INR per passenger. While in the Govindpuri area the e-rickshaws have to compete with the passenger autos that are a cheaper and faster mode of transport, e-rickshaws have become a popular choice for those travelling to localities like Chittaranjan Park and Greater Kailash.

The category of car drivers can be further divided into: 1) those who are employed in the middle and upper middle class residences, 2) those working with travel and tours agencies, and 3) those who drove their own cars as taxis/cabs on contract basis with Ola and Uber. Those who are employed in the middle and upper middle class residences were salaried, are compensated anywhere in the range of 10,000-15,000 INR on a monthly basis and therefore, had more stable source of income than the e-rickshaw and auto drivers who were daily wage earners. Similarly, an electrician who is hired by the Resident Welfare Associations had a fixed monthly income of 10,000 as opposed to those who worked on a periodic basis as electricians.

[64] Several men in Bhoomiheen camp are also employed as fishermen/fish sellers and shopkeepers selling a wide range of items in the shops located in this part of the camp.

Based on the nature of work and stability of income they have also been broadly classified under casual, salaried and self employment in Table 4.5.

Table 4.4 Cluster wise economic activities of fathers					
Activities	Bhoomiheen	%	Navjeevan-Nehru	%	Grand Total
Accountant			1	100	1
Astrologer			8	100	8
Attendant	2	66.67	1	33.33	3
Carpenter			1	100	1
Unskilled Casual Labourer (*Dihadi/Beldari/Mazdoori*)	3	100			3
Driver	8	61.54	5	38.46	13
Electrician	1	50	1	50	2
Field Executive	1	100			1
Mechanic/Technician	1	50	1	50	2
N.A		0	1	100	1
Painter	2	66.67	1	33.33	3
Plumber	2	100		0	2
Sales/Delivery/Field Worker	6	46.15		0	13
Security Guard	1	100		0	1
Self Employed/Printing Press	1	100		0	1
Self Employed/Shop owner	3	50	3	50	6
Shop Assistant	2	28.57	5	71.43	7
Tailor/Embroider	7	70	3	30	10
Unemployed			1	100	1
Vendor			3	100	3
Welder	1	50	1	50	2
Grand Total	40		44		84

Table 4.5 shows that 73.81 per cent are engaged in casual employment whereas only 11.90 per cent are regular/salaried workers. Only 1.19 per cent are in self-employment. As per NSSO's definition, (1)"Self-employed persons are those who operate their own farm or non-farm enterprises or are engaged independently in a profession or trade on own-account or with one or a few partners are deemed to be self-employed in household enterprises, (2) Regular wage/salaried employee are persons working in other's farm or non-farm enterprises (both household and non-household) and getting in return salary or wages on a regular basis (and not

on the basis of daily or periodic renewal of work contract). This category not only includes persons getting time wage but also persons receiving piece wage or salary and paid apprentices, both full time and part-time, (3) Those who are casually engaged in other's farm or non-farm enterprises (both household and non-household) and getting in return wage, according to the terms of the daily or periodic work contract are casual wage labourers[65]".

Table 4.5. Broad Classification of Economic activities of Fathers		
Salaried/regular wage (field executive, shop assistants, accountant, security guard, attendants/peons)	10	11.90
Casual (daily wage labourers, carpenters, drivers, plumbers, etc)	62	73.81
Self employed (shop owners, vendors)	10	11.90
Unemployed	1	1.19
N.A	1	1.19
Grand Total	84	100

The category of salaried and casual workers is often erroneously conflated with formal and informal economy. Therefore, it is important to mention that under the category of salaried only those occupations have been included where the individuals are paid wages on a monthly basis such as a security guard employed at a private residence, shop assistants in retail stores and attendants/peons/compounders in private and government enterprises. The casual workers are distinguished on the basis of the fact that their nature of work is irregular and wages are earned on a daily basis. It is also important to note that regular/salaried work does not necessarily reflect high educational status. While both the security guard and a field executive are clubbed together in this category the former has studied up to lower primary while the field executive, working in a private bank, has completed higher secondary. While both are salaried what distinguishes them is that one is employed in the informal sector and the latter in the formal sector. Higher levels of education and employment in the formal sector gives Madan, the field executive, some sense of security and status absent in the case of others.

Madan is a resident of Bhoomiheen camp who lives with his mother, wife and a 3 year old son. He claimed that his father was educated up to 10th which meant a significant achievement in

[65] http://mail.mospi.gov.in/index.php/catalog/143/datafile/F5/V206

those days and worked as a driver in a government run enterprise. After completing his school, Madan got enrolled in an undergraduate degree course but dropped out after he was unsuccessful in clearing the first year exams. Thereafter, Madan joined a nationalized bank as a tele-caller selling credit cards to customers from where he later moved to a private bank as an executive who verified and collected documents for credit cards. He continues to work up to the present day. Madan has 8 to 9 years of experience in this kind of work which he described as a "field job". Describing the nature of his work Madan shared that he doesn't have to be present in the office regularly but travels to meet the clients only when he is asked to. He has a personal motorbike for travelling. Madan was getting a remuneration of about 22,000 INR per month and other additional employee benefits such as a provident fund. Madan's attitude towards his uneducated or less educated neighbours was that they become alcoholics and find menial work (*choto kaaj meaning low status work*) due to lack of education. He further added that the minimum qualification required for the kind of work he is doing is a senior school certificate and several of his friends are not able to get these jobs because they have not completed school. Therefore, Madan becomes one of the few to have gone up to post-secondary level and entered into a more secure economic activity.

There is only one individual, Prakash, holding the occupation of an accountant. The family reported that Prakash's father was among the very few individuals who was a graduate and worked as a tutor in the initial years of settlement of the camp. Prakash holds a degree in Bachelors of Commerce from Delhi University but he also enrolled himself in a course in mechanical engineering but dropped out of it later. Prakash was shy and reluctant to share about his life and researcher could barely learn much from him. The third individual, Ashish, with an undergraduate degree works as a bike driver for Uber. He was initially employed as a sales and delivery worker for an organization selling Ayurvedic medicines, however, after that organization shut down he started working as a driver earning around 13 to 14 thousand INR in a month. Therefore, what came with higher levels of education was a sense of job security and the opportunity to find salaried work in the more organized sectors of the economy.

a. Wherever, Whenever: Irregular Work and Vulnerable Lives

As per the India Wage Report (2018) by International Labour Organization (ILO):

> Wage employment can be sub-divided into regular/salaried and casual wage employment. The casual labour market consists mainly of people from economically poorer households, engaged in irregular work, compensated on a daily basis and with low levels of education and skills. The incidence of such labour is high among socially disadvantaged groups. Casual workers are usually underemployed as working cycles are irregular and they are compensated only for days worked, unlike regular/salaried workers who have continuous employment and whose wages are compensated on a monthly basis (India Wage Report by ILO, 2018, p.8).

What is important to note here is the linkage of low education with irregular causal employment. It was difficult to check the credibility of the information related to income. At times respondents were hesitant to share and gave a vague estimate. In some cases where the main bread earner was a daily wage worker or casual labourer again a vague estimate was given to the researcher as there was no fixed monthly income but this very fact tells us about the nature of informal economy in the country which is largely constituted by the poor.

All the men who worked as carpenters, electricians, painter, plumbers and welders shared that their work is irregular in nature as it depended upon demand. Most of these men said: "*jab phone ata hai tab jaate hai*" (we go for call when we get a call). In responses as to what kind of work their husbands do several women said "*dihadi*" (daily wages), *beldari (*unskilled construction work*)* and "*majdoori*" (daily wages) which has been clubbed under the category of casual labourers. *Dihadi* means daily wage work where workers are paid on the basis of number of hours of work. Those who worked as labourers earned around INR 300-500 per day but it was contingent upon the availability of the work suggesting that they were intermittently in and out of work. The nature of work of these labourers was described as : "*jab jaisa milta hai*" (whenever and whatever work they find). For example, a woman in her 40s described nature of work her husband is engaged in : "it is like *mazdoori*, sometimes there is work, sometimes he has

to sit at home…if there is work there is money, if there is no work then he stays idle". Another respondent, a painter by occupation, said that he has been in search for work for the past three months and it is only when someone calls he goes for work and on the remaining days he stays at home. His son, Sugriv said:

> "It all depends on work. If we find work then we earn in lakhs, if we don't then the whole year we sit at home…If there are no jobs where will one find them…what will the government do…still if we find work we can manage at least 15 to 20 thousand for the month…if there is none then whatever we have earned/saved we spent that…we are not able to grow…if we work for one month we have to sit at home for next two months…whatever we earn is spent on daily needs (*jo kamaya who khake barabar ho gaya*)…there is no work for the past two three months".

This sentiment was shared by the households where the main earner was a daily wager that is whatever they earned was exhausted on food, education and everyday needs and by the end of the month they were left with hardly any savings. Tenants like Usha were of the view that life was much harder for them in the cities as with whatever they were earning they had to manage rent, child's education and daily expenditures and they were not left with much to save at the end of the month. The rent in the neighbourhood for a one room set with a kitchen-like space, without a bathroom within the premises was somewhere between INR 1500-2000, exclusive of the electricity bill. Additionally, as mentioned before since they were living on rent and did not possess a permanent address in the city they could not avail the benefit of subsidized government services like monthly groceries etc.

Usha's husband is employed as a driver at a private residence and is also engaged in a subsidiary occupation of distributing milk daily in the nearby areas. He earns about 17000-18000 INR per month and income from Usha's intermittent work in the factory as a tailor is about 7000-8000 INR per month. Since the family has been living on rent in a single room for the past 20-25 years they have invested in a small plot of land in Faridabad for securing a residential place in case they are displaced when the *jhuggi* is demolished. A monthly installment of 6000 INR is paid every month for the plot. Further their daughter is studying in a private aided school where she is

paying 6000 INR per year as fees. In addition to this the cost of van and tuition is about 2500 INR per month. Usha added one more dimension when she narrated her struggles of sustaining in the city. Usha's family is Brahmins by caste however in the city, she shared, her husband works as a driver suggesting a job that is "beneath" the status of a traditional Brahmin.

> Believe me Piyu's father [meaning her husband] does *puja* back in the village (*desh*). We are Brahmins. And what work is he doing [in the city]. Money is less in priest line. That is why he left home…he has entered this car line. Her father says if he had stayed in the village in the priest line then he would not have been able to educate his daughter like this in the city. For this purpose of education he has come…otherwise my father in law is also a Brahmin [in the village].

Chandola (2010) writes that although most of the migrants come from rural areas and small towns with rigid socio-cultural and caste norms, slums allow the possibility of going beyond these barriers and taking up occupations which otherwise may have been restricted back in the village, especially for upper castes. Such examples of change were found among other communities as well. For instance, in a group of Muslim families residing in Nehru camp who said they belonged to the Halwai (traditionally engaged in confectionary and sweet making) caste, many members were working as drivers or carpenters.

Out of the three casual labourers one has never attended school and the other two have studied up to primary and middle level, respectively. Those who were employed as shop assistants or sales persons in different kind of stores had more income security than those in casual employment as they received a salary at the month's end. It is important to note that these men employed as plumbers, electricians, welders did not undergo any training and learnt their craft on the job itself, beginning as apprentices.

The category of sales/delivery/field worker included a range of work. These were men who worked as dealers facilitating sales and purchase of cars, delivery boys and field workers/labourers working in shops and small enterprises ferrying items from one place to another. Other than drivers and sales/delivery persons, another occupation that several men in the sample are engaged in is that of tailors or seamsters which requires a detailed discussion. These

jobs were referred to as "*silai ka kaam*" or "*export ka kaam*" (work in stitching and export of garments). Those who were working in factories worked on piece rate basis. As mentioned before the *jhuggis* are in close proximity to Okhla Industrial Estate and Govindpuri extension and Tughlakabad which have a large number garment export enterprises.

A three part series article published in The Scroll[66] describes in detail the complex realities of the manufacturing units in India and in particular the garment industry in Okhla vis a vis labour conditions and legal regulations as an example. An everyday scene at the garment factories of Okhla is described:

> "Garment exporters are the largest employers in Okhla. Inside large garment factories, hundreds of tailors can be seen working at long rows of sewing machines. Each is working on a different section of the same garment. One tailor begins with stitching the back, another does the sleeves, another the collar. Their progress is closely monitored by supervisors on the shop floor, who use stop-watches to track the work done by each tailor on a piece".

This sector is also plagued by seasonality as the demand for garment exports peaks between October and March during the festivals of Eid, Christmas and New year for buyers in Middle East, the US and Europe. During this time factories run for 24 hours in a day whereas the demands fall during summers. Chandra, a mother from Bhoomiheen camp, said that her husband works in garment factories where the nature of work is temporary as there are periods of heavy work for two to three months followed by a lull of three months when he remains out of work. Secondly, workers have to keep looking for work, moving from one factory to another. Sadiya, whose husband works as a tailor, shared that when work is available her husband gets paid around 10,000-12,000 in a month but if there is no work it is difficult for them to run the house. When asked how much money her husband makes in a month another woman: "*itna ho jata hai ki karenge toh hoga , nai karenge toh nai hoga*" (if he works there will be money, if he doesn't then there will be none). As mentioned before, this statement was in fact reiterated by all those who were in casual form of employment including painters, carpenters, plumbers, electricians.

---

[66] Even without labour reforms, Delhi's factories have hired and fired workers easily for years https://scroll.in/article/734399/even-without-labour-reforms-delhis-factories-have-hired-and-fired-workers-easily-for-years

Several factories run on daily "piece rate system" or a "part rate system" where productivity and wage is dependent upon per piece or part of the piece. Most of these respondents worked as casual workers and were not receiving any health or social security benefits. The permanent workers of the factory are entitled to Provident Fund, health benefits, paid leave, and bonus. However, the contract workers received bonus on festivals like Diwali. A respondent whose husband works in a garment factory in Tughlakabad shared that her husband works on "*dihadi*" meaning, a casual worker on wage basis. She explained that they favoured the piece rate system as opposed to "salary" system (permanent worker) because they can earn more by working more , say even on holidays. In case of salary system no matter how much work they did the salary is fixed, although she acknowledged that in times of less demand the workers are assured salary. But in her words, "even if you work like a donkey, they will pay you the same fixed salary and in export line they pay 12000 salary". Therefore, casual workers like her husband preferred the possibility of making more money by choosing insecurity over the security of a permanent worker. For a mother like Usha, piece wage system , though it was insecure, it gave her flexibility to manage her daughter's schooling related activities and household chores.

Shopkeepers mostly included those who own and run shops inside or on the peripheries of the settlement. Most of these include small grocery shops selling items of everyday need like milk, packaged water, candies, bread, spices etc. In this sample there was one shop that sold tarpaulin sheets and bags on the peripheries of Navjeevan camp facing the main Ravidas road. The respondents shared that the shops that were located on the peripheries sold more goods than those which are functioning inside the camps. Shop owners were relatively better off than the vendors as they did not have to pay bribes to the local policemen in order to set stalls. However, some of them who did not own the space paid a monthly rent between INR 1000-2000. On the other hand, shop assistants include those who work in enterprises owned by others such as stores selling footwear, car accessories, etc., mostly outside the slum.

The vegetable vendors set up their carts (*thelas* in Hindi) fruit and vegetable market on the peripheries of Bhoomiheen camp. Along this long stretch several carts selling fruits, vegetables, juices are stationed. The owners have to negotiate with the harassment of local police personnel and pay a bribe of about INR 1500-2000 per month (what is called *khane peene ka* in Hindi) to continue to be able to position their carts and do their business from there. For this reason, a

respondent, Mahesh had to move to another occupation of setting up his own shop for spices and pulses, however, he shared that his current business too was not yielding much profit as there are many other local shops around the area selling spices. For example, Mahesh's narrative exemplifies the ordeals faced by the vendors in the fruits and vegetable market:

> "Now I earn about 150-200 INR per day. Earlier when I used to sell vegetables I would manage to earn about 4000-5000 INR almost every day. But the *thiya* owner used to trouble me a lot. Where everybody else was paying 3000 INR, mine was charged around 3500-4000 INR a month. Then again he increased it and I was almost paying 5000 INR to him monthly…we had to pay 1500 INR to the *policewalas* also…then the room rent..that is why I left".

The *thiya* owners are the home owners or shop owners who claim right over the space in front of their house where these carts are lined up. Lalita, shared that every month they are compelled to pay a sum of 7000 INR to the *thiya* owner for the vegetable stall that they put up. Additionally they pay 2000 INR per month to the local police personnel of the area. One newspaper article states: "The mini battles of Govindpuri road exemplify the million mutinies taking place in Delhi everyday as the urban poor and informal labourers struggle to earn their livelihood in the national capital"[67]. Sankaran and Rao (1995) also found: "a major problem most commonly reported by the vendors interviewed in the survey was harassment by authorities" (p.168). For some shopkeepers the one room space of the house served as a goods storage/workspace as well like Mahesh lived in a single room with his wife and daughter; this served as the bedroom, kitchen as well as space for storage of goods for sale.

b. Traditional Occupation, Education and Narratives of Change

There are 8 astrologers (*jyotish*) in the sample, and as discussed before they are based in Nehru camp and belong to the Marathi speaking migrant community from Madhya Pradesh. This is a hereditary occupation of the community and the researcher was told that this "*gyan*" or "knowledge" was passed from one generation to another generation in the family, from the father

---

[67] https://www.news18.com/news/india/mcd-elections-are-tougher-to-predict-than-assembly-polls-heres-why-1367211.html

to the son. All the respondents described this knowledge as "*upari/ kudrati gyan"* or "*shakti*" suggesting that its bestowed by a divine power. This is again a gendered occupation and only men in the family can acquire this knowledge and practice it. These astrologer/soothsayers do their business in popular spots in the city like Hanuman Mandir or inner circles of Connaught Place or local temples nearby. Several of them roam about in colonies and popular market places in search of clients everyday or wait for their regular clients to call them for rituals etc[68].

Few in the community set up stalls in luxurious spaces like shopping malls which is considered more lucrative as compared to sitting in popular temples and market places as they can attract wealthy clientele. In terms of education, a majority of them have studied only up to the upper primary level. These men acquired the knowledge from their fathers and grandfathers at a young age, as the researcher was told they had been learning it since their cognitive capacities developed ("*jabse hosh sambhala hai*").

This is again an occupation with instability written all over it. The incomes of the astrologers ranged from between INR 300 and 400 per day but as the researcher was told, this was not a stable income and it depended upon the availability of clients/customers ("*kabhi 200, 300 kabhi 500*" was the standard response). The nature of work thus was highly insecure as on some days and they returned home empty handed.

Rajni, a member of the Joshi samaj, opined that she would not want her son to pursue the same line of occupation as her husband who was an astrologer due to the daily hardships and low and insecure income it involved (*dhakke khana*). She would rather want her son to complete his formal education and pursue a different and more stable line of career. In the sample, the young men of the present generation, enrolled in schools and colleges did not show much inclination towards their hereditary occupation although a few mentioned that they too have acquired the "*khandani gyan*" (ancestral knowledge). One respondent who is enrolled in a distance learning

[68] "These fortune tellers go around the streets announcing their presence, or wait along footpaths or in front yards of busy buildings like temples or offices. Usually wearing a Maharashtrian cap, the parrot astrologer carriers a cage of parrots and a bag of cards, a book, and a few remedies for misfortune, such as stones or talismans…the fortune teller 'reads' the figure and the fortune in a peculiar Marathi dialect mixed with syncretic forms of other south Indian languages in a catchy shrill voice and emphatic pronunciation. For 'elaboration' upon the reading he 'consults' the book he carries with him. Usually clients are offered 'remedies' for evil eye or other misfortune, first in the form of a prescription and later from the various objects in the bag…(P. Nagaraja quoted in Chandola :308)

undergraduate programme and working part-time in a call centre mentioned that he has completed a certificate course in astrology.

IV. Mothers: Economic Activities, Nature of Work and Education

a. Gender and Women's Work

We have already discussed that the mothers' education levels are lower than that of fathers. According to Table 4.6, a large percentage of domestic workers are schooled up to primary level. There are 18.75 per cent of them with no formal education. A major chunk of unpaid household workers are also concentrated in primary and middle stage and 21.15 per cent have never been to school.

Table 4.6. Cross classification of economic activities with educational levels of mothers

Activities	1st-5th	6th-8th	9th-10th	11th-12th	Diploma /Certificate	Graduate and above	no formal education	N.A
Domestic Worker	43.75	25	12.5				18.75	
Factory Worker				50				
Home-Based Activity	33.33	33.33		0	33.33			
Unpaid Household Worker	26.92	32.69	7.69	9.62			21.15	1.92
Manager						100		
MLM Distributor				100				
Sanitation Worker	100							
Teacher+ MLM						100		
Self Employed/ Shop owners			50				50	
Supervisor		100						
Private Tutor			50		50			

In terms of activities, first and foremost what we notice (in Table 4.7) is that the diversity of occupation present in men's work is absent in women's case. This can also be attributed to women having lower levels of education than men. One can also argue that diverse kinds of occupations men are engaged in such as electricians, drivers, plumbers, painters, security guards and astrology are male dominant occupations. Sankaran and Rao (1995) corroborate this: "at

least in Govindpuri area of Delhi, the informal sector is almost completely dominated by male entrepreneurs except for purely home-based activities, in which females engaged by large factories on sub-contracting basis earn but a pittance" (p.190).

Table 4.7. Activities of mothers in Bhoomiheen and Navjeevan-Nehru camp

Activities	Bhoomiheen	%	Navjeevan-Nehru	%	Grand Total
Domestic Workers	14	87.5	2	12.5	16
Factory Workers	1	50.00	1	50.00	2
Home Based Activity	1	50.00	2	50.00	3
Unpaid Household Workers	23	44.23	29	55.77	52
Manager			1	100.00	1
MLM Distributor			1	100.00	1
Sanitation Worker			1	100.00	1
School Teacher+ MLM Distributor			1	100.00	1
Self Employed/Shopkeeper	1	25.00	3	75.00	4
Supervisor			1	100.00	1
Private Tutor	1	50.00	1	50.00	2
Grand Total	41		43		84

Second, Table 4.7 shows that a large number of women are household workers whose everyday routine includes cleaning, cooking, washing, caring for their children and other dependent members of the family. Responsibilities towards children also include ferrying activities and this has been discussed in detail in the chapter on mothering and education in slum households. While the respondents identified themselves as "housewives" because they were not in any paid employment, this group will be referred to as unpaid household workers in the thesis as a recognition of the range of household work they do on a daily basis. Unpaid household work has been included in the table as they often tend to be undervalued and not counted as "work". Menon (2012) writes: " …so naturalized are assumptions about gender roles that the Indian census did not recognize this as 'work' for a long time, since it is not performed for a wage, but is unpaid labour around the family" (p.13). These women commonly cited two reasons for not taking up paid employment 1) they had young children to look after and they were concerned about the safety of their children particularly girls 2) second, they were discouraged from taking

up paid employment by their husbands and family members. Women in Muslim households particularly were restricted from taking up paid employment. They were unanimous in sharing that they were not allowed by their husbands to work outside home even if a few of them were willing to. Nagma, a resident of Bhoomiheen camp shared that women have never been allowed to work in her family no matter up to what stage they are schooled : "my sister in law is a matric pass…but my mother never thought of letting her work. Similarly, she never thought of getting me educated so I can work. Our parents think differently". She further added that the Bengali households are more prosperous as they have more earning members: "In our household there is one earner and five members are dependent on him. Among Bengalis, mothers earn, fathers earn… the moment the daughter grows up she also starts working in the *kothis*…they all earn together which is why they are prosperous (*kushal*)". This was corroborated by two other residents of Navjeevan camp. With strong emphasis Lalita and another respondent Meena said: "In Bhoomiheen camp women do not sit [at home] …all the Bengali women…they never stay at home…most of them work as cook in *kothis*... that's why they do not face much problem. You will see that most of their children are going to private schools…"

This is in fact reflected in Table 4.7 where 87.5 per cent of domestic workers are from Bhoomiheen camp and majority were found to be from the Bengali speaking community. Their work includes washing clothes, cleaning utensils, sweeping/mopping and cooking in localities like Kalkaji, Govindpuri and Chittaranjan Park. Their interaction with and exposure to the outside world seem to make them more autonomous. The predominance of Bengali women in this occupation thus can also be explained by the attitudes to women's work across different social groups in the slum.

Home based economic activities included embroidery and stitching and this is an activity that often goes unrecorded in surveys. As pointed out by Sudarshan and Bhattacharya (2009), women's labour force participation is often underreported and underestimated:

> "Evidence from a large number of micro studies further suggests that women workers continue to be partly netted in by labour force surveys because of the nature of the work that they perform, which is often home-based, subcontracted, or through sources of self-employment. Women's work is also embedded in domestic activity, which creates perceptions that these activities

> are not to be reported as "work". Home based work included embroidery and stitching based on piece rate" (p.60).

Some respondents themselves were hesitant to share the home-based economic activities or subsidiary occupations they had undertaken during the researcher's first visit. For example, one respondent did not share the fact that she was working from home on piece wage rate and classified herself as "housewife". It was when her neighbour brought some raw material to her home, she disclosed that she is a home based worker cutting pieces for a garment enterprise. There could be two reasons for not reporting this kind of work. One she herself underestimates this home based activity as "work" and therefore did not report it. Second this could emerge out of the fear of revealing the actual economic status of the family and losing some of the benefits they were entitled to although the income from the home based activity was meager. But what is important here is that it speaks of their sense of precariousness and how there is always a looming threat of losing whatever little they possessed like their *jhuggi* or ration card.

Sankaran and Rao (1995) found 28 home based activities in Nehru and Navjeevan camp which mainly included "finishing work on stitched/unstitched/designed garments (removing remnants like extra threads/cloth pieces etc and other related processes). These are subcontracted by garment factories and firms. As it is apparent from the work profiles of men and women discussed in this chapter as well as from studies conducted by other researchers home based activity is also a gendered one. It can be explained by the fact that women remain within the confines of home, committed to the domestic responsibilities and at the time are also able to contribute to the household income. Sankaran and Rao (1995) further write:"as it was dominated by women workforce, was characterized by a total lack of technical skills; in fact none of the operations, as mentioned earlier requires prior knowledge of any special or technical skill" (p.134). It can also be argued that the knowledge of stitching and sewing is a social expectation and domestic virtue that every girl and woman is expected to have and therefore many start learning from mothers and grandmothers in their childhood.

However, of the three mothers, Pinky in the sample was skilled and trained differently. She was pursuing a diploma in fashion technology from an institute of polytechnic and running a tailoring business from her home earning about INR 5000/6000 in a month, an income more than the

income of the other two. The other two mothers, Saroj and Muskaan having studied up to primary and middle school were working piece rate basis with two different firms, a garment and toy making. Saroj, who makes soft toys for a firm, reported earning between (INR 4 per piece) 1000 to 1500 INR per month. Muskaan did not reveal her own income but shared that she receives 2 to 3 rupees per piece[69].

The shopkeepers included women who managed shops inside and on the peripheries of the camp selling groceries, bags and garments.

Table 4.8. Classification of activities of women

Activities	Mothers	%
Salaried (manager, teacher, domestic workers, sanitation worker, supervisor)	20	23.81
Casual (private tutor, home based tailoring, MLM Distributors)	8	9.52
Self employed/Shop Owners	4	4.76
Household workers	52	61.90
Total	84	100.00

Based on the nature of activities, Table 4.8 classifies them under salaried, casual and self employed and household workers. It shows that 23.81 per cent are salaried workers and 9.52 are engaged in casual activities. It is important to reiterated that being salaried ensures a fixed income at the end of every month and these activities does not necessarily mean high levels of education. Similarly, higher level of education of the private tutors is not reflected in its classification as casual employment.

Again the category of salaried and casual workers should not be conflated with formal and informal economy. For example, "while all casual workers are informal workers, not all regular/salaried workers are formal workers, as many do not receive social security benefits, pensions or paid leave – the classic case being that of domestic workers". Here, only three

[69] Sankaran and Rao writing in 1995 point out that "earnings of a home based worker in the slums was abysmally low and that piece rate fixed on cloth/garments was somewhere between three quarters of a rupee and two and a half rupees per piece of cloth/readymade depending upon the size" (p.143).

individuals were employed in the formal sector; one as a programme manager, the sanitation worker employed in a private school and the other as a teacher in an NGO-run educational centre. Further, a person's primary occupation could be a salaried one and at the same time she could be engaged in a subsidiary casual employment. For example, the school teacher was simultaneously working as a Multi Level Marketing (MLM) or network marketing distributor which can be classified as casual employment. Although the MLM distributors were registered and received a company generated Identity Document (ID), the incomes were dependent upon the number of new recruits they can hire. What set apart the two employees working in the formal sector was access to provident fund, paid leave, income security and a social status and this difference was associated with their level of education. The following sections will discuss difference brought about by education in the lives of these women.

b. Educated Selves: Respect, Entitlement and Networks

LeVine (1980) has proposed that schooling is a form of "assertiveness training" which enables women to form their own opinions and act on them, believe in the efficacy of their actions and not be influenced, intimidated or bullied by others (Cited in Thapan 1997, p.84). Thapan argues that while the effect of education on women's and her children's health is established, it has been found that more than primary, it is secondary education that makes a difference. This section explores in detail how a few women who have secondary education and diplomas and degrees are different than the rest.

Seema is the one of the two graduates in the sample who was employed as a programme officer and was earning the income of 15000 per month, highest among women in paid employment. A resident of Nehru camp, Seema belongs to a Nepali family, holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and has been working for the rights and education of persons with disability in an NGO for 15 years. She has also completed a course in Special Education as her work deals with children with disability. Seema's association with the NGO began when her own 11 year old son with cerebral palsy needed training and care under the guidance of disability experts. However, though her son passed away at the age of 12, Seema continued her association with the organization and gradually became an integral part of it. Initially, the organization's Community Based Rehabilitation programme for reaching out to disabled persons living in the cluster was run from

Seema's house. In this way, her familiarity with the neighbours increased and the latter also began to recognize her.

Seema's occupation in the formal sector as opposed to a large number of women employed in the informal sector as domestic workers gives her more security. When the researcher asked her if she is planning to retire from this organization she said she can quit whenever she desires but the organization will not remove her as she is one of the oldest employees. Her employee benefits and entitlements include provident fund and 30 days of paid leave in a year. She proudly showed the researcher several activities the organization conducts for children with disability.

During the course of fieldwork the researcher found that Seema was well known in the neighbourhood and her visibility extended up to Bhoomiheen camp. Seema herself emphasized that she was recognized as an educated person in the whole settlement. As an educated person Seema often guided young girls and boys about different courses they can enroll themselves after finishing school. She said : Everyone knows that I am educated (*padhi likhi)* …people of different *jati* live around me…if there is any information they need, they all come to me..to get forms filled, widow pension etc…they get all the information from me". The fact that she mentioned that people irrespective of social backgrounds come seeking help, also points perhaps towards the possibility of educated identity to overshadow others. She added: "I have built a lot of rapport… the moment I step out everybody greets me with *Namaste Namaste*…everybody knows me and respects me".

What was evident in the conversations with her was that her education gave her access to employment in the formal sector which in turn helped her to build networks. She also mentioned 'respect' which her education and work profile earned in the neighbourhood. The importance of respect was present in the narratives of Nibha as well.

Nibha, hails from Bihar and lives with her family in Navjeevan camp. Although she claimed to be a Brahmin, the researcher found out from another member of her family that they belong to Other Backward Classes. Nibha completed her higher secondary but could not study beyond it as she was married off by her parents. The researcher met Nibha in February 2018 just outside her household when she was filling up the water containers of her family as well as of the neighbours. Her family is one of the privileged families of the camp who have a private water

connection and supply drinking water to others in the neighbourhood. Nibha shared that she was associated with an NGO run centre where she taught out-of-school children as well as gave lessons in reading/writing to non-literate women for a salary of about 3000 INR per month. One year later, when the researcher met her again in 2019 she had entered into a different line of work, that is, as a distributor for Modicare, a brand of home, personal care and health care items that worked on the basis of multi level marketing[70] scheme. This kind of marketing is purely based on networking and friendship channels and products are neither conventionally advertized nor are they sold at any retails shops. Nibha's aspirations for herself and her family merits some discussion as they offer interesting insights into the lives of urban poor in the city and their pathways to social mobility.

Nibha approached the researcher with her demonstration kit where she tried to show how Modicare products were chemical free and therefore better than other brands which are available in the market. Nibha was also present at the same time. There were two points around which they were selling the idea: one by putting forth a discourse of having a healthy lifestyle (*swastha*) which entailed using "chemical free" products at home and two earning lakhs of money, a car and house just by engaging as distributor on a part time basis.

What was ironic was the largely middle class ideas about germ free and chemical free were being spread in a space where basic civic services like drainage, clean drinking water were yet to reach properly. What is interesting is to see how multi level marketing programmes have made their way into the lives of urban poor. Srivastava (2010) calls this 'subaltern consumerism' i.e. how urban poor engages in the consumerist activities of the city. These women use friends and family relationship to build and spread this network and what is essential to the part of convincing a potential distributor is the demonstration kit. Nibha's network involves people who have many degrees and high educational credentials. Nibha regretted that while her siblings had completed courses like B.Com and B.Tech she could not go beyond senior secondary. However, the entry into the world of multi level marketing enabled her to earn a decent income and prove that

[70] "Multilevel marketing plans also known as "network" or "matrix" marketing are a way of selling goods or services through distributors. These plans typically promise that if you sign up as a distributor, you will receive commissions- for both your sales for the plan's goods or services and those of other people you recruit to join the distributors". Attri, Rekha, A Study of Consumer Perceptions of the Products Sold Through Multilevel Marketing (December, 21 2011). Prabandhan & Taqniki, Management Research Journal, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 97-103, 2011 . Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=1975576

women are no less. According to her, this occupation helped her earn three things: *Sewa* (charity as she was spreading the ideas of healthy lifestyle), *maan-samaan* (respect), *aur paise* (money).

The promise of high income, international trips and the dream of owning luxury assets like cars was sold to residents like Nibha by the life changing experiences and success stories of young women entrepreneurs of the company. As part of the training, like other recruits, Nibha was asked to create a vision board for the future and focus on it for 60 seconds everyday: she envisaged a house with a swimming pool and individual rooms for her children and a car. This job, she said with conviction, will help her realize this vision and change her destiny (*kismet badal jaegi*). Nibha shared that she was earning around 10,000 INR from this scheme and hoped to start earning 50000-60000 in the next six months.

The only other graduate among women in the sample is Lalita in Navjeevan camp. She completed her schooling and undergraduate degree in Uttar Pradesh. When she was in 11th standard her marriage took place, however, she continued to stay in the village and with her mother's support she completed her bachelor's degree, occasionally visiting her husband who was staying in Navjeevan camp in Delhi. Her mother had limited education but believed that if her daughter is educated she would be able to live independently in times of crisis. Later, after coming to Delhi, Lalita also obtained other qualifications like Diploma in Elementary Education and Nursery Primary Teacher's Training (NPTT). She currently works as a primary teacher in the school run by the Carmel Community Church. She was also pursuing a course in basic computers at the time of the researcher's fieldwork.

Born in a Hindu scheduled caste family, Lalita started following Christianity from 2010 onwards when her husband fell seriously ill and according to her no amount of prayer was helping her through the crisis. It is only in Christianity she found some solace and the capacity to cope with the difficult times. Therefore, one can see that her association with the church is not merely as an employee but also as a practitioner of faith.

There are two ways in which Lalita's current employment status makes her different. One, Lalita's current occupation where she has spent about 8 years gives her an income security and access to benefits like recurring deposits. Lalita currently earns ten thousand rupees per month and this is commensurate with her qualification as the church also hires teachers who have only

obtained senior secondary school certificate and are paid less salary. She mentioned that the nature of the work also enables her to come home between shifts and look after her daughter's needs and perform the household chores. Second, Lalita is a face known to several parents in the neighbourhood because of her association with the church as a teacher. In the initial days of the fieldwork, her network helped the researcher to meet several families in Navjeevan and Bhoomiheen camp as she swiftly went around the neighbourhood during her break from work and introduced the former to women in these settlements.

Lalita has also been roped in by her neighbour, Nibha as an MLM distributor which brings income to Lalita's household. Both Nibha and Lalita's network goes beyond their immediate neighbourhood and they have managed to build relationships with women in the neighbouring lower middle and middle class colonies as well. Lalita said: "now I have such a vast network here that even if I move to another neighbourhood I can use this network and do something to sustain the household".

Lalita is enterprising and ambitious like Nibha and balances both work and household chores on a daily basis. Lalita believed that her busy schedule differentiates her from other less educated, 'idle' (*kam padhe likhe*, *khali rehne wali*) women of her neighbourhood who spent time in gossips. Her long-term ambition is to save money and build a three storeyed house on the plot (900 square feet) of land they have managed to buy in the NCR. She intends to turn one storey into a play school for children and is confident she will find handful of them to give her sufficient income. She further intends to sublet one storey and live with her family on the remaining floor. Lalita confidently shared before her daughter reaches 10th standard she would like to build the house in Noida and sublet it. In the meantime, with help of the income from the rent in Noida they would like to shift to a rented accommodation in the authorized lower middle class colonies of Govindpuri around the slum for a better environment. Not only this, her plan to sublet the rooms and earn from rent has been done with the far-sighted idea that even if they lose their work or are not able to work in the old age they will have stable source of income in the future.

The decision to work, however, has not been an easy one in a settlement which has codes about women's mobility and interaction in the public space. In the beginning there was a lot of resistance from Lalita's husband and his family to her decision to enter into paid employment.

However, she persevered and her association with the church softened his approach towards her. Further, when her husband met the fellow teachers there was more acceptance for her decision. With regard to her MLM job she shared that since the income is incrementally increasing he does not prevent her from doing it. She said she earned eleven thousand rupees in January 2020 while her neighbour Nibha has been earning about twenty thousand rupees in a month.

Jyoti is the last individual to have received post secondary education. She finished school and underwent training in Nursery Primary Teaching (NTT). Jyoti, a member of OBC, hails from Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh, where she completed her schooling. She could not pursue education as she got married, came to settle in Bhoomiheen camp and their son was born shortly after. She started working in a unrecognized private school where she worked for 8 years. She has also been a private tutor in the neighbourhood for 12 years and her monthly income ranges between INR 3000 and 3500 from providing tuitions.

Jyoti's desire to pursue some other courses via distance mode was also sacrificed for her son's education. Both Lalita and Jyoti shared their aspiration to become teachers in government school but they both felt that lacking English speaking/writing ability is a major constraint in securing this kind of a job. They felt education in Hindi medium back in their town and villages was a hurdle in securing employment in government schools in the city.

When the researcher visited Jyoti she was sitting on a single bed with her son and while a group of four children in the primary age group, her clientele, were sitting on a mattress on the ground in single room settlement. Her education and experience of teaching in school and later as a private tutor also enables her to engage with her son's academic work on an everyday basis. She said because she only has one son there is a lot of expectation from him to study well and get a good job. Her sense of entitlement which she attributed to her educated status distinguished her from other parents with limited education. Given below is a snippet of conversation with her:

> "Jyoti: The students who go to government school, their parents are less educated. I have told them often that they can go and complain because government pays salary to the teachers to teach your kids…go to the principal...if that does not work there are higher authorities. Parents like us go and speak up.

> Researcher: So what do you think makes you different?
>
> Jyoti: Because of education. They are less educated so they fear that if they complain it might affect their children. But they have to understand that it is their right".

The above conversation not only indicates sense of entitlement and assertiveness that women like Jyoti associate with having more education, but also reflects the level of engagement of an educated mother with her child's school (discussed elaborately in Chapter 7). A relative of the owner of the private school where Jyoti worked as a teacher introduced her to another a multi-level marketing chain called Forever and, like Nibha and Lalita, Jyoti had also become a registered distributor (researcher visited her again in 2019). In her words this new avenue not only generates easy income without having to venture out every day ("*ghar bethe income*") but also gives an opportunity to acquire knowledge when one goes out and meets other people ("*bahar jao toh knowledge milti hai*").

What differentiated these women with relatively higher levels of education was their aspirations for themselves and their families. In spite of some of them facing initial resistance from family members to take up paid employment they able to negotiate and assert themselves. For someone like Jyoti education and her work experience gave her a sense of entitlement and bargaining power and she could negotiate better with school staff. Seema, Nibha and Lalita especially envisaged a better life outside the slum. They also felt they were recognized and respected as "*padhi likhi*" women of the neighbourhood and their presence as teachers and MLM distributors also enabled them to build strong networks that went beyond the immediate neighbourhood.

Summary

This chapter explored the educational backgrounds of the parents and how it corresponds to the economic activities they are engaged in. Clearly, those who have finished school or have obtained post secondary education were able to secure regular employment as opposed to those who were educated up to primary and middle levels. The latter were largely engaged in irregular and low paid work which highlights the large involvement of men and women in squatter settlements in the informal sector where insecurity is widespread.

In terms of economic activities men had a greater pool to choose from as a large number of activities in Govindpuri were male dominant. This diversity was absent in case of women and they seem to face both cultural and market barriers in taking up paid employment. In fact the gender based differences were evident both in the case of educational levels and economic activities. To some women, however, higher level of education gave greater negotiating power. Better and steady incomes and a large network that they were able to build as part of their work also exerted pressure on their partners to accept their working status and mobility. These women were also conscious of the way they were recognized as "*padhi likhi*" women and given respect by the neighbours, suggesting a kind of symbolic capital. As education is viewed not only as an instrument in reducing poverty by leading to better jobs and income but also as capability that includes critical thinking, self-confidence and esteem, the chapter tries to explore how education produces this difference.

Chapter 5

Education as a Site of Difference: Aspirations and Choices

A common sight in the mornings and afternoons in and around the slum settlement is that of school going children moving in and out of the slum. One sees girls and boys across age groups in chequered uniforms of different colours, signifying the diversity of schools they are enrolled in. In the afternoons, the road from DDA flats to the Govindpuri cluster is filled with autos and e-rickshaws carrying school children back to the slum and many on their way to the school for the afternoon shift. While the adolescent boys and girls are mostly seen in groups as they chat, mock and giggle with each other, the younger ones are escorted by their mothers, indicating the greater involvement of mothers in the regular school related activities of their children. This regular sight of children in uniforms is an indication of how formal education is increasingly accessed by the urban poor living in slums. It is also an indication of their hopes and aspirations for a better future although the degree of optimism and the content of aspirations, choices, and strategies may differ.

This chapter delves into the educational aspirations of parents, their school choices (wherever it is a choice), their perceptions about and experiences of education and strategies to fulfill the aspirations. It takes forward the element of diversity and differences produced by education levels in occupational background and the everyday lives and subjectivities of the respondents from the previous chapter and attempts to continue the discussion along the same axes by exploring how having no or limited or higher education along with their economic capital shapes their aspirations and expectations.

I. Parental Biographies and Education as a Tool to Escape Slum: From 'Culture of Poverty' to 'Culture of Hope and Aspirations'

The concept of aspiration has been growing in importance in educational research and theory. How have researchers defined aspirations, a concept that is so popular in educational research and theory. Clair et al (2013) write, "…aspirations are, at minimum, an important component of

the imagined future towards which young people orientate themselves and their current efforts" (p.721). Most scholars have pointed out that aspirations are dynamic and "adapt and change in the light of new experiences, choices and information (Gutman and Akerman, 2008, p.i). For Kintrea et. al (2011), "aspirations are complex and multidimensional, reflecting the influence and interaction of many different individual, social, cultural and environmental factors, including economic, social, neighbourhood and household structures" (p.11). As Appadurai (2004) also argues, "Aspirations are never simply individual (as the language of wants and choices inclines us to think). They are always formed in interaction and in the thick of social life" (p.67).

Aspiration has also found its way in policies for example, there is a policy discourse in UK that higher aspirations can lead to better outcomes, therefore, there is a need to raise aspirations among the disadvantaged groups (Kintrea et. al 2011). However, studies have tried to challenge this oversimplification of a complex phenomenon. A longitudinal study by Joseph Rowntree Foundation on aspirations of young (at ages 13 and 15) people from three different disadvantaged neighbourhoods in UK found that young people were aspirational and wanted to study in universities, secure professional and managerial jobs and "there was little evidence of fatalism…" (Kintrea et al 2011, p.7). What it argues for is an in-depth understanding of how aspirations are formed by the social and spatial contexts of disadvantaged neighbourhoods, which can vary from one to another depending on the socio-spatial make up of the neighbourhoods and how the barriers to realization of these aspirations can be addressed. The study adopts a more nuanced approach to understanding aspirations by looking at the factors that shape aspirations: family, place of dwelling/neighbourhood, and school, where the spatial context in which people live is an important focus of this study.

When we speak of aspirations it is important to recall the work of Oscar Lewis (1966) and the concept of "culture of poverty" formulated by him. According to Lewis, "culture of poverty" distinct from poverty is a sub-culture found among slum dwellers more in capitalist countries like the US than in socialist countries or countries like India. "It is both a reaction and an adaptation of the poor to their marginal position in a class stratified, highly individuated capitalistic society" (Lewis, 1966, p.21) and listed some pre-conditions that need to exist for a culture of poverty to develop and identified some 70 characteristics that constitute the culture of poverty. "The individual who grows up in this culture has a strong feeling of fatalism,

helplessness, dependence, and inferiority" (ibid, p.23). Lewis almost went to the extent of saying that there is "poverty of aspiration" among the slum dwellers who exhibit culture of poverty. Although Lewis was of the opinion that he did not find the existence of this culture among the lower castes in India as they were well integrated with the larger society and other institutions. However, writing in the year 1966 he goes on to ask : "It remains to be seen….. whether culture of poverty has not already begun to develop in the slums of Bombay and Calcutta" (ibid, p.24). However, the interviews with the parents in Govindpuri slum settlement revealed they were hopeful and aspirational. This is where the study departs from Lewis' thesis of culture of poverty. The chapter seeks to discuss elaborately this aspect of how it varies and challenges the notions of culture of poverty thesis.

Parental aspirations were interlaced with a sense of hope, the hope of getting a white collar, middle class jobs which will give higher income and status and the hope of escaping the slum. Educational aspirations were also embedded with a desire for escape and mobility from the present socio-spatial context. For instance, a mother with no formal education said: "If we educate our children then they can leave the *jhuggi* and obtain a good *level* (originally in Hindi she said '*ache level mein*'), live in a good colony, that's how I think". The use of the term 'level' indicates the status associated with education. Parents also spoke in terms of "now" and "back then", past and present to highlight the importance of education: "we somehow managed to survive. But now it is impossible to have a future without education". Another respondent said that in the present time even when a person goes to a small shop to seek job s/he is asked about the educational background. The indispensability of education was highlighted in phrases like "without education the world is dark".

Scholars point out, "… aspiration is not only future oriented but also backward looking because imagined futures are built on pasts that have to be eliminated, and memories become a map for shaping the future" (Pine quoted in Mathew 2018, p.75). The past stories of first generation men were stories of acute poverty, sudden death or illness of the father/main bread earner which became reasons for these men to drop out of schools. Whereas for women not just poverty but patriarchal attitudes towards girls' education were also factors that shaped their schooling trajectory. It is in this context the aspirations of these poor men and women living in the settlement has to be understood. Therefore, a recurrent sentiment in the Govindpuri camps was

"*if we did not/could not study, but we want our children to study*" especially more pronounced among members with no formal education or with just primary education.

The fact that with their limited education several of these parents ended up with certain kinds of jobs, low paying, manual work often irregular in nature, made them imagine education as a pathway to jobs with better income and respectability. A sense of remorse at having received only primary education was expressed by Jharna, a sanitation worker: "we did not study…we feel sad. If I were educated I would not have been working as a cleaner today". A mother who had never been to school said: "if she will not study she will remain uneducated like me. I think if I were educated I would have done something at least…I could have helped them with lessons at home...there would not have been a need for tuitions". The same emotion reverberated in the responses of parents who had limited education and were employed as cleaners, painters, domestic workers, daily wage labourers; that they would want their children to have a different life.

Therefore, two threads were common in the responses of parents who had received no formal education and attended school up to primary level. In case of parents with no education and limited education (say till primary level) responses about their child's future and aspirations were more centred on "not becoming like them" as role models were few. Their aspirations were articulated as: "*humse age bade*" "*humse uncha jaye*" and "*hum jaise na bane*" which loosely translate into "they should be better than us" and "they should not end up like us". This is significant as it reveals that there was more stress on ("*hum jaise na bane*") "not becoming like them" than "becoming like someone". So while they hinted at middle class jobs they did not point out specific occupation. What is crucial to note here is that here is a group that does not want to reproduce or perpetuate its class and it sees education as an escape. The very fact that group with even the lowest education attainment voiced that they would not want their children to become like them or end up with working class occupations itself goes against Lewis' proposition. A characteristic of culture of poverty that is of instant gratification - "present time orientation and readiness to indulge impulses" - is also challenged when one hears them talk about compromising on their needs to able to save for the education of their children.

Two, their future expectations were tied to powers of fate or god in statements like "let us see how far "*uparwala* or "*bhagwan*" or "*naseeb*" takes them. For instance, one respondent said "a child studies up to whatever is written in his destiny (*naseeb*)" Another mother, Nazma said:

> right now I do not have any desire, when the time comes, god (*uparwala*) will make them something, now if I desire something and it is not fulfilled then I will be embarrassed...now if I say I want to make my daughter this or my son that … what if I am not able to do it…if their father had a government job or good income then we could have thought about something…

The above transcript is of a mother who despite of having limited means and only primary education fought with her husband to enroll her two sons in an unrecognized primary school because she aspired to provide "good" education which she held equivalent to private schooling. But despite the struggle she wages she also feels constrained by her economic status which makes her hesitate to assert what she really wants for her children. Further, Nazma shared she does not have any exposure to the world outside as she is always home bound. Nazma who could study only up to primary level is a person who has remained within the confines of the domestic space throughout her life. Neither her natal nor her affinal kins allowed her to venture out of the house after her family moved from Bihar to the Govindpuri JJ Cluster 30 years ago. Her daily routine includes household chores and looking after her three children - two sons and one daughter. Her life after coming to Delhi is summed up in these lines: "I have stayed in Delhi since childhood but my parents never let me go out. After marriage also I have stayed at home, never gone out alone…I am dependent (*mohtaaj rehti hun*)".

Several other parents shared that they would do everything in their capacity to support their children's education but the outcomes depend upon "*bache ka dimag*" and "*naseeb*/*kismet*". The term "*dimag*" was used often by parents to refer to mental aptitudes. In their understanding it was either inherently present or absent rather than something that to a large extent is shaped or built gradually in the school and home. Carspecken (1990) writes: "This kind of perspective may be rooted in a belief that the child's willingness or ability to learn is fixed and innate, regardless of the learning environment" (Carspecken cited in Ball et.al 1996, p.39).

But, if one goes deeper, it also perhaps shows the internalization of a worldview that is perpetuated by schools, teachers, middle and upper middle classes and the educational system in general. This is what Macleod(2009) points out:

> "…. success or failure in school is determined largely by social class. But cloaked in the language of meritocracy, academic performance is apprehended as the result of individual ability by both high and low achievers. Such is the magic of school-mediated exclusion: It implants in those it marginalizes a set of cognitive and evaluative categories that lead them to see themselves as the causal agents of a process that is actually institutionally determined" (p.16).

Social class, here, broadly refers to the occupational and educational background of the parents. Social reproduction theorists like Bowles and Gintis (2011) and Bourdieu (1974) have pointed out that education systems are not as neutral as they are projected to be by the advocates of equal opportunity for all. They argue that schools reproduce class inequalities by favouring the cultural capital of the dominant class as opposed to the working class. It justifies the so-called failure of the working class children in terms of individual abilities.

But it is also about something more concrete in this sense of uncertainty and vagueness i.e. the economic status of the household. Like Reay and Ball (1997) point out that "…what appears initially to be working-class apathy and fatalism can be redefined as a refusal to engage in a game where the stakes are often too high for working-class players" (p.96). A household where there were 5 children , the mother with no formal education said: "after she finishes 12th, I will enroll her in something…first we need money…if there is only one earner what can we do". There was only a single breadwinner earning about INR 12,000 per month. This brings us to the discussion of the difference between aspirations and expectations. Macleod (1987) distinguished between aspirations and expectations and their relationship to structural constraints in the following way: "Aspirations are one's preferences relatively unsullied by anticipated constraints; expectations take these constraints squarely into account" (p.469). Another scholar writes: "A theoretical distinction can be drawn between expectations and aspirations, which identifies the former as "realistic appraisals" and the latter as "idealistic goals"…" (Morgan, cited in Baars

2010, p.2). “Realistic appraisals” take into account the limitations of socio-economic status, social environment of the neighbourhood and parental biographies.

In comparison, parents with more education like upper primary were positive and motivated about their children’s education as compared to the previous group discussed above. Poornima who completed upper primary level of education said:

> “I could not study. I have a lot of aspirations…even if I have to beg I will not and I have never backed off. I have never discriminated between my son and daughters. My son has completed graduation …and now whatever my daughter wants to do… I told her to study further but she said she will not be able to do handle more pressure”.

Like her son, the daughter was also a graduate and was working as a trainee with a chartered accountant on a monthly stipend. Poornima was willing to invest further on another course in nursing for her daughter. While Poornima’s husband was a tailor, intermittently working in a garment factory, both her son and daughter were additional earning members.

A strong sense of optimism was detected in mothers like Ranju, who studied up to 7th standard, whose husband never allowed her to take up any paid employment outside the house. When the researcher asked if her husband would let their educated daughter to take up a job, she said:

> “She [daughter] is educated…she will get a decent job…even if she does not get a job she can provide tuitions…it is a respectable job…I am less educated I would have got a menial/labourious job (*dhakke khane wali*) only, I would not have been able to bear it…that is why, I also thought that we will eat less but we will give good education to our children”.

The idea of compromising on basic needs to be able to provide good education was recurrent in several narratives. This transcript also reflects the optimism of the mother about her daughter’s future, that it will be different from her own. The other important point is about the difference in the nature and status of work an educated and an uneducated gets and the potential of education to perhaps lift gender based barriers and relax some rigidities pertaining to women’s work. The idea that the daughter’s ambition to go for paid employment will be still “acceptable” to the

father because she will get a "decent", respectable job based on her educational credentials as opposed to the mother who is schooled up to upper primary level and would have got an unskilled work which involves "*dhakke khana*" or "*joote khana*", suggesting drudgery and lack of respect, shows a change in attitude to women's decision to work. Based on the analysis of occupations the working mothers and the current generation of unmarried daughters were engaged in, one can infer the type of jobs Ranju was hinting at. The mothers in paid employment were mostly working as domestic workers in middle class neighbourhoods. Daughters (mostly unmarried in the age group of 18-23) were working as teachers in unrecognized private schools or as private tutors, trainees in computer coaching/learning centres or chartered accountancy firms or as billers or salespersons in small retail stores. Although these again were not highly paid jobs but came with more security, required a minimum level of educational qualification. Some basic knowledge of English and computers thus qualified as being termed as respectable.

Other than education's instrumental value of finding a respectable job, Ranju also added that she is educating her daughter not because it will translate into money and add to their family's income but because it will make her daughter independent: "today I am investing money on her not in the hope of living off her…but in the hope that it will support her…". Here, we again see that the parental biographies including educational levels, conjugal lives and experiences of misogyny are important in shaping the aspirations of mothers for their children.

Similarly, a middle aged father, Kamal (Shopkeeper, 7th grade), who lives and runs a shop in Navjeevan camp reflected on his own past regretfully and did not want his children to tread on the same path.

> "I committed several mistakes when I was young and today I regret it…which is why we want our children to study…once I failed in 8th standard and never went back to school…when my own son failed in 9th standard my father told me not to continue his education and spend so much on it…but I said, no, even if I manage to earn INR 10-20 lakhs for whom am I earning..."

In the above lines, Kamal's educational trajectory is similar to many other parents in the camps. The feeling that a failure or low performance is leading to "waste" of money in an already under-resourced, poverty stricken household is prevalent in many households. Kamal further added that

he studied in a government school and had a negative schooling experience which is why he decided to send his daughter and son to a private school. Many young parents particularly men, who grew up in the camps had studied in the old government schools situated in the vicinity. Although these schools have undergone transformation since then, some of these parents still have memory of inferior quality of education and hence, they decided to send their wards to a private school, wherever, their economic capacity allowed them to make such investment. Raey and Ball (1997) support this: “Parents’ current choices are frequently, powerfully influenced and informed by their own experiences of schooling...On the simplest level, almost by definition, the working classes in general have a more negative experience of education than middle-class people” (p.95). Among members with moderate education one finds references to one’s own educational biography and the past but one can detect more optimism in their tone when they speak about their child’s future as well as had more monetary support available for investment.

While one can still find some overlaps between the first two sets of respondents discussed above, the responses of the parents with higher levels of education and more economic capital were starkly different, elaborate and specific. Further, they were much more emphatic and optimistic in their articulations about the educational outcomes and futures and one could not find references to destiny or fate. Naval, a father who attended school till 10th standard said: “I believe that if you keep working hard, you will positively find something”. Naval works as a shop assistant and his wife is in a supervisory role in a factory. Both his children - a son and a daughter - were pursuing undergraduate degrees via distance mode. The son was also working simultaneously with a tours and travels firm. Naval shared that his own father was also educated, a matric certificate holder, which was considered a significant achievement in those decades and worked as an employee with New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC). It is difficult to verify such information but what is important is that he identified his family as educated.

Another respondent, Madan who finished school and had been working as a salaried field executive in a private bank is a father of a three year old. He said: “I want him to study in some good English medium…because government schools do not have much… (pause) if he studies in private English medium he will learn English…everything will be good”. The moment of “pause” in the sentence where he was looking for a word for state funded schools, implies the inferior quality of education, according to Madan. This was revealed when, like Kamal, he

shared his own negative experience of studying in a government school which according to him lacked discipline and good quality of education and Madan was particularly critical of the evening shifts for boys[71].

Another father, Sunil, who has studied up to 11th standard and was deeply involved with the schooling of his son and daughter, had something specific planned for his children who were already attending high fee charging private schools: "This is what I want, I have a Kashmiri friend …he has enrolled his two daughters in a very good school in Himachal Pradesh…hmm [tries to recall its name]…it is boarding school…in 6th/7th grade I want to put my children there". Sunil's aspirations were largely shaped by his contact with middle and upper class clientele for his association with publishing and printing houses. A career in sales of books gave him exposure to different school in the city particularly the ones of high repute.

Similar clarity of thought was noticed in two mothers who had higher education and obtained degrees and diplomas. Seema, a bachelors degree holder and a programme officer in an NGO said: "We told our children that unless and until we do some course…from the beginning we thought that to get a good job, only education (*sirf padhai*) was not enough until we do some course". Here "only education" implied a conventional undergraduate degree whereas "course" implies professional and more job oriented courses in web designing, English speaking and accounting and so on. Another educated mother, Pinky, with a diploma in fashion designing said something similar:

> "*Basically* it is important to pursue a *course*…but the *main* thing is to at least *clear* 12th standard because then you have some knowledge of what you want to do…now the *open system*[72] [distance education] is also good..one can study and work together…".

Other than being more educated than other women these two mothers were also exposed to a more educated peer group and their ideas about courses and career choices were shaped by this exposure. In addition to this, it is also important to mention again that these households were better resourced having two earning members in case of both Pinky and Seema.

---

[71] This is a point shared by few other respondents.
[72] The words italicized by the researcher were used by the respondent originally in English which again indicates her educated status.

Here it is important here to bring in Appadurai's (2004) conceptualization of the capacity to aspire as a navigational capacity.

> "Because the better off, by definition, have a more complex experience of the relation between a wide range of ends and means, because they have a bigger stock of available experiences of the relationship of aspirations and outcomes, because they are in a better position to explore and harvest diverse experiences of exploration and trial, because of their many opportunities to link material goods and immediate opportunities to more general and generic possibilities and options" (p.68).

Although Appadurai (2004) writes in the context of poor in general and argues that the rich and better off have fully developed capacities to aspire, we can use the frame to look how the better educated among the class of poor also have a better navigational capacity.

Based on the degree of optimism and narratives of expectations about the future, the three categories of parents that emerge from the study are: *passively hopeful, actively aspirational* and *goal oriented*. The phrase *passively hopeful* has been used for two reasons. One, it shows that unlike how poor are often represented as hopeless (such as in Oscar Lewis) about the future, the parents were hopeful that with good education their children can have a better life, a life different from their own. However, at the same time economic constraints, hardships and limited education made them rely on fate and god's will to determine their children's life chances. The second category of parents articulated their hopes with more optimism and the element of fatalism was more or less absent which is why the category of "*actively aspirational*" has been attributed to them. Within their limited capacities they were trying to work towards fulfilling these aspirations. Needless to say, these are "ideal types" and there can be many overlaps between the first two groups and some aberrations are also present in each category. The third category of parents, *goal oriented*, are the ones who are not only optimistic about their children's future but are actively working to realize these goals as their volume of capitals (cultural, social and economic) is also more than the other two groups.

The study showed that parents were aspirational irrespective of caste, class, religious or educational backgrounds and the researcher did not find much difference in this respect rather

what differentiated them was their economic capacity, educational levels, and their exposure and interaction with more educated peers and role models. In fact, identities of caste may have taken a back seat in the context of urban education. For example, in the previous chapter, the researcher discussed how Usha's husband is working as a driver in spite of, according to Usha, being a Brahmin because occupation of priest gives low income. Usha added that her husband (employed as a driver) often says that if push comes to shove he is even ready to do "*cooliegiri*" (roughly translates into a labourer or porter who carries someone's else heavy load) to give their daughter good education. Here, "*cooliegiri*" metaphorically represents hard labour and toil to generate enough income for school and tuitions. In their case specifically *cooliegiri* was also important as it shows the readiness of a family of Brahmins to take up any manual work in the city for realising educational aspirations of their children, a subtle indication that the family is willing to shoulder any work even if it is beneath their caste status for education of their children. Usha who herself studied up to 11th grade gave an elaborate response when asked about her aspirations for her only daughter:

> "I have a lot of aspirations for Piyu… people come from the village (*desh* in Bangla) to the city in the hope of saving some money, in our case we are not able to save anything. We know how we save money to spend on our child's education so that they grow up, become capable/civilized (*manush hote pare*) and earn…in that hope we earn money to invest on our children. You have seen my husband. If he were earning well we would not be living here[meaning the slum]. To earn some money and educate our child we live in a place like this".

What is important is that Usha's narrative also provides insights into the interconnection of aspirations, city, education and life in a slum. Usha lives in a rented single room in Bhoomiheen camp with her husband and daughter. This civilizing role of education is highlighted in this Bengali phrase "*manush hote pare*" which can be loosely translated into English as *shaping one's child into becoming a holistic individual* with civilized or cultivated disposition. Other than instrumental role of education in translating into better paying, secure employment, this transcript speaks of civilizing properties of education. The civilizing properties of education can be better understood from another respondent's statement who not only identified herself as

"uneducated" but also used words like "*ganwar*" (uncouth) and "*jahil*" (ignorant) to describe and differentiate herself from her educated sons and daughters. But this narrative also brings in the importance of the city, how urban education matters to the slum dwellers and how something like caste based occupation takes a back seat when it comes to urban education and this is what we turn to now.

II. Urban Poor Migrant, the City Imaginary and Educational Aspiration

Seabrook (2007) writes: "The city is the site both of life-transforming possibilities and of extreme oppression. It is a destination of perpetual hope and optimism, even though it also takes a relentless tribute of human sacrifice" (p.2). While for the first and second generation of migrants the city provided livelihood opportunities, for the third generation, the city was also valued for the educational opportunities as is evident from the interviews. Many were of the view that they somehow managed to survive without having education or with limited formal education but in the present time education is indispensable especially for a decent living in a city like Delhi. This hope for accessing "good" education in the city was spoken of by many parents and as the previous section has already established, parents were willing to make sacrifices to realize these goals. Sacrifice entailed, according to them, spending less on food or curtailing their own needs to be able to invest on children's education.

The rising importance of education among the parents and youth in the settlement was tied to their imagination of the city and the opportunities it offers. While every respondent said that accessibility and quality of schools in their rural hometowns have improved, it was still nothing compared to getting education in a city like Delhi. For example, Meenu, an undergraduate student in Delhi University and a resident of Bhoomiheen camp, cited the case of her tenant's daughter: "Her father was thinking about sending her to village in Madhya Pradesh and putting her in a school there. My mother then explained to him that even if you send her to a private school in Madhya Pradesh it will not be equal to a government school in Delhi". The perception of government schools of the city, among the residents, was mostly negative. However, to state that even a government school in the city would be better than a private school in the village brings the city to the centre and is suggestive of the value they attach to the city space. Another respondent, Namita, a domestic worker from Bhoomiheen camp who is sending her only son to a recognized, unaided private school in the vicinity said: "Back in the village, quality of education

is not good. It is only to get our child educated in Delhi we are living here". She added they have some land back in the village but they will not be able to raise their child properly in the village (*manush hoe na thik kore*). Here Usha's perceptions in the previous section can be recalled where she stresses upon the civilizing properties of urban education.

Kalyani, another domestic worker, shared that her sole objective of coming to Delhi was to give urban education to her son and daughter. She narrated how she fought with her husband, borrowed money from her employer in Bihar and came to Delhi with her two children in the 1980s. In a week's time with the help of a contact who was already settled in Bhoomiheen camp, she rented a place and enrolled her children in government schools. She also found a means of livelihood as a domestic worker in the nearby colonies to support her family in the new place of residence. Subsequently, her husband also followed her to the city and settled down in the camp. She emphatically shared that her own desire to study remained unfulfilled but she would like her daughter to get educated and would not want her to take up a working class occupation.

> "I was very young when my parents passed away so I was raised by my neighbours. I really wanted to study but like it is said that in deprived (*obhabh* in Bangla) households parents cannot manage and in my case I did not even have parents, so who was going to teach me?…so my objective of coming to Delhi was to get my two children educated…I used to hear from people…it was etched in my mind that education in Delhi has a lot of value…education in our Bihar does not have much value, it is only valuable in Bihar but not outside".

What is significant in Kalyani's transcript is that it highlights the perception about not just any city but about Delhi, reinforcing the points discussed in Chapter 3 about how the Capital acts as a magnet for states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The fact that education from Delhi counts everywhere shows their optimism about the opportunities it can open up for any individual.

Nazma had a similar experience to share wherein she came with her mother and two brothers to live in Bhoomiheen camp after studying till 5th standard in her village in Bhagalpur, Bihar. Since then she has spent her whole life only looking after the house and the family and her interaction with the outside world was restricted, first, by the patriarchal attitudes of her natal

family and later by her husband post marriage. She was not enrolled in any school after coming to the city as her mother felt that it was enough for the girls that they could read and recite Quran Sharif. However, she feels differently for her children's future including her daughters and wants to invest in their education. For Nazma, good schooling meant English medium private schools, however, their household income only allowed her to access unrecognized private schools. While she craved for the airy and open spaces of the village as compared to the claustrophobic atmosphere of slums, urban education and its associated sophistication for her children was a significant factor for her to choose the city over the village. This is how she compared the education her children are getting in the city with their counterparts living in the village.

> "I was scared that nobody in his [husband's] family are educated…I do not feel like living in the city…but I think back there [in the village] my in laws' children do not study, what if my children also get influenced by them…because they study here there is a lot of difference (*farak*) between my children and theirs…in speech, manners, the way they sit, how to respect elders…like an educated person should be. Everything is different here…when we go from here…others also acknowledge this fact and we can also see the difference".

What is interesting in this narrative for a member of the urban poor in the city's slum, education becomes a marker of drawing difference and asserting a sense of superiority from her rural counterparts. Nazma's description of how an urban educated person looks, speaks of education as an embodied cultural capital and the distinction it produces. Not only Nazma, several other respondents had similar views about what differentiated an educated from a non-educated person. Refinement in lifestyles (*rehen-sehen*), mannerism, speech (*baat-cheet, bol-chal*), attire and demeanour (*acharan*) were all pointed out as qualitative markers of an educated person. One father in Nehru camp said, "today our clothes are based upon our education…if you go to a village…the person who is not educated is still wearing village/rural like clothes…you can tell that he is from a village". In this statement the imagination of the city, a certain level of refinement and education also become synonymous with the city for the respondent. In the same way, the rural is presented as a metonym for lack of education and refinement.

These imaginaries of the city space embedded in the educational aspirations have to be seen *vis a vis* the positioning of Delhi as a "world class city" by the planners and dominant classes of the city. Interestingly, and ironically the drive towards the world class city making has translated into removal of these very slums and dislocation of its inhabitants. However, the pursuit of urban education and the value it confers on the individual by these residents also reflects a desire to belong to a city striving to become "world class". As Rao (2010) argues in her paper about the struggles of the displaced poor in a resettlement colony of Delhi for membership in the "world class city" that "desire for urban sophistication is not the exclusive dream of the well-off" (p.409).

III. School Choices and Parental Perceptions and Evaluations Schools in the Neighbourhood

Gephart (1997) calls neighbourhood an "elusive" concept whose range can extend from "the block on which an individual or family resides…to a wide physical area that includes shopping areas, schools and community facilities" (p.10). A mapping of schools around the Govindpuri cluster shows that a number of government schools are present within a radius of 2/3 kms and locals have replaced their neighbourhood school names with different nomenclatures or as one respondent said "nicknames". The government schools in the vicinity are referred to as "*tanki walan", "dhalan wala", "peeli dress wala", "chaddar wali*" ,"*jungle wala*" and so on for their convenience for the fact that most of the government schools' names are long and are similar to each other, like "government boys senior secondary school" or "government girls senior secondary schools". Thus one way of referring to the schools was by the area or location or a famous landmark (like *Tanki wala* is named after a visibly large water tank near the school). Names like "*chaddar wali*" and "*jungle wala*" were given when these schools initially operated with minimal infrastructure or were surrounded by thick vegetation. Such nicknames, however, were not given to private schools.

In Delhi, local bodies look after the pre-primary and primary education and middle, secondary and senior secondary education is primarily looked after by Directorate of Education, Government of Delhi. A large majority of households access the 21 schools managed by Department of Education and 14 local body schools located in the surrounding areas of

Tughlakabad, Govindpuri, Kalkaji and Chittaranjan Park. Some of these have two shifts; morning shift for the girls and evening shift for the boys.

Table 5.1 Schools by Management Around the Govindpuri JJ Cluster				
Levels	**Dept. of Education**	**Local Body**	**Private Aided**	**Grand Total**
Pri. + U.Pri. + Sec. And H.Sec.	9		1	10
Primary Only		14		14
Upper Pri.+ Sec. And H.Sec.	9			9
Upper Primary And Secondary	3			3
Grand Total	21	14	1	36
Source: Official Website of Directorate of Education				

A new school that was established in the vicinity during the course of fieldwork is the School of Excellence and is not included in District Information System for Education (DISE) record yet. These schools form part of the many initiatives of Government of Delhi to bring reforms and quality in the government schools. Launched in the year 2018 these English medium schools, provide good facilities and infrastructure have been set up with the objective of bringing "government schools at par with private schools"[73]. The five areas of Delhi where these schools have been set up are Rohini, Khichripur, Kalkaji, Madanpur Khadar and Dwarka. While few respondents of this study were aware that a new school was established in their locality they were unclear about its affiliation, whether it was privately owned or a government school. Nevertheless, they spoke positively about it, their evaluation was mainly based on the physical infrastructure of the school. Two respondents, in fact, opined that the school's façade was so impressive that even a private school's building will fail in comparison and the name of the school was made to sound more like a private school so as to attract more clientele.

There was only one government aided school, located 3 to 4 KM away which was accessed by the residents but neither parents nor children knew exactly about the management of the school. Mousumi and Kusakabe (2017) point out that there are only 5 per cent schools in Delhi that are private aided schools.

[73] https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/delhi/dwarka-gets-first-school-of-excellence/articleshow/62964990.cms

"Private" schools are the ones that operate without any aid from the government. The private school sector itself is further differentiated with a hierarchy of schools based on fee structure (See Table 5.4), infrastructure/facilities, status of recognition, medium of instruction, teacher qualification and overall quality of education. They include both recognized and unrecognized low fee private (LFP) schools by entrepreneurs, LFPs by religious trusts, high fee charging recognized private schools and recognized schools run by non-governmental organizations. Then there are LFP schools that are language based. Most of the LFPs, however, are marketed as English Medium schools and attract parents who cannot afford high fee charging or elite private schools. The discussion on the aspect of English medium private school and the notion of quality and status associated with it has been built into the discussion on school choices of parents in the upcoming paragraphs.

Table 5.2 Private Unaided Schools around the Govindpuri JJ Cluster

	Girls	**Boys**	**Co-educational**	**Grand Total**
Pri. + U.Pri. + Sec. And H.Sec.	1	1	8	10
Primary Only			11	11
Primary with U.Primary			2	2
Grand Total	**1**	**1**	**21**	**23**
Source: Official Website of Directorate of Education				

There are 23 private unaided schools around the Govindpuri JJ cluster (Table 5.2). Out of these 8 schools offer all the levels, from primary to senior secondary and 11 schools have only primary sections and 2 are upper primary schools. These 8 schools have state-of-the-art infrastructure and may be counted among the medium to high-end schools of the city. For those living in the cluster these schools are not beyond physical reach but their economic capacity. A very small population could access these schools via the Economically Weaker Section provision under Right To Education Act (RTE, hereafter).

Out of these 23 unaided school three are co-educational schools run by religious trusts, namely, 1) Arya Samaj, 2) Sanatan Dharam, 3) Sant Nirankari Sect. While only one upper primary school, Sant Nirankari Public School, is listed in the District Information System of Education (DISE) record under the category of private unaided schools, the other two primary schools were not found. "For unrecognised private schools the majority are nursery and primary providers

(60.8%) and just under one third provide all sections (32.8%)" (Tooley and others cited by Nambissan 2012, p.53). These schools also provide some vocational training to women in sewing in the after school hours.

Two co-educational schools are run by non governmental organizations, Deepalaya and Katha. While these started as informal learning centres they were forced to acquire government recognition after the passage of RTE act in 2009. There was another school offering pre and primary schooling and was operated by an NGO. This school, interestingly, had a provision where through its tie up with an elite private school, it would identify 5 brightest students studying in the 5th standard who would then get a chance to attend the elite school from 6th to 12th . The education of these 5 children were sponsored by donors sought by the NGO.

The Katha Public School, earlier known as Katha Khazana, is situated within Bhoomiheen camp, run by a well known NGO and (not listed in DISE list) has considerable presence and draws several students from all the three camps. The school does not follow the conventional modes of teaching, learning and evaluating and specializes in innovative, alternative pedagogy (primarily through storytelling). It also provides classes in information technology and vocational training to both children and adults in the neighbourhood, training in early childhood care, tailoring, cooking etc. However, since its curriculum, exam schedule and mode of evaluation does not correspond with other schools it is difficult for parents to move their children to other educational institutions from here. What was observed was that this school often acted like a temporary or interim stepping stone for the poorest parents who would send their children to this school for the initial years before shifting them to government schools.

School Choices Exercised and the Rationale

Ball et al (1996) argue

> "…choice is thoroughly social - it is a process powerfully informed by the complex lives families lead and by their biographies…differences are not a matter of relative deficiencies or of social pathology in which certain parents are less responsible, or efficient or effective choosers. Furthermore, the practices of choice explored here are set against a background of material and social difference between families".

Ball et al offer a threefold typology of different types of school choosers in the context of United Kingdom 1) "privileged/skilled" or the "inheritors" comprising professional middle classes, 2) "semi-skilled/newcomers" constituted by diverse classes and 3) "disconnected choosers" who comprise the working class parents. They argue that contrary to the belief that choice is "individualistic and neutral", it is in fact shaped by social class. The social differences among the classes entail, as the authors point out, the educational biographies, their social networks and informational base. "Economic, social and cultural capital are all important here" (Ball et al 1996). It is the volume of these capitals that shapes the responses of the parents in these three categories towards schooling. While Ball et al's work looks at differences across class categories, the present work tries to identify differences within a seemingly homogeneous social and spatial category of poor. In Ball et al's paper differences between the "ideal types" are more stark, however, one can still take some cues from their work to find the axes of differentiation within the urban poor as well. In the previous section we have discussed how the educational and economic backgrounds of the parents shape their aspirations, now we turn to how the same factors shape their school choices. However, it is important to note that the "term" choice itself is fraught with complexities when it comes to the urban poor.

The social differences among the sample was reflected in the differentiated schooling choices of parents living in the neighbourhood. The element of choice made here by the parents is between privately owned and state owned schools and as discussed above these two categories themselves are not homogenous but are internally differentiated. In the range of private schools available the poor and low income families tend to access the lower end which consists of low fee/ budget schools.

The debate around school choice in the context of the poor began to shape in the years post 2000 especially with James Tooley (2007, 2009) and others claiming, based on their studies in Delhi and Hyderabad, that "poor families in their search for education of good quality were willing to pay for these private schools and were actively choosing them rather than free government schools" (Nambissan 2012: p.51). A simultaneous discourse was building around the declining quality of education in the state funded schools and therefore, a pro-private lobby was advocating to "build public opinion in India and influence state policy so as to direct public funds to facilitate parental choice, in this case for budget schools…" (ibid). However, as

Nambissan (2012) argues, the very manner in which they define and homogenize the poor needs to be looked at critically. The poorest of the poor continue to access the government schools as the budget schools are still beyond their capacities.

Table 5.3 shows that a majority of parents (63.64 in Bhoomiheen camp and 71.88 per cent in Navjeevan-Nehru camp) send their children to government schools. Households with at least one child in a private school consists of parents who are sending at least one or more children to private school. In this case the schools were low fee budget schools. In these households the other siblings may have earlier attended a private school up to primary level and were later shifted to a government school. In the last category which consists of few parents all the children attending private schools. Households with a single child or two children fall in this category.

Table 5.3. Schools accessed by the parents in Govindpuri JJ Cluster

Categories	Number of Households			
	Bhoomiheen	%	Navjeevan-Nehru	%
Households with all children in government	21	63.64	23	71.88
Households with at least one child in private	7	21.21	5	15.63
Households with all children in private	5	15.15	4	12.50
Total	33	100.00	32	100.00

Schooling choices in this settlement were defined by terms like "*aukaad"*, "*hasiyat*" (economic status) "*khomota*" (in Bangla) or "*shamta*" or "*kamai*" (in Hindi) meaning the economic capacity to pay the fees and support the schooling through tuitions. In families where parents struggled with finances, poorest of the poor as well as families with more than two school going children, the nearby government schools were the only available choice. As mentioned above the use of the word "*hasiyat*", "*aukaad*", meaning the economic status of the household, itself suggests that they were compelled to make the certain choices due to lack of financial capital. One couple whose children were enrolled in government schools shared: "we don't have the capacity (*hasiyat)* to access private". While these parents, by and large, held negative views about the public funded schools, the private sector was beyond their reach. In fact Rose and Dyer points out:

> Indeed Tooley's "poor" appear to be largely from lower middle class fractions, those who are self-employed and own petty businesses, organised sector workers and those with *relatively regular sources of income rather than families in extreme poverty*. The majority of those who are actually at the "bottom of the pyramid" are likely to enroll their children only in government schools as they charge no tuition fee and provide free textbooks and other essentials as well as midday meals. (emphasis added, Rose and Dyer in Nambissan 2012).

Baird (2009) also adds later that "even low-cost private schools are too expensive for the poorest of the poor- if private school fees are too high, or parents are too low-income, private school enrolment will not be an option (p.20). The phrases such as to describe those in "extreme poverty", "too low income" , "poorest of the poor" tell us about the fractions within the poor.

Table 5.4 provides an overview of the private schools accessed by the residents and the range of fees charged on monthly basis. It is true that families which were sending their children to low fee private schools charging between INR 300 to 500 per month were better resourced than the large section of residents who could only afford government schools. It is important to note that not just income but number of school going children in a household was also significant.

A brief discussion of the profiles of families that are sending their children to private schools is important to understand the differences brought about by economic capacities and how they sought to convert it into a cultural capital in the form of what they termed as good private education. It was observed that these households had two earning members. For example, in one household the father (up to 10th) worked as a salaried salesperson earning about INR 15,000 per month (he was also entitled to Employees State Insurance). Additionally, the mother, Kajol (no formal education) ran a small grocery shop inside the camp. According to the respondents, their total monthly income was between INR 20,000 and INR 22,000 per month combining the two sources. A mother of three sons, Kajol had enrolled two sons in a private primary school and her third son was going to an NGO run, Katha Public School.

Table 5.4. Recognition Status and Fee Charged by Private Schools			
	Recognition Status	**Grades**	**Monthly Expenditure (in INR)**
New Green Field Public School	Recognized	HS	2280-3000[74]
Deepalaya Public School	Recognized	HS	1870-2420[75]
Sant Nirankari Public School	Recognized	UP	1800-2200[76]
Arya Samaj School	Unrecognized	P (1st to 3rd)	300
Sanatan Dharm School	MCD recognized	UP	1200-1500
Benhur Convent Public School	MCD recognized	P	550-580
Deepanshi Public School	Unrecognized		N.A
Gyan Public School	Unrecognized	P	550
Jagdamba Public School			N.A
Siddharth Public School	MCD recognized		500-555
Monsoon Kids School	Not-for-Profit	Pre-nursery to primary	50
Ganga Memorial Public School			800
Source: Data collected by the researcher			

In Nazma's home, her husband was employed as a tailor at a garments shop and earned about INR 12000-13000. She was paying a sum of INR 1100 for her twins who were going to an unrecognized private school operating in a nearby residential locality.

> "I also have the desire to send my children to good schools. Earlier we have had fights also, their father said that he cannot bear the cost of private schools, so I said if you cannot do that then I will go back to the village… why are we earning here… in a foreign place , leaving behind our village".

Nazma also shared that choice of private over government was also related to concerns of physical safety for her young children. In her first visit to one of the government schools to get her daughter enrolled she witnessed that the children were moving in and out of the classrooms without much adult supervision, engaging in squabbles and she feared that her child may not get

[74] http://www.ngfssaket.com/fee-structure.html
[75] Official Website of the school
[76] Official website of the school

adequate attention from the teachers. She also makes a powerful statement that captures the stress of poor on education in the city and what they expect from the city for their children. We should recall her earlier statement quoted in the section on city and aspirations where she attributes the sophistication and cultivated disposition to urban education and compares her sons with their rural counterparts. What we see in Nazma's transcript is that good schooling and education was synonymous with English medium private schooling. This was true in the case of Jharna (5th, Sanitation worker).

Jharna is another resident from Navjeevan camp who lives with her husband and a four year old son in a house with two rooms. Jharna works as a cleaner in the same unaided English medium unrecognized private school headed by a religious trust where her son is enrolled, earning a salary of INR 4000 per month. Her husband sells air fresheners for cars at a petrol pump with no fixed income but manages to earn about INR 6000 to 7000 in a month, together they earned about INR 12000-13000 in a month. Her sons' school fees she said is not much as according to her, the school caters to the *poor* and she pays around INR 200 INR per month. In the snippet from the conversation with Jharna she tells us about her aspiration:

> "Jharna: Every parent wants their child to receive good education…in English medium"
>
> Researcher: What is your aspiration?
>
> Jharna: "I want my child to become something good. This is my aspiration. That is why I have decided to have only one child".

The first inference we can draw from her statement is that it echoes Nazma's idea of "good education" meaning English medium private schools. Both the mothers are educated up to primary level and they associated private with a general sense of safety and discipline. The mothers did not share any specific or elaborate aspiration just that they would not want their children to end up like them. The second point to emphasize upon is the decision of a mother like Jharna to provide "good education" is tied with her conscious decision to have a single child as they will be able to invest more money and time within their limited capacity. Even after facing tremendous pressure from her in-laws Jharna continues to stand her ground to have a single child and channelize all the resources in making him successful. A similar sentiment was shared by Maya who said that she has only one son and her neighbours tell her that she should invest

wisely in getting "good education" since it is her only child. When she was further probed about what she means by good schooling, she said: "actually everyone thinks…boys get wayward (*bigadna*)…behave like vagabonds (*awaragardi)*. There is some safety in private schools, that a child will be taken care of. Where do you find this in government schools?"

In another family the researcher was told that as compared to earlier times parents in the settlement decide to have two children and thus they can afford to get them educated in private schools. There is hardly any focused study on this aspect. However, one newspaper article on a slum in Bandra cursorily mentions how the drive to send children to private schools is encouraging poor families to have smaller families. The reporter writes: "Parents with two or more children had a problem …because they did not want a child to be more privileged than the other. This was leading to one-child families"[77]. This aspect merits further investigation especially because it goes against the popularly held stereotypes of the poor refusing to practice birth control or having no aspirations and strategies for their children's education. Secondly, as Donner (2006) and Savaala (2010) point out hitherto it has always been the middle class mother who was held as an ideal for birth control and family planning that also ensured better educational future for her children. However, evidence shows that the women like Maya, Usha and Jharna were also consciously practicing family planning as a strategy that will enable them to invest on what, according to them, was "good education".

It is important to note that these budget schools are primary school providers and a transition from private to a government school takes place after completion of the primary level. What is significant is the narrative that is built around getting primary education in a private school in this slum settlement. Several parents echoed their belief that it creates a *base* for the child and makes up for the "inefficiencies" of the public school system. This was also a strategy for families who did not have the resources to invest in private schooling beyond a certain point. One parent from Nehru camp reasoned that it is easier to bear the cost of private schooling at primary levels and education in private schools becomes expensive as one goes to higher classes. These parents felt that once the *base* is laid i.e. a strong base in rudimentary knowledge, particularly English language, which was absent in government schools, the child, according to

[77] https://www.livemint.com/Opinion/g3tQrZC7RNmZSW5Y4UKYMJ/English-Education-A-way-out-of-slums.html

them can be shifted to any nearby government school. This base they felt was not created in the government schools where children at primary levels could not even read basic texts of lower classes.

Therefore, the word "base" seemed to be a buzzword in the settlement. Private tutors like Sunil from Nehru camp also shared that his suggestion to the parents is to get their child educated in a private school up to the primary level (*paanchvi tak private padao*). Respondents whose children are studying in a private primary school put forth : ***isse jad mazboot ho jata hai or bache ka base ban jata hai (this makes the roots or the base strong)***. In Riya's family, for instance, out of three children two daughters were in government and a son was going to a private school. Riya's son was going to a unrecognized primary school in nearby Tughlakabad Extension, Gyan Public School, paying a fee of INR 550 per month. Riya's husband works as a tailor in a garment export company and earns between ten to twelve thousand rupees in a month. Riya said she provided private education to her two daughters till 5th and then shifted them to government schools. The idea behind sending all the three children to private for initial years of schooling, she explained: "had I not been able to send my children to private then they would not have been so strong (*mazboot*)…like other children (*un log ki tarah*)…they would have remained like them…and nobody in our home is educated to help them to cover up [academic activities]…".

There are several inferences one can possibly draw from Riya's statement. First, one can clearly see a difference that Riya draws between her children and "*other children*" referring to children in government schools, in the justification of the choice of private school. This hints at the construction of difference by the residents in the same social space between children attending private schools and children enrolled in government schools. *Strength* implies ability to read and write and knowledge of English which many other parents pointed out. Private schooling, according to her, also compensates for the limited education of the parents. Gyan Public School where her son was presently enrolled was also an unrecognized school operating in the owner's residence (image 5.1). Interestingly, her two daughters had received primary education in unrecognized budget school by the name *La Bella* which had to be shut down as it did not meet the requirements of obtaining recognition from Directorate of Education when the Right to Education Act was passed. Interestingly, however, Riya's eldest daughter who was in 11th standard, was of the view that she did not feel any significant improvement in her English

reading/writing/speaking skills after studying in a budget school, which is marketed as an English medium school. However, Riya seem to believe that the quality of education imparted in this school would create a strong base for her children, and her evaluation, like Jharna and Nazma, operated on the binary of government as bad and private as good.

What is to be noted in the above cases is that the choice of school was explained by the parents in terms of safety, discipline, English learning and a generalized association of private with “quality education”. The ability to qualitatively assess private schools and recognize the heterogeneity based on academic quality was the characteristic of better educated residents. One interesting example is of Sunil who holds a masters degree in computer applications and provides private tuitions in Nehru camp. He shared that he always instructs parents to get their children educated in a private school for first five years. However, later he acknowledged that the owners of these schools were simply graduates and the teachers were also less qualified as compared to the government school teachers and almost all of them were undergraduates or high school pass outs. The apparent contradiction in Sunil’s attitude towards budget schools perhaps indicates that the better educated poor residents recognize the differentiated nature of private schooling but at the same believe that it may enhance the life chances of poor children who due to financial limitations have to choose between a declining public school system and low fee private schools of questionable quality.

Ritu, who holds a masters degree in Hindi, happened to be an ex-teacher of a budget school and she was of the same opinion that the quality of private school depends on the qualification of the owner: “they opened these after doing B.Ed. In my opinion they are only ruining the future of these children”. Ritu who herself taught in one such school for two years shared that she was perhaps the only graduate among the teachers and the rest were hired right after qualifying higher secondary.

Figure 5.2. Image of an unrecognized private school. (Reproduced from Justdial's webpage)

This was evident from the case of Koyal who shared that after completing school she taught in a budget school which was later closed as it was unable to acquire recognition under RTE. The school she shared paid her a mere 2000 rupees a month for teaching all the five subjects.

The assessment of quality of private schools for respondents like Riya, Nazma and Jharna was based on physical infrastructures and a sense of safety. The only parameter based on which they distinguished a budget school from the recognized English medium/high fee charging schools was the fee and infrastructure. For instance, Riya said her family would not have been able to afford (*aukaad nai thi*) schools like New Green Field School or Kalka Public School which fall in the medium to high fee category. These were generally classified as "*bade schools*" by these respondents. She also added that such schools do not admit children from the *jhuggi*. Jharna also compared Nirankari, a recognized private school with her son's unrecognized budget school, Arya Samaj and shared that the latter provides English medium education for poor families like her while Nirankari which charges about 10,000 INR per year which is clearly out of their reach. Both schools are run by spiritual trusts but differ in fees, infrastructure, facilities, teachers etc. In this way, Jharna clearly identified herself as poor (*gorib manush*) and different from those in the neighbourhood who are able to send their children to a school like Sant Nirankari (hence not so

poor). This difference was further underpinned by a father whose son was going to Sant Nirankari school. In response to his tenant's inquiries about schools he said: "how will a ***poor man*** manage…one helpless fellow lives upstairs...he asked me in which school does your son study…I told him about the school…I told him initially you may manage but what will you do as the fees gradually rises". The poor again referred to those whose low incomes and low education levels coincided and they were mostly the passively hopefuls.

In the third category of respondents, were parents who were sending their children to schools which were in the middle to high end private schools and these families were able to access the school either by availing the Economically Weaker Section provision under Clause 12C of the Right to Education Act of 2009 or by bearing the full fees of these schools. What clearly distinguished these schools from the budget schools is the visibly large infrastructure, playgrounds, better qualified teachers. These are schools with their own dedicated information websites. The economic status of these parents was better than the rest and they were also better educated, having studied up to 10th and beyond. The difference produced by having more education was reflected in how they assessed their child's school and rationalized their choices. For Pinky in Bhoomiheen camp, the attention a child gets in private schooling was important. She compared it to government schools and said:

> "If I think that let me put him in a government school, it will save my money but what if he is not able to learn anything there…that is why I am sending him here [private]…even he does not study on his own, the school will pressurize him to study. What happens in a government school is that if the child is not studying the teachers also do not bother to ask why. In private schools…they will complain to the parents during meetings".

What we can interpret from the very first line is that she had a choice between government and a private (although a medium fee) school because not sending to the former would have saved money. Clearly, it is not a matter of affordability here. Pinky was working as a home based tailor which gave her an income of INR 5000-6000 every month. Her husband who worked as a salesperson for a company earned a salary of INR 15000 per month. She was sending her only son to Deepalaya which cost her around INR 2200 per month. The family also spent INR 1000

monthly on school van and private tuition. The assessment of the two types of school providers is also more detailed as the respondent is more educated than the women like Nazma and Jharna who have had only primary education. It was not merely about safety or discipline but about the attention and grooming a child receives and accountability of the school. Similarly, Rajni said:

> "See how does a child become *smart* in private schools…they offer a lot of activities…even a dull (*budhu*) child will become active, such is the environment of private. A government school *mahaul* only emphasizes on academics…if you do it is okay, if you don't do even then it is okay".

Rajni (9th standard educated, Unemployed Household worker) and her husband Sunil (11th Class educated, Sales/Delivery person) had enrolled their two children in high fee charging recognized private schools of the city. Sunil worked as salesperson for a publishing house and their total household income was, as shared with the researcher, was INR 15,000[78]. Their son got admission in a high-end-private school in the city under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS)[79] quota while their daughter is studying under the general category in another private school where they are paying INR 3000 per month as tuition fee. In fact, her son got admission in Mother's International, another upper middle class school, which features in the list of top 5 schools in Delhi. During the course of this research they changed their daughter's school twice, moving her from one private school to another and then again brought her back to the old school. These decisions were taken on the assessments about the quality of English the child was learning and other academic activities.

[78] The researcher is doubtful in this case whether this is actual income of the family because their expenditure on schools is considerably high.

[79] "Clause 12(c) of the 2009 Right to Education Act (RTE Act) compels all private unaided schools to reserve 25% of their places in Class I (or pre-school, if available) for free for all children from economically and socially disadvantaged groups until they reach the end of elementary school"

Figure 5.3 Nirankari Public School (Reproduced from the school's official website)

Another respondent is Jyoti, a private tutor and her husband , an Uber driver, spend around INR 7000 per month (tuition fee and transport) on their only son's schooling who is enrolled in a private school in Sangam Vihar. Her son was previously enrolled in Sant Nirankari School, however, according to Jyoti the quality of education and *behaviour* of the teachers was not satisfactory. She particularly pointed out that she was unhappy with the way teachers and other staff spoke to the parents. Additionally, she felt the written and spoken English her son was learning was not satisfactory. Similarly, Seema, a graduate, was asked if the Sant Nirankari school her son goes to fulfils her expectations she responded: "no, not that much..not up to my expectation…I mean, the way we want the study to be…and that English should be really good, conversations should happen in English with both parents and other children…that does not happen".

Where educational background becomes significant is when respondents had to differentiate or discriminate between private schools. The educated respondents were able to evaluate the quality of different types of private schools and distinguish between them. What we see in these transcripts is greater involvement of parents with their children's academic career. Their evaluations and choice of schools went beyond concerns of infrastructure or safety or a general discourse of "private" vs "government". The responses of the mothers also shows educated mothers are involved with their children's schooling.

The educational and economic capital of the family is a differentiating factor which in turn determines the type of education the household is able to access. We see intra class differences in a seemingly homogeneous space called a slum manifesting in the freedom and capacity to choose. Class "…determines what people must do, what they have the freedom to do, what they cannot do. It structures the realm of choice…Defining that choice matrix reveals a structure of freedoms, capacities, and compulsions: i.e., the class structure" (Herring and Agarwala cited in Dickey 2016, p.11). The financial status and education levels of the families strongly shapes their aspirations and school choices. This was recognized by the respondents themselves. One respondent Ravi, for example, said

> "see it is very *clear*…the one who is sending to private is *financially strong*…the one who is not is *compelled [word originally used in English]*...it their compulsion (*majboori)...actually* the parent who sends their child to a government school is a *poor person*…they have 3 to 4 children…he will be able to send one to private…won't be able to send the other 3…"

In Ravi's family, his niece and nephew were going to medium/high fee charging private schools. The above narrative suggests that he clearly distinguishes between the poor and the not so poor by stressing on choice of schools. The linkage between number of children, economic capacity and school choice is also highlighted by Ravi. Another father said: how will a poor (*garib banda*) man send his children to private…if a school charge 3000 how will he manage the household expenses? We also saw how the respondents constructed difference among themselves based on school choice. Ritu made a similar comment: :you find very less students from good families (*bhalo ghor in Bangla*) in government schools…they do not send to government schools… those schools have more or less from the same society…". At first the adjective "good" indicates the economic and educational status of these families. The "good families" has to be seen in connection with the "good schools" meaning schools. Is it then possible that the family is getting defined as good by their choice of a "good" school, thus making the school as a marker of difference.

Another respondent Poornima attributed some behavioral characteristics to families where children go to government school: “those households whose children are going to government schools are like this…children are bunking. Guardians are not interacting with the school…fathers get drunk in the evening”. This is a perception that middle class and upper middle holds about the poor and children accessing government schools. It paints a picture of the parents having lackadaisical attitude towards their children. What is interesting is that both the respondents Ritu (22) and Poornima (45) have been beneficiaries of the government school system. Ritu was pursuing a Masters degree in Hindi from an open university and simultaneously working as a private tutor and a yoga trainer. Poornima’s son and daughter both were graduates and were working in two different firms. Then is it possible that such perceptions about government schools and the families it caters to are internalized by some sections of the poor themselves even if their own experiences conflict with such perceptions?

This above discussion reveals the gradations that exist within the category of poor. We see how the choice of school varies even within the so called private schooling with the number of earning members and the sources of income. Thus the parents can be segregated into three categories based on their school choice: 1) those who were sending their children only to government schools 2) those who were sending their children to unrecognized private unaided schools 3) those who were sending their children to high fee charging private schools of the city. While differences may not be very pronounced between the first two types of parents, it is more stark when we compare the third category with the other two.

Summary

In a study among urban poor in a squatter settlement of Delhi, Majumdar (1983) writes:

> “the basti settlers, though poor, have improved their conditions since incomes have increased over time and it is because of this that they are not generally fatalistic about the future but believe they have some influence in shaping the direction of their life in the city. This future oriented outlook is underscored by the widespread tendency among the urban poor to save money wherever possible, secure better educational opportunities for their children, and improve their homes” (p.57)

This chapter also echoes this, i.e. how contrary to conventional theories of culture of poverty that project the poor as a homogenous mass of hopelessness, the slum dwellers are hopeful and aspirational, rather what differs is the content, how it is articulated and the intensity with which it is pursued. The aspirations were grounded in and varied according to their own educational biographies and current existential conditions and the role models around them. The better educated parents, for instance, with 10th and 12th certificates emerged as individual with more concrete, elaborate aspirations and optimism about their children's futures. These findings are in alignment with more recent studies conducted in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. A dominant sentiment among the parents in the Govindpuri settlement was that they did not want to reproduce their class conditions and education was seen as tool to escape from their present context. For some, the emphasis was more on "not becoming like us" than "becoming like someone". This desire made several of them willing to sacrifice on their needs for their children's progress. This sacrifice can be read as a coping and survival strategy. One can recall here Kim's (1995) study on the poor in Korean society where the education cost was not compromised as part of minimizing the expenditure (discussed in the Introduction). Another strategy that was identified was sending their child to an unrecognized private school for primary schooling with a strong belief that it will create solid base in learning. The decisions of few parents to have only one child to be able to fully invest on his or her education can also be read as a strategy to improve their circumstances.

Chapter 6

Educated Poor and the Pursuit of Distinction

The previous chapter discussed the educational aspirations, choices and strategies of the slum dwellers and how three categories of respondents emerge based on their educational backgrounds and aspirations: the *passively hopeful*, the *actively aspirational* and the *goal oriented*. In this chapter we turn to the last of the categories, a small group of respondents whom we termed as *goal oriented*, who were unique in terms of their views about education, investments on education, their aspirations for the future including matrimonial alliances, their neighbours and the neighbourhood in general. This chapter delves into the lives of these respondents, a sub-sample from the larger sample who positioned themselves as different and educated.

I. Conceptual Frame

In a multi-slum study in Chile, Salcedo and Rasse (2012) developed a classification of the urban poor based on "the repertoire of available strategies for social integration, narratives of upward social mobility, and narratives regarding future expectations" (p.94). They write:

> "traditional lower-class culture (with strong family ties and the existence of nonfunctional networks) is being replaced by a culture of individualism (lack of community control over territory, privatization of everyday life, and *appearance of symbols of status and differentiation*). These cultures give rise to different projects for social mobility (ibid : 99, emphasis added)".

Whether Indian slums have had a traditional lower class culture of solidarity in the past is something that needs to explored and is outside the purview of this study. However, what is interesting to note is the emergence of individualism and use of symbolic distinction which can be said to be visible among this group of families in the Govindpuri settlement whom we classified as *goal-oriented*. In Salcedo and Rasse's five-fold typology of urban poor households emerging from the narratives of future expectations (organized, dependent, ghettoized, hopeless,

and "moyenized[80]") what is of relevance to our study is the category of "moyenized families" who the authors point out will always create a symbolic boundary between themselves and their neighbours in different ways such as condemnation of their neighbour's lifestyles or adopting strategies such as sending their children to private schools, an attempt to obtain a particular type of cultural capital. "These families considered themselves to be 'different' from their neighbours either in terms of their willingness to sacrifice and work hard, or in terms of the cultural capital or education they possessed" (Salcedo and Rasse 2012: p.105) The creation and assertion of symbolic differences in this class project also brings us to the formidable and influential work of Pierre Bourdieu. It is in his work *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste (*English translation first published in 1984*),* Bourdieu brings in his conceptual repertoire of capitals, habitus and asset structures to study social class differences and how they are forged and maintained.

Since capital is channeled for social reproduction of a class, some fractions may rely on economic capital (inherited capital) like the industrial or commercial employers, while some may depend on cultural capital like education for social reproduction like teachers and university professors. The role of education, for Bourdieu, in both its embodied and institutionalized form (academic qualifications) is the most important cultural capital and how its pursuit forms an important basis for distinction is also central to this chapter. The chapter discusses how the three forms of capitals are evoked, pursued and converted from one to another by the respondents in their pursuit of distinction. It is important to mention that these families are still in the pursuit of acquiring these capitals and in that way this is an upwardly mobile group among the urban poor which is also sometimes thwarted by constraints.

In his study of distinction, Bourdieu analyzed consumption practices and tastes in food, preparation and cooking, clothing, beauty culture, presentation of self, music, paintings, books, furniture of the dominant classes and its fractions and how they differ from the working classes. While Bourdieu's conceptual categories guide this work, the markers of distinction in an Indian urban poor settlement, however, are bound to be different and has to emerge from the field itself. As Weininger (2005) writes: "…it is necessary, particularly when undertaking such an account in

[80] "The term "moyenized" comes from Oberti and Preteceille (2004), who described the situation of certain urban poor families in Brazil that, despite being poor, possess expectations and values, and behave like middle class families" (Salcedo and Rasse 2012).

a place or time different from that in which Bourdieu wrote, to untangle the substance of these propositions from the peculiarities of the context to which they were applied". Therefore, the researcher has tried to discuss the dominant markers of distinction that emerged from the field itself while at the same time the theoretical insights and concepts from Bourdieu's work on distinction helps to explain and put them in perspective. Like pursuit of educational qualification or English as a cultural capital is similar to Bourdieu's work, the act of keeping social distance and drawing symbolic boundaries is unique to this context of the poor neighbourhood.

In this chapter, the researcher discusses both the material and non material markers of class distinction with more emphasis on the later. The material dimensions mostly include the observable assets in the house, the type of house and other goods and services consumed by the respondents. The non material or what Dickey (2016) calls the "subjective" and "intangible" aspects of class distinction that are forged by the respondents reflected in the way they articulated their aspirations, choices, ideas about their neighbours and friendship circles. Here the "performative aspect" of class, to borrow from Dickey, is also the focus i.e. how class is not just about occupation, income or education but also about how it is lived and performed in everyday life. The chapter very briefly first discusses the profiles of the seven respondents and their family backgrounds followed by the different aspects that reveal how these respondents assert their difference from others in a shared social space.

II. Respondents' Profiles: The Material Aspects of Distinction

Rajni

Rajni and Ashok are natives of Jammu and have been married for over 12 years. While Rajni is a household worker, Ashok works as a sales assistant in a publishing house earning about INR 12,000 to 15,000 in a month[81] and the couple are parenting a 6 year old daughter and a 12 year old son. Rajni did not study beyond 9th standard and Ashok studied up to 11th standard after which he failed and discontinued. When the researcher first met Rajni in 2018 she was living with her affinal kins, her two brother-in-laws and their families and her mother-in-law in Bhoomiheen camp. Ashok's family has been living in this settlement since its establishment and their house is larger than other houses in the neighbourhood having two storeys and each

[81] There is a possibility that monthly incomes were under-reported.

brother's family has a single room and a separate kitchen to themselves. However, when the researcher visited the couple again in 2019, they had moved into a flat with one bedroom, hall and kitchen in the lower middle class colony of DDA, across the slum and started living separately from the kins. Among the three brothers Ashok was the only one sending both his children to well-to-do, recognized private schools of the city.

Seema

Seema, a graduate, works as a programme officer in an NGO that pays her INR 15,000 a month along with some other employee friendly benefits such as provident fund. Her son, Manav, completed a diploma in food production from a small private institute and was employed as chef at a well known hotel chain in the city earning a monthly salary of about INR 18,000 a month. Seema's husband who retired after 20 years of service in a hotel now runs a shop for everyday items situated inside their residential premises. They own a house in the settlement which stands out for its bigger size compared to the other houses in the camp. Having two large rooms on the ground floor along with a separate bathroom, kitchen and a toilet is a marker of their relative privilege. On the first and second floors the family has sublet rooms from which they earn additional income as rent. The researcher was also told that they own some property in Dehradun where both Seema and her husband's extended family are settled. Like Rajni's family this couple too has lived in the slum for more than 30 years.

Ravi

Ravi is the youngest of the four brothers and two sisters and belongs to a Dalit family (Jatavs). He was proudly introduced to the researcher by his elder brother Kamal, as the most educated member of the family, since he was the first one to have completed school and obtain a bachelors as well as a masters degree. Ravi's father with limited education came to Delhi from Uttar Pradesh in 1980s to settle in Navjeevan camp and started making his living doing odd jobs such as rag picking, garment stitching and so on. The family's income gradually improved over the years and it enabled them to set up a shop selling tarpaulin sheets and bags on the peripherals of Navjeevan camp. The shop is jointly managed in the present day by Kamal and their father and occasionally by Ravi on the weekends. Among the brothers, Kamal has studied up to 8th and his

wife has studied till 10th, however, they both enrolled their children in recognized private schools of the city.

Ravi completed his schooling from a nearby government school and obtained a degree in Bachelor of Arts later, after which he enrolled himself in a private institute in Delhi to obtain a 2 year degree in Masters in Business Administration. Simultaneously, he joined another institute to learn computer operations and worked on developing fluency in spoken English.

He did several odd jobs for about 8 years (field jobs, in his own words) in the private sector before finally joining the Ministry of Railways as a trackman, a position in the group D category. Initially, he was posted in Lucknow and assigned the job of maintaining the track which included arduous manual labour. Ravi was conscious of the fact that as someone with an MBA degree and who had cleared a written examination for securing this position the nature of the job was incongruous with his qualification. However, one year later his educational credentials were recognized and he was assigned a desk work. He was earning a salary of INR 30,000 per month at the time of the interview. Over the course of fieldwork, Ravi also got married to an UPSC aspirant holding an MBA degree who was also preparing for different examinations for jobs in railways, bank etc. Ravi himself was preparing for different competitive exams.

When the researcher first met Ravi and his family in 2018 they were staying in the slum. However, at the time of the researcher's third visit Ravi had already moved into a new 2 BHK flat in the authorized lower middle class colony of Govindpuri which the family purchased.

Sunil

Sunil is the youngest of seven siblings in a Dalit (Jatavs) family settled in Nehru camp. Sunil's father migrated from Itawa, Uttar Pradesh, in the 1980s and started living with his brother in law's family in a rented accommodation in Govindpuri. Later he shifted with his wife and young children in the newly emerging squatter settlement on a vacant DDA land. In the initial years, Sunil's father, a 10th pass, worked as in the garment factory with the help of his extended network to gain a foothold in the city. A staunch Ambedkarite and a supporter of Bahujan Samaj Party led by a Dalit leader, Sunil's father shared that he has always laid stress on educating the children. Sunil's family is unique in the sense that all the brothers and sisters have obtained at least a bachelors degree and are trying to pursue different careers in law and chartered

accountancy. Sunil has a degree in Masters in Computer Application and works in the Ministry of External Affairs. The family owns a three storied house in Nehru camp and a small general provision store which is operated from the premises of their home. In addition to this, they also have a house in Sangam Vihar.

Meenu

Meenu's family hails from Madhya Pradesh and has been residing in Bhoomiheen camp for the past 30 years. Meenu also belongs to the Dalit community (Namashudra) and is a second year undergraduate student attending regular college. Her elder sister was pursuing a course in stitching and designing from an NGO run training institute after completing college and their younger brother was attending a government aided school. Meenu's mother works as a baby sitter intermittently for additional income for the family, and her father is a sales assistant at a garment selling store as well as works as an agent for Life Insurance Company on part time basis. The family has a three storeyed home where one floor is sublet making rent an extra source of income for the family. Meenu also shared that they have a house in Noida which is again sublet. Combining all the sources of income Meenu said the monthly income of their household is between INR 30 to 40 thousand.

Sonali

Sonali is a third year undergraduate student pursuing B.Com (hons) via distance mode. Her brother, a graduate was an MBA aspirant and was working as a tour manager at a local tours and travels agency. Sonali's father has studied only up to 9th standard and her mother completed 8th standard. While the father works as a sales assistant with a cable service provider, the mother works in a supervisory role in a garment factory. Their house in Nehru camp is, like other families in this category, considerably bigger than their neighbours. It is also a house with a separate living room for guests and furniture like sofa and a coffee table and two large speakers which the researcher was told was bought on the demand of the children. The walls and the floors were also covered with tiles. While they cited seepage as a reason for getting tiles, maintaining a status was equally important. The house also had a large courtyard. Additionally, Sonali's family owns a house in Faridabad where her grandparents are currently residing.

Indu

Indu holds a Masters in Computer Applications and was working as a consultant for a private firm. Indu's late father and her upper caste family (Brahmins) is known to many in the camp as one of the slum leaders who helped to settle many people in the initial days. Indu's father, as told to the researcher, was a graduate, perhaps the only one in the generation of first settlers to have this education. He used to run a small tuition centre for the neighbourhood's children. Her mother however only had primary education and has remained a household worker most of her life. Indu is married to a Computer Engineer but was living in her natal house as she was pursuing another course in web designing. Of her two brothers, one holds a B.Com degree and works as an accountant in a small firm and the other holds a ITI degree and works as sales and purchase agent.

Thus material markers of difference include, first and foremost, the type of housing. It was noticed that all these respondents owned relatively bigger homes in the settlement. While the poor and moderately poor residents lived in one or two room houses, these families had built homes with two to three storeys. For example, Seema's house was spacious with a small room in the front serving as a small provision store. A narrow corridor led to the living room which was bigger than the usual rooms in the slum. A separate bathroom and a toilet were the other privileges these families could afford in the slum. They had made smaller rooms on the upper storeys of the house which were sublet, therefore, rent was also a source of income for these families.

Where the boundary between private and public space was non existent in most homes, as there was only one room, Seema and Sonali's family had a clearly defined living room with a sofa, small rugs and coffee tables to welcome guests. In smaller houses, the wall mount wooden shelves served as show cases where photos, children's certificates or trophies, crockery/utensils were displayed. In Seema's home a separate wooden cabinet was present to display showpieces and crockery and an aquarium was also kept in the living room. The other noticeably different appliances in the house included a flat screen television, washing machine and a refrigerator in Seema's home, an air conditioner in Sunil's house and computer for the children in Rajni's house. In a setting where a large number of families had a single room to live a separate room to study or work was again a marker of difference and this observed in the relatively bigger homes

of the other families in this group. For respondents like Sunil and Rajni, possession and display of books was also matter of pride and they spoke about it to reflect their educated status.

Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.2 Book shelves in a respondent's house

Figure 6.3 Floor tiles in one of the households

Figure 6.4 Bureau and an upholstered sofa in another household

Another distinguishing feature in some of these houses were the floor tiles. In fact, Seema's family shared that their extended family, settled in Dehradun, is well-to-do and Seema has to therefore, maintain a certain status "to live in society", hence, the floor tiles. A similar point was shared by Sonali's parents who said their children's friends often visit their home and there is need to maintain the house in a certain way. Her father said: "whosoever comes, relatives, friends, sit here [living room]. Our bedroom is double in size. We focus on education and cleanliness…no matter who comes…we maintain cleanliness in the home". Although living in a state of perpetual threat of demolition has not deterred these families from adorning their homes and visibly improve their standard of living. All the interviews conducted with Ravi, however, took place in their shop and the researcher did not get a chance to visit their house, neither in the slum or in the one purchased later in Govindpuri.

III. Symbolic Boundaries and the Construction of Difference

a. The inside and the outside

In the popular imagination, poor neighbourhoods are stigmatized for being concentration of filth, illiteracy, illegality and violence and removal of slums are rationalized based on this kind of discourse. Ghertner (2015) points out that the "symbol of the slum" and the narrative around filth, disorder, violence and decay is used to define the middle-class selfhood of order, hygiene and security (p.85). This resonates Bourdieu's (1984) point: "As for the working classes, perhaps their sole function in the system of aesthetic positions is to serve as a foil, a negative reference point, in relation to which all aesthetics define themselves, by successive negations" (p.57). This inter-class opposition and conflict over space finds extensive discussion in the literature on Delhi's urban restricting and spaces of poverty. In this study the slum residents themselves were conscious of the stigmatized identities and associations with their neighbourhood but what is interesting is intra-class differences emerge in the narratives of the *goal-oriented* families who were trying to forge distinction. In Bourdieu's analysis of class difference, the idea of "negation", "opposition" in the process of classification is an important one. As Bourdieu (1984) points out, class distinction is always relational and is based on taste which itself is constructed upon the "distaste" for the taste and lifestyles of others and "when they have to be justified, they are asserted purely negatively, by the refusal of other tastes" (p.56). Further, according to Bourdieu,

> "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in which their position in the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed" (1984: 6).

The members of this group of *goal-oriented* respondents not only classified their neighbours as people lacking civility, sophistication, education and decent "*rehen sehen*" (way of living) but in the process also positioned themselves as distinct and more educated, hence also as holding more power to classify and define others. Furthermore, by frequently using the binaries such as "us" and "them" and *andar ke log* "people living inside" and *bahar ke log* "people living outside" they drew symbolic boundaries within the social space they were occupying . The *inside* refers to the secure space of one's home whereas the *outside* has two meanings: one, "outside" was the immediate surrounding, the streets and homes of the neighbours in the slum, and two, "*outside*" represented the world outside the slum including the adjacent, authorized low and middle income colonies. While the immediate neighbours were looked upon with disdain and believed to have a corrupting influence on children (*buri sangat*) who had to kept inside and constantly monitored, having friends and relations with people residing in the neighbourhing middle class colonies was not only desirable but formed a part of defining oneself. The neighbourhood is also central in understanding this distinction. Dickey (2016) writes:

> "What people experience in everyday life - the challenges and victories they face in daily activities and interactions, and their feelings about themselves, their neighbours, and their lives-reveals not only the immediate concerns and pleasure of their lives, but also the daily impacts of class process" (p.16).

For instance, Meenu, Seema, Rajni and Sunil shared with a hint of pride that they maintain a social distance from their neighbours and rather have friends from the adjoining colonies. Meenu, a 19 year old Bengali girl, shared that her friends' circle only constituted boys and girls from outside the slum and it was her conscious decision to avoid socializing with anyone living in her settlement. She never invited her classmates from college to her home as, in her words:

"they all lived in different and good localities, nobody lived in a *cheap*[82] area like this". It was as if the stigma attached to the slum was most intensely felt by this group of respondents.

Meenu's contempt was particularly pointed towards her "uneducated" non-bengali neighbours and Muslims in the settlement who, according to her, were least interested in getting their children educated and thus creating an environment of illiteracy (*unpad, jahil*) and backwardness in the neighbourhood. The lack of education of these women and its associated backwardness ("*gandi* mentality in her words) was explained in two ways. First, the women, particularly from the non-Bengali speaking communities still practiced the tradition of veiling in public and ridiculed girls like Meenu who wore strappy or skimpy western dresses which they considered as "revealing". This is another reason Meenu cited, for not inviting her educated and modern friends to her neighbourhood. Second, she added that these same women, however, openly defecated in the *galis* instead of using the community toilets and hence had no sense of shame. This is where Meenu also distinguished herself as her father built private toilets for his daughters within their home so they do not feel embarrassed and unsafe to use the community toilets. As discussed before, having a private toilet and bathroom was a marker of relative privilege and more economic capital. Here we also see Meenu positioning herself as an educated person reflected in her different lifestyle, modern western clothes and worldviews. The relational aspect is important in understanding the construction of this difference. Lifestyles, Bourdieu (1984) writes, "…can only really be constructed in relation to the other, which is its objective and subjective negation…" (p.193). At another point, Bourdieu (1984) writes: "Because life-styles are essentially distinctive, a number of features do not take on their full significance until they are brought into relation not only with the social positions they express but also with features appearing at an opposite pole of this space" (p.130).

This association of education with having a progressive outlook was also reflected in the narrative of Ravi's brother, Kamal, whose children were studying in recognized private schools. Commenting on the gendered landscape and moral codes of the slum he pointed out that if a boy and a girl are seen talking with each on the street they will be ridiculed. He however distinguished himself as different and a progressive parent in this respect as his son studies in a

[82] Originally used in English.

private school and in a co-educational set up where it is acceptable and usual for him to see his son interacting with female classmates.

The attributes of good and bad *(ache log, gande log* or *gandi* mentality) was recurrent in the narratives of the other respondents in this group. like Rajni said: "in the *jhuggi* out of 100 only 5 to 10 people are good (*ache log*)…our nature is different…family is different…we don't interact with people here". What is interesting is that these sentiments and classifications were inculcated in and imbibed by the younger generation in these families from a young age. Rajni's 12 year old son, enrolled in an elite private school, had been asking her about why they cannot move to a better residential area as he did not like living among the "*gande log*" (bad people/ neighbours). For Rajni, "being different" entailed having better educational levels and remaining indoors and minimal interaction with the neighbours. This was also evident in Seema's point about her son, Manav:

> "*touchwood,* my child never went outside. Children roam around barefoot here [in the streets] but my child never spoke to anyone. From the beginning he has friends from families in DDA …he never even goes out bare-chested".

The description of children roaming barefoot or bare-chested or the use of the word "*ganda*" or dirty to describe the neighbours invokes the popular imaginary of the people from lower class/poor and castes (as both often coincide) among the middle classes. We can infer from the transcripts of Meenu, Seema and Rajni that "*ganda*" referred to both physical dirt or lack of self-care/hygiene and to lacking education and modern, progressive sensibilities towards gender relations or women's attire or mobility which they perceived was due to lack of education. In Froystad's (2006) study on classification of strangers, the upper caste respondents in middle class neighbourhoods categorized those they considered inferior in class and caste status as *gande log* (bad/dirty) and also used it interchangeably with "*jo padha-likha nahin*" (illiterates). By constructing the others as "*gande log*" and distancing themselves these residents positioned their own selves and families as "*ache log*". Such classifications allowed them to construct symbolic distinction if monetary constraints did not allow them to physically relocate to a authorized, non-slum neighbourhood. Whether such accounts are true reflections of their social

relationships is not as important as the fact that they represent their efforts for asserting difference, attempts at social mobility and building social capital.

This sense of "self" and difference from others is protected and maintained by remaining indoors, the home which is a safe enclosure as opposed to the idea of a disdainful street or neighbourhood. The street represents several things: noise, idleness, unemployment, moral policing and lack of education. It also represented a space for the masses from which distinction had to be drawn.

b. Regulating Home, Socialization and Social Connections

We turn to the idea of the "inside" i.e. the home, how it is enclosed and carefully regulated and disciplined in attempts to build educational and cultural capital. For these members socialization of children or how they were brought up by their parents was important and articulated in terms of "*parvarish*" (socialization) or "*rakhne ka tarika*" (practices of child rearing) which made all the difference in their lives and contributed to their educational success. In the recollection of her childhood, Indu said that it was difficult growing up in a locality full of people she classified as uneducated and unemployed (*berozgar*) but then her parents ensured that they do not form any friend circles in the neighbourhood. She asserted: "our family is of a different kind". What is almost ironic here is that while they said that their interactions were limited with the neighbours, Indu's father was one of the few educated persons with a graduate degree in the 1980s when this camp was emerging and he took active part in social life of the slum.

The slum neighbourhood and the streets represented a world of uneducated, unemployed and idle and loitering persons (what was termed as "*khali ghumna*" or *timepass*) especially men. Idleness especially therefore had to consciously avoided with attributes like focus, self-discipline and proper scheduling of time. Indu said by interspersing Hindi and English:

> "it is *common* [sense] that if you are studying then your *focus* should be on your study. If you are mixing up with *friend circle*, or spending time in other houses *it means* you are idle. If you have a *goal it means you are a busy person.* You will hardly spare even a single moment for another person".

For this reason, it was observed that Indu and her elder sister (a graduate) also a put up a large timetable on the walls delineating daily routines and practices for the use of their nieces and nephews. Other parents with school going children in the family like Ashok and Rajni had fixed routines for their children after school hours like tuitions, music lessons. The importance of time and focus was highlighted by another respondent, Sonali's father. He said:

> "we used to skip marriages when the children were studying in 10th and 12th…if there was a wedding but next day they have an exam…we would skip… I would tell them to prepare…it does not matter if some relatives get upset…but if one year is wasted in order to attend a two hour event then it can never be recovered…we have one room inside and one is this [where the researcher was seated]…both the children study here".

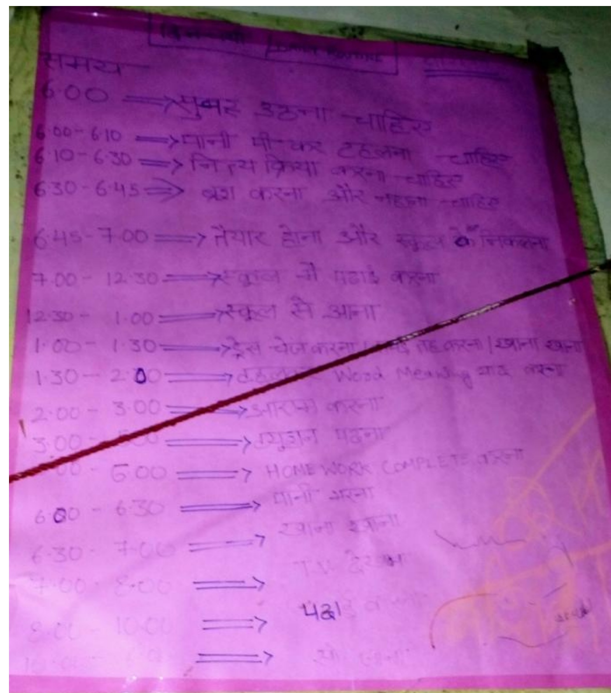


Figure 6.5 Timetable for children

Sonali's father and mother have studied up to 10th and 8th respectively, however, both Sonali and her brother studied in college. Her brother was also an MBA aspirant who had earlier attempted for Chartered Accountancy as well. Their father, mentioned that he has always told his children

that he is ready to invest in their career as long as they do not waste time and remain focused. As mentioned earlier, the relative privilege of having more than one room for the children also set these families apart. This itself can be characterized as a marker of objectified cultural capital that aided in the acquisition of educational capital. Jaeger (2009) point out that as opposed to narrow measures of cultural capital such as visits to art museums, theatre or possessing paintings home educational resources such as "a quiet place to study" or a "desk to work" are useful indicators of cultural capital that can also explain educational success.

For instance, Seema also shared that when the NGO she works with ran a centre in the living room of her house, her son was able to isolate himself and study in another room. She ensured that her son never went out on the streets after school hours and created a home environment with amenities which may not have been available to a large population in the slum which are both markers of economic capital and social status.

> "I used to provide everything for him… like he will come from school… a microwave to heat the meals…everything. We also gave him a phone so that if in case I had to go for trainings or workshops in the afternoon I could speak to him and remind him about tuitions. After coming back from school he had everything here…television, lunch".

While television is an asset present in every slum household, Seema's family owned amenities such as microwaves, washing machines and an even an aquarium as a piece of decoration. Further to cultivate hobbies and enhance his skill-set Seema enrolled him in English and computer learning courses during school summer breaks because as she said "she did not want him to waste any time". What is worth mentioning is also her ability to foresee how these were valuable in future for securing a job.

It is not as if friendships and social networks were not encouraged but they were rather built with individuals living in different localities outside the slum which was not only important as a marker of status and difference but also enabled acquisition of cultural capital. For Meenu, a second year college student of political science, the importance of education and career choices were influenced by her interaction with people outside the settlement.

> "Meenu: I had no idea what I could do with Political Science. So everybody told me that you can either study law or become a politician…So I thought I will do LLB. It doesn't matter whether I become a lawyer or not, I just want to gain knowledge…because knowledge is very important in life.
>
> Researcher: So where do you get these ideas from and how important is the role of your family and school in this?
>
> Meenu: These ideas came from outside…as in my parents also motivated me a little but as I started going to college I made a lot of friends who were always studying. Only when you go outside you realize. As long as I was here in this company (*sangat*) I was not alright (*sahi nai thi*), I lacked interest…Only when you go out you realize what life is".

Here what '*outside*' also suggests is that entry into higher education gave her access to friends, networks having worldviews and cultural capital which was not possible till the time she was attending the neighbourhood government school which largely drew children from the camps.

Respondents like Sunil and Ravi with advanced degrees in MCA and MBA respectively entered into government jobs in the Ministry which was a social prestige for them and their family in the neighbourhood.

As mentioned before, 32 year old Ravi, the youngest of five siblings, is one of the few who could afford to complete a regular degree in B.A programme and later pursue an MBA from a private institute in South Delhi. Ravi's father runs a small shop for tarpaulin sheets on the peripherals of the slum but until he gained a foothold in the city he initially did various jobs, as rag picker, garment trader and so on. In Ravi's words: education is the only *tool* available to progress for poor families and the family had the funds to invest on his education. He also pursued an advanced diploma in desktop publishing from a small training centre to add to skill-set. After completing his MBA, he struggled for five years doing odd jobs before securing a position of a trackman in the Indian Railways in the Group D category. In this capacity, he manually slogged on the railway tracks for one year until he was noticed by his superiors as an educated person (*padha likha*) with an MBA and assigned a desk job. The success of finding a government job,

albeit in the lowest division, was attributed to the Masters degree and Ravi was contented to be the first individual from his family to have secured a stable government job. Here the aspiration perhaps differs from the new middle class youth who would want their investment in MBA degrees to turn into lucrative roles in big private firms or multinational companies but for youth in poor families with years of accumulated disadvantage a government job brings a sense of pride and economic security.

The entry into these professions also marked what Bourdieu (1984) calls a transverse movement which requires "reconversion of one type of capital into another or of one sub-type into another sub-type"(p.132). In this case, both Ravi and Sunil's family possessed sufficient economic capital to invest into the pursuit of cultural capital, in other words, educational capital. In Ravi's words: "My family could invest in my education" *(family paisa laga sakti hai)*. But other than social status, the entry to these jobs also gave them access to a strong peer group or what they called "connections", a term used by Bourdieu (1986) himself in defining social capital:

> "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group—which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital…"(p.21)

Sunil and Ravi both regretted the fact they had lacked informational capital and role models when they were growing up and certain educational choices they made were purely made without much guidance. However, Sunil shared more than once that he has a large circle of friends and colleagues that includes doctors, lawyers, businessmen, Indian Administrative Service (IAS) aspirants. In fact he further added that his circle also includes Ministers of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) and Member of Parliaments (MPs) and that the local MLA of the Govindpuri area is a good friend. The phrase "*uthna bethna*" and "*aana jaana*" (rub shoulders with or keep the company of) with such people in prestigious positions was used by Sunil to suggest the thickness of these relationships. He was confident that in future if his elder brother, who was undertaking coaching for chattered accountancy, ever needs some support in opening a private firm, it can be done without much hassle as Sunil can mobilize his all

"*connections*". The volume of the social capital, Bourdieu (1986) writes, "depends on the size of the network of connections" the individual can mobilize and the volume of the capitals owned by each in the individual's network (p.21). In Sunil's and Ravi's cases, their peer group constituted men and women who had economic, cultural and social capital. Similarly, Ravi's entry into the Ministry also gave him access to similar group of people who held important positions of power. Ravi's brother, Kamal is also an active member in the political party, Aam Aadmi Party which is currently the ruling party of Delhi. At Ravi's wedding where the researcher was invited she was specially, with a hint of pride, told that she may get a chance to meet the Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, as he was also invited[83].

Further, Sunil is a popular figure in the neighbourhood as he offers tuitions and counseling and, in his words, he is known and respected as "Sunil *bhai*" in the whole neighbourhood. There are two important points that need to be emphasized here. There are ways of gaining popularity in the neighbourhood as Sunil and others mentioned that there are popular gangs who are involved in what they called "*bhai giri*" and "*dada giri*". These are again men from whom the educated families keep distance from because they spent considerable time on the street. Here the label *bhai* has negative connotations as they evoke fear whereas in Sunil's case the distinct status and label of *bhai* is based on his educational status and job in the Ministry. This divide can also be seen as a divide of rough and respectable where the uneducated represent the rough and persons like Sunil represent the respectable for being educated and cultivated.

Second, the non-literate and those having low educational qualification can also have connections with the local politicians. But what makes Sunil's circle distinct is the presence of Indian Administrative Service personnel, government servants, doctors, lawyers. For example, he said : "right now the office I work in each and every person is preparing for IAS…the day I started applying for government jobs they suggested books to me".

Seema, a social worker, also had a good network due to her 15 year old association with a non-governmental organization. Her name and work has also appeared in an article on disability rights of children in Govindpuri slums in newspapers like The Guardian[84]. She had been an active outreach worker for the disabled population living in the three camps and she also keeps

[83] The research due to some personal reasons could not attend this wedding.
[84] https://www.theguardian.com/journalismcompetition/education-for-all

counseling the neighbourhood youth providing them suggestions on educational courses etc. Therefore, she was known and respected among her neighbours as an educated person, "*padha likha insaan*".

Here it is also important to recall Schindler's (2013) point about the relationship shared by the poor with other dominant social groups in the city and the cultural capital that the former acquires in the process. While prejudices, discrimination and exclusion of the poor from public, residential and workplaces places controlled by the dominant groups are social facts, interaction with the middle classes also makes possible shaping of ideas, aspirations and lifestyles. This was articulated by Seema as "*nayi soch*" or "mentality", a new perspective or a worldview, similar to Meenu's idea about learning "what life really is". Seema's work as a programme manager in an NGO which involves frequent travelling and interaction with colleagues from other social classes exposed her to new ideas about living and raising children (*rakhne ka tarika*). On trying to further disentangle what "*soch*" meant, it has came to fore that it included ideas about ways of living, cleanliness, importance of education and more subtle and behavioral aspects like pitch and manners. As mentioned before, Seema's son attended an English medium private school in his childhood, obtained a diploma in food production and was working with a renowned hospitality chain. Both Seema and her son were exposed to a circle and workplace where they acquired what Bourdieu calls cultural capital in its embodied form. Seema said: If I raise my pitch while speaking my son gets angry. His way of dressing, eating, living everything is different (*alag hai*).

IV. Centrality of Education in Search for Partners

In this group, respondents like Sunil and Ravi were in their late 20s and early 30s, considered an "ideal" marriageable age traditionally by families in India and therefore, their parents were engaged in a matchmaking process. Both Sunil and Ravi strongly emphasized that educational credentials of the girl was an important criteria for them. This also marks a generational change because, if we recall, a majority of mothers including their own have only primary education.

In the past, Sunil's family had opened a low cost, unrecognized primary school in Sangam Vihar however, the school was shut down for reasons he did not share. But when Sunil was asked about his choices for a partner he shared his dream of opening a similar school and he would like

his prospective partner to be educated enough to run it. However, the search was for more than the just a degree or the ability to govern a school or teach, it also entailed having modern sensibilities and progressive outlook in taste and lifestyles that one associates with education especially in a city. Sunil explained it in this way: "[Our] thinking should match…now suppose my wife is uneducated… if I want to allow my children to wear one-piece outfits or go for night outs with friends she will not agree because our thinking is different…she will not be broad minded".

This echoes Meenu's point about "*soch*" or mentality. We see that education is equated with being a modern, urbane individual who along with being in paid employment will also match the taste of men like Sunil in clothes, grooming and social activities. Further, not only is Sunil talking here about his idea of a future partner for himself but also of a future mother and the imagination of how he would want their children to be raised.

A similar idea was expressed by Gautam, who although is not a part of this small group of seven families, but his case is worth discussing for the insights it offers into education, marriage, and mobility. Gautam's family moved out of Bhoomiheen camp into a rented accommodation in a nearby lower middle class colony. His family like many other *jhuggi* owners retained their old house in the camp and sublet it to an acquaintance from their village. Originally from Bangladesh, Gautam's family, moved to Govindpuri slum in the 1980s and his father worked did odd jobs like cooking, painting and whereas his mother was a domestic worker. His father continues to work as a supervisor at construction sites and his mother works as a part time tailor, operating from the home itself. Gautam's only elder sister is married and works as an assistant manager at a firm in Noida. It was his sister's marriage that led them to move out of that space as they felt uncomfortable inviting his brother-in-law to their old house in the camp.

Gautam never finished college and dropped out in his second year unable to pass the examination. He worked with an outdoor advertising firm for a while before joining the current workplace as a backstage events manager organizing shows like Amazon Fashion Week, Lakhme Fashion Show and Blender's Sprite. He showed several photos and selfies taken with both known Bollywood celebrities as well aspiring models to the researcher. Gautam shared that

the current job which is his "dream job" demands a particular *lifestyle*[85] such as having to follow the current trends and wear fashionable clothes.

At the time of this interview in 2018 Gautam's parents were looking for a match for him. He rejected few proposals from West Bengal his parents had shortlisted for him and instead wanted to marry someone from Delhi who is a well educated, financially independent and can speak English clearly stating that his criteria for a partner were different from the ones set by his parents.

> Gautam: There was a girl in Noida whom I liked but she had no qualification. Only up to 12th…I want at least a graduate…I want a working type who will always be fit…life is such now that men and women are equal.
>
> Researcher : and she can support you financially also?
>
> Gautam: now it is an era of education (*education wala zamana*)…if we are educated our kids will also be so. If I take her somewhere and everybody talks in English…they will say "hello" and she will not be able to understand and say "*namaste*".

There are several interpretations one can draw from this transcript. Like Sunil, Gautam is not only looking for someone with a degree but a girl who would possess English speaking skills and urban sophistication that will also add to his status before his educated peer circle. Again the imagination and equivalence of the "educated" with the ability to speak English is reinforced. What is also implied in "working type" is education based employment as opposed to the nature of work women in Gautam's mother's generation took up to survive in the city, symbolizing a social change in aspirations brought by education and rising incomes. This relates the discussion on respectable employment that a mothers also hinted for her daughter in Chapter 5. Additionally, the lifestyle that is expected of him from his peers and employer in the workplace, he wants his partner to also share similar taste in western clothes and stay physically "fit", the current synonym for slimness. Lastly, the fact that educated parents will be able to transfer their educational capital to the future children echoes Bourdieu's idea of "domestic transmission" of

[85] Term used by the respondent himself.

cultural capital. In the dominant classes the cultural capital including educational qualifications, linguistic abilities, cultural goods in the form of books and paintings are inherited by the children which is later legitimized and sanctioned by the school. However, in families like Sunil and Gautam or Ravi, they are the first generations to have gone to college and entered into white collar professions different from their father and fore fathers. Therefore, in their seeking of educated partners who will complement them and their urban lifestyles we see attempts to also build, preserve and transfer the cultural capital they have acquired.

Like Gautam's case, Ravi's matrimonial alliance prompted the family to move to a lower middle class neighbourhood and they moved just before his wedding. In a conversation that took place with Ravi in 2018 said:

> "Ravi: In our community (*samaj*) having a government job is a big deal, from the day I joined, marriage proposals from relatives etc., started pouring in…but my first *focus* was that I want an educated person, everything else is *secondary*...even if she is not my equal ….[I want] at least a graduate".

Ravi's government job with a monthly salary of INR 30,000 turned him into an attractive groom in marriage negotiations and also enabled him to purchase and move to a house in a nearby low income, authorized colony with his family. What is worth noting is that he was eligible for a housing loan from a bank, which Dickey (2016) identifies as a marker of middle class status as opposed to the stigma of debt owed to local moneylenders, friends and relatives, mainly practiced by the poor. An excerpt from a conversation with his brother, Kamal, complements Ravi's sentiments and gives a hint of what these "secondary" criteria might be that education has replaced.

> "the girl whom we have chosen for our youngest brother [Ravi] is preparing for Indian Police Service…we got several offers like cars, money but we said no, we only want an educated girl (*padhi likhi*)…because I want my children to become something…when she comes she will have to teach these children".

Kamal's point shows the family's preference for an intangible wealth like education as opposed to the tangible assets like cars or money which a groom's family receives in dowry during marriage from the bride's side. When the researcher met Ravi again in 2019 he was indeed married to a girl who was preparing for the UPSC examinations. However, it is not entirely true that the family did not accept any dowry in fact a Royal Enfield motorbike worth 1 lakh INR was gifted to Ravi from the bride's family.

There are two interpretations that can be drawn from the above discussion. First, the demand for an educated match not only reveals a desire for status and seamless blending in privileged social circles, but also for an educated, future mother. Scholars have drawn attention to the middle class expectations from an educated mother to engage in round-the-clock activities around children's schooling, tuitions and extracurricular work (Drury 1993; Nambissan 2010). Highlighting the link between home, family and school, Griffith and Smith (2005) point out that middle class mothers work as an invisible force in reproduction of middle classness by dedicating themselves to "children's health, socialization and to supplementary educational work supporting their schools" (p.13). This aspiration among respondents like Sunil, Gautam and Ravi, therefore can be read as a component of their project of class mobility and emulation of middle class practices. Second, the inseparability of "being educated" with "being able to speak English" in these responses is reminiscent of the equation of "good education" or "good schools" with English medium private school, "to which upper middle class Indians have always sent their children, thereby setting trends and laying down standards of the 'good' in education" (Nambissan 2010, p.284).

V. Social Identities, Class markers and Self-Improvement

Giddens writes: "Each of the small decisions a person makes every day – what to wear, what to eat, how to conduct himself at work, who to meet with later in the evening … All such choices (as well as larger and more consequential ones) are decisions not only about how to act but who to be " (cited in Gurney 2017, p.80). Use of modern technology such as smart phones and presentation of self on social media platforms has become one of the ways in which this youth especially tried to construct its social identity. Meenu frequently uploaded pictures and videos of herself while riding a bike or working out in a gym, or spending time with friends in food chains like Dominos, McDonalds, or catching a film in a multiplex. Her clothes and disposition in the

photographs uploaded by her showed that she kept up with new trends. It was usual for Sunil and his friends to go for what they termed as "outings" almost every weekend, and undertake short road trips once in every three months to nearby destinations like Mussourie and Dehradun, activities which according to him, most other boys in the slum could not afford. Gautam's profile picture and status on Whatsapp always displayed a collage of photos taken with upcoming models and Bollywood celebrities who came to attend his events. It also included videos of him enjoying in the swimming pools of private farmhouses, clubs, malls, captioned with phrases like "having fun", "party hard", "drinking night", and "Delhi boys". The last caption "Delhi boys" also speaks volumes about these individuals who are claiming to belong to a city and trying to emulate particular practices which sometimes figure in the popular imaginary of the Delhi.

An interesting point that emerged in the discussion on entertainment and leisure was also related to the consumption of alcohol. An alcoholic and unemployed slum dweller who loses money in gambling and thrashes his wife is a popular imagery often invoked both within and outside the slum. Sunil and Gautam, however, distinguished themselves by pointing out to the researcher that they also drink but moderately and only in designated places like pubs and restaurants which implied that it is different from the "unruly and uncontrolled" drinking behaviour of other men in their neighbourhood. This again echoes dominant class attributes of "order, restraint and propriety" pointed out by (Bourdieu 1984: p.196).

Zabiliute (2016) identifies "wandering" (*ghumna*) in malls, places of middle class consumption, as an important way in which young urban poor men make attempts for upward mobility. This may be limited to only gazing at branded goods, not actual consumption but they are slowly acquiring the non branded version of clothes and body language that gives them entry in such spaces and blend with middle and upper-class consumers. Clothes alone, however, were not enough though, as Sunil pointed out to me : "no matter how many good clothes you wear, the moment the person opens his mouth, one can tell". This is a significant point made by the respondent as it speaks about composition of capitals and the difference between economic capital and cultural capital. While money can help one purchase branded and expensive clothes the disposition, speech and mannerism are part of embodied cultural capital. This is a difference that was acknowledged by several other respondents irrespective of their educational backgrounds who believed this difference was brought about by presence and absence of

education. For example, consider the following sentence spoken by one respondent: "by looking at someone, listening to him speak, way one carries himself (*aachar aacharan*) one can tell the difference". This "a*achar aacharan*" includes ways of talking, laughing, walking, and so on.

On further probing, Sunil gave an example and explained that he does not get treated the way other boys from the settlement do in the nearby public park because not only does he wears track pants and shoes he can also converse with the middle class residents in English whenever a need arises. In fact, Meenu, Ravi, Sunil, and Indu all spoke Hindi interspersed with English words and sentences. The transcript given below sums this up:

> "Sunil: boys from the slum swear and abuse…from their clothes you can tell they are slum dwellers - ragged pants, soiled shirts, bare footed… [whereas] children from the pocket [middle class gated residential complex] come wearing sport shoes, with their own football…so they are not able to play and then residents call the police…but you can't tell by looking at people like me.
>
> Researcher: is that difference because of education?
>
> Sunil: Education, lifestyle (*rehen sehen*), peer group (*sangat*)…*lifestyle* for example, don't roam around on the streets, you are dark because you spend too much time outside…if you don't care for yourself you will look bad…initially I was very lean but then I realized that I had to wear suits for presentations…so I started going to the gym…*developed personality"*.

In the above transcript Sunil makes several references to aspects on which distinction is based - language, clothes, lifestyles, social circles, colour of skin and the body. Sunil's reference to the bare footed boys from the slum with their ragged clothes is a reminder of Seema's distinction of the bare-chested and bare footed boys who loiter in the streets. This is the nameless "others" who help respondents like Seema and Sunil to assert their distinction and educated status. As opposed to this, Sunil's attire (track pants and shoes or suits for presentations) is similar to how the boys from the middle class homes dress up. This also shows his knowledge for dressing appropriately for different public spaces, track pants and shoes for parks, suits for workplaces and casuals for going out with friends. Secondly, the use of foul language (in Hindi) in public by such men and

boys is again a marker of the "uncouth" urban poor lacking education. Sunil, on the other hand, who had conversational knowledge of English said he was treated with respect and politeness whenever he would approach a middle class resident, for example, asking for the cricket ball (in English) that may have landed in their premises.

The third comment he makes is on the colour of skin and the shape of the body. Froystad (2006) also points out that "complexion, clothing, body shape, movement and speech" (p.164) were visual markers of class and caste status to categorize strangers in public places. She further writes that strong associations are made between fairness and upper caste background and dark complexion and low-caste background (ibid: p.165). Thus, efforts have to be made to protect the skin by remaining indoors and away from the dirt and pollution on the streets. Secondly, people with single rooms or smaller houses in the slum spend time on the thresholds or in the streets to catch fresh air or socialize with the neighbours. Whereas respondents like Sunil who have bigger houses have the privilege of staying indoors. This also reflects the economic resources and occupational privilege of the respondent as he can afford to remain indoors as opposed to the poor manual labourers who spend considerable time outside in the heat and cold temperatures. Sunil, on the other hand, is someone who needs to look presentable not only by wearing clothes appropriate for his position but also caring for and grooming his hair, skin and body. For Bourdieu (1984) :

> "…body is the most indisputable materialization of class taste, which it manifests in several ways. It does this first in the seemingly most natural features of the body, the dimensions (volume, height, weight) and shapes (round, square, still or supple, straight or curved) of its visible forms which express in countless ways a whole relation to the body, i.e., a way of treating, caring for it, feeding it, maintaining it, which reveals the deepest dispositions of the habitus" (p.190)

Efforts were put into shaping the body and external appearance by going to gymnasium and following a diet plan (eggs, bananas and milk shakes in his own words) so as to build "personality" and not look like a "slum dweller". To not looking like a slum dweller or *jhuggi wala* was of significance to Sunil and he asked the researcher thrice on different occasions if she

felt or could tell that he was from the slum during an anonymous encounter. Thus dis-identification with the spatial context of a slum is a class project and Sunil draws the boundary between “people like me” and “people like them”. As Bourdieu (1984) writes: “Each class condition is defined… by everything which distinguishes it from what it is not and everything it is opposed to; social identity is defined and asserted through difference” (p.171-172).

VI. English medium Private Schooling and Pursuit of Cultural Capital

The previous chapter discussed how the desire for good schooling and education among the parents was rooted in their own personal biographies. While every parent said that they would want their child to study and lead a life different from theirs, what set some families apart is their choice of school and their ability to invest time and economic capital in that choice. Rajni’s and Kamal’s family are one of the very few families in the sample to have managed to enroll both their children in high end private schools of the city as possess greater volume of economic capital as compared to others to be able to convert it into cultural capital. In this, Rajni and Kamal’s family are like the “moyenized families” of Salcedo and Rasse’s (2012) study, discussed earlier, who used private schooling as a symbol of status and differentiation.

Rajni’s son got admission in a high-end-private school in the city under the Economically Weaker Section (EWS) quota while her daughter is studying under the general category in another private school. Rajni put great emphasis on parents’ role in ensuring educational success of their children, without which she felt it was not possible for children to succeed in the present time. In her words: “till the time parents do not work towards it…in the present time children want support, without parents’ support they cannot go ahead”. Parental support and responsibilities included right from searching for “good” schools for their children, active engagement in the day to day school activities, providing for good tuitions and last but not the least, monetary investments. For her, only when one gets involved in the process of admission one gets to know about the importance of education and good schools in Delhi.

Rajni and her husband Ashok’s preparation to send their child to a private school began early on. Their son was sent to a private pre-school in a nearby middle/upper middle class locality before he was enrolled in a high fee private senior secondary school. This indicates that where the poorest of poor send their children to *anganwadi or* the NGO run child care centres in the pre-

school initial years there is a better off section of parents living in the slum who have started sending their children to play schools. Rajni's ability to send both her children to private play schools differentiated her not only from the neighbours but also within the family where her brother-in-laws were not in a economic position to afford a private play school for their children. Donner (2006) writes in the context of middle class mothers in Calcutta and their engagement with their children's schooling "sending a son or daughter to a preschool/nursery at an early age has become a precondition for admission to better English medium schools..." (p.374).

When the time came for her son's admission, Rajni and Ashok exerted enormous effort to get him in a high end private school in Delhi. She narrates how she felt about the education of her children even before they were born and the journey of the admission process.

> "you know for many schools we filled the forms?…25 schools…I stopped eating…only for the school sake, we use to leave at 6 in the morning…even before these children were born, I used to ask my husband if our children will be able to go to such good schools one day…because whenever I used to see these schools I had this desire (*iccha*) that my children should also study there…I have not studied much, only up to tenth…so therefore I had this desire (*armaan*)...in the future when he will be well educated it will be a matter of respect (*izzat*) for us".

She considered herself a "lucky" parent for the fact that her son was selected in a school of her preference and used "touchwood" and "thank god" several times in the sentences. In her narrative, the "good schools" Rajni is referring to are the state-of-the-art schools that are situated in neighbouring localities around the cluster, schools which a majority of residents from this poor neighbourhood said they cannot afford or felt that children from the *jhuggi* will not find a place in. The hyperbole used by Rajni, that she stopped eating and would leave early in the morning for queuing up for forms, suggests the desperation and determination of the parents to get their child admitted in one of these schools. Lastly, the narrative also suggests that their investments in their child's education was also tied to the desire for respect that it will bring in the future. This is similar to honour and respect accorded to educated persons like Sunil and Seema in the neighbourhood.

The behaviour of parents was important in Rajni's desire for good education for her children: "those parents who are uneducated want their child to study so that they can have a better life. If children have a good life parent's behaviour also changes…environment changes, along with the children parent's *level* also changes". Here, use of the English term "level" is significant as it refers to economic and social status of the families not only within the neighbourhood but in the larger society and meanings attached to the word level becomes clearer as we delve into Rajni and Ashok's views about their children's schools and peers.

Initially, at the time of her daughter's admission, Rajni contemplated shifting to the area where her son's school was located so as to be able to increase their daughter's chances of getting selected (based on the neighbourhood criteria). As this move was beyond their economic capacity they enrolled their daughter in another private school close to their own neighbourhood under the general category, paying an annual tuition fee of about 21,000 INR (exclusive of books, uniform and other miscellaneous expenses). However, during the course of the researcher's fieldwork the couple decided to change their daughter's school as they were anxious that the school she was enrolled in, although an English medium recognized private school, drew few students from the slum but still catered mostly to children from low income areas like Govindpuri and Tughlakabad due to the neighbourhood factor: Children from high level families/homes are not studying there ("*high level ke ghar ke bache nai pad rahe hai*"). Whereas, Rajni wanted her daughter to have a peer group from families who were from middle or upper middle classes like the clientele her son's school was serving.

It is important to see the location and ranking of the two schools to gain full understanding of Rajni and Ashok's aspirations. Their son got admission in a school which is counted among the top schools of Delhi and is located in an affluent part of South Delhi. The daughter's school albeit an English medium private school is located 3 kms away from the slum. Though it remains out of reach of large proportion of slum dwellers it does cater to children living in the nearby low income colonies. It is important to note that several families that manage to move out of the slum take residence in these low income colonies, including Rajni and Ravi's family.

Therefore, to give their daughter a different peer group the family shifted her to another private school located in an affluent part of south Delhi, paying higher fees than they were already paying. It is important to connect Rajni's use of the word *level* here with regard to the families of

her daughter's peer group with what she says in the previous paragraph about her education brings a change in the *level* of parents. For this couple, the school is a possible site from where cultural capital both in terms of competencies including English language ability and as well as embodied properties such as manners, speech and taste can be acquired. Private schooling was also, as Gurney (2017) points out, "both a symbolic and literal delineation between their own family and others within the local community, with private schooling in practice functioning as a strategy of differentiation on the basis of social status"(p.29). This became clearer when Rajni said that people in the slum neighbours did not even realize what studying in a elite private school of the city means when she told them about her son, however, people from middle class colonies recognized its value.

Another significant point that emerges is that Rajni and her husband could discriminate and compare between two private schools and had the discretion-making ability backed by financial capacity to switch schools. Rajni was also able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the two schools her son and daughter were attending, for example, the observation that her son's school laid more emphasis on extra-curricular activities while her daughter's school was more academically driven. This was possible due to their engagement with the school, its teachers, and extra-curricular activities on a sustained basis. Pictures of cultural events in which her children participated and certificates received were often shared on WhatsApp statuses.

In answers to question about what they feel about the school, the poorest of poor whose children were going to government schools were mostly short and devoid of details and generalized. For example, many said "like any other government school". Or where a majority of parents thought in terms of binary oppositions of private vs government where all private stood for quality, this set of respondents having better education than the rest could also differentiate within the private sector schools.

Distance and cost were significant factors when it came to school choice in this poor neighbourhood of Govindpuri. A large number of parents chose government school or low fee private schools close to their homes because the transportation to far off areas will be an additional cost for the parents to bear. In their case, "Spatial horizons and the practicalities of travel imposed definite limits upon the 'realities' of choosing" (Ball et al 1996 ,p.36. However, in case of Rajni's family, both the children were studying in schools that were located far from

the home, in more affluent colonies of the city. The school bus charges for her son were 2000 INR and 800 INR for the daughter. Additionally, she was also sending her son for tuitions in a nearby upper- middle class settlement paying a monthly fee of INR 1800 and since it is slightly far from where they live (about 2.5 kms) she pays INR 200 monthly for the van that ferries him to and from the tuition centre. Once again here it has to be noted that where the poorer residents were accessing tuitions mostly within the camp paying between 300/500 INR, Rajni's family investment capacity made them different from others. Rajni also shared that they readily agreed to pay a sum of INR 3000-3500 for her son to participate in personality development (including Spoken English, etiquettes, etc) classes in the school.

Like Rajni, Kamal's decision to send his two children (a son and a daughter) to private schools was again based on his personal biography and his perception of what is a "good" school. Kamal's son is studying in a recognized public school run by an NGO where the entire cost of tuition fee, book, and uniforms and other miscellaneous charges are being borne by the family. His daughter, however, is studying in another private school, enrolled under the economically weaker section provision of Right to Education Act of 2009.

In the case of these parents it is clear that they have the economic capital necessary to invest in private schooling and its accompanied demand for tuition. It is important to mention that in Kamal's and Rajni's case both the respondents' families were also bearing the cost of the books and uniforms for the children who were enrolled in private schools under Economically Weaker Section quota, although they were entitled to free books and uniforms. However, both were apprehensive that if they raise this issue with the school's administration it may jeopardize their children's opportunity to study in these premier schools of the city. While they seemed displeased about the schools' decision to charge them for books and uniforms, amenities they were entitled to, they also were quick to point out to the researcher that they are satisfied with whatever benefits they are receiving and do not mind investing from their own pockets, to ensure their children get good education in English medium private schools. According to Kamal: "We are satisfied that we are getting this much but it is important that the poor should get these benefits…I am able to do it so I am doing it…but if the government has made these [provisions] for the poor they should be implemented". Rajni said : "If after 8th we have to pay the fees this much we can do…we do not have a problem…if our child is studying for free up to 8th what else

benefit do we want”. It needs to be reiterated that both the families are also bearing the entire cost of education of the second child studying in a different private school.

Although this suggests that these families had the economic capital necessary to invest in private education it also differentiates them from middle and upper middle class families who have a strong sense of entitlement when it comes to their relationship with schools. Here these two families are in a delicate transitioning phase where they do not want to lose the opportunity to educate their children in a prestigious private school which might become their ultimate pathway of entering into the urban middle class.

Education, particularly English medium education in private schools has remained one of the biggest means for the urban middle classes in India to succeed. “These are among schools to which upper middle class Indians have always sent their children, thereby setting trends and laying down standards of the ‘good’ in education” (Nambissan 2010, p.284). After the withdrawal of the middle classes from the government schools it is largely the students from poor and disadvantaged sections that fill the classrooms of government schools.

Summary

In the chapter, we discussed the worldviews, practices and aspirations of a small group of respondents to assert their difference from the rest living in the settlement. The boundaries are drawn and distinction is asserted on the basis of “distaste” or “negation” and “opposition” of the lifestyles and taste of others where we almost see that these respondents use similar categories which the middle classes use to differentiate themselves from the poor. This echoes what Bourdieu (1984) writes about the struggles of different classes and class fractions to maintain their distinction :

> “… all the groups involved in the race, whatever rank they occupy, cannot conserve their position, their rarity, their rank except by running to keep their distance from those immediately behind them, thus jeopardizing the difference which distinguishes the group immediately in front; or, to put it another way, by aspiring to possess that which the group just ahead already have, and which they themselves will have, but later” (p.161).

Boundaries and social distancing is reflected in the classifications of "people like us and people like them" and "inside and outside" and "good people and bad people". The presence and absence of education and its associated notions of modern sensibilities, urbanity, becomes the marker of distinctions and it is a valuable cultural capital both in the form dispositions and credentials which has to be pursued, expanded and preserved. We also observe an increasing privatization of lives in attempts to socially distance from the slum neighbours and instead build relationships with peers in possession of more educational and social capital. These attempts are backed by the fact that this set of respondents possess more economic capital reflected in their housing quality, ownership of properties outside the slum, and ability to invest in education and consumption of goods, converting one form of capital into another.

Chapter 7

Gendered Nature of Distinction: Mothering and Education of Children in the Urban Poor Neighbourhood

I. Introduction

> "…public places in the city are dominated by school children at certain times of the day. But equally conspicuous are their mothers, who are sitting next to the gates or who stand in the shade under a tree waiting for their sons and daughters to emerge. Mothers can be seen in the morning on the way to school … Groups of mothers reappear in front of secondary schools in the afternoon to collect children, hurrying home before they accompany them to tuition classes, music and computer lessons later in the evening" (Donner 2006, p.138).

The above description of a road in Central Calcutta was written by Donner (2006) in her account on middle class mothers and their role in shaping the educational trajectory of their children. While Donner writes specifically in the context of middle class mothers, a typical working day in the Govindpuri JJ Cluster also showed how resident mothers were involved in the regular school related activities of their children. This was true for both employed and non-employed women in the neighbourhood. The fathers in almost every household, as mentioned earlier, followed a tight schedule where they would early in the morning for their work and return home late in the evening or midnight, leaving them very little time to engage with their children. The idea of this chapter is not to disregard the importance of fathers in children's education as many of them encourage and support their children's schooling financially but mothering activities in urban poor households in India merits our attention as it remains under-researched. In India, particularly studies on the lives of urban poor mothers in slums has focused on aspects of health and their vulnerabilities like malnutrition, access to safe toilets and medical care, child mortality and so on. Mothers literacy and education has been studied more in the context of its impact on the health of the child and sometimes on education, however, discussions of their everyday

routines around schooling activities and aspirations for their children's education remains limited.

The study argues that the mother's association with the child's schooling and educational needs is not just limited and peculiar to the middle class families as the literature suggests, but it is increasingly true of poor and working class families too. The chapter documents how these mothers from Govindpuri JJ cluster straddle between household work, paid employment and children's education and how they envisage and support their children's education, at times going against the general tide to ensure a better life for their children. Other than highlighting the gendered nature of support to children's education, this chapter, however, also outlines the nature of the differences and distinction among the mothers from poor neighbourhood in terms of the family social status and educational levels.

The chapter begins with a discussion of the existing literature on parenting and mothering and how both are gendered and classed processes. This is followed by description of the everyday activities of the mothers in the slum to support their children's schooling, their aspirations and negotiation for a better life for the children. In the last section the chapter discusses how educational backgrounds of the mothers account for the differences in these mothering activities.

II. Parenting is neither Gender nor Class Neutral

Vincent (2010) and Gillies (2007) point out that the parent and child interaction which was earlier a private and intimate affair is now increasingly subject to the intervention of the state and the market. This is evident in the publication of prescriptive manuals, advertisements etc., that provide tips on parenting and often end up standardizing an image of what entails "ideal" parenting which is oblivious of socio-economic backgrounds. Further, these scholars have argued and shown that though parenting is a term and process assumed to be gender neutral it "disguises the fact that mothers continue to shoulder major responsibility for the day-to-day care of children" (Gillies 2007: p.32). The ideal mother is expected to work selflessly for the child's upbringing, an end to which everything else including her own life as an individual, her interests and career should become secondary.

Furthermore, Reay (1998) points out that for a long time mothering and caring for children has been viewed as something that comes naturally to women and less as a productive activity that

requires active and sustained engagement. Reay (1998), in fact, adds that the amount of time a mother gives to the child in the domestic set up is a resource acknowledged by Bourdieu himself, that constitutes the cultural capital of dominant classes and this is evident in the point made by Griffith and Smith (2005) who argue that the work of the educated middle class mothers helps in reproduction of middleclassness.

Just as it is not gender neutral, parenting is not class neutral either. As Vincent (2010) argues, mothering is "far from being a shared experience common to all women with children, mothering practices, including consumer behaviours are infused by class" (p.109) but they are often extended and standardized to include all mothers irrespective of race and class categories. When the middle class mothering is held as an ideal by the media or policy makers the mothering practices of women from low-income disadvantaged backgrounds becomes marginalized and stigmatized. "Lone mothers, lesbian mothers, mothers surviving on benefit and those trying to make ends meet on income support and, from inside and outside those groups, black women, are all operating within contexts permeated by such taken-for-granted assumptions" (Griffith and Smith 2005: p.13).

Gillies (2007) also writes: "…working-class mothers who do not conform to standards grounded in middle-class privilege are vilified and blamed…Working class mothering practices are held up as the antithesis of good parenting, largely through their association with poor outcomes for children" (pp.1-2). These perspectives that try to prescribe and "correct" the behaviours of mothers are based on the assumption of working class way of living as having some "deficit" rather than raise questions about structural inequalities that result in, for example, low educational attainment and drop outs. This is consistent with the neoliberal logic that situates the deficit in the poor for the conditions they find themselves in and makes it an individual responsibility.

Drawing upon the lives of working class women (including lone mothers) in London, Vincent et al (2010) discuss how the contradictory discourses and expectations of 'good' mothering and productive worker/citizen especially those that target working class mothers produces feelings of loneliness, guilt and conflict within these women who have to straddle between child care and paid employment. The conflicting expectations make it difficult for women to choose either of the two and thus produce predicament for them. These women lead a life in disadvantaged, poor

neighbourhoods where they not only have to daily negotiate with financial constraints but prove their worth as responsible mothers as well as productive workers contributing to the nation's economy. The authors add that while such dilemmas arise among middle class women too, it is particularly difficult for working class mothers as they are resource deprived but at the same time stigmatized and judged for not doing the right kind of mothering. Lavee and Benjamin's (2015) study also highlights similar predicaments arising out of multiple expectations among working class mothers in Israel. As the society and policies took a neoliberal turn, resource-poor mothers were caught between two maternal ideals: extensive mothering (Christopher 2012) (child care combined with labour market participation) and intensive mothering (Hays 1996) (continuous presence and active engagement with children's well being and academic life) which produced feelings of guilt and questioning of self-worth. The working class mothers were burdened with domestic responsibilities, childcare and the additional expectation of involvement of with their children's academic work but at the same struggling to sustain themselves as many were also single parent.

In the context of India, it is the middle class mother who has been popularly held as an ideal as the sole purpose of her education was at one time anchored towards becoming a good wife and good mother and by implication contribute in bringing up the ideal citizens for the nation (Donner 2006). Nambissan (2010) discusses how middle class mother's educational credentials are considered valuable for socializing children into middle values, preparing them for English medium private schooling and entry into middle class professions. Our study challenges some of these assumptions and stereotypes associated with working class women for it not only revealed and reinforced the arguments given by Reay, Gillies and Vincent that parenting is often gendered it showed how mothers in urban poor households, contrary to perceptions, were aspirational and juggling between domestic responsibilities and employment to support their children's school routines and activities.

III. Mothers on the move: Everyday Routines and Practices

In Chapter 4, we have already discussed the occupational and educational backgrounds of the mothers. A majority of mothers had obtained primary and elementary education. Only a few had gone beyond 10th standard and two women in the whole sample were graduates and two other

held diplomas. A large percentage of women were unpaid household workers and a majority among the working population was engaged in paid domestic work in middle class households. In both the cases, where women were employed and where they were not employed it was observed that they were much more closely involved with schooling activities and daily lives of their children. The entire day of women was organized around household work and schooling activities of children. Dickey (2000) writes about women in general:

> "…regardless of whether women hold paid employment, caring for the home and nurturing the family are women's responsibilities. These include food preparation and serving, cleaning, laundry, and child care (including overseeing children's educations), all of which are subsumed under the term housework… they [fathers] are usually much less involved with the daily details of education and nurturing than their wives" (p.468).

The two excerpts provided below give us a glimpse of a typical day of most women who are household workers in the Govindpuri clusters and the range of activities they are responsible for. Shanti (unpaid household worker, no formal education, children studying in government schools):

> I wake up at 5 am…then prepare breakfast for everyone. Then I go to drop the eldest girl at 6.30…then the middle one at 7.30…then after coming back I go to drop my son at 8. After coming back at 8.30 I prepare food, sweep, mop, wash utensils and clothes…it is already 1 pm by the time I finish these chores...then I again go to pick my son from the school in the afternoon.

Nargis (unpaid household worker, upper primary, children studying in government schools):

> I wake up at 5 am every day. I go to the (community) washroom … then wake my children up, dress them up, give them food…thereafter the school van arrives so I go to drop them at the stop. They come back around 12/1 pm and then again go to learn Urdu around 2 pm. After coming back from Urdu classes they do their tuition work…then my son goes for tuition at 5 and my daughter goes for tuition at 7.

On the other hand, those who were in paid employment straddled domestic chores, employment and children's school related activities. For instance, women who were employed in garment factories or as domestic helpers, adjusted their schedules around children's school timings. As discussed in an earlier chapter, Usha, a mother of a teenage daughter, works in a garment factory nearby on a piece rate basis which gives her the option to come home for lunch around the same time when her daughter returns from school and also ferry her to and from tuitions. Similarly, other domestic workers left in the morning for work and returned in the afternoon to complete the household chores and look after their children after they came back from schools. Some of them even went for a second round of work in the afternoon or evening after lunch. Both working and non-working women shared that there was hardly any time left for them to rest and they hardly get any break from work (*kaam se phursat nai milta*).

When children were ready to enroll in school it was the mothers who searched for schools, ran around for getting admission forms and fulfilling the formalities. Further they searched for tutors, ferried them from school to home and to tuition and back. It was the mothers who went to schools and also negotiated with the administration and teachers although the type and degree of involvement with the school varied according to the educational backgrounds. While mothers with no or limited education used their neighbourhood networks to find out about schools few mothers with better education background like Lalita, Jyoti and Seema had the privilege of using their networks, both at work places and in the neighbourhood, to inquire about schools and admission processes. Economic capacity as discussed in Chapter 4, articulated as "*shamta*", "*aukaad*" and "*haisiyat*" and the distance of the school from the house especially in case of younger children dictated their choice of schools.

On the other hand, barring a few households the involvement of a majority of men was limited to paying the school or tuition fee. This is not to suggest that the fathers were not involved or encouraging at all. In fact Usha mentioned that she and her partner together decided to have only one child so as to be able to invest properly in her education and ensure her success. Usha along with her partner often go to the wholesale book markets in the walled city to purchase supplementary books and subject guides for their daughter. Interestingly, this practice of accumulating and procuring educational resources and books by visiting second hand book stores has been a typical trait of educated urban middle class families which seem to have been

practiced by the urban poor families as well. The very knowledge as well as exploration of such sites in the city clearly marks the distinction that the poor tend to maintain within their neighbourhood. It also tends to reflect their eagerness to ape middle class practices through and for education of their children.

Moreover, some fathers said that they would never stop their children from pursuing higher studies and will try to support them financially as well. There were a few households where the fathers dropped their children to school in the morning on their way to work, however, none of them were as deeply involved as the mothers in the everyday activities around schooling. This absence was largely attributed to the work schedules of the fathers which did not allow them to engage with their children as they mostly left for work around 7/8 AM and returned late in the night around 9/10 PM. Those who owned and managed shops or sold vegetables in the *mandi* came back around midnight. This kind of schedule also took a toll on the mothers, for example, Lalita whose husband was a vegetable vendor said that she remains awake till her husband gets back home at midnight and takes his dinner. It is equally important here to understand the nature of work urban poor men are involved in.

As discussed in Chapter 4, many men were engaged in insecure, irregular, informal work with no fixed working hours and where income was dependent upon the availability of customers and clients. Many also had to look for their daily bread, for instance, the plumbers, electricians, astrologers, labourers, and drivers. Long working hours and unfavourable conditions also shaped their work lives. Many women said that since their husbands were better educated, they could have helped more with homework etc., but cited lack of time and fatigue as the primary reason for their non-involvement. A mother said: "I look after school work…father does not get time. He leaves at 8.30 and comes back at 10. By that time I put the children to bed as we have to wake up at 5.30”. As Raey (1998) explains,

> “…..parental involvement is gendered. It means very different things for the woman of the house and her male partner. This difference is more vividly illustrated in women’s descriptions of the early morning. It is primarily women who get children up, dressed, fed, and ready with all their equipments to go to school. Men disappear from these tales of getting things done, mostly to leave early for work…. The underlying assumption by both parents that

> parental involvement, especially in the home, is women's work meant both men and women operated with a norm of men's non-involvement, unlike the texts on parental involvement which make a very different assumption—that of both parents' equal involvement"(p.155).

Largely, the role of the father in most households was restricted to paying the school fee or motivating and engaging with the children once in a while. In some families, the extent of non-involvement of the fathers was described in this way. Sunil, one of the educated respondents holding an MCA degree when asked about his childhood says: "schooling was completely taken care of by our mother…our father did not even know in which class we were studying". Ranju, a housewife and mother of three, corroborated this:

> "He (*father*) doesn't get involved at all…once my brother-in-law asked him [husband] in which grade our children were studying…he said he does not know and that their mother only would have such information. Only sometimes when we have to access [examination] results online we ask for his help" (because the father works in a computer hardware company as a labourer and has acquired some knowledge of computers).

Ranju added that she has taken care of everything including school admissions, tuitions, getting caste certificate for her four children to ensure they do not face any trouble (*dhakke na khana pade*). Ranju is also a mother to an intellectually disabled child. She narrated her story of moving her son from one school to another, seeking help from NGOs for her son to receive education. She added that in order to secure his future she ran around to get a disability certificate made and also secured a disability stipend for him.

Lalita, one of the two graduates in the entire sample, teaches the primary sections in the Carmel Community Church and is mother to a ten year old girl who is studying in a government school. When asked about who chose the school for her daughter, Lalita said: "I only did…men do not have the time to go and do any research (*pata lagana*)…if somebody gives information then it is a different matter…I have to do everything…If I have to admit her anywhere…[he says] take the money and admit her…". It is to be noted that the use of the category "men" suggests that she is

not commenting on her husband in particular but the limited involvement of men in the settlement in general. Since Lalita was teaching in the tuition centre run by the church she used her own network of colleagues to get information about the schools and fill the application forms. Jyoti, a mother who completed school and obtained a diploma in nursery teacher training said: “a father’s entire focus is on his work, to earn to run the household (*ghar grihasti chalana*). Mother’s role is to take care of children and focus on their education”.

Figure 7.1 Mothers with their school children in the afternoon

Due to their lower educational backgrounds, working class mothers, faced a limitation in getting intensively involved with their children’s school work at home, however, their zeal and support for the education of their children was reflected in the round-the-clock ferrying activities and care provided by them. One of the fathers himself acknowledged the role his wife played in bringing up his two children:

> "I am 10th pass and she is 8th pass…they [the children] were dependent (*badaulat*) on the mother. I used to work outside. In primary classes it is difficult to teach children, the main thing can be done in tuitions but the mother has to help in homework. Now I come at 8 in the evening…then I am in the mood to sleep…she has contributed (*yogdaan*) a lot in the children’s education”.

It is important to point out here that the assistance in homework mentioned by the respondent has to be interpreted more as an act of monitoring than actual academic support. As Panda (2015) also notes in her study with 75 mothers from different social class backgrounds, mothers with no or limited schooling experience played the role of monitoring and disciplining their children. Whereas mothers with higher levels of education had clearer expectations from schools and teachers and could provide more guidance in homework and other school related activities (discussed later).

The disciplining and supervisory activities of the mothers entailed monitoring children's peer groups, keeping a tab on their time tables and minimizing their presence in the streets. For example, one mother who studied up to 10th and runs a shop said: "I don't let them idle about here and there (*faltu ghumna*)…from school to tuition, tuition to home…sometimes they go to their aunt's house…otherwise we have things at home like carom, ludo and TV for entertainment". Riya's mother who has not received any formal education said: "For studies I keep a check on their tuition and school. I do not have knowledge at least I can be sure that they are studying, so I go to the tutor and ask how my children are doing in studies"

A constant source of anxiety shared by all the mothers was the safety and wellbeing of their children. They were concerned not only because children were young but about keeping them safe, particularly girls in a neighbourhood where stories of drugs, alcoholism, violence and molestations kept making rounds. These mothers spoke about how the city of Delhi in general and their slum neighbourhood especially was not safe for the daughters and cited stories of sexual abuse and rapes which were circulated via word of mouth (could not be verified) or the daily news. Thus these concerns translated into choosing to stay at home or finding work that will allow them to juggle both. Some mothers with very young children in this study opted to stay at home for meeting the childcare responsibilities even if it meant managing the household on the income of a single earner. This is how Nazma (primary education) compared herself with other women:

> "…in our family the *ladies* do not go for work leaving their children behind...many women work…it helps to manage the household…but we say that we must take care of the child first…you go out to earn and what if the

child falls downs or goes somewhere…mother and father are not at home…the child behaves as per his/her whims".

This also goes against the popular imagery of poor working class mothers, their neglectful attitudes towards their children or their absence in the household due to employment which then leads to neglect of children. At the same time, it is important to highlight that for many it was also a restriction imposed by the patriarchal codes about women's work and mobility. Therefore, underlying the apparent choice of Nazma to stay at home is also the restriction imposed on her. This becomes clear from Nazma's past where she recalled that her mother never let her venture out even to complete her education after 5th and later her husband never allowed her to go out of the house to take up paid work or even to have friends in the neighbourhood. Recalling how she spent her own childhood she said: "by doing household work all through my life…(laughs) I did not even realize how the years passed. My parents never let me go anywhere". But despite her limited education, economic limitations and the fact that she remained within the boundaries defined by her family, Nazma was adamant that her sons and daughter attend English medium private schools at least up to the primary level. This brings us to another aspect of the lives of these mothers i.e. their aspiration and determination in some cases to carve out a better future for their children, a future that is different from their own and present and also that of the many of their neighbours in the slum cluster.

IV. "Not like me": Challenging gender norms and dreaming for their children's futures

In the recollections about their own schooling experiences, mothers remembered having discontinued schooling due to household poverty, their own lack of interest or their parents' indifference to the girls education. Many were married off when they hit puberty. Thus for most of them their aspirations for their children were shaped by the existential struggles and patriarchal attitudes to women's education they faced right from their childhood to their settlement in the cluster and hope for a better life out of poverty. Lavee and Benjamin (2015) note that the working class mothers "associate chances for future achievement with their present poverty and failure… they strongly want their children to succeed in school and are willing to enlist all their resources for that purpose" (p.615). Similar to their study, the mothers in Govindpuri JJ Cluster drew upon their past experiences of poverty, limited opportunities and

gender based discrimination to highlight that they wanted bright futures for their children which cannot be possible without giving them education.

Some women desperately wanted their daughters to have a life and future different from theirs and this aspect is highlighted by the stories of mothers like Kalyani and Sadiya. As discussed in Chapter 5, Kalyani came to Delhi with her two children in the hope of educating them in a city as she was attracted by the prospects of better opportunities offered by an urban space. She fought with her husband and came to an alien city with her son and daughter, rented a *jhuggi* with the help of an extended family member and found work as a domestic help. Her daughter, Ritu, completed her Bachelor's degree from a regular college and was pursuing a Master's degree at the time of fieldwork for this study. Kalyani's desire that marriage etc., can wait till her daughter stands on her own feet so that she does not have to depend on anyone later is both empowering and encouraging.

Some women's struggle with gendered codes of behaviour continued up to the present day. Several mothers like Sadiya said they were not allowed by their husbands or family to step out of the house and go for work, irrespective of religious backgrounds. Sadiya is a mother who lives with her three children and her husband in a two storeyed house. Her husband is the single breadwinner of the house working as a tailor in a shop/boutique. Her two sons were attending government schools and her daughter had completed her schooling. Sadiya described how her husband's conservative worldview (*purane khayalat*) had acted as a barrier against her own desire to take up paid work for additional income and was in the present time also restricting her daughter's wish to go for higher education:

> "He tells me to remain at home. He belongs to the new age but his views are old. He says 'I am going out to work and [manage with] whatever money I am bringing…outside *mahaul* is not good ,women are not safe', which is true but can we really avoid these, if it has to happen it will, but if we think like this then we will never be able to go out of the house…what I want is like her [daughter's] friends she should also go for work…if she goes out she will learn to differentiate between good and bad…her mind will become sharp, she will get courage…but he [father] does not allow…back in the village women stay at home and the husband goes out to earn…that is how he

thinks…I do not want my children to lead a life that we led…our parents said what will you do with education…learning to read /write a letter is enough".

Such notions about women's mobility and education are often imbibed by younger generations and in this case by Sadiya's son who questioned his sister's ambition to go for higher education. Although the girl herself was apprehensive of challenging her father's authority, Sadiya courageously enrolled her daughter in a Bachelor of Arts (B.A programme) degree course via correspondence (distance mode) against the will of her husband. Sadiya received education in a madarsa and never went to a formal school. Her parents never showed interest in getting her educated and to some extent this discriminatory attitude has been continuing for her daughter who still has managed to complete her schooling. Members of the slum community, both men and women, continued to question the utility of women's education if the ultimate goal of life was to get married and manage the household. Where in Sadiya's case her parents decided that the ability to read and write a letter was enough, a generation later it was being decided that sending a daughter to school was enough.

While almost every mother said that she would like her children to study and enter into occupations different from their own, Sadiya's aspiration for her daughter is particularly different because she not only wants her to study but also go out to work against the gender based cultural norms and restrictions placed on her by the family. The sense of autonomy, confidence and life skills that she wants to instill in her daughter via education is also noteworthy.

Few mothers also regretted that even after receiving education daughters had to give up paid work or were not allowed to work after marriage. In one family, all the three daughters had completed school and one of them was pursuing an undergraduate degree via open schooling and working in a customer service agency simultaneously. Rani, their mother said that though the eldest daughter had studied till 12th she was not allowed by her husband and the in-laws to take up any paid work. Now she has small children to take care of and a household to manage. Reflecting on her daughter's experience and the general resistance to women's paid work Rani lamented:

> "even if she washes utensils it might be acceptable but if she studies and works at a decent place where she might have to interact with unrelated men [as her equals]…it will be frowned upon…sometimes I think that I gave them education but it holds no value. They worked hard and I spent money…I am illiterate and they are educated but we both have the same status (*mere barabar ho tum*) isn't it?…managing the household?"

What we see here is that a women's sexuality and relationships especially with the opposite sex have to be kept in check as they are tied to the notion of family honour. Strict sexual division of work is visible in the fact that the women's "place" is ultimately the home. However, there is another side to this story. Ranju's case is an example. Ranju, a mother of three grown up sons and a daughter said: "I tried a lot but their father did not let me go out [for paid work]… he said as long as he is living and working I should not go out…whatever he is earning we should manage with that…we will eat less…take care of the children". When the researcher asked Ranju how she managed to raise four children with one member's income (including a son with intellectual disability) one of her sons interjected and told the researcher it is his mother who has managed to run the household with great difficulty (*ghar chalta nahi hai, mummy chalati hai*). However, Ranju had high aspirations for her daughter who was pursuing a course in library science and was confident that she will find respectable work (discussed in Chapter 5[86]) and the father will "allow" the daughter to work. Like Ranju another mother Tasleem, when asked if her husband will allow the daughter to undertake paid work considering he did not want his wife to go for paid work said: "Yes he will let her…she has to go to another's house [after marriage]...we are thinking that we will give her education and prepare her…tomorrow when she gets married she will at least have some skills…who knows what kind of a husband she will get".

There are two interpretations one can draw. First, in the views of Kalyani, Sadiya, and Tasleem we see the hope in education for equipping a girl with skills that can help her in sustaining independently especially in the times of marital crisis. Second, in some families like that of Rani's, women regretted that work as a domestic worker (*jhadu pocha bartan*[87]) will be acceptable but not work in office spaces where women work with male peers. This is in stark

[86] In Chapter 5 the researcher has mentioned the nature of these occupations such as work as a private tutor, school teacher in unrecognized private schools or work as billers in small departmental stores etc.
[87] Domestic work includes cleaning and washing dishes.

contrast to the views put forward by Ranju and Tasleem where possessing a formal degree and white collar work may ease the restrictions on women's paid work. We see in them the intergenerational change in outlook. For them, education provides a pathway to more respectable jobs, in their words "*izzat ki naukri*"(where the use of the word "naukri" itself implied a salaried job as opposed to "kaam" which was used to refer to domestic work), occupations significantly different from the kind of work majority of mothers were involved in (this aspect has been previously discussed in Chapter 5). Although it may be noted that the choice to/of work will be "granted" by the patriarchal figure of the father or other men in the family. Whether the daughters are allowed to continue to keep their jobs post marriage is something that remains dependent on the same patriarchal structures. In sum, the women's mobility and work is tied with the notion of family respectability and honor.

Grover (2017) writes that contrary to an earlier view in social sciences that "male breadwinner ideology" was dominant in upper caste households it seemed to be prevalent even among scheduled castes in the urban poor settlements of Delhi and it is tied with "notions of respectability, family reputation, and female modesty" (p.38). She notes: "in instances where husbands earn stable incomes, they seek to restrain wives from taking up paid work. Some husbands nonetheless contend that they are less resistant to the idea of a working wife if she can find a respectable job (e.g., government job or school based work)" (ibid).

Several poor mothers interviewed in the Govindpuri JJ cluster not only critiqued and challenged the gendered restrictions placed on opportunities for education and employment but some of them also challenged the sexual division of work within the household to ensure girls and boys received similar treatment. For example, Shanti, a mother to possibly the only girl student in the sample to have opted for a science stream at the higher secondary level, said: "see all my children are studying. I do all the work…I never make my children do any work…I have never even asked my girls to make *roti* or bring a glass of water". Similarly, educated respondents like Indu who had a Masters in Computers Application (discussed in Chapter 6) and was working as a software developer shared that in her childhood her mother (with no formal education herself) never made the daughters do any household work and instead would always tell them to study hard. These mothers took it upon themselves to manage the households and create a supportive environment where children could attend schools and tuitions without having to get involved in

household work. Therefore from challenging the gendered division of work within the household to giving their daughter's the freedom to do paid employment, several women shared how they were supporting their daughter's education.

V. Dealing with alcoholism, abuse and sustenance

Sometimes, as Grover (2017) points out, based on her own study of working lives of urban poor in a JJ settlement in Delhi, that "women are also confronted with provider responsibilities when their husband develop serious health problems. As hard manual labour, inadequate nutrition and excessive drinking adversely affect men's working lives…" (p.44). This was true in the case of Meena and a few others where their partners were alcoholic which would occasionally lead to domestic brawls and intimate partner violence. Although her husband despite of being intermittently ill kept working to sustain the household and children's education, he would get drunk and beat his wife up. Meena, however, was more worried about the temporary loss of income that would arise when her husband would undergo a kidney operation and would be required to rest for a few months. She shared multiple times with the researcher that she was looking for a job to sustain the household but her search was limited to jobs whose working hours would allow her to look after her three children and simultaneously manage the domestic chores. It is important to note that Meena's entry into a job to substitute the role her husband was playing would only add to her existing responsibilities because her husband who was not used to performing the domestic chores or child care would not be able to switch roles in the home. This is how Meena articulated her dilemma: " I can do it but then looking after these children would be difficult because it will be at least an 8 hour duty…I have to look after them, cook, send them to school, and do their hair…etc".

Despite of all that was going on in her life, Meena said that she tries to keep her children shielded from these unpleasant realities of their life as much as possible and tells them to enjoy their childhood as eventually they too may have to deal with similar kind of hardships when they mature. Having studied up to upper primary, Meena herself grew up with household poverty and an alcoholic and abusive father. Therefore, we see an attempt of a mother to also break this cycle of destitution and violence by trying to protect her children and also socialise them to confront struggles of life poverty, patriarchy and travails of city life.

When Meena was asked if her husband supports their children's education she responded: "He does… but I am more supportive than him. I tell him that we should not differentiate between girls and boys and treat them as equals, he does not want my daughters to wear short clothes, but I think if I could not, at least they should". She was clear that she does not want her daughters to follow the dress codes that the neighbourhood imposes on young girls by way of ridicule and in doing so went against her husband's notions about how girls should be raised. "If my daughters are loitering outside, then you need not do it either", she added about her youngest son. This point also relates to the gendered landscape of the slum where men and adolescent boys were more visible on the streets and adolescent girls and young women were told to stay inside. In Meena's case, we see a mother disciplining both the son and the daughters without promoting separate rules .

Existential crisis was thus often accentuated by alcoholism, bad tempers and domestic violence. The researcher met a few single mothers who during the course of this fieldwork were found in their natal homes and were working as domestic workers to support themselves and raise their children. Shabana is one such case. She could study only up to primary level and had to discontinue because an accident put her father in vegetative state. She was also raised in a family where earlier the father was a patriarchal figure, as told by Shabana herself, who did not allow the women of the household to have any voice of opinion or dissent. Shabana's marriage also did not last as the man she was married to, she alleged, was unemployed and she also suspected him of having an extra marital affair. Hence, since his separation she had been living at her mother's place with her only son who was five years old at the time of this interview.

Shabana found work as a cook in a middle class household in a nearby locality, earning about 5000 INR a month. She strongly hoped to provide good education to her only child and this was evident in the fact she had applied in about 37 private schools for her son's admission under the Economically Weaker (EWS) provision under the Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009. Shabana also sent her son to a play school before sending him to a English-medium preparatory school in spite of not getting any support from her husband for raising the child. Shabana's story reverberates in the accounts of other single mothers met by the researcher who were working as domestic workers and supporting their children's schooling and other needs without much support from their partners.

VI. Education and Mothering with a Difference

While in the previous sections we unpacked how parenting is gendered and how mothers in Govindpuri JJ cluster played a greater role in child care and school routines, in this section we discuss how within the category of mothers educational levels was a further differentiating factor. The participation of majority of the working class mothers as discussed earlier was limited to ferrying children, disciplining them and caring for their health and general well being. Mothers with no or primary education would sit by the side of children and make sure they read and write. Mothers who received some education in Hindi medium schools were able to help their children but to a limited extent. Usha (higher secondary educated, factory worker) said she had good knowledge of Bangla and helped her daughter who had Bangla as an additional subject in her school.

One difference between mothers with higher levels of education and those with limited or no education was reflected in how they interacted and negotiated with their child's school and the teachers. In the latter case interaction was limited to conversations about fee hike, teacher's behaviour or school infrastructure and rules. For instance, Namita, who had hardly received any formal education said she was upset about the fact that her son's private school makes the parents buy a new thick sketchbook every year but not even half of the pages are filled and their money goes waste. Another mother with upper primary education said:

> "we are not so educated so we cannot lecture them …I asked the teacher how long is one period. They said 45 minutes. So if it is 45 minutes and there are 6 periods how come there is no work in the child's notebook or no homework…then they start narrating their own problem…then what can we say?"

This shows that the engagement was limited to look at the amount of work the child's notebook shows rather than actively engage with the lessons or help in homework, role an educated mother such as someone who had completed or gone beyond school fulfilled. As Panda also found in her study: "Mothers with more education tend to have two important resources: (i) they know more about their child's school performance and (ii) they have more social contact with school

personnel" (p.234). These two points can be explained and substantiated with the examples of a few mothers who had higher levels of education as compared to the rest.

Seema, as already discussed in Chapter 5 and 6, is a graduate who works as a programme manager at a non-governmental organization working for the rights of children with disability. Her education and long association with the organization as a social worker had made her a visible figure in the neighbourhood. As a full-time working mother, different from the factory workers and domestic workers who had more flexible timings, Seema ensured that her son had access to all the amenities at home including a microwave, television and a mobile phone for the child to stay connected with her son which is also a reflection of the relatively better economic position of this family (mentioned in Chapter 5).

Seema's involvement with her children's education went beyond basic disciplining which the other mothers with no or limited formal education were unable to do. Seema not only kept a track of what was being taught in schools and tuitions but also how the lessons were taught. For example, she was dissatisfied when she found out that her child was only copying from the blackboard and learning by rote without understanding the meaning of the sentences. She helped the children in their lessons and homework at home especially in subjects like Hindi and Sanskrit. The fact that she checked the school notebooks and discontinued sending her child to the tuition because she felt he wasn't learning anything is a reflection of the extent of her involvement. Her knowledge also comes from the fact that she is part of a team that designs curriculum for children with disability in the NGO. Her knowledge and extent of involvement with school related work also gave her a sense of entitlement which was absent in the case of most mothers[88]. For example she said: "I told the teacher that "ma'am he still cannot read in English properly…I said in the PTM…Nor is he able to write… "you always say that he is notorious but whose duty is it to control him…yours only".

Furthermore, what set educated mothers like Seema apart from the rest was her ability to distinguish and compare the quality of education in state owned schools and private schools. For instance, Seema remarked:

---

[88] It is not as if the mothers with less or without education did not argue with the school administration or staff. Such instances were also found but they limited to dealings about fees and general comments teacher absenteeism and apathy, lack of discipline and general quality of education in government schools.

> "English is very important. This is where the children from sarkari schools lag behind because of the education they receive…they do not get in a *proper* way…the child does not know what she is writing…whatever the teacher writes…somehow they pass till 8th class and then it becomes difficult in 9th. Now after Manish Sisodia[89] has come the structure of education has changed…now are they looking at the foundations (*bunyadi*)…they are going offer classes during summer break".

Here Seema compares the public schools with private schools on the basis of medium of instruction but later also criticized the unrecognized private schools who ran in the name of "English medium" but the children were not able to converse in English at home or otherwise. She was also someone who was not merely satisfied with the work in the class notebooks because she insisted that the child also learns the meaning of what he or she is writing rather than just copy from the blackboard. Second, she was critical of the no detention policy of the government which she felt was responsible for students dropping out at the secondary stage. This, however, is a point that was made by few other mothers with elementary and secondary education, irrespective of their educational backgrounds. Third, her awareness of the recent changes introduced in the government schools by the Government of Delhi, under the Aam Aadmi Party.

As discussed earlier in Chapter 4, she puts strong emphasis upon pursuing job oriented courses as her observation was that "in a city like Delhi after finishing education it is difficult to get a job unless and until one does a course". This observation stems from over 15 years of work experience, exposure visits, travels and interaction with educated colleagues. Seema added: "If I would have stayed at home I may not have been able to do all this in spite of being a graduate. Because I met my colleagues and their children, saw their home *mahaul* (environment) etc...I was able to create an environment for my children". As Donner (2008) says: "The 'mothering' role also includes 'creation of a favourable environment for study at home' defined as 'giving the children peace of mind'" (p.134). Creating a good environment also entailed speaking softly and self-censorship, keeping the child indoors, regulating and monitoring the peer interactions and

[89] Manish Sisodia is the Deputy Chief Minister of Delhi and looks after the portfolio of education and higher education.

management of time by enrolling the child in English and computer learning classes. This environment was complemented with availability of material resources mentioned above, gadgets and appliances and more space to study.

The cultural capital acquired for making a suitable home environment that Seema speaks of is also acquired by the less educated women hired as domestic helps in middle class households. Seema herself pointed this out and this was corroborated by a domestic worker herself: “They have observed the environment there..one has to keep quiet, speak softly, eat properly and maintain cleanliness…this they try to inculcate in their children”. But what differentiated Seema and what she brought additionally was her deeper engagement with children’s academic work, ability to interact with teachers and so on.

In another family, Ravi (an MBA degree holder) compared how his wife, Amrita, a commerce graduate and an UPSC aspirant, was different from his brother’s wife who had only 4 to 5 years of schooling. Here is a excerpt from a conversation held with Ravi:

> “Researcher: your wife is the most educated…does it make a difference in the house?
>
> Ravi: yes, a lot of difference…she keeps telling me how the children (his nieces and nephews) keep watching television…their own mother does not notice these things. She works, gets tired and goes off to sleep…she[my wife] keeps inquiring about their home work…she is already trying to be a mother…she said if we do not put a check on them now it will be difficult later…this is the right time”.

The above narrative also reveals how an educated mother is anxious about regulating time and disciplining the children at an early age so that the children’s futures are secure. This connects well with the idea of judicious use of time discussed in Chapter 6 and how the educated stressed upon using time to cultivate oneself as wastage of time is a trait of the uneducated. Further, Ravi’s wife already had visions for their unborn child.

> “She keeps telling me that we will start preparing now…I want her/him to study in Bluebells…I said “Are you crazy, I am in a government job so EWS

> quota will also not work"…but she is thinking (*soch*) big…she said we will create an environment (*mahaul banaenge*)".

The school mentioned by the respondent's wife is one of the prestigious schools of South Delhi. The very aspiration (thinking big) to send the child to this school and preparing and planning for it even before the child is born itself is a marker of educated status and is also an emulation of middle class mothering practices. Ravi further added that his wife has already decided to have only two children with a gap of 5 years between the two which again shows she is well informed about maternal health and family planning. Another respondent, Indu who holds an MCA degree, said (with Hindi interspersed with English) about her toddler:

> "I want to give best of the best higher education. We will not impose anything on him. Based on his *ability*, *creativity* …IIT Kharagpur…we will prefer that. And if by god's grace we have money we will try to give him *international education*..or if he wants to do some business…or go abroad for work…we can support *financially and educationally*" (the lines in italics were said in English).

Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) are prestigious institutions in India for education in science, engineering, mathematics and humanities. Both IITs and Bluebells International School located in Delhi fall in the category of elite educational institutions and are accessed by the middle and upper middle classes. The entry of non-dominant and marginalized groups has been made possible with the help of policy change and legal interventions like affirmative action for ST, SC and OBCs or the Economically Weaker Section Quota under the RTE Act. The knowledge about elite institutions like IITs or Bluebells and to aspire to send their children to these places itself makes these mothers different from the rest. Seema, Indu and Amrita were all part of this upwardly mobile, emergent class and their middleclassness was evident in the cultural capital they acquired through education and networks which they were trying to build in home and pass on to their children.

VII. Summary

Gillies (2006) writes "social class is now increasingly seen in terms of moral distinctions, with the working classes represented as lacking the skills and aspirations to achieve social mobility" (p.282). This chapter discussed how the urban, working class mothers in the slum, contrary to popular perception, are in fact aspirational about their children's education and future. Their support may not be in the ways that the middle or upper middle class mothers do but it is more in the form of admitting them in schools, ensuring children go to the school everyday, bringing them back, sending them for tuitions, and taking care of their overall well-being which is equally consequential. Wherever their economic capacity allowed they also enrolled their children in extra school activities like drawing and music lessons, computer and English learning classes. Most of these mothers not only faced acute poverty in their childhood but also gender based discrimination that forced them to leave schools, get married at an early age, and many continue to live in patriarchal set ups created by their husbands and affinal kins. Therefore, their own biographies often shaped their aspirations and attitudes towards their children's education. Their involvement and practices of mothering are grounded in and stem from these aspiration. What also emerged from the narratives were instances of resistance to gender norms and roles pertaining to daughters and how mothers were trying negotiate with these structures.

It is not as if their male partners were completely absent from the picture but their responsibilities was more visible in the financial support they provided for education. Women bore the greater responsibility of ensuring that children receive education. Lastly, the chapter also brings out not only the gendered differences but also differences produced by education i.e., how the worldviews, practices of the educated mother and her engagement with the child's schooling positions her different within the category of mothers.

Chapter 8
Summary and Conclusion:
Does Education Matter in Understanding Difference and Distinction among the Poor?

There have been several studies which indicate that, even within similar structural conditions, heterogeneity exists among the urban poor. Hence, our study attempted to understand these differences and distinction using the framework of capitals, difference and distinction provided by Bourdieu and the centrality of education in this process, although we depart from his framework for two reasons. One, while Bourdieu provides a detailed analysis of how the volume and composition of capitals (economic, cultural, social and symbolic) becomes a basis for the assertion of difference between and within classes (fractions), his analysis remains limited to examining the dominant class fractions and their practices. Besides this limitation, Bourdieu's *Distinction* has also received criticism for projecting the working class as having a homogeneous "culture of necessary" which subsequent scholarship has challenged.

Studies have shown how a feeling of 'us' and 'them' can exist not only between the dominant and the working class but within the working class itself thus making it a heterogeneous category. Practices of dis-identification, distancing and dissimulation (borrowing from Skeggs 2002) within the working classes have also been noted and studied. While these differences emerge based on lifestyles, attitudes to work, notions of respect, our study set out to explore how education is central to this kind of differentiation. To this end, we followed a spatial definition of poor which took us to a four-decade-old, multi-generational slum settlement of Delhi with a population of roughly 30,000 individuals. In this last concluding chapter, we summarize and discuss the key arguments that emerged from this study and how they are aligned with the objectives we set out with.

The Urban Poor Neighbourhood and the Boundary Making

The field setting, the Govindpuri JJ cluster, comprising three camps - Bhoomiheen, Navjeevan and Nehru - emerged just like other squatters on public land owned by DDA when a small number of families came to the city to make a living, often taking part in construction of cities' infrastructure and set up their makeshift *jhuggis or* camps. They were later joined by members from immediate and extended family or by those from their native village. Clusters of poverty also emerge primarily around areas of economic activities from where the residents earn their livelihood. The larger Govindpuri area and surrounding Okhla Industrial Estate, for instance, is home to several factories and industries which require large labour force. The makeshift structures made of plastic, tin, mat, over the years, were transformed into two-three storied brick and cement houses with painted walls. The initial settlers faced considerable hardships in setting up their homes and accessing amenities for everyday living. Therefore, older residents acknowledged that there has been improvement in living standards. However, a significant point about social change was made by a resident of Navjeevan camp who said if they set the past as the yardstick, a lot has changed today, but if they compare their status with the present, then they still have nothing. This point is a more useful, relative understanding of poverty and aptly captures the perpetuation of socio-economic hierarchies and status of urban poor neighbourhoods in the cities.

What is significant to highlight is that the status of being a 'camp' is retained locally and officially and suggests a perpetual state of temporariness and a threat of demolition which slums marked for relocation and rehabilitation in the cities have to constantly live with. In the case of Govindpuri, the residents have been living in this state for the last 40 odd years. The stigmatization as "encroachers", threat of demolition and promises (unfulfilled mostly) of resettlement pervades and defines their relationship with the state, urban policy makers and privileged sections of the city. In the last two decades the dream of transforming Delhi into a world-class or global city has often translated into the practice of removing the spaces of poverty that seem out of "order" and relocating the inhabitants on the outskirts of the city.

In more recent times, however, "...despite ongoing pressure against slums, demolitions have slowed in Delhi, in part due to the fact that most large settlements had been cleared in millennial Delhi, and in part because of legal protection offered by the Delhi Special Laws Act and a 2010

High Court judgment that ruled that "every eligible slum dweller had to be relocated to a place with proper civic amenities before being evicted from a piece of public land" (Ghertner 2015, p.193). Residents, however, due to this prolonged duration of waiting and numerous surveys for establishing eligibility, displayed a sentiment mixed with distrust, confusion, anxiety towards the impending demolition of their jhuggies and the promise of resettlement in the newly constructed flats not very far from the clusters. Although many felt that their social networks and economic activities like shops run from the household premises will be disrupted and these flats are too small to accommodate their large families, they refused to give up the claim to resettlement. The hopes of resettlement has been interpreted by scholars as perhaps the only pathway for the urban poor to occupy a "legal" space in the city (Datta 2012). Ghertner (2015) sees this promise of resettlement as the the promise of the world-class city. Due to persistent stigma of being "nuisance" "squatters" or "encroachers" on public land, Ghertner argues, slum dwellers "fetishized property" (p.158) and for them "to pursue property was to pursue a life of propriety" (p.181) which shows how the selfhood is deeply connected with space. "Rather than contest the world-class city, they pursued a part in" (Ghertner 2015, p.157). This not only enables one to view the slum dwellers as active and strategic agents rather than passive victims of state violence or middle class apathy but also see how the pursuit of educational capital is also a pursuit of this so called urban personhood and distinction.

It is important to highlight that 56.44 per cent of the total households reported to be Below Poverty Line as per the DUSIB survey in 2012. There are two interpretations that can be drawn from this. One, that not all those who live in slums are poor. Two, the official poverty line, as pointed by scholars, functions more like a calorie line. If we include access to health, sanitation and education to measure poverty a larger population is likely to come under its ambit. We argue that the actual number of poor can be higher. Slums, Saglio-Yatzimirisky's (2013) writes

> "…may be the most visible manifestations of urban poverty since it is here that the poorest of the poor are concentrated. However, differences in wealth within a slum and the cases of social mobility it may harbor call into question a too hasty amalgamation of slums with extreme poverty. Not all poor citizens live in slums and, conversely, slums do not attract the poor alone…the idea is not to give a positive view of slums, but rather of avoiding

> the use of certain clichés that hinder the understanding of an extremely complex space" (p.10).

This argument substantiates why we selected a slum settlement. It is this complexity and heterogeneity that this study sought to study. The social composition of a large population in this settlement also indicates the presence of an already marginalized population of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Castes (OBCs) and religious minorities. This is in line with a trend found across urban squatters in India which shows the intersection of space, class and caste. The presence of SC, OBCs and minorities in squatters and slums reveal a spatial manifestation of caste and wealth based segregation. Scholars like Haider (2000), Ayyar and Khandare and Nijman have noted the overwhelming presence of Dalits and backward classes in slums in India which leads scholars like Ahmad (2012) to argue that housing inequality intersects with socio-economic inequality and therefore, should be viewed and addressed together rather than separately.

Another finding that merits a brief discussion is the fact that although the number of poor could be higher than what is recorded based on the official below poverty line, there is a small section among the SCs, OBCs and the General category who are above the poverty line and could be upwardly mobile. This reaffirms that intra-caste and intra-class variations exist in what appears to be a homogeneous space and a monolith category called the "poor". The upwardly mobile poor and their "diverse dynamics of social mobility" (p.9) and the centrality of education in these strategies (to borrow from Saglio-Yatzimirisky, 2013) is what becomes the focus of the later chapters.

While there is a clear boundary between Bhoomiheen and the other two camps, boundaries between Navjeevan and Nehru are hard to draw. Internally, each camp is also known to be dominated by a particular regional and linguistic group, for example, Bhoomiheen has earned its name as a "Bengali colony" for the predominance of Bengali speaking population from the east and west Bengal, while Nehru camp has a spatial concentration of Marathi speaking fortune tellers from parts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra who are traditionally engaged in astrology and fortune telling and practice of rituals to earn their livelihood. This community calls itself the

"Joshi Samaj" and presented itself as a closed group with its own culture, way of living, traditional occupation and practices of endogamy.

Therefore, while the urban shelter bodies may have official nomenclatures and demarcations, populations living within the settlement have created their symbolic boundaries based on religion, language and region, caste, perceptions of morality, lifestyles and educational levels. As mentioned above, each camp considered itself to be better than the other in terms of safety, moral superiority, education and ways of living. One community's sense of superiority was constructed by assigning a inferior status to others. These attempts of labeling and distanciation can also be read as an attempt to distance themselves from the stigma associated with being a slum dweller. As Auyero (2000) points out in the case of slum in Argentina, "it is seen as a degraded space which, in spite of internal differences, disqualifies its inhabitants in toto…" (p.59). As a result, he writes: "as in many other poor neighbourhoods, *the territorial stigma*, the sense of indignity of living in a cursed place is, many times, deflected by thrusting the stigma onto others. A specific forbidden zone within the area…a specific social group…are singled out as those responsible for the overall situation of the slum" (p.50, emphasis added)

These constructions attest to the fact the a feeling of 'us' vs 'them' exist within poor neighbourhoods. Muslims were labeled "dangerous", "uneducated" and "backward" by few non-Muslim respondents and these attributes were connected with their religion. This seems to be stemming from prevailing prejudices against the Muslims in the larger society. Othering was particularly strong in the case of the Marathi speaking population of fortune-tellers and pertains to a large extent to their language as well. Phrases and adjectives like "*ajeeb*/strange" "*gande log*", criminal type", "backward" were used for groups that were looked down upon. Their lifestyles and language were characterized as strange because interaction with neighbours from Northern and Eastern states was minimal.

One can only speculate a few reasons to explain this animosity of the other groups towards the fortune tellers. One, the community of fortune tellers itself appears to be a closed group, fiercely guarding its culture and identity, for example, by forming a caste panchayat that prevents inter-caste marriages and doles out punishment in the form of fines and excommunication to the "deviants". They continue to maintain a distinction between insider and outsider. Saglio-Yatzimirisky's (2013) writes: "…the protection of identities in the slum - a context disrupted by

migration and day-to-day hardships - explains the strengthening of the caste structure, which organizes space and certain private practices, including marriages" (p.14). If we compare the Bengalis and the Marathis, the latter continue to converse in fluent Marathi with the family and neighbours whereas the former, particularly the newer generation stammered while speaking in Bengali with the researcher. Preservation of language is a way to preserve one's culture as language carries culture, and culture carries language (Thiongo 1985). One respondent from Nehru camp belonging to the Jatav caste commented that nobody dares to pick up a fight with them as the entire community of fortune tellers comes forward to defend itself. Here we must recall Haider's (2000) point about the existence of regional, linguistic and caste ghettos within slums. Wacquant (2012) introduces the element of asymmetrical power relation, and calls the ghetto a "Janus-faced institution" that arises out of "external hostility and internal affinity" (p.10). Although Wacquant (2012), uses this more in the context of African American ghettos however it can be used to explain the segregated nature of fortune tellers as well. This strong socio-spatial voluntary segregation and protectiveness of fortune tellers and the prejudices of the other groups towards them feeds into each other and solidifies the spatial and symbolic differences and boundaries.

Second, the claims of the fortune tellers of having the mystical powers to predict future also makes the other groups perceive them with some amount of skepticism. The linguistic differences are very pronounced in this case and it appears more foreign to the north Indians than Bengalis . This was evident in descriptions such as "*ajeeb bhashsa*" and "*totewali bhasha*". Bengalis, in comparison, also perhaps seem more familiar because of the proximity of the slum to a predominantly Bengali upper middle class neighbourhood. These boundaries and perceptions indicate that what is to an outsider a homogenous, faceless, socio-spatial category of poor slum dwellers is internally differentiated on language, regional affiliation, caste and religious basis.

Differentiation also existed along the lines of quality and maintenance of houses, physical space, ownership status of the house (owned or rented), assets and availability of toilets and piped water connection inside the house. Having more space in the house and a toilet were markers of relatively better socio-economic status. These better off residents had also acquired private water connections and supplied water to their neighbours in exchange of a nominal amount. When we

compared the conditions of owners and tenants, the latter emerged as more deprived, struggling more to make ends meet and educate their children. One of the reasons that exacerbated the struggle of those living on rent was the inability to acquire ration. Several of them shared that their ration cards were made on the address of their native homes, and they cannot use the present address of the rented accommodation in the slum to get ration. Therefore, their status was precarious than the others who owned a house in the slum.

A slum is also a gendered space with codes of behaviour for men and women. Gender differences are evident not only in the sexual division of household work but also in the attitudes to women's paid work, mobility, the interaction between genders and educational aspirations and lifestyles. While some women respondents seem to think and suggest that it was specific to their community (*samaj*), say among Muslims or Hindu Marathi speaking population, such attitudes were found across all groups irrespective of religious backgrounds. Although it was indicated that the women in the Bengali speaking community had greater freedom in taking up paid employment and hence enjoyed more freedom and interaction with the world outside the slum. The fact that "regional and cultural backgrounds" can have impact on women's mobility and decision making to some extent has been discussed by Thapan (1997). In Basu's study of slum in Delhi, Tamil women were "much more likely to be working than those from Uttar Pradesh which has implications for women's self-confidence and independence" (Basu cited in Thapan 1997, p.85).

Sociability is high in a densely packed settlement such as a jhuggi-jhopdi cluster which in the first place emerged with the help of caste, neighborhood and village networks and was turned into habitable place of dwelling from a wild and rocky land through cooperation. Residents also depend on this network to secure work as well as survive in a large and often alienating city. People frequently visit each other's household, share items, use and gather at communal water points and toilets. It is this nature of social and spatial organization of slums that makes social and physical spaces of slums in Indian metropolitan cities.

Differences in Education, Occupation and Nature of Work

In terms of parental education, gender based differences in levels of schooling were evident. Our study found that education of mothers is largely limited to primary and middle school whereas in

the case of fathers, more concentration is in the middle and secondary levels. More number of women reported having received no formal education as compared to men, indicating the poorer status of education of women. Within the category of mothers, however, the education levels of Muslim women was found to be lower. While educational status even within this group varies with caste, class, and regional background and rural-urban divide, “Muslim women are among the most disadvantaged, least literate, most impoverished, and most politically marginalized in the nation”(Samanta 2016, p.169). An inter-cluster comparison showed that a higher percentage of fathers in Bhoomiheen camp were better educated (secondary levels) as compared to Navjeevan-Nehru camp.

The education levels also determined the nature of economic activities of the parents. Fathers, having no or limited formal education (primary and middle levels) were found in casual employment. The unskilled and uneducated were working as casual labourers. Others with limited education and skills were working as vendors, painters, plumbers and electricians. Similarly, majority of astrologers, a male-dominant craft that was learnt by son from the father and grandfather, had only studied up to primary and middle levels. The shop assistants, shop owners and sales/delivery/field workers seem to have slightly better status as compared to the rest, having studied up to secondary and higher secondary.

When we classified the occupations in terms of salaried, casual and self employment, large percentage were found to be engaged in casual employment whereas only a few were regular/salaried workers. It is important to note that the category of salaried workers also included security guards and drivers employed at private residences who were paid on a monthly basis. Therefore, the category of salaried should not be conflated with employment in the formal sector. Where education levels were high, for example, senior secondary and beyond, the fathers were employed in salaried occupations were in the formal sector. This reinforces that the “level of education determines the level of informality” (ILO 2018). Those in formal sector had greater sense of security and a steady source of income as compared to those in the informal sector, engaged as casual labourers, painters, plumbers, astrologers and carpenters. Their lives were pervaded with a sense of what they described as “wherever, whenever”, meaning that work and income was highly contingent upon finding clients and customers who will avail their services. This kind of work was described as “*dihadi*”, “*beldari*” and “*majdoori*” suggesting its daily-

wage nature. This is indicative of the precarious nature of work of a large number of poor slum dwellers.

Differences were also noted between vendors/hawkers and shop owners. Unlike the shop owners who ran their business from permanent structures, the former paid a considerable amount of their monthly income as rent for the place they set up their stalls and as bribes to police personnel and local authorities. Similarly, drivers employed in offices and private residences were paid regular wages as compared to auto and e-rickshaw drivers who were dependent on daily wages. In the case of astrologers too, those who set up stalls in malls earned more than the ones who solicited clients in temples. Therefore, within each occupational category differences existed in terms of conditions of work and income.

The diversity of occupations noticed in the case of men was absent in case of women. Urban poor mothers had limited options to choose from and this can be explained by the fact that several skilled occupations like painting, plumbing, electrical work etc are heavily male dominant. A majority of mothers were not in any paid employment and were household workers. Among those who were in paid work, a majority were employed as domestic workers in middle class households. The occupations of mothers was also classified as salaried, casual/home-based, and self-employed. It is important to mention in this context that being salaried ensures a fixed income at the end of every month and these activities do not necessarily suggest high levels of education, for example, domestic workers were salaried employees but had limited education. Whereas private tutors and teachers were also salaried but had higher levels of education. The latter were not only more secured in terms of income but had other benefits of employment in the organized sector such as a provident fund.

Importantly, the better educated mothers highlighted a sense of entitlement and respect associated with having more education. They shared with a hint of pride that they were known and respected as "*padhi-likhi*", "educated" persons in the neighbourhood. The exposure to circles comprising similarly educated peers from other neighbourhoods also allowed them to acquire cultural capital for raising their children. Thapan (1997) writes: "There is no doubt that educated women tend to be more assertive, move out from within traditional confines and use external resources much more effectively than uneducated women"(p.84).

Differences in Aspirations for Children's Education

We also studied how as opposed to popular as well as some scholarly representation of poor as "hopeless" and "pessimistic", respondents were found to be hopeful about their children's education and future. A recurrent sentiment echoed by the parents was that they were willing to compromise on basic needs to be able to provide good education. This is a sentiment that also resonates with a point Katherine Boo (2012) mentions in her account of a slum in Mumbai, that education was seen as a route out of poverty and parents were willing to survive on salt and *roti* to afford private tuition for their children. This element of sacrifice was present in several narratives and leads us to reject the view that the poor are a dejected lot and are trapped in their conditions of poverty. The residents of the Govindpuri settlement were in fact aspiring for a better future and attempting to escape their social and spatial context. Education featured as a pathway in this aspiration.

A unanimously voiced feeling was that they would like their children to have a life and future different from their own. A sentence that was reiterated by almost all respondents: "*if we did not/could not study, we want our children to study*" or "*what we could not do, we want our children to do*". As scholars have discussed, aspirations do not exist in a vacuum but are enmeshed in the parental biographies, the volume and composition of the cultural, social and economic capital of the parents, availability of role models and the neighbourhood context. The educational past of parents was shaped by poverty, questions of survival, and illness of an important earning member of the family and therefore, these experiences had a bearing on their aspirations. In the case of mothers, aspirations were shaped not only by poverty but also by discouraging patriarchal attitudes to women's education and instances of early marriages. Therefore, in the present day due to no or limited formal education, for several of these parents who are involved in low paying, irregular, menial labour, education of their children gave hope for steady income, escape from poverty and the slum conditions, and the possibility of moving into better housing.

What varied, however, was the articulateness, intensity of optimism, the content of the aspiration and their strategies. This variation can be attributed to the interplay of educational, social and economic capital. It was also found that parents were aspirational irrespective of caste, class, religious or educational backgrounds and instead what differentiated them was their economic

capacity, educational levels, and their exposure and interaction with more educated peers and role models.

Based on the interpretation of their aspirations, we developed a threefold typology (ideal types): *passively hopeful, actively aspirational and goal-oriented*. We discussed how having no or limited education on the one hand and higher education credentials, cultural capital and informational capital on the other hand, shape their aspirations and imagination of the future. The category of "***passively hopeful***" suggests that unlike earlier studies where scholars have suggested that poor are characterized by hopeless and pessimistic attitudes we found every respondent to be hopeful but at the same time, their hopes were tempered by economic constraints. This was evident in their reliance on destiny and god's will. While they hoped that their children would study and find better jobs they were quick to also add that the outcomes depended on fate. The aspirations of "*passively hopeful*" were also articulated more in terms of "not becoming like us" which is suggestive of the fact that none of them wanted to reproduce their class ("*humse age bade*" "*humse uncha jaye*" and "*hum jaise na bane*"), unlike the middle classes for whom education becomes a pathway to social reproduction. Due to limited social and cultural capital while they pointed out better jobs and incomes they did not specify occupations or career choices and wanted their children to become someone. In a study of aspiration of Muslim women in a slum of Kolkata, Samanta (2016) writes what this aspiration of "being someone" means: this involves rising above the hardship of their lives, where education provides a path to work and income, to "stand on one's feet," but especially to earn respect— both self-respect and the respect of their community"(p.169). A large number of members from this group were accessing government schools for their children as their incomes were too limited.

The parents with moderate education (upper primary and secondary) whom we categorized as "***actively aspirational***" were more optimistic and rarely showed fatalism. This sense of confidence can be attributed to having more education and more earning members and a steady income in the family. The third category of parents, albeit a minority, the "***goal-oriented***" were more educated, having studied higher secondary and beyond and their volume and composition of capitals made them a distinct group. Due to their exposure and interaction with educated peers in their workplaces they were able to articulate their aspirations more clearly in contrast to the "passively hopefuls" who were somewhat vague and fatalistic. Having more economic capital

also boosted their confidence to pursue the cultural capital for their children. Drawing upon Appadurai's idea of navigational capacity we argue that a relatively more volume of economic, social and cultural capital allows the "goal-oriented" group of respondents to have a better navigational capacity. A focused pursuit of cultural capital to forge distinction was visible only in this group's aspirations, reconversion strategies and construction of self vis a vis others.

Educational Choices and Intra-class Differences

The fact that education confers a kind of embodied cultural capital Bourdieu (1986) that differentiates the educated from uneducated was something that was recognized by several respondents. The civilizing role of formal education in shaping their children into well-rounded individuals was highlighted and differences were drawn from the uneducated who were described as ignorant and uncouth. This feeling was particularly pronounced among parents with more economic capital who were also interested in converting it into cultural capital and therefore emphasized that even if they manage to amass wealth, a life without education will be useless. The construction of the educated person was also related to the urban context and the city was a site of opportunities, education and a certain level of urban sophistication and refinement. The difference between "educated" and "uneducated" was highlighted by drawing a difference between the city and the village and being educated a became a metonym for being a city dweller.

Thus education was not only valued for its role in employability but also valued for its humanizing and civilizing properties and the dignity associated with education-based jobs. Education was seen as a pathway to acquiring more respectable jobs based on knowledge of computers or English as opposed to jobs entailing manual labour and drudgery (*articulated as dhakkhe khana, joote khana*). For women in younger generation (18-25 years) obtaining education also translated into relaxation of some gender-based barriers to paid employment because they felt that it will give them entry into more respectable (*izzat ki naukri*) occupations such as private tutors, teachers in unrecognized private schools and billers in retail stores in contrast to the work of the domestic worker or a cook in middle-class households. Therefore, an intergenerational shift in the attitudes to women's paid work was also observed.

In terms of school choices of the parents, the difference was between privately owned and government-funded schools. Within the private two types of schools were accessed: the

unrecognized low fee private (primary) schools and recognized high fee-charging schools. There was more concentration in the former category of private schools whereas the latter was accessed by a minority and mostly under the EWS provision under the RTE act. The rest of the population accessed the government schools located around the cluster. Even those who managed to send their children to unrecognized private schools later shifted the children to government schools after the first five years of primary school. A dominant narrative prevailing in the settlement was that first five years of schooling in a private school would create a base in rudimentary knowledge in English and Maths and Science and ensure the educational success of the child even if s/he is shifted to a government school in the upper primary stage. Schooling choices were rationalized by parents using terms like "*aukaad*", "*hasiyat*" (economic status) "*khomota*" (in Bangla) or "*shamta*" or "*kamai*" (in Hindi) meaning the economic capacity to pay the fees and support the schooling through tuitions. Families who were in the lowest wrung with more than two school-going children and irregular incomes, the nearby government school were the only option. Even those who managed primary schooling in a private school shared that they will not be able to sustain it up to the higher secondary stage.

Good schooling was synonymous with English medium education in a private school. While parents with limited education evaluated the private schools based on a generally prevailing and sometimes contestable notion of better quality, the appeal of English-medium, discipline, and safety, the ability to qualitatively assess private schools and recognize the heterogeneity based on academic quality was the characteristic of better-educated residents, the "goal-oriented" group of respondents. The assessments of the latter were more qualitative for example, they were able to assess whether the child can converse, read or write in English, and hence were able to go beyond a simplistic binary of private vs. government.

Education as a Marker of Distinction

An important objective of the study was to explore if and how education can become a marker of distinction and, for this, we turned to a detailed examination of the "goal-oriented" group of families. These respondents were unique in terms of both their volume and composition of capital. Their aspirations for education and betterment of their socio-economic status made them unique. This group resembled the category of "moyenized families" developed and described by Salcedo and Rasse (2012) who used symbols of status and distinction such as sending their

children to private schools or showing disdain towards the lifestyles of their neighbours. A good education for parents of school-going children in this group also meant education in elite private schools which were inaccessible for a large number of parents in the slum.

The goal-oriented group not only possessed capital but also attempted to convert one form into another, like economic into educational and cultural and further, cultural into social, what Bourdieu terms "reconversion strategies" for improvement of one's asset structure which is constituted by the volume and composition of capitals. It is the pursuit of educational capital and how it is used to assert their distinction is what we primarily focused on the discussion of this group. What is significant is that these respondents highlighted that money was useless if one cannot invest in education and wearing good clothes or having material possessions alone was not enough to distinguish one. And this is where the importance of education and embodied cultural capital was highlighted; an educated person is distinguished from the way s/he walks, talks (*muh kholte hi pata chal jata hai*), sits or conducts himself or herself. This point is also connected with the urban context and how being educated was equivalent of being a city dweller. It is important to recall here Ghertner's point mentioned earlier that the urban slum dwellers wish to partake in the world class city dream and the pursuit of educational capital can be seen as a pathway to achieve it. Education was equated with a sense of urban sophistication, manner of speaking, demeanour, attitudes to work and gender relations. The idea of self-improvement and self-care was recurrent in their narratives especially in the use of phrases such as "*rehne ka tarika*", "*rehen-sehen*" and "*developing personality*".

As mentioned in Chapter 2 on methodological approaches and again in Chapter 6, the markers of distinction emerged from the narratives of the respondents themselves as the categories used by Bourdieu to discuss the distinct status of the dominant class in *Distinction* were not useful in our context. While the quality of housing, their possession of assets and property ownership were more tangible markers that set them apart from their neighbours, intangible markers included the construction of boundaries of "us" and "them", their social networks, their description of their neighbours and the neighbourhood, their aspirations and practices.

Manolova (2020) writes: "…symbolic distance and proximity has become a key mechanism for reconfiguring objectively assigned social boundaries and realizing aspirations for an upward identification used by those occupying a precarious "in-between" status" (p.508). This symbolic

distance was apparent in the construction of boundaries of "inside" and "outside" within the settlement by the respondents where the classification of "us" and "them" was reflected. The inside (*andar*) had two meanings. In one sense it referred to their household which had to be protected from the "outside", here, meaning the immediate surroundings which were characterized as a space of unemployment, lack of education and refinement. Therefore, they insisted that they remained inside and particularly kept the children indoors to keep them away from bad company suggesting an increasing privatization of their lives. In another sense, it referred to the neighbourhood, the slum where the "outside" referred to the neighbouring colonies around the slum which were socially and economically better-off. Where having friends from the immediate slum neighbourhood was discouraged, forming networks and friendship with counterparts outside the slum, in the non-slum neighbourhood was encouraged. It was also a matter of status and pride for the parents and thus became a part of defining oneself. Therefore, by asserting more similarity and connection with people outside, the difference was drawn from the people inside, their slum neighbours. Blokland (2005) who prefers "social identification" to "social identity", writes that "social identification, then, are processes in which people experience and express that some are like them, and that some others are different" (p.126). Here we saw that there was an attempt not only to distance from the neighbour but also to the popular stereotype and stigmatized constructions attached to slum dwellers especially middle-class ones. This comes prominently in the attempt to not "look like a slum dweller" which is related to the acute stigma associated with the category and absence of positive recognition. As As Sanso (2006) writes that "in urban context …neighbourhood reputation becomes an important marker of a person's or family's integrity, as well as of social status" (p.183). "When a working-class identity is hard to retain or no longer evokes positive recognition and evaluation, middleclassness increases its potency as a desirable strategy, or may even become the only available path for subjective repositioning" (Manolova 2020, p.506).

The manner in which the goal oriented group positioned itself is a reminder of Yatzimirsky (2013) findings in Dharavi, Mumbai that while caste and religious identities remained intact in the city slums, a small section was making new status claims based on money and education. Education, to some extent, was also making it possible for these groups to re-define their otherwise stigmatized identity of being a lower caste slum dweller. This is evident from the fact that out of seven families three were from SC and one from OBC background.

In this discussion what needs to be highlighted is the relational nature of distinction that Bourdieu (1984) lays stress upon. In the relational nature it is element of scarcity of attributes and resources that makes an individual or a group distinct. Two, the aspect of opposition and negation is central to Bourdieu's (1984) ideas of distinction where one's taste and lifestyle is based on the distaste for the taste of others or its negation. By classifying their neighbours through assigning labels such as "*gande*" and "*unpad*", the educated, goal-oriented respondents were also in the process asserting that they themselves were refined, educated and good. The opposition and binaries were recurrent in the narratives of this group of "goal-oriented" families. The idea of "ganda" or dirty not only referred to physical dirt or soiled clothes or being barefoot but also attitudes (what the respondents called mentality) to women's clothes and mobility. The idea of mentality or *soch* was an important one in drawing this difference from others. They believed their worldview to be progressive and modern and highlighted their education and social networks in shaping this worldview. Such classifications and perceptions of the neighbours were also imbibed by the young school-going children in such families. Drawing these boundaries and social distance allowed them to forge distinction when the real possibility of moving out of stigmatized space was absent. Distance had to be maintained from what they characterized as uneducated and unemployment, people who waste time.

Time thus emerged as an important resource that has to be judiciously spent and acquisition of cultural capital needs the investment of time. "Wasting time" or "time pass" was the characteristic of the uneducated. Children had to be kept indoors and engaged in activities like lessons in spoken English, music, dance and computers and repeatedly told about judicious use of time. It is not as if the other parents or children from other families were not aspiring for such activities but the availability of more economic capital in this group also made it possible for them to reconvert into cultural capital. The importance of the family and the home environment in building cultural capital is also highlighted, an important site where cultural capital is built and transmitted.

Entry into institutions of higher education and jobs in prestigious government institutions gave the educated respondents a peer circle from whom they acquire cultural and informational capital. Respect and social status engendered by education is another important theme that emerged from the narratives of the respondent. For all these respondents it was important to

know that they were recognized and respected as "different" and "educated" or the "*padhi-likhi*" families in the settlement, a form of symbolic capital. This sense of respect was primarily derived from education, starkly different from that popularity that emerged out of fear or notoriousness as was the case with slum lords.

Gendered Nature of Intra-class Distinctions

Education was also central in the search for partners in marriage in case of three male respondents whose family members were looking for a bride. The educated wife was sought after not only because these men sought women who will share similar taste in clothes, lifestyles and a modern sensibility and urban sophistication. Not only this, but these respondents were also looking at the role an educated mother would play in the future in bringing up children with modern sensibilities and imparting education to them. This desire not only echoes Bourdieu's idea of domestic transmission of cultural capital but only draws attention to the practices and activities of the middle-class mothers to reproduce advantage and ensure academic success.

Another factor of difference was gender where mothers were seen as more involved in the daily routines around schooling, tuitions and other activities of children. In popular discourses and policies working-class mothers have often been stereotyped as negligent or held responsible for the educational failure or low performance of their children. In contrast, it is the middle-class mother who has been projected as the ideal parent involved in the schooling and education of her children and therefore, in raising good citizens. Here again, we see that the middle-class selfhood, as Ghertner (2015) points out, is defined by denouncing the practices of the working classes. However, our fieldwork revealed that working-class mothers are involved in several activities in their everyday lives that goes into supporting their children's education. It was the mother who searched for schools, ran around for admission, ferried children to and back from the schools and tuitions. This was an addition to the everyday household responsibilities of cooking, cleaning, washing and collecting water and caring for the elderly. The mothers who were in paid employment adjusted their work schedules with the school timings. The role of the fathers was limited to financing the education of the children although some exceptions were found. Their work schedules were tight and the nature of work especially for those in the informal sector was exhausting to an extent that it did not allow them to get deeply involved with their children's everyday school routines. Therefore, it reinforces the argument that parenting is a gendered

process as many scholars have highlighted. Women were not critical of their husband's non-involvement and exempted them by being more sympathetic to their work routines, although own work routines were equally grueling.

Mothers were aspirational and, as mentioned before, these were shaped by their experiences emerging not only from poverty but gender-based discrimination faced in their childhood. Several of them were deprived of the opportunity to complete schooling due to parental indifference and early marriages. Therefore, many of them strongly aspired for a different educational trajectory for their children, especially the daughters, and went against patriarchal attitudes to negotiate for a better future. Support to their daughter's education was also reflected in their challenge to the sexual division of work at home and attempts to give equal treatment to sons and daughters. Women wanted education for their daughters not only because they will find better jobs but also because they felt it will make them self-reliant and inculcate life-skills which might help them survive a marital crisis. This feeling again emanates from their own lived experiences and knowledge of abusive marital relationships existing in the neighbourhood.

The intersection of education and gender was noticed in two kinds of trends. As mentioned earlier some mothers felt that the unmarried educated daughters will be "allowed" to work by patriarchal figures of the household as they will find more respectable jobs such as of a customer service personnel or a teacher in an unrecognized private school or a salesperson at some store. However, a few also hinted at the possibility that these educated women will not be allowed to work in spaces where men and women are required to interact as equals or continue to work after marriage as the expectation would be to take care of the household which is considered to be the woman's primary responsibility. In both cases attitudes to women's work were associated with notions of family honour and respect.

While the involvement of the majority of mothers was limited to ferrying, monitoring and disciplining activities as they had limited education, educated mothers, which was a minority, played a different role. Since they were educated they were also able to reflect on what was being taught in the lessons and whether the child was learning or merely copying content from books and blackboards. Others mostly evaluated quality and education based on school infrastructure, the volume of work in notebooks, and teacher's behaviour. Second, most mothers operated on the binary of private as good quality and government as bad quality binary.

However, educated mothers could also distinguish within the private based on the quality of education. Due to their interaction with educated peers, they could also get more information and advice related to their children's education.

A common thread that runs through every chapter is that the level of education and the degree of interaction with educated peers and economic capital produced differences within this category of poor living in the settlement. The educated were articulate and emphatic when it came to their aspirations for themselves or their children. With having more resources at their disposal they were able to convert it into the pursuit of educational capital by pursuing courses and degrees or accessing elite private schools for their children. The acquisition of educational capital opened the doors to workplaces where they were able to form a network of more educated peers who could further guide and advice them or even could become objects/references of imitation for them. Not only this, but they also associated the educated status with behavioural traits, attires, language, dispositions and overall lifestyle. This was evident in their discourse of self-discipline, time management and self- improvement and self-care.

We set out with the objective of exploring how an apparently monolith category of poor is in fact internally differentiated and also to find out ways in which education acted as a marker of such differentiation. The spaces of poverty, in this case, a squatter settlement or JJ Cluster was found to be both spatially and socially differentiated. Clusters existed within, at the intersection of region, caste, language and religion. However, and additionally education too emerged as an important factor of differentiation. Varying levels of education, from no formal education to primary to secondary and post secondary, produced variations in outlook and aspirations to escape their socio-spatial context. This affirms that class fractions exist among the poor, working class category and the study echoes with several other writings such as of Lamont (2000), Skeggs (2002) and others who acknowledged the existence of feeling of "us and them" within the working class. While Bourdieu's conceptual repertoire of capitals and distinction helps in approaching and analyzing difference and class fractions, the study moves away from it because *it* fails to properly acknowledge the existence of fractions within the working class. This study documented and analyzed not only in what ways the poor are internally differentiated but also how education becomes central in this construction of difference and here lies the strength of the thesis. However, there are several limitations too and these open up the possibilities for

continuing this work and addressing these limitations in the future. Only a few can be mentioned here. One limitation that can be identified is that the aspect of caste based differentiation remains underexplored, leaving scope for more examination. Whether and how caste intersects with other identities or gets reconfigured in the urban context, a seemingly emancipatory space, is something that merits more investigation. The researcher also feels that the goal-oriented group occupy an "in-between" status and are gradually making a transition from poor to lower middle class. In fact, as the data shows two families from this aspirational group moved out of the slum into an authorized colony during the fieldwork period. More investigation, therefore, can shed light on the exact process of transition and upward mobility.

Bibliography

Books and articles

Ahmad, S. (2012). Housing Inequality Amongst Disadvantaged Communities in India. *United Nations University*. Retrieved from https://unu.edu/publications/articles/housing-inequality-amongst-disadvantaged-communities-in-indian-cities.html

Antony, M.,& Maheswaran, G. (2001). Social Segregation and Slums: The Plight of Dalits in the Slums of Delhi. New Delhi: Indian Social Institute.

Appadurai, A.(2004). 'Capacity to Aspire' in Michael Walton & Vijayendra Rao (Eds) *Culture and Public Action* (pp.59-84). Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Arabindoo, P. (2011). Rhetoric of the 'Slum' Rethinking Urban Poverty. *City*, *15*(6), 636-646.

Auyero, J. (1999). 'This is a lot like the Bronx, isn't it?' Lived Experiences of Marginality in an Argentine Slum. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 23, 45–69.

Ayyar and Khandare (2007) Social Network In Slum And Rehabilitation Sites : A Study In Mumbai(India) Paper presented at urban research symposium at World Bank 14-16 May,2007. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343599054_SOCIAL_NETWORK_IN_SLUM_AND_REHABILITATION_SITES_A_STUDY_IN_MUMBAIINDIA

Baars, Sam (undated) Social class, aspirations and cultural capital: a case study of working class children's plans for the future and their parents" involvement in life beyond the school gates ISC Working Paper 2010-05. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/5719089/Social_class_aspirations_and_cultural_capital

Baird, R. (2009) Private Schools for the Poor. Development, Provision, and Choice in India. A Report for Gray Matters Capital. Retrieved from http://www.dise.in/Downloads/Use%20of%20Dise%20Data/Ross%20Baird.pdf

Ball, S.J., Bowe, R., Gewirtz, S., (1996) School Choice, Social Class and Distinction: the realisation of social advantage in education. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 11(1), available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44820614_School_Choice_social_class_and_distinction_The_realization_of_social_advantage_in_education

Basu, A.R. (1988). *Urban Squatter Housing in Third World*. Delhi: Mittal Publications.

Baviskar, A. (2002). The Politics of the City. *Seminar, 516.*

Baviskar, A. (2006). Demolishing Delhi: World Class City in the Making. *Mute Magazine*, 5.

Bennett,T., Savage, M., Elizabeth Silva., Warde, Alan., Cal, M.G., & Wright, D (2008) *Culture, Class, Distinction*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Bhan, G. (2009). "This is no longer the city I once knew": Evictions, the Urban Poor and the Right to the City in Millennial Delhi. *Environment and Urbanization*, 21(1), 127-142.

Bhan, G.,& Jana, A. (2013). Of slums or poverty: notes of caution from census 2011. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 48(18), 14-16.

Blokland, Talja (2005) Memory Magic: How a working-class neighbourhood became an imagined community and class started to matter when it lost its base. In Fiona Devine., Mike Savage., John Scott & Rosemary Crompton (Eds.) (pp.123-138) *Rethinking Class: Culture, Identities and Lifestyles*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Blum, Z.D and Rossi P.H. (1968). "Class, Status, and Poverty. In, Moynihan, Daniel P. *On Understanding Poverty: Perspectives from the Social Sciences.* New York: Basic Books

Boo, K. (2011). *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai.* New York: Random House.

Bourdieu, B. (1989). Social Space and Symbolic Power. *Sociological Theory*, 7 (1), 14-25.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of The Judgment of Taste.* United States of America: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). “The Forms of Capital”. In, *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John C. Richardson,. 241-258.

Bourdieu, P. (1987). What Makes a Social Class? On The Theoretical and Practical Existence Of Groups. *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*, 32, 1-17.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *The State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power.* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1974). The school as a conservative force: Scholastic and cultural inequalities. In John Eggleston (Ed.) *Contemporary research in the sociology of education* (pp.32-46). London: Methuen.

Bowles, S., and Gintis, H. (2011). *Schooling in Capitalist America. Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*, (republished with new introduction by authors). Chicago: Haymarket Books

Bruce, S and Yearly, S. (2006). The Sage Dictionary of Sociology. London: Sage Publications.

Caroline Sarojini Hart (2016) How Do Aspirations Matter?, *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 17(3), pp.324-341

Centre for Global Development Research Private Limited (2011) *Delhi Slum Clusters: A Profile*. New Delhi.

Chakrabarti, P. (2008). Inclusion Or Exclusion? Emerging Effects of Middle-Class Citizen Participation on Delhi's Urban Poor. *IDS Bulletin,* 38(6), 96-103.

Chandola, T. (2010). Listening into others: Between noise and silence. [Unpublished doctoral thesis]. Queensland University of Technology.

Chandola, T. (2012). Listening into others: moralising the soundscapes in Delhi. *International Development Planning Review*, 34 (4), 391-408.

Chaudhuri, S. (2013). Living at the Edge: A Socio-economic Profile of Kolkata's Poor. *South Asian Survey,* 20(1), 44-58.

Christopher, K. (2012). Extensive Mothering: Employed Mothers' Constructions of the Good Mother. *Gender And Society*, 26 (1), 73-96.

Clair, R.S., Kintrea, K..,& H, M. (2013). Silver bullet or red herring? New evidence on the place of aspirations in education, *Oxford Review of Education*, 39(6), 719-738.

Coser, L.A. (1965). The sociology of poverty: To the memory of George Simmel. *Social problems*, *13*(2), 140-148.

Datta, A. (2012). *The Illegal City: Space, Law and Gender in a Delhi Squatter Settlement*. United Kingdom: Ashgate.

Desai, A. R., & Pillai, S. D. (1970). *Slums and Urbanization.* Bombay: Popular Prakashan

Dickey, S. (2000). Permeable Homes: Domestic Service, Household Space, and the Vulnerability of Class Boundaries in Urban India. *American Ethnologist,* 27(2), 462-489.

Dickey, S. (2012). The Pleasures and Anxieties of Being in the Middle: Emerging Middle-Class Identities in Urban South India. *Modern Asian Studies,* 46(3), 559-599 .

Dickey, S. (2016). *Living class in Urban India*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.

Donner, H. (2006). Committed Mothers and Well-Adjusted Children: Privatisation, Early-Years Education and Motherhood in Calcutta. *Modern Asian Studies*, 40(2), 371-395.

Donner, H. (2008). *Domestic Goddesses: Maternity, Globalization and Middle-class Identity in Contemporary India*. Hampshire: Ashgate.

Donner, H. (2012). Whose city is it anyway? Middle class imagination and urban restructuring in twenty-first century Kolkata *New Perspectives on Turkey,* 46, 129-155.

Drury, David. (1993). *The Iron Schoolmaster: Education, Employment and the Family in India.* Delhi: Hindustan Publishing Corporation.

D'souza, V. S. (1979). Socio-cultural marginality: A theory of urban slums and poverty in India. *Sociological Bulletin*, 9-24.

D'souza, V. S. (1979). Socio-cultural marginality: A theory of urban slums and poverty in India. *Sociological Bulletin*, 28(1-2), 9-24.

Dupont, V. (2011). The Dream of Delhi as a Global City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research,*35(3), 533-554.

Dupont, V., Tarlo, E., & Vidal, D. (ed) (2000). *Delhi: Urban Space and Human Destinies*. Delhi: Manohar Publishers and Distributors.

Dupont, V., Banda, S., Vaidya, Y., and Gowda, S (2014) Unpacking Participation in Kathputli Colony Delhi's First Slum Redevelopment Project, Act I *Economic and Political Weekly*, 49(24), 39-47

Dupont,V. & Ramanathan,U. (2008). The courts and the squatter settlements in Delhi-Or the intervention of the judiciary in urban 'Governance'. In I.S.A. BAUD & Joop de WIT (Eds.), *New Forms of Urban Governance in India. Shifts*, *Models, Networks, and Contestations* (pp.312-343). New Delhi: Sage.

Fernandes, L. (2010). The Violence Of Forgetting, *Critical Asian Studies*, 42(2), 265-272.

Friedman, S., Savage, M., Hanquinet, L.,& Miles, A. (2015) Cultural sociology and new forms of distinction. *Poetics*, 53, 1-8

Froystad, K. (2006). Anonymous encounters: Class categorisation and social distancing in public places. In Geert De Neve and Henrike Donner (eds.) *The Meaning of the Local: Politics of Place in Urban India*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Gans, H. (1968). Culture and Class in the study of Poverty. In Moynihan, Daniel P. *On Understanding Poverty: Perspectives from the Social Sciences* (pp. 201-228). New York: Basic Books

Gartman, D. (1991). Culture as Class Symbolization or Mass Reification? A Critique of Bourdieu's Distinction. *American Journal of Sociology, 97*(2), 421-447.

Gephart, M. A. (1997). Neighborhoods and communities as contexts for development. In Brooks-Gunn, J., Duncan, G. J., Aber, J. L. (Eds), *Neighborhood poverty: Vol. I. Context and consequences for children* (pp. 1–43). New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Gewirtz, S. (2017). Rethinking education and poverty. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38(7), 1081-1088.

Ghertner, A. (2010). Calculating without numbers: aesthetic governmentality in Delhi's slums. *Economy and Society*, 39(2), 185-217.

Ghertner, A. (2012). Nuisance Talk and the Propriety of Property: Middle Class Discourse of A Slum-Free Delhi. *Antipode*, 44(4), 1161–1187.

Ghertner, A. (2015). *Rule by Aesthetics: World-Class City Making in Delhi*. India: Oxford University Press.

Gillies, V. (2006). Working class mothers and school life: exploring the role of emotional capital. *Gender and Education*, 18(3), 281-293.

Gillies, V.(2007). *Marginalised mothers*. London: Routledge.

Goffman, E. (1986). *Stigma: Notes on the management of spoiled identity*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Griffith, A.I. and Smith , D.E. (2005). *Mothering for Schooling*. New York: RoutledgeFalmer

Grover, S. (2017). *Marriage, Love, Caste, and Kinship Support: Lived Experience of the Urban Poor in India* (2nd edition). New Delhi: Social Science Press.

Gurney, E. (2017). Choosing schools, choosing selves: exploring the influence of parental identity and biography on the school choice process in Delhi *International Studies in Sociology of Education,* 26(1), 19-35.

Guruswamy, M., & Abraham, R. J. (2006). Redefining poverty: A new poverty line for a new India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 41(25), 2534-2541.

Gutman, L.M., & Akerman, R. (2008) Determinants of Aspirations. London: Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, Institute of Education, University of London.

Haider, S. (2000). Migrant Women and Urban Experience. In Veronique Dupont (ed) *Delhi: Urban Spaces and Human Destinies*, New Delhi: Manohar.

Harvey, D. L., & Reed, M. H. (1996). The Culture of Poverty: An ideological analysis. *Sociological Perspectives*, 39(4), 465-495.

Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Jaeger, MM (2009) Equal Access but Unequal Outcomes: Cultural Capital and Educational Choice in a Meritocratic Society. *Social Forces*, 87(4) 1943-72.

Kim, I-Ki. (1995). Differentiation among the Urban Poor and the Reproduction of Poverty: The Case of Nanjido. *Environment and Urbanization*,7(2), 183–194.

Kintrea, K.., Clair, R.S., &Houston, M. (2011). The influence of parents, places and poverty on educational attitudes and aspirations. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Lamont, M.,& Lareau, A. (1988) Cultural Capital: Allusions, Gaps and Glissandos in Recent Theoretical Developments *Sociological Theory* 6(2), 153-168.

Lareau, A (2003). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*. Berkeley, CA; Los Angeles, CA; London: University of California Press.

Lareau, A. (1987). Social Class Differences in Family-School Relationships: The Importance of Cultural Capital. *Sociology of Education*, 60 (2), 73-85.

Lavee, E and Benjamin,O. (2015). Working-Class Mothers' School Involvement: A Class-Specific Maternal Ideal? *The Sociological Review*, 63(3), 2-31.

Lemanski, C. (2016). Poverty: multiple perspectives and strategies. *Geography*, 101 (1), 4-10.

Lemanski, C., & Marx, C. (Eds.). (2015). Introduction. In *The City in Urban Poverty* (pp.1-15). United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Levinson, B. A., Foley, D. E., & Holland, D. C. (1996). *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: Critical Ethnographies of Schooling and Local Practice*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Lewis, O. (1968). Culture of Poverty. In Moynihan, Daniel P. *On Understanding Poverty: Perspectives from the Social Sciences* (pp.187-200). New York: Basic Books

Lynch, O. (1991). Potters, Plotters, Prodders in a Bombay Slum: Marx and Meaning or Meaning Versus Marx. In *A Reader in Urban Sociology*, (Eds.).M.S.A Rao, Chandrashekhar Bhatt and Laxmi Narayan Kadekar, 314-34. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

MacLeod, J. (2009). *Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a low-income Neighbourhood*. United States: Westview Press.

Majumdar, T.K. (1983) The Urban Poor and Social Change: A Study of Squatter Settlements in Delhi. In Alfred de Souza (Ed) *The Indian City; Poverty, Ecology and Urban Development* (pp.29-59). Delhi: Manohar.

Manolova, P. (2020). Aspiring, Ambivalent, Assertive: Bulgarian Middle-Class Subjectivities and Boundary Work. *Migration East European Politics and Societies and Cultures,* 34(2), 505–528

Mathew, Leya. (2018). Aspiring and Aspiration Shaming: Primary Schooling, English, and Enduring Inqualities in Liberalizing Kerala (India). *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 49(1), 72–88.

Mehra, D.&Batra, L. (2006). Neoliberal Delhi: Through the Lens of the Yamuna Pushta Demolitions. In *Megacities: Approaches to Metropolitan Cities in India*(Eds.)Broius, C and Ahuja, R, Heidelberg: DraupadiVerlag.

Menon, N. (2012) *Seeing Like a Feminist*. New Delhi: Zubaan and Penguin Books.

Menon-Sen, K., & Bhan, G. (2008). *Swept off the map: surviving eviction and resettlement in Delhi*. New Delhi: Yoda Press.

Miller, S. (1964). The American Lower Class: A Typological Approach. *Social Research, 31*(1), 1-22.

Mitlin, D., & Satterthwaite, D. (2013). *Urban poverty in the global south: scale and nature.* Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

Mitlin, D., & Satterthwaite, D. (2014). *Reducing Urban Poverty in the Global South.* London & New York: Routledge.

Mousumi, M.A., and Kusakabe, T. (2017). The dilemmas of school choice: do parents really 'choose' low-fee private schools in Delhi, India? *Compare,* 49(2), 1-19.

Naafs, S & Skelton,T. (2018). 'Youthful futures? Aspirations, education and employment in Asia. *Children's Geographies*, 16(1), 1-14.

Naidu, R. (2006).Dilapidation and Slum Formation: A Study of Hyderabad. In *Urban Studies*. (Eds.). Sujata Patel and Kushal Deb, 294–317. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Nair, R.B. (2002). *Lying on the Postcolonial Couch: The Idea of Indifference*. London: University of Minnesota Press.

Nambissan, G.B. (2010). The Indian middle classes and educational advantage: Family strategies and practices. In *The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, (Eds.) Michael W. Apple, Stephen J. Ball and Luis Armando Gandin, pp. 285-296. Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Nambissan, G.B. (2012). Private Schools for the Poor: Business as Usual? *Economic and Political Weekly*, 47(41), 51-58.

Nangia, S., & Thorat, S. (2000). *Slum in a Metropolis: The Living Environment.* Delhi: Shipra Publications.

Narayanan, N.P. (2019). The production of informality and everyday politics, *City*, 23(1), 83-96.

Neuwirth, R. (2016). *Shadow Cities: A Billion Squatters A New Urban World.* New York: Routledge.

Newman, K.S (1999) No Shame in my Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Newman, K.S (2002) No Shame: The View from the Left Bank, *American Journal of Sociology* 107 (6),1577–99.

Nijman, J. (2015). India's Urban Future: Views from the Slum. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 59(3), 406-423.

Nijman, J.(2009). A Study of Space in Mumbai's Slums. TijdschriftvoorEconomischeenSocialeGeografie, 101(1), 4-17.

Nussbaum, M. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ocejo, Richard E. (Ed.). (2013).*Ethnography and the City: Readings On Doing Urban Fieldwork.*New York: Routledge .

P. Nagaraja, (2003) In *South Asian Folklor*e: *An Encyclopedia* edited by Peter Claus and Sarah Diamond. New York: Routledge.

Panda, G. (2015). Maternal Involvement in Everyday Schooling: A Micro Study. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 22(2), 219-242.

Philipsen, M.I. (2007). The problem of poverty: shifting attention to the non-poor. In Galen, J.A. Van and Noblit, George W. (Eds) *Late to Class: Social Class and Schooling in the New Economy.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Priya, R. (2006). Town Planning, Public Health and Delhi's Urban Poor: A Historical View. In *Urban Studies*.(Eds.). Sujata Patel and Kushal Deb. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Randolph, G. (2013). Delhi choosing high-rise over consultative planning despite national consensus on slums'. *The Global Urbanist.* Retrieved from http://globalurbanist.com/2013/05/21/delhi-choosing-high-rise.

Rao, K. Ranga, and M. S. A. Rao. (1991). Cities*,* Slums and Urban Development: A Case Study of a Slum in Vijayawada. In *A Reader in Urban Sociology*, (Eds.). M.S.A Rao, Chandrashekhar Bhatt and Laxmi Narayan Kadekar, 314-34. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

Rao, U. (2010) Making the global city: urban citizenship at the margins of Delhi.*Ethnos*, 75(4), 402–424.

Rao, U. (2016). Urban Negotiations and Small-Scale Gentrification in a Delhi Resettlement Colony. In *Space, Planning and Everyday Contestations in Delhi* (Eds.)SurajitChakravarty and Rohit Negi, 77-89. India: Springer.

Reay, D., & Ball, S. J. (1997). Spoilt for Choice: the working classes and educational markets. *Oxford Review of Education*, 23 (1), 89-101.

Reay, Diane. (1998). *Class Work: Mother's Involvement in their Children's Primary Schooling.* London: UCL Press

Reay, Diane. (2000). A useful extension of Bourdieu's conceptual framework?: emotional capital as a way of understanding mothers' involvement in their children's education? *The Sociological Review*, 52(s2), 57-74.

Rodman, H. (1963). The Lower-Class Value Stretch. *Social Forces,* 42(2), 205-215.

Rose, P. M., & Dyer, C. (2008). Chronic poverty and education: a review of literature. Chronic Poverty Research Centre Working Paper, (131) available at http://www.chronicpoverty.org/uploads/publication_files/WP131_Rose_and_Dyer.pdf

Roth, G.&Wittich, C. (Eds.). (1978).*Economy and Society: An Outline Of Interpretive Sociology*. California: University of California Press.

Roy, Deya (2013) Negotiating marginalities: right to water in Delhi, *Urban Water Journal*, 10(2), 97-104.

Saglio-Yatzimirsky M.C. (2013), *Dharavi. From Mega-Slum to Urban Paradigm*. New Delhi, Routledge.

Saglio-Yatzimirsky, M.C and Landy, F. (2014). *Megacity Slums: Social Exclusion, Space and Urban Policies in Brazil and India*. London: Imperial College Press.

Salcedo, R., & Rasse, A. (2012). The heterogeneous nature of urban poor families. *City & Community*, 11(1), 94-118.

Salcedo, R., & Torres, A. (2004). Gated communities in Santiago: wall or frontier?. *International Journal of urban and regional research*, 28(1), 27-44.

Samanta, S. (2016). Education as a Path to "Being Someone": Muslim Women's Narratives of Aspiration, Obstacles, and Achievement in an Impoverished Basti in Kolkata, India. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies,* 37(3),151-174.

Sankaran, T.S., and Rao, V.R (1995) The Urban *Informal Sector in India: A study of Govindpuri (Delhi)*. New Delhi: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (India Office).

Saavala, Minna. 2010. *Middle-Class Moralities*: *Everyday Struggle Over Belonging and Prestige in India.* New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan.

Schenk, W. C. (2010). Slum Diversity in Kolkata. Columbia Undergraduate Journal of South Asian Studies, 1, 91-108.

Schindler, S. (2014). The Making of "World Class" Delhi: Relations Between Street Hawkers and the New Middle Class. *Antipode*, 46(2), 557-573.

Seabrook, J. (2007). *Cities: Small Guide to Big Issues*. London: Pluto Press and Oxfam.

Sen, K.M., (2006). 'Better to Have Died than to Live like This': Women and Evictions in Delhi. *Economic and Political Weekly, 41*(20), 1969-1974.

Shaw, A. (2012). *Indian Cities*. India: Oxford University Press.

Sheikh, S., & Banda, S. (2014). In-situ Upgradation of Jhuggi Jhopri Clusters: A Plan for Improvement without Relocation. *Centre for Policy Research*, New Delhi.

Sheikh, S., & Banda, S. (2015). Surveying Slums: Process of Survey and Use of data, *Economic & Political Weekly*, 50(22) 73-79.

Shildrick, T. and MacDonald, R. (2013). Poverty talk: how people experiencing poverty deny their poverty and why they blame 'the poor'. *Sociological Review*. 61, 285–303.

Sibley, D. (1995). *Geographies of exclusion: society and difference in the West*. London; New XYork: Routledge.

Skeggs, B. (2002) *Formations of Class and Gender*. London: Sage

Skeggs, B. (2004). *Class, self, culture*. London: Routledge.

Small, M. L., & Newman, K. (2001). Urban poverty after the truly disadvantaged: The rediscovery of the family, the neighbourhood, and culture. *Annual Review of Sociology,* 23-45.

Small, M. L., David, J. H.& Michele, L. (2010). Reconsidering culture and poverty. *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* 629(1), 6-27.

Smith, M., & Davidson, J. (2008). Civility and Etiquette. In Tim Hall, Phil Hubbard, & J.R.Short (Eds.)*The SAGE companion to the city* (pp.231-249). Los Angeles [i.e. Thousand Oaks, Calif.]; London: Sage Publications.

Soni, A. (2000). Urban Conquest of Outer Delhi: The Case of the Mehrauli Countryside. In Veronique Dupont, Emma Tarlo & Denis Vidal (Eds.). Delhi: *Urban Spaces and Human Destinies,* New Delhi: Manohar.

Sriraman, T. (2012). The state identification and welfare documentary practices in India [unpublished doctoral thesis]. University of Delhi. Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10603/31686.

Sriraman, T. (2014). Pedagogies of Gendered Citizenship: Identity Documents and the Urban Poor in Delhi. *Paper for European Conference on South Asian Studies, Zurich, 23-26 July 2014.* Retrieved from https://nomadit.co.uk/conference/ecsas2014/paper/18346

Sriraman, T. (2018). *In Pursuit of Proof: A history of Identification Documents in India*. India: Oxford University Press.

Srivastava, S (2014*). Entangled Urbanism: Slum, Gated Community and Shopping Mall in Delhi and Gurgaon.* India: Oxford University Press.

Stokes, C. (1962). A Theory of Slums. *Land Economics,* 38(3), 187-197.

Swartz, D. (1997). *Culture & power: The sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Thapan, M. (1997). Linkages between Culture, Education and Women's Health in Urban Slums, *Economic and Political Weekly, 32(43),*83-88.

Thieme, T. (2017). Navigating and negotiating ethnographies of urban hustle in Nairobi slums, *City*, 21(2), 219-231.

Tilak, J.B.G. (2002). Education and Poverty. *Journal of Human Development*, 3(2).191-207.

Tooley, J., Dixon, P., & S V Gomathi, S.V. (2007) Private Schools and the Millennium Development Goal of Universal Primary Education: A Census and Comparative Survey in Hyderabad, India. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33 (5), 539-60.

Tooley, J. (2009) *The Beautiful Tree: A Personal Journey into How the World's Poorest People Are Educating Themselves*. New Delhi: Penguin.

Truelove, Y., & Mawdsley, E. (2011). Discourses of Citizenship and Criminality in Clean, Green Delhi. In Isabelle Clark-Deces (Ed.) *A Companion to the Anthropology of India.* Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Valentin, K. (2011). Modernity, education and its alternatives: schooling among the urban poor in Kathmandu. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 9(1), 99-113.

Valentine, C.A. (1968). *Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter-Proposals.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Vedeld, T., & Siddham, A. (2002). Livelihoods and collective action among slum dwellers in a mega-city (New Delhi). In IASCP conference.

Vera-Sanso, Penny (2006) Conformity and Contestation: Social heterogeneity in south Indian settlements. In Geert De Neve and Henrike Donner (Eds.) *The Meaning of the Local: Politics of Place in Urban India*. London: Taylor & Francis.

Vincent,C., Ball, SJ., Braun, A. (2010). Between the estate and the state: struggling to be a 'good' mother. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 31(2), 123-138.

Vincent, C. (2009) Sociology of mothering. In *The Routledge International Handbook of the Sociology of Education*, (Eds.) Michael W. Apple, Stephen J. Ball and Luis Armando Gandin, (pp.109-120), Taylor & Francis e-Library.

Wacquant, L. (2012). A Janus-Faced Institution of Ethnoracial Closure: A Sociological Specification of the Ghetto. In B.D. Haynes and R. Hutchison (Eds.) *The Ghetto: Contemporary Global Issues and Controversies* (pp.1-31). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Walker, M & Unterhalter, Elaine (ed) (2007) *Amartya Sen's Capability Approach and Social Justice in Education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Weber, M.*, Gerth,* H., *& Mills,* C. W. *(1946). From Max Weber: Essays in sociology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Weber, M., *Roth, G.,* & *Wittich,* C. *(1978). Economy and society: An outline of interpretive sociology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weininger, Elliot B. (2005). Foundations of Pierre Bourdieu's Class Analysis. In Erik Olin Wright (Ed). *Approaches to Class Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Whyte, W.F. (1943). Social Organization in the Slums. *American Sociological Review*, 8 (1), 34-39.

Wiebe, P. D. (1975). *Social life in an Indian slum*. Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Ltd.

Wit, Joop de. (2017). *Urban Poverty, Local Governance and Everyday Politics in Mumbai*. India: Routledge.

Zabiliute, E. (2016). Wandering in a mall: aspirations and family among young urban poor men in Delhi. *Contemporary South Asia*, *24*(3), 271-284.

Reports

World Bank. (2011) Poverty and Social Exclusion in India. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Directorate of Economics & Statistics (2014) *Statistical Abstract of Delhi.* http://www.delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/f508bc8046667b0e9cf6bcf5a4ed47e7/Stattistical+Abstract+of+Delhi+2014.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&lmod=-1346796026&CACHEID=f508bc8046667b0e9cf6bcf5a4ed47e7

Govt. of NCT of Delhi. *Highlights of Economic Survey of Delhi 2014-15* http://delhi.gov.in/wps/wcm/connect/8a5cdc0048d90b21aab9fb7a2b587979/Highlights+of+Economic+Survey+of+Delhi+2014.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&lmod=524667566&CACHEID=8a5cdc0048d90b21aab9fb7a2b587979

International Labour Organization (2018) *India Wage Report : Wage policies for decent work and inclusive growth*. Printed in India

Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner. *Primary Census Abstract for Slum, Census 2011*. http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-Documents/Slum-26-09-13.pdf

Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner. *Primary Census Abstract for Slums 2011*. http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011-Documents/Slum-26-09-13.pdf

World Bank (2016) India's Poverty Profile
https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/infographic/2016/05/27/india-s-poverty-profile

----(2016) India Habitat III. *National Report*. Ministry Of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation. Government of India.

Govt. of NCT of Delhi. Highlights of the Economic Survey of Delhi 2018-19. http://delhiplanning.nic.in/sites/default/files/Highlights%20_English_%20of%20Economic%20Survey%20%20of%20Delhi%202018-19.pdf

Newspaper articles

___(2016, November 15) The Changing face of Indian Slum. The Hindu. https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/The-changing-face-of-the-Indian-slum/article16428217.ece?homepage=true

Hegarty, Stephanie (2010, June 14) Education for all. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/journalismcompetition/education-for-all
http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/69333111.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

Pandit, Ambika (2015, January 27). Delhi election 2015: Dream home promise fading, slums to raise stink with Rahul. The Times of India. https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/delhi-elections-2015/top-stories/Delhi-election-2015-Dream-home-promise-fading-slums-to-raise-stink-with-Rahul/articleshow/46024145.cms

Rawat, Mukesh (2019, August 22) Explained: Why are Dalits agitated over demolition of Ravidas temple in Delhi. India Today. https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/dalit-protest-demolition-ravidas-temple-delhi-tughlakabad-explained-1590482-2019-08-22

Roy, Sidharatha (2019, May 15). DDA doesn't have enough flats at Kalkaji to take in all. The Times of India.

Roychoudhary, Shibaji (2014, May 18) Around 3,000 slum families set for new homes thanks to DDA project. Dailymail. https://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-2632029/Around-3-000-slum-families-set-new-homes-thanks-DDA-project.html

Roychoudhary, Shibaji (2014, May 19) 3,000 EWS families to get swanky new homes in Delhi. India Today. https://www.indiatoday.in/india/north/story/delhi-slum-dwellers-ews-families-dda-kalkaji-govindpuri-kalkaji-in-situ-housing-society-193480-2014-05-19

UNDP India (2019,July 12) New data challenges traditional notions of 'rich' and 'poor retrieved from https://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2019-MPI-India.html

Wal, Aradhana (2017, April 28). MCD Elections Are Tougher to Predict Than Assembly Polls. Here's Why. News18 .https://www.news18.com/news/india/mcd-elections-are-tougher-to-predict-than-assembly-polls-heres-why-1367211.html

Yadav, Anumeha. (2015, June 22) There's a wage crisis in Delhi's factories – and the Modi government's new labour laws won't help. The Scroll. https://scroll.in/article/732336/theres-a-wage-crisis-in-delhis-factories-and-the-modi-governments-new-labour-laws-wont-help

Yadav, Anumeha. (2015, June 23) Even without labour reforms, Delhi's factories have hired and fired workers easily for years. The Scroll. https://scroll.in/article/734399/even-without-labour-reforms-delhis-factories-have-hired-and-fired-workers-easily-for-years

Annexure I

Survey Schedule

Name of the cluster: Bhoomiheen Camp ☐ Navjeevan Camp ☐ Nehru Camp ☐

I. Basic Household Profile

A. Respondent Details

1) Name of the respondent: ……………………………

2) Respondent's relationship to the main bread earner: ……………………………………….

3) Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐ Transgender ☐

B. Household Information

6) Number of household members: Adults: Male: .… Female: ..… Children (below 18) Male.… Female: ..… .

7) Please give details of the main bread earner : Age: Sex:

8) Family Type: Nuclear ☐ Joint ☐ Extended family☐

9) Who all live here: 1 Grand Parents 2. Parents 3. Children 4. Any other ……..

10) Religion: Hindu ☐ Muslim ☐ Sikh ☐ Christian ☐ Others …………..

11) Caste/tribe/ethnic group : ……………………………

12) Language/s spoken in the household: ………………………………….

13) Type of house:

i. a. Rented/owned…………………………….

i. b. If rented, rental per month:……………………………..(Specify electricity and water charges included in the rent)

ii. c.1 If it's own house, do you rent out any portions of the house?..

ii. c. 2. How many portions do you rent out?...

ii.c. 3. How much rent do you charge?...

Socio-Economic Profile

S.no	Relation to the main bread winner	Highest level of education	Main			Subsidiary 1		
			Occupation	Income	NOD	Occupation	Income	NOD

Educational Profile

Detailed educational profiles of school going members													
S.no.	**Sex**	**School Type***	**Medium of instruction**	**Expenditure (per child) monthly**					**If working (Y/N)**	**If yes, where**	**Reasons for working**	**Income**
				School Fee	**Transport**	**Tuition**	**Extracurricular/ miscellaneous**	**Extracurricular outside the school**				

P= Private G=Government, GA= Government Aided, Private Unrecognized= PU.

Detailed educational profiles of members pursuing higher education									
S.no	Sex	Type	Expenditure (per person)*			If working (Y/N)	If yes, where	Reasons for working	Income
			Fees	Transport	Coaching/tuition				

*In case of any other expenditure please mention.

Profiles of children who dropped out or never enrolled (5-15) (if any)				
S.no	Sex	Completed till	Never Enrolled	Reasons for drop out/never enrolling

Perceptions, Attitudes and Strategies

- Who among the family members takes the decisions regarding the child's education?
- What are your aspirations for your children?
- What are the enabling and constraining factors in realizing these aspirations?
- How do you strategise to overcome these constraints or enhance your child's life chances?
- In what ways are you involved in your child's everyday school activities?
- Has your child's education ever been negatively affected?
- How important is education for your survival in this city?

Interview Guide

1. For how long have you/your family lived here? Were you born here or migrated with your family members?
2. Who was the first person/s from your family to have come and settle here?
3. Do you have your extended family living around you?
4. Can you tell us how the settlement has evolved? How would you describe this place?
5. What kind of changes and continuities have you observed in all these years in this neighbourhood?
6. What kind of changes have you observed with regards to educational levels?
7. What were your educational experiences?
8. How important is education in a city like Delhi? What kind of importance do you attach to education? Do you think having more education makes a difference?
9. How do you distinguish between the educated and uneducated in the neighbourhood and outside?
10. How would you describe the current school your child is enrolled in? Are you happy with education they are receiving?
11. How and why did you choose this school?
12. What are their everyday routines?
13. Are they also enrolled in any extracurricular activities outside the school?
14. What are your aspirations for yourself and your children?
15. How do you envisage your children's future?
16. What kinds of challenges are faced in pursuing these aspirations?
17. How do you strategise to support their education?
18. Who makes the decisions about their schools and other educational activities?
19. What kind of support do the children get at home for their educational activities? In what ways are you involved in your child's everyday school activities?
20. Who goes to school to meet the teachers and staff?
21. Do you have friends in this neighbourhood?
22. Do your children have friends in this neighbourhood?
23. Do you consider yourself and family to be different from the neighbours? If yes, in what ways?