



Education Exclusion and Inclusion: Policy and Implementation in South Africa and India

*by Yusuf Sayed, Ramya Subrahmanian, Crain Soudien, Nazir Carrim
with Sarada Balgopalan, Fhulu Nekhwevha and Michael Samuel*

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Yusuf Sayed
On behalf of the team, 2007

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC	<i>African National Congress</i>
C2005	<i>Curriculum 2005</i>
CABE	<i>Central Advisory Board of Education</i>
CHE	<i>Council on Higher Education</i>
DET	<i>Department of Education and Training</i>
DfID	<i>Department for International Development</i>
DoE	<i>Department of Education</i>
DPEP	<i>District Primary Education Programme</i>
ECD	<i>Early Childhood Education</i>

EFA	<i>Education for All</i>
EGS	<i>Education Guarantee Schemes</i>
EMIS	<i>Educational Management Information System</i>
GDP	<i>Gross Domestic Product</i>
GETT	<i>Gender Equity Task Team</i>
GOI	<i>Government of India</i>
HIV/AIDS	<i>Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</i>
HOA	<i>House of Assembly</i>
HOD	<i>House of Delegates</i>
HOR	<i>House of Representatives</i>
HSRC	<i>Human Sciences Research Council</i>
HSS	<i>Higher Secondary School</i>
IDP	<i>Integrated Development Plans</i>
KZN	<i>KwaZulu-Natal</i>
LPS	<i>Lower Primary School</i>
MDG	<i>Millennium Development Goals</i>
MP	<i>Madhya Pradesh</i>
n.d.	<i>No Date</i>
NCS	<i>National Curriculum Statements</i>
NEPA	<i>National Education Policy Act</i>
NGO	<i>Non-Governmental Organization</i>
NNSSF	<i>National Norms and Standards for School Funding</i>
NPE	<i>National Policy on Education</i>
NQF	<i>National Qualifications Framework</i>
OBC	<i>Other Backward Caste</i>
POA	<i>Plan of Action</i>
P-UPS	<i>Private Upper Primary School</i>
SA	<i>South Africa</i>
SABC	<i>South African Broadcasting Corporation</i>
SAHRC	<i>South African Human Rights Commission</i>
SAQA	<i>South African Qualifications Framework</i>
SASA	<i>South African Schools Act</i>
SC	<i>Scheduled Caste</i>
SEN	<i>Special Needs Education</i>
SGB	<i>School Governing Body</i>
SRC	<i>Student Representative Council</i>
SSA	<i>Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
ST	<i>Scheduled Tribe</i>
TLC	<i>Total Literacy Campaign</i>
UEE	<i>Universalisation of Elementary Education</i>
UK	<i>United Kingdom</i>
UNESCO	<i>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</i>
UPE	<i>Universal Primary Education</i>
UPS	<i>Upper Primary School</i>
VEC	<i>Village Education Committee</i>
VPS	<i>Valley Primary School</i>

Executive Summary

Persistent inequalities of gender, class, race, caste and ethnicity are evident in education systems worldwide, whether at the stage of enrolment and attendance, in outcomes and achievement, or in terms of the consequent opportunities to which education is expected to give rise. This was evident in the debates at the EFA Forum in Dakar, Senegal (2000), where governments and donor agencies renewed their commitment to equal opportunities in access to education and to ensuring that all learners have access to quality learning. In South Africa and India, the patterns of inequality in education correlate consistently and significantly with race and caste,¹ and further, with gender and poverty, and suggest the complex intersections between each in the production of persistent education exclusion. In both countries, further constitutional and other policy commitments and efforts have explicitly addressed the issue of race and caste disadvantage.

It is the persistence of education exclusion in countries where there is an explicit comment to inclusion that this study addresses. Based on a two year study of education inclusion and exclusion in South Africa and India, this report focuses on the qualitative experiences of these excluded groups.² This qualitative experience is important to point to because exclusion occurs despite both India and South Africa having respectively made strong and explicit constitutional and other policy commitments and efforts to address the issue of caste and race disadvantage. Whilst changes are evident in the access of these different groups to education over time, and while important initiatives have been undertaken in both countries to improve the positions of the disadvantaged, there is a need to understand better why exclusion continues to characterise the education landscape through, firstly, analysing how different forms of inequality intersect, and secondly, examining how different groups experience inclusive policies that are carried out in their name.

The specific objectives that guided the study were to:

- review education policies in South Africa and India designed to include marginalised groups, using the categories of race and caste as primary starting points for an analysis of processes of exclusion and inclusion in selected sites in the two countries;
- provide a nuanced account, in these sites, of the mechanisms and processes of educational inclusion and exclusion for different racial and caste groups;
- provide policy makers with an account of the effects of specific policies of inclusion in education in South African and Indian education, in terms of the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of the policy 'target groups'.

¹ The term "black" in the South African context refers to the African, 'Indian' and 'coloured' populations as classified under the Apartheid system. "black" is used in the anti-apartheid struggle sense to denote the common and similar forms of historical oppression of those who were not part of the ruling 'white' minority government. These categories are still used in South Africa principally to measure inequality and effect redress strategies. Usage of these racial categories does not imply an endorsement of the categories or the definition of an essentialist identity. 'Caste' in India refers to a social system of differentiation, resulting in particularly inequitable outcomes for those groups clustered at the bottom of the social hierarchy, those previously considered 'untouchable'. The term 'Scheduled Caste' is used to denote the (in a legal sense) 'ex-untouchable' castes based on a Schedule promulgated by the British in 1936, which is a list of castes that are entitled to special educational benefits, parliamentary seats and public employment. Scheduled Tribes refers broadly to indigenous forest-dwelling populations. In this research we use the term 'Dalit' to refer to these groups, in keeping with more contemporary and political considerations that have emerged from social movements of oppressed groups and their struggle for dignity and rights. Similarly, we are also concerned with 'Adivasis' or the indigenous tribes that are classified administratively as Scheduled Tribes. Where we use the more official categories of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST), it is to reflect that usage, in terms of either government data, or state policies and programmes.

² The full case studies, *Education Exclusion and Inclusion: Policy and Implementation in South Africa*, by Yusuf Sayed, Crain Soudien, Nazir Carrim, Fhulu Nekhwevha and Michael Samuel and *Education Exclusion and Inclusion: Policy and Implementation in India*, by Ramya Subrahmanian and Sarada Balgopalan, are available through the ELDIS Website.

The four aspects of exclusion/inclusion identified as central to elaborating the experience of schooling for diverse racial and caste groups were:

- *Access*: entry to, and meaningful participation in, schooling.
- *Participation and governance*: engagement with the school and the learning process through participation in rule-defining and rule-setting processes.
- *Curriculum*: the transaction of learning through formal and hidden texts and practices.
- *Identity*: the self-perceptions and perceptions of others around children of their social value and worth.

Inclusion and exclusion policy in South Africa and India

Impressive constitutional and other policy efforts are a key feature of both countries in seeking to effect the inclusion of marginalised groups.

Both countries have what one might call activist identities. The state is configured in each country, essentially, as a rights-minded state which addresses not only the protection of rights of vulnerable groups but also their active promotion. The role that the state plays is thus both protective and fundamentally anticipatory, in so far that it must be constantly alert to the different ways in which the social structure conditions and limits the policies made for the protection of weak groups. The significance of the state is thus enhanced by playing a stronger role in relation to weaker groups in society.

The activist state, however, and this is the case with both countries, is also strongly ideologically defined. It has to project a strong welfarist identity and manage this identity in relation to three connected pressures, namely, the often prescriptive global order, the influence of local dominant groups (who are often the managers of the state), and the demands and aspirations of weaker and more vulnerable groups within the state. It is within the dynamics of these three pressures that the state determines a strategy for itself. Rhetorically its position places on it certain obligations, while the conjunctural circumstances it works with constantly limit how far or how deeply it is able to sustain the general trend of its policies.

Affirmative action in both countries has been defined as a legal necessity to deal with forms of discrimination that either emanate out of formal and legalised modes of oppression and marginalisation or take their origin from social and public mores and practices that are deeply institutionalised. The point of affirmative action in these contexts is to deinstitutionalise discrimination and to replace the dominant power relations in those institutions with new legal provisions that deliberately address the barriers that prevented the subordinate groups from progressing in those societies. Because the structural realities in the two countries have been different, and have produced distinct exclusionary outcomes, efforts to effect redress have taken different forms.

In South Africa affirmative action was written into the Constitution. In India redress has been largely effected through the principle of affirmative action, in the spheres of higher education, public employment, and local governance. In contrast to South Africa, where race forms part of the political debate (e.g. the National Conference on Racism in September 2000), public policy discourses in India on eliminating caste-based differentiation have been tackled at the

level of the state and in welfare areas such as education. With respect to education, a number of affirmative action programmes have been instituted. The evolution of the present-day compensatory discrimination approach, articulated within the Constitutional guarantee of equality as well as welfare targeted to the most deprived, merits study in terms of its impact on the lives of those targeted, and the extent to which it has facilitated inclusion of groups into education. Policies to make education more inclusive have focused on generating ‘demand’ through offering incentives such as scholarships, food rations and preferential access to higher education and public employment. They also focus on making community structures relating to schooling more representative of marginalised groups within villages.

In policy terms, both countries have beyond the level of state mandates, difficulty in ensuring equity effects at the institutional and community level.

Inclusion and exclusion in practice in South Africa and India

The table opposite summarises practice at the school level in the schools studied, looking at school policy, governance, access, and curriculum (which includes teaching and learning processes).

Summary Table

	South Africa	India
A) Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access required by law (procedural access). • Proxies for race discrimination in South Africa include fees and language use. • Means to administer access include documentation, proof of residence, payment of fees. • Language, fees discriminatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access required (procedural access). • Caste single most important factor for controlling access in India. • Means to administer access include documentation, proof of residence, payment of fees. • Language, fees discriminatory.
B) Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a single school in the sample practices strongly inclusive governance practices. • Governance strong part of reform agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a single school in the sample practices strongly inclusive governance practices. • Non-functional governance reform.
C) Teaching and learning		
<i>Curriculum</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Africa has child-centred national curriculum – C2005. • Language major means of discrimination. • Assimilation into the dominant cultural order prevalent. • Cultivation of standards as exclusionary device. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional pedagogy in India – rote-learning. • Language major means of discrimination. • Assimilation into the dominant cultural order prevalent. • Educability used to justify discrimination against lower-caste children.
<i>Teachers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional identities of teachers. • Accountability to the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional identities of teachers. • Accountability to state and parents.

From the study of the two different contexts it is evident that

- The alignment of policy with practice remains a challenge. Arguably, in both countries it is the inherited legacy with which policy is having difficulty engaging. While the rhetoric value of policy in both countries is high, potential for implementation remains precarious. Substantial efforts need to be made in both countries to establish mechanisms to support the implementation of policy and to ensure that there is much stronger correspondence between policy as pronounced and policy as practised.

- The vision of inclusion has been particularly tested by the financial challenges of providing equitable educational opportunity. Particular concerns have been raised in India about the fragmentation of provision under the umbrella ‘Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan’ or ‘Schooling for All’ policy and the increase in the range of schools being made available through public resources, and their differing quality. In South Africa, criticism of the state’s attempts to discriminate positively in favour of poorer schools, by making larger subsidies available to them, has turned on the inability of the policy to recognise the structural contexts in which schools find themselves and their inherited challenges which small improvements in funding are unable to address.

Significantly, the overall conclusion of this study is that there were no schools studied in either of the two countries that could be described as fully inclusive. While there were individual schools that had developed inclusive approaches for aspects of their policy platforms, for the most part schools could only be described as being weakly and procedurally inclusive. This must be a matter of great concern for both countries.

Developing and targeting inclusive education policy in South Africa and India

A key starting point of effecting inclusion is to address the nature, form and content of the policies designed to overcome exclusion. In this regard, the following suggestions are offered:

- *A rights based policy approach:* A rights based policy approach is critical to ensure that policies of inclusion are conceived of as rights rather than ‘incentives’. Such an approach sees the marginalised not as backward people, suffering an exclusionary deficit but as bearers of rights whose dignity should be reaffirmed and whose needs should become the drivers of policy.
- *Feasible, flexible enabling policy:* Policies must reflect the context to which they pertain. While they may draw on global models of success, they should reflect the conditions to which they apply. Feasible policies are those which enable actors to use the framework to effect transformation.
- *Holistic, integrated policy:* Inclusion policies must be integrated with broader educational policy. If inclusive educational policy is located outside of the broader framework, it will constantly face problems of lack of articulation with other educational initiatives. Inclusive education policy needs to take account of the often contradictory nature of exclusion and the various ways in which exclusion is manifest at all levels of society.
- *Involving the excluded in developing policy:* This should be promoted actively. A participatory process involving all social groups and in particular, policy beneficiaries, is crucial.
- *Political will and pressure:* Policy mandates need to be coupled with strong political will and enhanced social awareness to ensure effective implementation and desirable outcomes. Thus communities need to be active in arguing for and being party to how inclusion policies unfold at all levels of the system. In particular, attention needs to be paid to strengthening the capacity of communities to hold schools accountable.

Whatever the intentions of policy, the key driver is the capacity of the state and its institutions to ensure that policies are successfully implemented and that schools and communities are supported in this process. Thus implementing inclusive policy is the responsibility of all levels of education.

There also needs to be oversight of the policy implementation process. Enhanced monitoring of inclusionary efforts and of mechanisms of exclusion needs to be put in place. Moreover, it is important that such monitoring develops an expanded notion of inclusion beyond formal access to school, such as the achievement of learners from marginalised and disadvantaged communities and the disaggregating of expenditure in terms of beneficiary analysis. Ensuring inclusion thus requires a commitment on the part of governments at all levels of the system to have in place robust and appropriate forms of monitoring so that policy remediation can occur. Effective monitoring also requires that an appropriate system of incentives is in place at the institutional level to encourage schools to monitor the progress of those at risk of exclusion.

Changing practices in South Africa and India at the school level to promote inclusion

A number of key aspects to promote inclusion at the school level have emerged from the study, including:

- *Enhancing access:* The education system needs to address education exclusion by ensuring that all students eligible for education, especially those from deprived backgrounds, are meaningfully included in education programmes. In addition, students need to be aware of the incentives to include themselves in the education system, such as those which reduce the cost of education, for example scholarships, conditional and unconditional cash grants. However, it is imperative that these are integrated as part of holistic policy efforts.
- *Developing inclusive school policy:* There is a need to ensure that an inclusive discourse permeates all levels of the school environment including governance and teaching and learning. There is also a need for awareness at the school level of the particular forms of differentiation associated with caste and race that give rise to discrimination against marginalised groups. Policies must consider how to include ‘previously excluded’ students in the system as a whole and in specific institutions that would previously have fostered exclusionary practices.
- *Creating inclusive governance structures and processes:* Effective school governance that is participatory and reflective of all the interests of the school community is one of the most effective ways to facilitate inclusion. Governance requires attention to how grievances and complaints are dealt with and the removal of barriers to making complaints. It also encompasses governing structures that include stakeholders, and the management of schools by head teachers and other members of the school management team. Leadership and management are key to the effective operation of the school in implementing its inclusion strategies.
- *Promoting inclusive teaching and learning:* Inclusive teaching and learning requires a curriculum approach which upholds principles on which the philosophies of inclusive education are based, such as rights and respect for diversity. For example, teaching materials should be inclusive and should not marginalise and discriminate in any way against specific racial, caste or other groups. Pedagogy must shift from a deficit model of the marginalised, as in the notion of standards in South Africa and educability in India. An inclusive language approach should also be adopted which elevates languages other than English in schools. Teachers are crucial to ensuring inclusion of marginalised learners at the classroom level, so policy needs to address the human resource development of all staff, especially teaching staff. Most importantly, these staff should demonstrate their commitment to a culture of inclusivity by ensuring that all students feel included in the classroom.

Implications for development partnerships

Emerging from the study a number of recommendation are offered for governments and their development partners to support country efforts to effect inclusion.

First, if particular groups of learners are excluded from schooling at the point of access then the EFA and Millennium Development Goals will not be met. The 77 million children out of school, of which 43 million are girls, include many marginalised and excluded groups (UNESCO, 2007). This requires a concerted focus and attention on the part of development agencies to the needs of excluded groups. The goals almost certainly cannot be achieved, and will not be sustained, without such policy focus.

Second, there is a need for development partners to enter into constructive dialogue with governments about exclusion and the needs of the marginalised. Ways need to be considered to include those excluded from school so that EFA and the MDGs are achieved. This requires that good sector plans need to consider ways and strategies for this to be effected and bolstered by robust monitoring of actions.

Third, support to government, and dialogue, must pay attention to both supply and demand. Demand is affected by the disjuncture between policy intention and policy practice, and strategies must be devised to enhance learning. Otherwise inclusive policy which does not translate into an inclusive learning environment will result in the lowering of demand for access, as parents of the marginalised will not send their children to, and keep them in, school when they experience a learning environment that is alienating, not relevant, and poorly focused. Attention should be paid to the 'black box' of schooling, to ensure that the school finds ways to tackle exclusion in the learning environment, in how the school is governed and in how teaching and learning occurs in the classroom.

Fourth, it is crucial that development parties step up efforts with governments to ensure that the voices of the marginalised are heard. This means strengthening the capacity of the poor and civil society organisations to become effective partners in sector dialogue.

Fifth, where Sector Wide Approaches have been applied to development assistance, it is important to work with governments to ensure that their budgets within their Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks focus on effective plans and strategies to tackle social exclusion. Sector wide planning has developed in a patchy way. Often it does not include all aspects of social exclusion.

Sixth, external support can help to ensure that there is strong dissemination of good practice and lesson learning about strategies that work.

Finally, the development community has an important role to play with donor agencies and across global initiatives to ensure that there is a more joined up approach to dealing with social exclusion and that it receives prominent attention in international dialogue. There are projects and initiatives to support governments and others to tackle social exclusion but very little coordination between them.

In summary, development partners need to develop coherent policies and strategies to support the development of education sector plans by governments that pay explicit attention to overcoming exclusion. While there are differing ideas about what constitutes such support, some of the more important actions include:

- ensure that education social inclusion features prominently in sector reviews, sector development dialogues, and other modalities of support;
- ensure that social inclusion is planned for, budgeted, and monitored;
- share and disseminate good practice on tackling social exclusion in education;
- encourage constructive policy dialogue with NGOs;
- consolidate and align international efforts to tackle social exclusion in education;
- ensure effective international monitoring, advocacy, and dialogue on social exclusion in education; and
- link support for policies tackling social exclusion in education with attention to learning experiences.

Further research

There are many areas where further research is needed to increase the probability that more robust and effective policy can be developed to tackle social exclusion in education to ensure achievement of EFA and the MDGs. A short list includes:

- basic mapping of experiences in tackling social exclusion. This would entail detailed studies of different types of cross comparative experiences;
- review of experiences of strengthening demands and voices of the marginalised in different national contexts;
- tracer studies of the experiences of marginalised groups that have participated in schooling to compare outcomes;
- cross country analysis of policy on tackling social exclusion in education to compare approaches, create policy option frameworks, and assess viability and likely effects;
- cross country studies of strategies and mechanisms to effect social inclusion; and
- review of development partners' rationales for and activity in supporting social inclusion in education.

None of these are easy areas within which to bring change. One challenge that arises is in relation to arguing for such broad-based systemic reform in countries such as India, still with a reasonable way to go in providing education 'for all' in terms of basic infrastructure. Yet, securing the participation of first generation learners is crucial to ensure sustainable inter-generational change. This is unlikely to happen unless some of the shifts suggested above start being put into place. The other challenge arises from the inherently political and contested nature of many of these issues, which will mean that policy and political actors may not readily buy into the rationale for some of the reforms proposed.

However, it is also important not to overestimate the challenge. Many of the proposals made above involve building on processes that already exist, even if weak in form and substance. While these are proposed as complementary inclusive policies and approaches, a starting point

may be made based on what already exists as viable entry-points. For example, teacher training is an ongoing activity, monitoring of learning processes takes place, and education systems communicate particular types of policy messages to local administrators and teachers. Building on these entry points could offer an important start to the process of altering the highly variable and often exclusionary norms and behaviours that characterise the current schooling environment. The argument here is for revitalising these in new ways to make the policy agenda of inclusion meaningful, feasible, and achievable to ensure Education For All.

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the context of repeated global commitments to Education for All and the attempts of countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set at important international meetings of the global education community at Jomtien, Thailand (1990) and Dakar, Senegal (2000), it is of cardinal importance that an understanding is developed of why inclusion of 'all' children remains difficult to attain in many countries. In terms of this, attention has to be paid to those who are excluded from schooling and those who fail to complete a full cycle of primary schooling and, critically, the processes behind these phenomena. School and educational exclusion – the denial or restriction of access to and meaningful participation in educational institutions and processes – has a number of implications for the societies in which they occur. First, they present these countries with great human rights challenges. Second they deny countries the opportunity to capitalise on the individual and social talents and contributions that excluded young people can make to social and economic development. Where young people have been left out, instead, one sees countries labouring under, and often failing to manage, the burden of the remedial and welfare activities that become necessary to support them. This research is concerned with the experience of inclusion and exclusion in education and the policies, mechanisms and processes that India and South Africa have put in place to address the challenges that come with exclusion in education.

To place the situations in India and South Africa against a larger backdrop, it is evident that persistent inequalities of gender, class, race, caste and ethnicity exist in education systems worldwide, whether at the stage of enrolment and attendance, in outcomes and achievement, or in terms of the consequent opportunities to which education is expected to give rise. This was made very clear in the reports delivered at the EFA meeting in Dakar, Senegal (2000), where governments and donor agencies renewed their commitment to equal opportunities in access to education. The reports for India and South Africa were consistent with these global developments. Patterns of inequality in education in both countries correlate consistently and significantly with caste³ and race,⁴ respectively, and deepen further, with gender and poverty. These factors, however, come together in complex ways to give the production of inequality and exclusion in education in these two countries very specific characters. It is the specificity of these characteristics that this study is interested in revealing and understanding.

The study was conducted during 2002 and 2003 based on a collaborative design and relatively uniform approaches and research instruments in the two countries. It involved research teams of between eight and ten academics, researchers and fieldworkers in each of the two countries. The methodology and its rationale are discussed in greater length in later chapters.

³ 'Caste' in India refers to a social system of differentiation, resulting in particularly inequitable outcomes for those groups clustered at the bottom of the social hierarchy, those previously considered 'untouchable'. The term 'Scheduled Caste' is used to denote the (in a legal sense) 'ex-untouchable' castes based on a Schedule promulgated by the British in 1936, which is a list of castes that are entitled to special educational benefits, parliamentary seats and public employment (Mendelsohn and Vicziány, 1998). Scheduled Tribes refers broadly to indigenous forest-dwelling populations. However, the term 'tribe' is in many ways an artificial category, used by the colonial state to designate very diverse groups. In this research, we refer mostly to these groups as 'Dalit' reflecting current politically sensitive language; the reference to 'Scheduled Castes' is used when discussing government policy to reflect accurately official positions and language.

⁴ The term 'black' in the South African context refers to people classified African, 'Indian' and 'coloured' in terms of the Population Registrations Act of the former Apartheid government. The term 'black' came to be used in the anti-apartheid struggle sense to denote the common and similar forms of historical oppression of those who were not part of the ruling 'white' minority government. These categories are still used in South Africa principally to measure inequality and effect redress strategies. Usage of these racial categories does not imply an endorsement or acceptance of the category of 'race'. The authors also recognise how controversial these terms continue to be in South Africa. In this respect, a brief comment is necessary to make clear that while they do not accord race an essentialist value – in terms of a biological meaning – they do not wish to ignore the social meanings and attachments that many people have to the terms African, 'coloured', 'Indian' and 'white' in the country. For many, these racial labels are more than social constructs. The authors, however, are interested in the politics of these social constructs.

Analysis of the extent of exclusion faced by groups defined in terms of caste and race has been well established in both South Africa and India. For example, in India, Nambissan (2000) and Thorat (2005) have drawn on national data to point both to the continuing gap between the educational access and achievements of Scheduled Castes and other caste-based categories, and the slower rate of progress of these groups compared to other caste based categories in terms of national policy efforts to universalise elementary education. In South Africa, the recent work of Fiske and Ladd, 2005, and that of Soudien and Gilmour (forthcoming), has made clear how significant the achievement gap is between that of white and other advantaged groups, on the one hand, and that of poor and black groups, on the other. Recent studies (see Soudien and Gilmour, forthcoming), for example, have shown in the Western Cape that the performance of children classified African and coloured at key phases of the schooling process is two grades weaker than those of their white and more privileged counterparts.

Our research study focuses on the qualitative experiences of these excluded groups. This qualitative experience is important to point to because exclusion occurs despite both India and South Africa having made strong and explicit constitutional and other policy commitments and efforts to address the issue of caste and race disadvantage, respectively. Whilst changes are evident in the access of these different groups to education over time, and while important initiatives have been undertaken in both countries to improve the positions of the disadvantaged, there is a need to understand better why exclusion continues to characterise the education landscape through, firstly, analysing how different forms of inequality intersect, and secondly, examining how different groups experience inclusive policies that are carried out in their name.

The specific objectives of the study are to:

- critically review education policies in South Africa and India designed to include marginalised groups, using the categories of race and caste as primary starting points for an analysis of processes of exclusion and inclusion in selected sites in the two countries;
- provide a nuanced account, in these sites, of the mechanisms and processes of educational inclusion and exclusion for different racial and caste groups;
- provide policy makers with an account of the effects of specific policies of inclusion in education in South African and Indian education, in terms of the experiences, understanding, and perspectives of the policy ‘target groups’.

A wider objective of the research is to utilise empirical research findings to reflect on what the achievement of ‘inclusive’ education, particularly with reference to schooling, may entail. The idea is also to broaden the concept of ‘inclusive education’ beyond its current dominant usage in relation to ‘Special Education Needs’ (and also its underpinning strategies), particularly as these are primarily defined in relation to conditions of disability. It is argued in this text that inclusion and exclusion are wider social processes than disability and that these mark the educational and other experiences of historically and structurally disadvantaged groups in complex ways (Sayed, 2003). This is discussed more fully below.

1.1 Conceptualising social exclusion in relation to education

Social exclusion is defined as an outcome of processes of discrimination against specific groups of people (DFID, 2005), leading to their systematic disadvantage in relation to economic assets and livelihoods, human resources such as health and education services and political and social participation. As a concept, social exclusion is understood to illuminate some of the significant processes underlying poverty and its intergenerational transmission. The advantages of paying attention to these underlying processes of economic, human and social deprivation is that they point to the qualitative changes that need to be encouraged in societies to address inter-group conflicts, prejudices and/or the exercise of intimidation or oppression.

Social exclusion is complex. It is sometimes the product of a single factor stemming from a distinguishing social attribute, such as race, class, ethnicity or gender. It is equally often the product of a complex of forces and factors which affect individuals at particular points in their life-cycle owing to circumstances such as being widowed or orphaned, migrating to new areas, or having stigmatising health conditions such as being HIV+ or engaging in stigmatised occupations such as sex work (Gardener and Subrahmanian, 2005). Social exclusion takes political, economic, social, and cultural forms and often is experienced differently by people who putatively belong to common groups. In countries such as the United Kingdom it is understood essentially as a social phenomenon and is often explained in relation to the state of the economy and the kinds of marginalisation created by a market economy. The Social Exclusion Unit in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister described it as follows: “a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, unfair discrimination, poor housing, high crime, bad health and family breakdown” (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004:4).

A broader use of the term is deployed in this study. Social exclusion is understood to arise from both the structural conditions that prevail in a society, such as described in the paragraph above, and those ideological factors, such as belief and political affiliation, which determine whether individuals and groups enjoy the rights to which others outside of their group have access. Combinations of structural and ideological forces may also arise and need to be recognised. In these terms it is a multidimensional phenomenon that manifests itself in physical exclusion and psychological forms of marginalisation.

Attention to education exclusion is important as reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and those of the Education for All (EFA) commitments will not be possible if large numbers of children are not able to access school and use to their maximum benefit the opportunities that school might provide. Thus, attention to both out of school children as well as children who are unable to sustain participation in schooling, is crucial given the commitment of national governments supported by development agencies to ensuring that by 2015 all children enrol and complete a full course of primary schooling. The reality is that for 77 million children globally access to schooling has not been achieved (UNESCO, 2007). Even in countries with relatively stable governments and state provided education systems, there are many children still out of school. India is a good example of such a case, where significant numbers of marginalised children are not reached despite the expansion of education services since the 1990s.

Education exclusion is a facet of social exclusion and manifests itself in a spectrum of social and psychological inequities. Extreme educational exclusion arises when individuals and groups find themselves systematically excluded from rights and entitlements which are theirs as a result of their membership of a society and includes denial of resources and facilities. At the other end of the spectrum exclusion could take the form of subtle forms of manipulation of the delivery of educational goods and services to favour some individuals and groups at the expense of others, or the reinforcement of negative or discriminatory social attitudes towards particular children. In these cases, while the effects are often as damaging as when extreme forms of exclusion occur, proof is harder to adduce.

Education policies have been particularly oriented to expanding supply to ensure universal enrolment of children. Poor supply of quality schooling continues to be a factor constraining the access of different groups of children to school. However, even with qualitative improvements and greater supply, it is apparent that there are consistent gaps in the education participation and achievement of different social groups. Inequalities thus need to be seen not just in relation to the physical access of children to school but also in relation to the quality of the education experience and its ability to maximise the potential of every individual child, build self-esteem and develop capacities to function fully as citizens.

Barton (1999: 58) explains the challenge thus:

Inclusive education is not an end in itself, but a means to an end – the creation and maintenance of an inclusive society. As such, the interest is with all citizens, their well-being and security. This is a radical conception ... It is ultimately about the transformation of a society and its formal institutional arrangements, such as education. This means change in the values, priorities and policies that support and perpetuate practices of exclusion and discrimination.

Developing a policy response

The policy response, particularly in the industrialised or developed world, has been to actively tackle social exclusion of individuals and groups of citizens to ensure that they become part of society. In policy terms, addressing social exclusion can be understood as comprising a number of processes. First, it requires the identification of groups who are excluded. Second, there is a need to understand why individuals and groups might be excluded. Third, in response to this, there is a need to institute processes which either (i) eliminate the barriers which lead to discrimination experienced by these individuals and groups and which preclude their involvement or participation in the democratic processes and activities of the society, or (ii) secure, through mechanisms such as targeting and affirmative action, their receipt of essential goods and services where access is limited. Fourth, social exclusion requires joined up policy across different social sectors and services. This is discussed at greater length below.

In paying attention to the scale of the problem of exclusion it is important to understand why it arises. Most commentators on the subject would agree that exclusion is rarely mono-causal in its origin and that education exclusion is a process in which different societal factors (social, political, and economic) coalesce to prevent children from enrolling in and completing school.

Given the interlocking nature of these factors, social exclusion in education cannot be tackled as a single-issue policy response. It requires joined up policy, planning and service delivery across a broad range of services.

Taking an integrated view of the problem of social exclusion allows us to examine and understand processes whereby some groups of children remain systematically unable to participate in and benefit from these services. This in particular suggests viewing education systems as interlinked with wider societal processes and relationships including: children's relationships with each other, with their families and teachers; relationships between the wider community in which children and their families are located and the school and schooling processes; and between children's families and the wider economic, social and political opportunities they are able to access. This point is elaborated below.

First, access to education services is affected by the nature and form of education provision. The quality of the educational experience has a crucial effect on the demand for and completion of primary education. Retention in primary schooling and progression to upper primary and secondary education will continue to decrease as it becomes clear that for many the school services that are provided do not meet their needs, and are alienating and exclusionary.

Second, a social exclusion approach allows for a focus on processes by which exclusion is produced and reproduced. It allows for an examination of how certain social processes in society in general and the way governments provide services mean they do not reach the very groups that are targeted. Social exclusion throws light on the fact that the eradication of poverty and disadvantage should always be seen as a process and not an end in itself. Thus, while quick fixes and quick wins, and high profile interventions, are important in meeting the needs of the excluded, long term and deep seated change requires continuous policy attention and engagement.

Third, a social exclusion perspective opens up a larger and more complex domain of disadvantage for policy-makers to grapple with than does the conventional focus on poverty. It adds concerns with social inequality to long standing concerns with poverty. While factors relating to income and livelihoods have been identified as the important economic causes of exclusion, the cultural and social factors that lead different groups to experience and value education are important explanatory factors. Studying the interconnections between economic processes of exclusion and school experiences becomes essential in both countries, where ethnicity, gender and race identity overlap with poverty and deprivation, intensifying experiences of marginalisation.

Fourth, a social exclusion perspective signifies the importance of the need in current development research and policy to voice the concerns of marginalised groups. Strengthening the voice of the poor and marginalised in education is crucial not just for effective policy formulation, but also to close the gap between intention and practice. While research highlights the interplay of factors that contribute to exclusion from education, there is less focus on linking policy processes and outcomes to the ways in which people locate their experience and relationship with institutions of policy delivery within their multiple and overlapping identities.

Fifth, there is much educational research about what factors can explain lack of participation and retention in schooling, particularly focused on school and classroom based processes of differentiation and reproduction of social structures. In the Indian context, that there is caste-based disadvantage in education has been clearly demonstrated in the rich body of education research in the country, and has equally been acknowledged as an important policy concern in educational government documents. In the South African context various researchers have pointed out the extent to which the system of apartheid education has systematically excluded groups of learners, a process which it is noted continues in post apartheid society. However, little research has been done that 'joins up' the social and school-related dimensions of education, or studies on how excluded groups experience specific inclusion policies that are put in place in their name.

Sixth, the meanings ascribed to dominant factors such as 'caste' in India and 'race' in South Africa in relation to policies of educational inclusion and exclusion need to be analysed, to ascertain how issues relating to 'caste' and 'race' are framed within policy and the processes of policy delivery. Without a deep understanding of how categories of 'caste' and 'race' are socially constructed and continuously evolving (McCarthy, 1990; Quigley, 1993; Gupta, 2000) it is likely that policy approaches will misinterpret the challenges of inclusion. Thus, the historical context, policies themselves, and an understanding of what excluded groups view as the best route to greater inclusion into education, are policy lessons to be considered.

Finally, social exclusion offers a perspective on education that allows for the examination of the effects and impact of policy. Effective access to education, particularly at the lower levels, crucially depends on how policies are implemented and received at the institutional/community/individual levels. Much attention has been devoted to the formulation of education policy, but limited attention has been paid to how policies are implemented and received. The extent of the 'policy gap' between intention and practice is now acknowledged (Sayed and Jansen, 2000) as a crucial factor in explaining why people do, or do not, take up educational opportunities. This gap requires scrutiny.

1.2 The country context

We have identified India and South Africa as focus countries for this study, as they exemplify different approaches to dealing with educational inclusion and exclusion. While differing in many respects, both countries share a strong stated commitment to broadening access and providing targeted strategies of inclusion for marginalised groups.

South African education has witnessed significant changes since the democratic elections of 1994 (Sayed 2000). These have included the closure of the fifteen different public education administrations associated with different racial and ethnic groups and the establishment of a single state system with a national Department of Education and nine provincial departments. The national department is responsible for establishment of national norms and standards as well as for monitoring the implementation of policy by the provincial departments. New legislation and policy as changed the educational landscape, including, *inter alia*: a new framework for education policy development (National Education Policy Act; 1996); the

reorganisation of the funding and governance of schools (South African Schools Act, 1996); the introduction (and later revision) of a new learner-led, outcome-based curriculum (Curriculum 2005); the restructuring of the further education sector (Further Education and Training Act, 1998); and the development of various policies on a range of areas, including teacher education, teacher provisioning, special needs education, quality assurance and education management development.

Underlying these changes is the recognition of the need to redress the imbalances of the past and the need to create more flexible, responsive and diverse systems of education provision. A key component of the policies has been attempts made to ensure that schools are racially mixed and that redress is effected. Educational redress is understood to involve offering access to learners to all types of schooling irrespective of race, changing the teaching force to reflect the composition of the population, providing funds to schools that have had/have to educate the majority of marginalised learners, and policies of affirmative action in education.

Enrolment rates at secondary school level in South Africa have been high by the standards of Sub-Saharan Africa. However there is a legacy of very unequal provision in terms of facilities, performance, and performance giving access to further study. Many patterns in the schooling system derive from the segregated system that has been displaced, despite the changes since 1994 (Sayed, 1999a, 1999b). South Africa was chosen for this research because while the broad goals of educational policy are laudable and there is an impressive array of dazzling and far reaching progressive education policies, questions regarding the implementation and effects of such policies remain unanswered. Analyses of policy in South Africa have mainly taken the form of evaluation studies using snap shot survey methods (HSRC, 1999; CHE, 1999). Less attention has been paid to exploring in detail, at the school level, how inclusive policies are implemented and experienced, why policies on non-racism in educational provision still do not translate into non-racial schools, or why and how schools take on different racial characteristics orientated along specific class lines. There is an urgent need, after over ten years of democratic rule, to see what the impact of the educational policy changes are, using race as a starting point. For development, a close study of South Africa provides important lessons in the complex interrelationships between creating an enabling policy environment and policy implementation with respect to including the marginalised.

In India, caste has proven an enduring albeit changing social institution, withstanding legal, policy, and political attempts to overturn the discrimination that has accompanied social stratification. Caste is a complex social phenomenon (de Haan and Nayak 1995; Gupta 2000), with ex-untouchable groups experiencing varying levels of oppression on the one hand, and an increasing degree of assertion and political mobilisation on the other (Mendelsohn and Vicziany, 1998). The intersections with economic disadvantage are very strong, and a large proportion of rural Scheduled Caste (SC) households are landless and clustered within low-wage occupations, in many cases occupations that are considered to be socially stigmatising. The correlation between low caste status and economic disadvantage persists, despite the occupational bases of much of the traditional⁵ differentiation between castes undergoing transformation.

⁵ For example, hereditary low-caste occupations, such as skin and hide work, carrying carcasses, scavenging, and drum-beating, amongst others, (Singh, 1999).

In contrast to South Africa, where race forms part of the political debate (e.g. the National Conference on Racism in September 2000), public policy discourses on eliminating caste-based differentiation in access to education have been caught up in the competitive politics unleashed by affirmative action. The evolution of the present-day compensatory discrimination approach, articulated within the Constitutional guarantee of equality as well as welfare targeted to the most deprived, merits study in terms of its impact on the lives of those targeted, and the extent to which it has facilitated inclusion of groups into education. Policies to make education more inclusive have focused on generating 'demand' through offering incentives such as scholarships, food rations, and preferential access to higher education and public employment. They also focus on making community structures relating to schooling more representative of marginalised groups within villages. The impact of these policies in the context of socially divided communities and inequalities in the distribution of wealth and assets requires study in the Indian context (Subrahmanian 2000).

A particular issue that needs investigation is the impact of 'access' policies on the inclusion of children from marginal social groups into schooling. The contrast with South Africa would in particular highlight the role of policy and institutional mechanisms that have been put in place in both countries, which have a very different and historically influenced approach to tackling education exclusion, in the context of explicitly inclusive constitutional mandates in both.

1.3 Structure of the report

The above section outlines the importance of studying inclusion for the broader development agenda and to promote educational opportunities for all. It highlights the value of studying this through the frame of exclusion and inclusion and developing cross-national learning.

This synthesis report of research carried out in India and South Africa builds on two separate country reports that present the findings of studies carried out that examined the policy environment in countries, the structures and mechanisms in place to promote inclusion, and detailed empirical investigation of the practice of inclusion at the school community level.

Drawing on this research, this report focuses on the policy dimensions of 'inclusive' education, framed within the wider international and national policy concerns with promoting 'Education for All'. In this study, we are particularly interested in how schools respond to the challenge of including 'all children', given the diversity of social identities, the prevalence of economic, social and political inequalities, and the challenges of forging coherent educational policies and institutional mechanisms that respond to the interlocking nature of inequalities experienced by marginalised groups (differentiated by race in South Africa, and caste in India). Interlocking inequalities require policies that recognise these multiple and intersectoral concerns, and this study is an attempt to situate education within the wider social, political and economic spheres that impact on educational outcomes.

In the report we focus on three sets of issues which shape policies designed to tackle social exclusion. First, we focus on the supply side of inclusion policy examining government actions to provide services to the marginalised. In this regard, some of the main issues we examine are:

the nature and form of the enabling policy environment created; the structures and mechanisms created to promote inclusion; and the extent to which such policies are responsive to and reflect the values and experiences of the excluded.

Second, we examine the institutional level practices, effects and outcomes of policies of education inclusion. These are viewed through the lenses of institutional ethos and policy, access, governance and curriculum. Third, the report examines the lesson for policy and practice in tackling education exclusion.

The report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 will provide an in-depth analysis of the literature on inclusion and exclusion in education. The discussion focuses on the differences between what is described as a ‘northern’ as opposed to a ‘southern’ perspective.

The methodology developed and used for the study is described in **Chapter 3**. The chapter draws attention to the issues involved in researching inclusion and exclusion and raises questions about the nature of the research process in projects such as these.

Chapters 4 and 5 contain the findings of the South African and Indian case-studies. Each chapter begins with a policy contextualisation and then outlines the major themes emerging from the research at the school level. The chapters develop a classification of degrees of inclusion which attempts to characterise the differences evident in inclusionary and exclusionary practices in schools.

Chapter 6 pays attention to some of the main cross cutting issues which influence the nature, content, and effect of inclusion education policies in South Africa and India. The chapter highlights the similarities and differences in the ways in which race and caste operate in the two countries.

Chapter 7 outlines the main policy issues emerging from the research.

This research has been conducted as a partnership between several research and educational institutions in India and South Africa. The building of these partnerships has been a critical part of the research process. From the design of the research framework, to the analytical framework developed to unpack the research findings emanating from different sites, the teams in the three countries that have formed partnerships for this research, India, UK and South Africa, have met regularly, interacted continuously, developed joint outputs (papers, conference proceedings, etc). The value of this approach is that it has facilitated South-to-South collaboration and lesson learning, a key objective of the research. Moreover, it has generated rich insights about the ways in which two major developing country governments seek to provide ‘education for all’, overcoming entrenched historical legacies of inequity.

Chapter 2: Exclusion and Inclusion in Education: Key Issues and Debates

2.1 Introduction

This chapter develops arguments that contribute to building a framework for theorising educational exclusion. Much work has been done towards building conceptual analyses of the dynamics of ‘social exclusion’, particularly for developing countries with large populations who are locked out of redistributive processes and participation in decision-making. Within educational policy however, exclusion has largely been theorised in relation to the treatment of children with special needs, notably those with a range of physical, mental or learning disabilities. In this chapter, we set the framework for the conceptual approach to our research as a whole, where we shift the debates in education away from a narrower engagement with exclusion based on ability to a wider engagement with structural processes of material, human and social deprivation, locating education as one of many interlocking processes through which social exclusion is played out and ultimately shaped.

Literature on ‘inclusive’ education also recognises the importance of broadening the approach to embrace a range of forms of disadvantage. While much of the work in the educational inclusion debate is cast within the framework of special needs education, there have also been significant theoretical inputs which have sought to place the issue of disability alongside other forms of oppression, in a human rights framework. Inclusive education is therefore increasingly being viewed as an agenda which aims at fundamental educational transformation with a view to developing an equitable education system which echoes and reflects the fundamentals of an equitable society (Dyson, 1999: 40). This shift finds echo in Slee’s (2001) argument that the discussion in ‘inclusive’ education ought not to start from the premise of how to include special needs students in ‘regular schools’, but must fundamentally question the very basis on which these schools are regarded as ‘regular’. In other words, addressing education ‘inclusion’ requires an interrogation of the terms and conditions of what is defined as normatively ‘inclusive’.

A major challenge of this conceptual terrain is how to define terms without being prescriptive. ‘Exclusion’ is recognised as a process that can arise from social norms of differentiation which are made routine through generalised ‘labelling’, categorisation and definition of population groups. Given that most policies rely on a significant level of labelling and classification of ‘users’ and ‘beneficiaries’, and are invariably based on assumptions about the character and circumstances of the normative ‘user’ or ‘beneficiary’ which the policy is trying to reach, the policy terrain is itself exclusionary. A classic example is the ‘male breadwinner’ model that is associated with the systematic exclusion of women from economic and labour policies, with impacts on all other aspects of human life and social equality. In other words, attempting to define who is excluded and how can in turn create new categories and labels that result in further marginalisation.

A significant caution, therefore, is the danger of treating ‘exclusion’ and ‘inclusion’ as binary categories, forming neat opposites. The term ‘inclusion’ by definition implies to be part of and to be included, while the term ‘exclusion’ suggests its opposite; to be removed, to be expelled, and to be rejected. Beyond these apparently straightforward definitions, however, lie a range of ideologies, political values which point to the social context and socially constituted construction of the notions of inclusion and exclusion. Underlying these political debates are critical issues of citizenship and the nature and characteristics of citizenship at local, regional, national and even global levels. These discussions have become urgent in the context of an increasing awareness of the complex ways in which social inequality is experienced in different parts of the world.

2.2 The concepts of inclusion and exclusion

The concept of social exclusion currently lies at the heart of vibrant debates on a range of issues notably whether it provides a definitive alternative paradigm to ‘poverty’, and whether as a concept developed historically in the context of industrialised countries, it can have anything to offer the vastly different socio-economic circumstances of developing countries (Popkewitz & Lindblad 2000, Slee 2000, Kabeer 2000, de Haan 2000, Betts 2001, Preece 1999). The conceptual ‘capacity’ of the term to shed light on a wide range of contextualised understandings and practices of discrimination remains to be tested.

A review of the various definitions of exclusion (Sparkes; 1999:1; de Haan, 2000; Gillborn and Mirza, 2000: 6; Sen, 2000) suggests the following key features:

- Social exclusion is a process, linked to but differentiated from poverty, and is a concept that explains the experiences of *groups* of people.
- Social exclusion is a holistic concept which includes deprivation in the economic, social, and political sphere.
- Exclusion is a process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society in which they live.
- Exclusion is a societal process – society at large is responsible for generating processes, systems and institutions premised on equal opportunity which it views as a counterpoise to exclusion.

A starting point in this discussion is to recognise that social exclusion, irrespective of definitions that attempt to explain it, is “...a theoretical concept, a lens through which people look at reality, and not reality itself. ... (s)ocial exclusion remains a concept and the discourse emphasises that it is a way of looking at society” (de Haan, n.d.: 28; see also Betts, 2001:2).

The value of the concept is that it captures an important dimension of the experience of certain groups who are excluded from social and other institutional processes that determine social recognition and acceptance, equal distribution of opportunities and resources, and fair treatment. Second, it allows attention to be paid to the processes of exclusion of groups in ways which could help develop policy that is informed by and aims to redress these dynamics. It is an opportunity to explore precisely this textured terrain through a different frame. Most importantly, such an approach requires a focus on the experiences of those excluded as an entry-point into understanding the underlying dynamics that result in negative outcomes for particular groups of individuals.

Social exclusion is now widely applied in the context of developing countries where social inequities in the process of development (for example, see DFID, 2006), and now globalisation, raise fundamental questions about structural inequalities in the distribution of critical resources and entitlements, and the role of development policy in addressing these.

However, alongside the increasing policy use of the terminologies of ‘inclusion’ and ‘exclusion’, there are concerns about analytical rigour and value and questions about the utility of the notion of social exclusion in contexts where structural inequality may be the dominant social pattern (Kabeer and Cook, 2000). For some, the concept of exclusion has limited analytical and policy

Box 2.1 Paradigms of Social Exclusion

A useful classificatory schema for mapping the diverse paradigms that have given rise to more concerted thinking about social exclusion in development is developed by Silver (cited in de Haan, 2000). In this schema three paradigms of social exclusion are presented.

The Solidarity Paradigm

This paradigm is dominant in France and is influenced by the work of Rousseau who argued that “exclusion is the rupture of a social bond between the individual and society that is cultural and moral ... the poor, unemployed and ethnic minorities are defined as outsiders” (de Haan, 2000:6). Exclusion, according to Rousseau, produced “outsiders”, and divided society. Inclusionary measures emanating from this analysis have in mind the objective of re- establishing social solidarity based on a common humanity.

The Specialisation Paradigm

Based on the work of Hobbes and dominant in the United States, this approach proposes that individuals have specialist skills to contribute in society and that their identity as citizens arises from their unfettered ability to contribute to the good of society. This approach assumes that: Individuals are able to move across boundaries of social differentiation and economic division of labour. Liberal models of citizenship emphasise the contractual exchange of rights and obligations ... exclusion reflects discrimination, the drawing of group distinctions that denies individuals full access to or participation in exchange or interaction. Causes of exclusion are often seen in uninformed rights and market failures (de Haan, 2000:6).

The Monopoly Paradigm

This approach is influenced by Weber’s work which argues that “the social order is coercive, imposed through hierarchical power relations. Exclusion is defined as a consequence of the formation of group monopolies [which] restrict access of outsiders through social closure” (de Haan: 2000: 6).

purchase as it is perceived to weaken the centrality of key issues such as poverty and gender inequality. The argument is made that exclusion as a notion underplays the role of power in the experience of inequality (cf. Kabeer, 2000). For others, it has value in the focus it provides on the experiences of the most marginalised, and on the everyday social relations that have the power to determine life chances, opportunities and experiences (de Haan, 2000). There are also concerns, as highlighted earlier, about the limits of constructing binary categories of ‘exclusion’ and ‘inclusion’ and the potential for such reductionism to underplay the complexities of social relations which have elements of both. These arguments are reviewed below.

Exclusion and policy displacement

A critical concern in development thinking about the concept of social exclusion is that it potentially displaces a strong policy concern with equity. It has been argued that the notion of social exclusion may, when applied to social policy, result in strategies which do not confront directly the material conditions under which people live, thus undermining a focus on poverty. The second policy concern about the notion of social exclusion is that it essentialises the categories of 'the excluded'. Thus, the excluded may be treated as one homogeneous category in which differences between men and women and other social groups, and in the bases and mechanisms for their exclusion, are subsumed into one, thereby displacing the particularities of experience of exclusion.

For example, many question the usage of social exclusion as a concept which fails to interrogate who is being included or excluded, who is doing the including or excluding, into what and from what are people being included and excluded, and who declares or decides that people are branded 'excluded' (Anderson and Collins, 1998; Betts, 2001; de Haan, 2000; McCarthy, 1997; O'Brien et al, 1997; and Slee, 2001).

There is also concern that the process of tackling social exclusion might come to be read in normative ways, without considering who defines optimal outcomes for a society in terms of participation, what is desired and valued, and how this may be attained. There may then be a failure to understand how inclusion may itself generate new forms of exclusion without altering the patterns of social, economic and political domination/inequity in a meaningful way. The most obvious way this occurs is through the process of assimilation whereby the excluded are 'assimilated' in disadvantageous ways, an argument with strong resonances with the view that the assimilative nature of the Western project is at its core a process of alienation of colonial people from their own histories and pasts (see Chatterjee, 1999). In South Africa, for instance, as Jansen (1998) argues, while 'black' students are being 'included' in formerly 'white' schools in South Africa, they encounter a hostile, anti-cultural environment in which assumptions are fixed about what constitutes, for example, good schooling and appropriate language policy, inflicting damage to the self-esteem and confidence of children. For example children may learn that English has status while Zulu does not; that good teachers and role models are 'white'; that appropriate history is European; and that failure is something that happens to 'non-white' children (Jansen, 1998).

Theorists of race, caste and gender also point out that what social exclusion fails to offer is a nuanced account of how race, caste and gender reflect differences between and within groups. This point is critical for both the Indian and the South African contexts where both race and caste have been used in homogenising kinds of ways, denying the deep differences of class, religion and of location, which characterise the divides that exist within these societies. It is these differences which the concept of social exclusion elides through creating a homogenised category called the excluded, so that, for example, 'scheduled castes' targeted for inclusion may have deep-seated gender differences, or intra-group differences may be ignored.

This problem of homogenisation derives from a notion of social exclusion which projects a form of social equality as an end-state that solves all divides. This does not take account of equity and

undermines the many related issues of justice. As Soudien notes in the South African context:

While the new and reformed government may meet the technical criteria for the achievement of equality in terms of race, it may overlook embedded inequalities which flow from class, culture, gender, religious and language disparities, many of which are refracted through the hidden curriculum (Soudien, 1998: 126).

The links with post-colonial analyses must not be under-estimated. The formal social equality and citizenship espoused in forms of analysis derived from the West ignore the deep structural alienations experienced by large swathes of the population. The way language works in both India and South Africa, where middle-class English and Englishness, for example, has come to define the standard for inclusion, is an important structural point of departure. The drafting of the Constitution in both India and South Africa represent moments of immense achievement, but their translation into rights for all citizens relies on literacy in the English language and particular values associated with elite groups, possibly resulting in exclusion.

Researchers have also questioned whether social exclusion is congruent with, leads to, or is caused by, poverty. There are researchers who see poverty as the primary determinant of exclusion. Thus to be poor is to be excluded. Nayak (1994) argues that poverty can be used as a determinant of social exclusion by virtue of the fact that people who are poor do not have access to certain goods and services. The reverse is also argued, viz. that those who are socially excluded from food for bare subsistence are, necessarily, poor. Caste, it can be argued, is directly linked to poverty.

Finally, it needs to be recognised that the dichotomous discourse of inclusion and exclusion tends to create the excluded as 'other' and sees the only movement in this problem as being that of the transformation of the excluded into the included (Rogers, 2000). It is important to acknowledge that some may consciously choose to exclude themselves from certain processes and opt to occupy alternative spaces (Robinson Pant, 2000). As Betts notes:

People without the commodified 'skills' advocated by the state are still participating socially, they themselves are subverting the dominant discourses, rather than being co-opted by them, whether these be the discourses of social inclusion/exclusion, oppression or liberation, or the formalisation/informalisation of the South African case (Betts, 2001:10).

The above point raises the question of including the marginalised in the determination of what it mean to be excluded. For example, where groups require economic redistribution as well as social recognition, policies have to account for both of these. As Kabeer argues:

A social exclusion perspective opens up a larger and more complex domain of disadvantage for policy-makers to grapple with than does the conventional focus on poverty. It adds concerns with social inequality to long standing concerns with poverty and it draws attention to the importance of respect and recognition in strategies for addressing disadvantage, along with more conventional preoccupations with the technicalities of needs identification and service delivery (Kabeer, 2000: 94).

To conclude, the social exclusion frame offers the opportunity for the policy making process to be reflexive, to involve persons in positions of power who, in the first instance, have instituted mechanisms and processes of injustice, drawing, where possible, as a result of globalisation, on global communication of such injustices.

Appropriate policies for addressing complex processes of social differentiation that impede social equality and result in persistently negative development outcomes have to be developed contextually. Such a formulation should involve the actors who will implement and effect transformation. Thus policies have to take account of all aspects of injustice. By simply adding a category of inequality as an afterthought, policies not only fail in what they seek to do, but alienate important and significant groups of activists who would otherwise be agents of implementation.

There remains the policy danger of believing that social inequality can be overcome by providing the same opportunities equally for all citizens. While this would go a long way towards correcting historic imbalances and injustices, it is short-sighted, because citizens' social positions do not arise from positions of social, economic and political equality. This approach also tends to lump inequalities together so that gender problems are dealt with in the same way as racial problems. However, the challenge lies in retaining a focus on 'universalism' or an integrated view of social equality while at the same time recognising the different needs and interests of differentially positioned social groups. As Slee (2001:117) points out, "most complex of all is the tension between the rejection of the 'one size fits all' approach to schooling (i.e. differentiation) and a potential drift into new segregations".

The challenges of promoting education 'inclusion'

As noted earlier, much of the work in the educational inclusion debate is cast within the framework of special needs education. Within this field there have been significant theoretical inputs which have sought to place the issue of disability alongside other forms of oppression in a human rights framework. Inclusive education is therefore viewed as an 'agenda' which aims at fundamental educational transformation with a view to developing an equitable education system which echoes and reflects the fundamentals of an equitable society (Dyson, 1999: 40).

Like the notion of exclusion in social policy, in education there is growing concern that the new thrust towards 'inclusion' may, whilst trying to find ways in which schooling can build bridges between different social groups, fail to anticipate the resistance that such attempts at integration may face. Jansen, for instance, highlights this development in the new South African dispensation. He observes the 'fear' of previous 'white' schools about opening their doors to learners previously excluded, the anticipated crisis of numbers and the challenge of diversity. He notes that:

...deafening silences remain on issues of curriculum, staffing policy, assessment or language policies of former 'white', 'coloured' or 'Indian' schools. One consequence of this misplaced focus is that while many 'black' students successfully enter 'white' schools, they encounter a hostile, anticultural environment in which assumptions are fixed about what constitutes good schooling, appropriate language policy and the like (Jansen, 1998: 102).

In education exclusion is experienced and manifest in a number of ways. The first form occurs at the level of accessing schools. As previously noted, educational exclusion is the reality of about 77 million children globally (UNESCO 2005). Even when the excluded do have access, they can be excluded from good quality learning. Economically poorer communities generally only have access to poorer quality education. Even if geographical differences are overcome the dominant cultures at schools may continue to alienate certain groups of learners.

The above raises the question of what learners are being ‘included into’. As Barton notes:

Inclusive education is not integration and is not concerned with the assimilation or accommodation of discriminated groups or individuals within existing socio-economic conditions and relations. It is not about making people as ‘normal’ as possible. Nor is it about the well-being of a particular oppressed or excluded group. Thus, the concerns go well beyond those of disablement. Inclusive education is not an end in itself, but a means to an end – the creation and maintenance of an inclusive society. As such, the interest is with all citizens, their well-being and security. This is a radical conception ... It is ultimately about the transformation of a society and its formal institutional arrangements, such as education. This means change in the values, priorities and policies that support and perpetuate practices of exclusion and discrimination. (Barton, 1999: 58)

This can be particularly sharply felt in relation to the inclusion of those groups who are defined by race or caste. Ogbu (1994) argues that the gap in school performance between ‘black’ and ‘white’ persists because its root, racial stratification, continues to function and because social mobility has fostered the growth of a ‘buffer’ ‘black’ middle class. Evidence suggests that irrespective of social class, ‘black’ children perform less well than ‘white’ children. Researchers have also had difficulty explaining the behaviour of ‘black’ students through the frame of social class and have repeatedly returned to the experience of the African-American struggle for understanding the limits of notions of inclusion. This explanation has powerful echoes both in the South African and Indian contexts.

2.3 Discourses of educational inclusion that influence policy

Partially flowing from the three paradigms identified above (see Box 2.1), four discourses about inclusion and exclusion can be identified in public policy, with relevance for education policy (Dyson, 1999). These are: (i) a rights and ethics discourse; (ii) an efficacy discourse; (iii) a political discourse; and (iv) a pragmatic discourse. These are not mutually exclusive, and elements can be found in the policy frameworks of different countries. A further discourse focuses on joined up policy.

The rights and ethics discourse

Influenced by solidarity type social frameworks, this discourse emerged in the 1950s with the intention of “equalising opportunities and spreading economic and cultural benefits more widely through society” (Dyson, 1999:39). Special education is seen as reproducing societal divides by separating ‘disabled’ persons from the rest of society and protecting such services from addressing the need for ‘integration’.

In response to this, a focus on ‘targeting’ has developed (Deacon, 2000; Tomasevski, 1997). Proponents of this view argue for the need for ‘well-resourced’ countries in the ‘developed’ world to redistribute resources globally so that those less developed countries are able to meet the basic rights of their citizens. In this light, then, notions of inclusion and exclusion provide governments with ‘measures’ to determine whether development targets in relation to social rights are being achieved.

The efficacy discourse

This discourse argues that inclusive schools are more cost-efficient, socially beneficial and educationally effective than segregated special schools. The efficacy discourse critiques special education arguing that expected outcomes of special programmes have appeared unsuccessful (Dyson, 1999:41). Special education is also seen as more costly in all respects, including overheads, infra-structural costs and human resource investment (Dyson, 1999).

The political discourse

In this discourse, marginalised groups argue for their political rights under the rubric of securing inclusion. In the political process, they may align themselves with other groups or other struggles to broaden their lobbying base. The political struggle of marginalised groups may be at the level of ideas and concepts, challenging conventional views about themselves, and changing policies.

The pragmatic discourse

This discourse is practical in focusing on the dimensions of inclusive education as well as the means by which it may be enacted. Certain protagonists of this discourse believe that inclusive schools have ‘determinate characteristics’ in relation to structure, programmes, systems, practices, culture and ethos which distinguish them from non-inclusive schools. The discourse is also concerned with outlining an ‘inclusive pedagogy’ which relates to theories of instruction and learning (Dyson, 1999: 42). The discourse promotes the view that ‘right action’ in relation to policy and practice will lead to successful inclusive education.

Joined-up policy

Joined-up policy is another discourse which has emerged in recent years. During the era of the Thatcher government in the United Kingdom, for example, moves were made to limit the role of intermediate levels of government such as local authorities, including health and education authorities, to assert a stronger degree of control over the delivery of goods and services (see Smith, 2005). In responding to this increased centralisation, the Labour government argued for a focus on what it called localism and joined-up government. Smith (2005:3) describes the initiatives of the Labour government:

It was argued that the silos of departmentalism resulted in contradictory or perverse outcomes. The government also recognized that many social problems required a holistic approach: poor housing, low educational achievement, teenage pregnancies, high

unemployment and poverty are inexorably linked. To resolve one of the problems requires action on all of them.

Out of this thinking emerged first the development of joined-up policy-making and then that of joined-up delivery, an approach which has been taken up in many countries around the world. In South Africa, it has been taken up under the guise of what is called the multi-sectoral approach (see Pieterse, 2005). Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), for example, have become a stock tool for government and are now the conventional basis on which many social issues have been addressed (see Kraak et al, 2006). In the Western Cape Provincial Government in South Africa, for example, the Premier, Ebrahim Rasool, has clustered government departments in cognate zones, requiring policy sign-off by these whenever a department makes new proposals.

The shift from 'joined up' policy thinking to inclusive practice in delivering services, however, requires serious consideration of institutional reform. Exclusion operates not just through 'poor policy' but requires serious attention to the practices of exclusion evident in service delivery. In an assessment of service delivery constraints to inclusive service delivery based on case studies of good practice in South Asia, Gardener and Subrahmanian (2006) identify the following lessons for promoting 'inclusive' development:

- the importance of providing empirical evidence of exclusion and disaggregated information systems, along with advocacy strategies based on such evidence;
- needs based and targeted responses within programmes that focus attention on excluded groups – such as targeted incentives to cover/subsidise costs and give social recognition (such as exemption schemes, identity cards, stipends);
- integrated supply and demand side approaches – focusing on both livelihoods as well as improving political and social capital;
- community-based approaches which encourage inclusion by exposing exclusion through participatory survey and monitoring, community-based management through local bodies with mechanisms to ensure representation and accountability of excluded groups, community involvement in the care of vulnerable groups. Community involvement helps to build a constituency of support for inclusion and promotes social accountability, though it also requires substantial capacity building and nurturing to help processes to sustain;
- inclusive accountability mechanisms for central government programmes and local level management, which include representation of excluded groups on government monitoring bodies, amongst others.

2.4 The approach of the research: an interlocking framework

The purpose of this chapter has been to unpack the density of the notion of exclusion. The key argument is that exclusion has to be understood in more complex terms. Perspectives from the North tend to fail to recognise how inclusion can produce new forms of exclusion, by not problematising the assimilative nature of some initiatives or by seeing the 'excluded' as a homogeneous group.

McCarthy (1999) proposes an interlocking framework (see Sayed, 2002) where race, gender, class, region, and language, all intersect in ways that recognise an individual or group's unique and particular experiences. This approach is also similar to Hall's (1996) 'theory of articulation' which argues that these factors cannot be placed on a two-dimensional grid that simply seeks the intersection of two of the categories. Such a grid would merely tell of the dual effect of two of these categories on a number of groups. The concept of an interlocking framework recognises the highly complex ways in which race, caste, class, gender and other categories intersect and inter-relate to produce unique individual and group experiences. The fact that there is a dominant articulating principle of conflict or poverty, or inequality does and should not undermine the prevalence of other levels of injustice. Rather, the political approach pivots around a primary and articulating factor which might be dominant moment, but with recognition of the complex context in which injustice occurs and the fluid and shifting social settings that obtain in many societies, including those that we are considering in this research.

'Nonsynchronicity' thus helps explain the contradictory nature in which relations of domination 'articulate' to present differently textured conditions, and in addition, the way in which struggles may engage with these interfaces in unique and peculiar ways, re-shaping and sometimes transforming the dynamic to produce a different set of contradictions.

An interlocking analysis, which attempts to acknowledge and work with the multiple sources of inequality and marginalisation that operate in a specific social sphere alert to the principle of non-synchronicity and attempts to recognise and work with the shifting nature of domination and subordination. Central in this analysis is recognising how dominant forms of oppression and exclusion articulate and mobilise other forms of these phenomena to reconstitute constantly the experience of exclusion. Racism, for example, in these terms constantly reinvents itself by accommodating the interests of the marginalised but presents itself in new forms. The discussion in the South African case-study below makes clear how this process works. The same could be said for caste, where analysis suggests that upper-caste groups are able, repeatedly, to find new ways in which the subordination of *dalit* groups might be secured. What non-synchronicity does is urge the recognition of the shifting modes of subordination. It is also consonant with newer analyses in post-colonial studies (see Brooks, 2000) which have attempted to show the intersection of different forms of discrimination through investigations of the genealogy of oppression.

In particular, we are interested in the 'culture' and 'politics that inhere within educational institutions, in our case, schools, and how these are moulded by, and in turn shape, processes and outcomes of attempts at inclusion, but which are often at odds with educational policy commitments. These questions are critical for giving specificity to the ways in which exclusion is activated at local levels, and for illustrating some of the ways in which the disjunction between enunciated policy and received practice comes about. An important point of departure for this study is that both India and South Africa promulgate far-reaching and indeed progressive laws and regulations. Their constitutions, for example, carry exemplary status in the developing world. And yet neither society has been able to fulfil its commitments. This study, working with schools, seeks to explore how the history and politics of the 'local' influences, often negatively, the larger state project of universalism, social justice and inclusion.

Applying the interlocking framework to institutional contexts, the following domains have informed our research approach and methodology:

- 1) *The point of institutional access*: Access policies determine who does and doesn't have access to particular institutions. Students are often excluded on the basis of economic status or geographical location with schools only accepting students who fall within their 'catchment' area. Other levels of access relate closely to institutional access in terms of a school's dominant culture undermining the cultures of some of its learners.
- 2) *Institutional setting and ethos*: Institutions may formally include, but subtly continue to exclude, learners. For example, particular indicators of inclusion are participation in school structures such as the Student Representatives' Council, sports teams and also participation in the classroom. Governance of institutions is a key area that determines not only policies pertaining to access, but also those relating to institutional culture and practice.
- 3) *The curriculum*: The curriculum is a focus of power. The curriculum has to address not only the varied interests of its expanded learner-base, but equally those aspects that reinforce inequality. New students may be included without any changes made to the curriculum to reflect their interests and histories or to offer 'new ways of seeing'.
- 4) *Institutional setting and policy*: The relations between institutions and their wider social contexts need to be taken into account. Policies pertaining to access and to institutional culture and practice need to be understood in terms of how they are implemented. There is a need for greater understanding of the dynamics involved, to gain a more complex understanding of what exactly each institution includes and excludes, and how and why these processes develop in the way they do. These interlocking domains form the basis of the research approach taken in this research across all sites in India and South Africa. The detail of the approach and methodology are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology of the study. It describes the objectives and approach of the study. An account of the research approach in South Africa and India is provided and key limitations of the study outlined. The study is largely a qualitative one though quantitative methods, such as surveys, were used where appropriate.

3.2 Research objectives

The research objectives of this study were to:

- review critically education policies in South Africa and India designed to include marginalised groups, using the categories of race and caste as primary starting points for an analysis of processes of exclusion and inclusion;
- provide a nuanced account, in carefully selected sites, of the mechanisms and processes of educational inclusion and exclusion for different racial and caste groups;
- provide policy makers with an account of the effects of specific policies of inclusion in South Africa and India education, in terms of the experiences, understanding and perspectives of the policy ‘target groups’.

A wider objective was to utilise the research findings to reflect on what the achievement of ‘inclusive’ education, particularly with reference to schooling, may entail, in contexts where wider processes of social exclusion are well known to have marked the educational and other experiences of historically and structurally disadvantaged groups (Sayed, 2003).

3.3 Research questions and hypotheses

The questions guiding the study were:

- What are the conceptual and philosophical underpinnings of inclusive educational policies in respect of the groups who have been marginalised under the apartheid and caste systems?
- What specific mechanisms and strategies have national and selected state/provincial educational departments put in place to ensure educational inclusion and overcome specific histories of exclusion?
- What are the factors that shape exclusion from education? How do different race and caste groups experience and respond to specific educational policies designed to provide access and inclusion? What are the intended and unintended outcomes of educational policies designed to foster inclusion?

3.4 Research approach and methods

3.4.1 Analytical framework

The term ‘exclusion’ describes the outcome of being ‘left out’ or locked out of public, market or community resources and institutions. Defining the approach of this study to ‘exclusion’ is important, given the wide scope of processes and outcomes to which the term refers. The term refers both to notions of ‘process’ as well as ‘outcomes’ and their overt/covert manifestations, and spans the micro, meso and macro levels of institutional interplay. Further, race and caste are ‘bivalent’ forms of exclusion, rooted both in economic and cultural discrimination (Kabeer, 2000). Hence using both as primary entry-points for the study of exclusion provides the advantage of understanding how economic and cultural forms of exclusion intersect and reinforce each other in different contexts.

A four-fold analytical framework was developed by the research teams for both countries to articulate a common set of questions that would cut across the diverse contexts, even within each country that was being studied. The four aspects of exclusion/inclusion identified as central to elaborating the experience of schooling for diverse racial and caste groups were:

- *Access*: entry to and meaningful participation in schooling;
- *Participation and governance*: engagement with the school and the learning process through participation in rule-defining and rule-setting processes;
- *Curriculum*: the transaction of learning through formal and hidden texts and practices;
- *Identity*: the self-perceptions and perceptions of others around children of their social value and worth.

Using this framework to generate research questions, findings from both India and South Africa were then articulated in terms of a continuum of practices, namely weakly inclusive, moderately inclusive and strongly inclusive schools.

Weakly inclusive schools have no policies and demonstrate little understanding of their obligations to newcomers to their schools. They may come to this weak position either because of internal inertia, or because they have ceded the initiative to an authority outside of themselves, or because they deliberately wish to preserve, for whatever reason, the structure and the social arrangements that they inherited (for example, from the apartheid era in South Africa, or from a continuously evolving set of social structures that intersected with different types of state, the colonial and the modern in India).

Moderately inclusive schools have some policies, are aware that exclusion is happening inside the school and make some attempt to engage with these realities. Moderately inclusive schools may be characterised by internal conflict or weak leadership, or, as in the case of some ‘white’ schools, in South Africa, a problematic understanding of what inclusion constitutes, for example in premising policies on strong assimilationist principles. They show little awareness of alternative political orientations and possibilities. Their primary epistemological framework – often that of middle-class judgements and attitudes to learning and teaching which are underpinned by strong individualistic philosophies – dismisses the possibility that every-day life

and knowledge formation might take their validity from other understandings of the world. In the process, those forms of understanding which are perceived to be African, or *Dalit* for example, are not given any credibility.

Strongly inclusive schools are self-conscious institutions which deliberately set out to include as comprehensively as they can. They design policies which are reflective and which are regularly revised to take up new problems. Schools such as these are active sites of internal and external dialogue. They regularly subject themselves to appraisal and review and acknowledge that they need to return to their policies.

This continuum of inclusivity was then applied to each of the domains in our research framework – questions of access, governance and participation, and curriculum and learning.

3.4.2 Methodology

The research drew largely on qualitative methodology. Much quantitative assessment of education disadvantage has been done in India, drawing conclusions about the nature of caste-based inequality in education on the basis of statistical evidence. This material provided the broad assertions – that the scale of inequality is great, shrinking in some contexts but widening in others – based on which the case for ethnographic research of the nature undertaken in this project was made. Multiple factors go into shaping the education experiences of young people, and these operate in the overlapping spaces of home, market, state and community. As the nature of much policy directed at excluded groups operates on the basis of a concept of ‘group equity’, the community thus becomes a crucial part of the story of educational inclusion. By focusing on localised ethnographic accounts of the experiences of the ‘ethos’ of schooling, we sought in this project to surface issues operating in these overlapping spaces. Gaining conceptual clarity on exclusion involves using qualitative, reflexive and participatory methods to explore life stories and to explore the overt and covert forms of social processes and access to resources that shape identity, power and their relationship with education. Quantitative data collection has therefore not played a major role in this research, except to keep track of information about the cohorts interviewed in each site.

The research approach methods utilised were developed by country research teams within a collaboratively designed framework through workshops which brought the research team together in the closing months of 2000 and in early 2001.

3.4.3 Phases of the research

The research was conceptualised and implemented as a four phase project:

The *first phase* involved a documentary review of literature on aspects of inclusion. This phase identified key trends, summarised recent empirical studies, and located general policy issues in experience and practice with a view to critically examining the discourses of education exclusion and inclusion.

The *second phase* involved a critical review of the policy environments in both countries. This involved collecting and analysing legislation and relevant Education Acts, planning documents and data from management information systems, internal and external reports from Ministries and from development partners, and academic research studies. This process helped identify issues that needed more exploration and allowed current developments to be placed in an appropriate historical and institutional context.

The *third phase* obtained data for the project through observation, student surveys, student interview schedules, teacher interview schedules, and parent semi-structured interviews. An observation schedule was developed which attempted to document and record the most pertinent facets of the classroom experience relating to inclusion and exclusion. Diaries and field notes were kept. The administering of student questionnaires followed observations. While teachers administered the questionnaires, the researchers made preliminary selections of students for interviews.

The *final phase* comprised analysis and writing the report.

Collaborative research entailed the articulation of a joint analytical framework, as discussed above. In addition, the research teams from both countries met regularly and visited field sites together. The common framework provided reference points that aided dialogue and learning, although in each country they were elaborated and extended to suit the specific contexts being studied.

3.5 The research in South Africa

Thirteen schools were studied (see Box 3.1). Students in South Africa were selected based on the following criteria: gender, race, language, academic ability (mixed ability) and personality (extrovert and introvert).⁶ The interview explored the issues raised in the questionnaire in more detail. The selection of parents was guided by the selection of students. The parent interview explored issues around why children were sent to a particular school; the process of gaining access to the school; involvement in school life and committees; interactions with teachers and the principal; frequency and reasons for visiting the school; level of satisfaction with the quality of the education received; time their child spent on play and on homework; whether they were familiar with their child's friends; and means taken to ensure their child studied. The educator interview explored issues of diversity through questions that looked at class composition; how the class was constructed; teaching methods used; methods of discipline; seating arrangements; parental participation in the school; as well as questions specifically engaging issues of diversity in the classroom.

In South Africa, to gain a deeper understanding of the arguments and rationalisations made by students and teachers of their behaviour with respect to difference and diversity, the research team, made up of graduate students with extensive research experience themselves, took the decision to develop a research instrument that would give respondents an opportunity to explore specific settings. Two scenarios were designed which sought to stimulate debate and

⁶ 'Introvert' and 'extrovert' were useful criteria for selection of students as it became apparent from the interviews that bullying and family problems were often related to introversion, hence isolation and exclusion.

even controversy. The first scenario gave an example of an ‘exclusion’ situation that was removed from the students, and teachers’ immediate context (set in England). The intention was to avoid a picture that would either offend or intimidate anybody. The names of the major actors and the central incident in the scenario were adjusted for former DET and non-former DET settings.⁷

The scenarios were given to students, and the analyses of the findings were shown to the teachers concerned. This feedback was useful for the teachers in gaining insight into the responses of their students (which informed the answers to the second teachers’ questionnaire). The findings were also presented to the class concerned in the form of a feedback. After the feedback was given, the second scenario was presented to the class. This scenario was based on a social problem that produced exclusionary outcomes in the school. The children were asked to respond to questions that were developed by the researcher and the teacher.

Box 3.1: School Sites in South Africa

The five previously ex HOD and HOR schools in this category are: an Afrikaans-medium former House of Representatives’ (for people classified ‘coloured’) school in Alice, in the Eastern Cape, called Ruby Primary; Lagaan Primary School, a former House of Delegates School (for people classified ‘Indian’) in Cape Town in the Western Cape; and three former House of Delegates schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, Amazon, Marula Primary, Amazon High and Bass Secondary. Dover High, also an ex-HOD school, was also included in the study as a supplementary but not a main case-study.

Important for the purposes of this study is the fact that the five schools reported on in this study are significantly different from each other. Their contexts are strikingly different as are the histories that have shaped them. While it is true that ‘Indian’ and ‘coloured’ schools were generally better resourced, and often less scarred by the turbulence of the student uprisings of the 1980s and the 1990s, as a category of schools they are extremely diverse. They have very distinct spatial locations, very distinct histories and, as this collection of schools in this study show, may be located at opposite ends of the privilege spectrum in South Africa. As a group, however, they are perceived as being ‘better’ than most African schools. African parents, to escape the township schools, for whatever reason, see them as constituting a better promise for the future of their children.

Four ex-DET schools were examined for the study, one of which was a primary school in Alice, in the Eastern Cape (in the same town as the school called Ruby) called Basildon, Bongaletu High School in the township of Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape, Divinity Technical Secondary School in an African township in Durban and another high school in the township of Kwadebeka, also in Durban, called Siyafika Secondary School. Apart from Basildon which was started by lecturers at the University of Fort Hare, all the schools had previously been located within the Department of Education and Training system which administered urban African schools in the apartheid era. Siyafika, like Dover, was also a supplementary case in the study.

⁷ In apartheid South Africa, there were four systems of education for each of four racial/ethnic groups, namely for ‘black’ African students under the Department of Education and Training, for students classified as ‘coloured’ under the House of Representative, for students classified as ‘Indian’ under the House of Delegates, and finally, though with most rights and privileges for ‘white’ students. Model C schools were ‘white’ schools which began to admit other students as apartheid began to loosen.

Interestingly, and important for dispelling popular stereotypes of all African schools as chronically indigent and dysfunctional, the four schools gathered together in this study were strikingly different from one another. Like their ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ counterparts, they drew on histories and experiences that set them apart from each other. Importantly, however, running through their narratives, and this is what this report shows, were the constant themes of being less than their counterparts in the former ‘white’, ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ schools. Pervasive in each of the schools was a discourse of race and class that was hard to avoid.

The four ex-Model C schools studied were: Eastdale School in the Eastern Cape; Valley Primary School in the Western Cape; North City Afrikaans High in the Western Cape; and Oasis School in KwaZulu-Natal. In Kwa Zulu-Natal two other ex-Model C ‘white’ schools were studied though not in as great a detail as the major three sites. These are not reported on.

While all four schools were ex-Model C schools they displayed marked different patterns of racial intake (for example, Oasis school enrolled significant number of ‘Indian’ students and Valley Primary School and North City still remained mainly ‘white’). The majority of the teaching staff in the schools were ‘white’. Significant for the report is the fact that the three schools typified very different approaches to inclusion within an explicit overall commitment to inclusion.

3.6 The research in India

In India an ethnographic approach was used. While the focus of the research fell on issues of access, retention and academic achievement, an attempt was made to highlight the subjective experiences of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students and parents in government schools. The research took place in two districts in each of two states (see Box 3.2 and also Chapter 5). The intention was to get at the ways in which marginalised communities articulate the relational deprivation that they experience within an important state institution, namely formal schools. Formal schools serve both an expressive as well as an instrumental value. They socialise diverse ‘populations’ into citizen-subjects and in conjunction with this train them for the world of formal labour. Given this crucial role of formal schooling, an ethnographic approach seemed best suited to cull out the narratives of members of the community, teachers and students, and qualitative tools were designed to capture their everyday interactions with the school space. In deciding to research *Dalit*, and in some cases *Adivasi*, children’s experiences through a qualitative methodology, the project sought to study inclusion not as the quantitative prevalence of ‘incidents’, but through using ethnographies to understand how children perceive their experience of schooling, to uncover how it resonates with home life, how others perceive and deal with their inclusion, how this affects their perceptions of new opportunities, and how they negotiate the new relationships that inclusion into schooling brings.

Box 3.2: India Research Structure

States: Madhya Pradesh Rajasthan

Districts: Harda, Ujjain Shriganganagar, Tonk

Schools studied per district: 2 Lower Primary Schools, 1 Upper Primary School, and 1 Higher Secondary school

Cohorts studied in each school/site: 3rd Grade [Lower Primary School], 6th grade [Upper Primary School], 9th Grade [Higher Secondary School]

Out of School children per site:

2 cohorts of the age group 6-11 years, equivalent to cohort in 3rd Grade

1 cohort of the age group 11-14 years, equivalent to cohort in 6th Grade

1 cohort of the age group 14-16 years, equivalent to cohort in 9th Grade

While these qualitative tools were used to gather the experiential, lived realities of communities' lives, quantitative data was used to situate the particularities of narratives within larger understandings of the issue in the locality, village, and block. Needless to say these divisions between quantitative and qualitative were discursively constructed and it is quite impossible to do either type of research without using the tools usually associated with the other.

Because the researchers in the Indian context came from NGO backgrounds, the decision was taken to provide them with practical training before they entered the field. Most of the researchers in the project had some work experience with poor rural and urban populations prior to the research but none of them had been 'professional' ethnographers. Keeping their existing skills and previous knowledge of the state and specific communities in mind, the initial nine-day research training provided to the team focused on what ethnography entailed for the purposes of the current research. The skills of participation and observation were practiced during the course of the training by having the researchers keep a diary during training and share this with their colleagues. This researcher diary was to be the mainstay of the research along with the other tools devised for it which included, as indicated above, survey questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. During the training one day was spent in the field, a rural village school and community, and the researchers were teamed up in groups of two to try out the tools that had been developed for the research. This included surveying and interviewing in-school and out-of-school parents and children, undertaking a focus group discussion with third grade students as well as interviewing a primary school teacher and principal.

3.7 Difficulties encountered and limitations of this study

This section documents some of the major difficulties encountered in the process of conducting this research, as well as the limitations of this study.

Funding resources for the project were limited and determined how much time and attention individuals could give to the project. This was a major constraint as research of this kind is labour-intensive and requires financial resources that will support researchers in the field for extended periods of time. Given the range of categories in the study, it was not always possible for the researchers to interview all the respondents or to conduct interviews over the whole duration of the project, which was effectively only two years (the two years were for the study as a whole: from designing the research, recruiting researchers, conducting the research and producing reports).

As discussed earlier in the paper, research contexts have a determinative influence and it was noted that gaining access to schools was difficult both in India and in South Africa. Teachers and principals of schools tended to be reluctant to be subjects of research, seeing the research as 'policing', showing up their deficiencies and judging their performances. Their reactions tended to be defensive, and in most instances prevented observations of classroom practices.

Finally, the scope of the study was substantial, conceptually, methodologically and empirically, in that it stretched across macro, meso and micro levels of education, in two countries.

3.8 Conclusion

The process of researching educational inclusion and educational exclusion needs to be understood in the broader context of the social exclusion social inclusion debate in the South. The concepts of inclusion and exclusion press for much closer and conscious consideration of identity and role: who is doing the researching on excluding and including, who is choosing the excluding and including, how are these processes of inclusion and exclusion facilitated, and what are the dominant views and relations of social, economic and political power. These questions, it is argued, are critical in terms of understanding how much the process of research itself intersects with the very issues that it wishes to understand empirically.

Chapter 4: Education Inclusion in South Africa

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the empirical data gathered from case studies carried out in the three provinces of South Africa. It provides a broad overview of inclusionary and exclusionary policy and practices in South African policy prior to examining the ways in which education inclusion and exclusion is played out in selected schools in South Africa. It pays particular attention to looking at practices around access, governance and curriculum. It also highlights the tension between a strong central inclusionary policy framework in South Africa and the realities at the school level. It also argues that the ways inclusion policy is manifest at the school level is one in which schools can be considered to be *conditionally* open.

4.2 The policy environment in post apartheid South Africa: creating an enabling environment

4.2.1 The broad constitutional environment

In South Africa, the newly formed state initiated a spate of policy changes to create an enabling policy environment to effect inclusion of all learners. There were two distinct threads to the enabling policy environment. The first was the passing of a series of laws that would define the direction, intention and desired goals of a non-racial inclusive society and education system. The second was to create and establish a number of structural mechanisms which would project, promote and monitor the enabling policy environment. In short, the post-apartheid South African scenario is one that attempts to redefine the exclusionary constructions of apartheid and to reconfigure these in ways that are more inclusive of all the people of South Africa. As the Preamble of the Constitution of the ‘new’ South Africa states:

We, therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic so as to –

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law;
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

(Preamble of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996: . 1).

Inclusion and exclusion in the post-apartheid situation constitute a phenomenon that speaks directly to the apartheid past. In the ‘new’ South Africa, South Africa not only “belongs to all those who live in it”, it is also based on “the foundations of a democratic and open (read inclusive) society/social justice and fundamental human rights”. The comprehensive inclusion adopted in the Preamble of the Constitution is later reinforced in the Equality Clause of the Constitution.

Sections (3), (2) and (4) of this clause are most important. Section (3) recognises sixteen different forms of identities, and the ‘new’ South Africa intends to ‘include’ them all constitutionally in the workings of South African society. In this regard, people cannot be ‘excluded’ on any of these terms, and all people, with all the identities specified, are to be ‘included.’ Note, however, that those who are to be included and who cannot be excluded, both comprise and extend beyond disabled people and those defined in terms of ‘race’, class or gender – the ‘famous three’ (cf. Soudien, 1998).

Sections (2) and (4) are significant because they allow the ‘new’ South African government to enact measures to initiate, facilitate and develop the inclusion of different groups of South Africans in South African society. In this regard, it is worth pointing to the Employment Equity Act of 1998 which sets out to do this in relation to the economy and in respect to both ‘black’ and disabled people and women.

The Employment Equity Act of 1998 may be viewed as an instance of ‘preferential treatment’ (Gilligan, 1994) or ‘affirmative action’ (Henrard, 1996). Following the constitutional stipulation to “redress the imbalances of the past”, the Employment Equity Act of 1998 attempts to ‘redress’ access to the economy by people who were previously most discriminated against and excluded from meaningful participation within the economy. These have been identified within the Employment Equity Act of 1998 as mainly those who are ‘black’, female and disabled. In terms of this Act, economic organisations and/or institutions need to achieve a ‘balance in numbers’ of those who are employed with them, in terms of the overall profile of their organisations and particularly in terms of the composition of their management structures. ‘Black’ and disabled people and women need to be represented and participate on all levels of the organisation. Capacity development and support programmes are also indicated in the Act, and point to the importance of economic organisations to develop plans for the long-term sustainability of ensuring such representation and participation of South Africans in the future. Although this Act privileges ‘race’, disability and gender in its ‘preferential treatment’ of South Africans, it does signal a political will on the part of the South African government to embark on policies and pass legislation to facilitate ‘inclusion’ and reduce instances of ‘exclusion’.

In light of the above, it would be fair to state that inclusion and exclusion in South Africa have been historically, and currently, conjoined, and have not been restricted in their use to refer to people with disabilities. They have been incorporated and redefined, first, within the anti-apartheid struggle, and, second, as a part of the project of nation building.

4.2.2 The educational policy environment

Three distinct phases can be identified in changing the education policy environment in South Africa.

1994 –1997: this was a phase in which emphasis was placed on establishing a unified, democratic and accountable educational system that was participatory in terms of policy development and responsive to the needs of the previously disenfranchised and oppressed. Thus, the key imperative following the elections of 1994 and the constitution of the new national and provincial departments of education was to integrate the previously fragmented and racially and ethnically divided education system. This creation of a unified education

system required setting in place new structures and processes as well as the appointment of new officials. But the ability to reconstitute and recompose a new educational system was constrained by a number of factors. These included the ‘Sunset Clause’ which emerged from the multi-party negotiations process and which protected the employment of officials who had served under the previous system and made their replacement difficult (see Sayed, 1997). At the same time, the new officials who were appointed were politically acceptable but often lacked the necessary knowledge base and skills to manage the system. Perhaps the most glaring manifestation of the reality that change would include the simultaneous and conflictual existence of both the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ was the fact that the education budget for the new Ministry had been allocated prior to the elections (see Sayed, 1995 for a more extensive discussion). Policy development at this point could thus be characterised as being in tension: the challenge of laying down the foundation for the new system while, simultaneously having to ‘accommodate and adapt’ to the old as the new Ministry sought to come to terms with its positioning in an open polity.

1997-1999: The second phase was marked by a flurry of policy commissions and investigations that considered and reported on different aspects of the education system. The most significant of these include the first White Paper (DoE, 1995a) which provided the basis for the National Education Policy Act (DoE, 1996d). Further commissions included the National Commission on Higher Education in 1995, and the school governance review, called the Hunter Commission, in 1995. A number of Acts followed the National Education Policy Act including the establishment of the South African Qualifications Authority in 1995, the National Qualifications Framework in 1996, the South African Schools Act in 1996 and the Higher Education Act in 1997. This phase of educational policy development in South Africa can be characterised as the setting of ‘frameworks’, which can also be regarded as symbolic policy, and provide images of the desired educational outcomes sought for the education system, rather than the specific content of educational policies (see Sayed, 1997).

1999-2004: This phase was symbolically marked by the campaign of *Tirasano* (Call to Action) by the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal. The choice of this campaign was deliberate – it was an attempt to mark the tenure of the Minister with concrete action and an improvement in school practice. The nature and type of policy initiated, such as whole school evaluation and a focus on the improvement of matriculation pass rates, etc., indexed a shift towards an emphasis on practice and the attainment of ‘real improvement’ in the schools.

In general it can be argued that in the post-1994 period a flurry of explicit policy development occurred which identified racial discrimination in society and in education as the core inequity that had to be addressed. Ending racial discrimination and effecting inclusion became the *leitmotif* of the new resurgent state. The particular aspects which impact on this study are:

- an overwhelming political consensus and will that identified racial non-discrimination as a key imperative. Inclusion thus became part of an agenda that sought to end all forms of disadvantage based on arbitrary distinctions of race;

- a strong groundswell of support from a range of stakeholder groupings for the reform of education. This made it possible for the South African state to enact and establish structures that aimed at the achievement of equity and bringing to an end racial discrimination.

Yet, behind this widespread support, lay the continued existence of disparate interests. The state, in confronting its diverse constituencies needed to mediate the discordant and vested interests of these different groups and to produce compromises which could be generally acceptable. The state did not have a free hand to end discrimination in ways that were totally of its own choosing. For example, in schooling, the new state had inherited a large number of ex-'white' schools where power was vested in School Governing Bodies; moreover, the ability of the state to set a course of action, was seriously constrained (and still is) by its capacity to act and implement. For example, the 'Sunset Clause' ensured that many bureaucrats of the old order were still in place in 1994 and were able to remain until such time as they chose to retire or when their posts were made redundant.

In short, the state has had the political will to effect inclusion but has been heavily constrained by an existing set of settlements, agreements, and entrenched interests.

4.2.3 Mandates and more mandates

During the three phases, the new state published a number of substantive policy texts which included:

White Paper 1: The SA Constitution (1996) required that education be transformed and democratised in accordance with the values of human dignity, equality, human rights and freedom, non-racism and non-sexism. The Constitution guarantees access to a basic education for all through the provision that 'everyone has the right to basic education, including adult basic education.' The fundamental policy framework of the Ministry of Education was set out in, *Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa: First Steps to Develop a New System* (February, 1995). This document served as the principal reference point for subsequent policy and legislative development.

The National Education Policy Act (NEPA): This Act, passed in 1996, set out in law, the policy, legislative and monitoring responsibilities of the Minister of Education. Furthermore, it formalised the relations between national and provincial authorities. The NEPA embodies the principle of co-operative governance, elaborated in Schedule Three of the Constitution and the principle of guaranteed fundamental rights with regards to equal access to education, protection against discrimination and protection of language rights. The Act also established national sovereignty over education policy, so that the national policy overrides any provincial policy. Equity and redress, on race and gender, are specifically noted as key elements of the education policy, and guarantees of language rights are mentioned. Nonetheless, how these goals were to be pursued was not elaborated. Also of importance to the issue of inclusion and exclusion is the provision allowing for national sovereignty over education policy while at the same time establishing consultative bodies of representatives from all provinces.

The South African Schools Act (SASA): Also promulgated in 1996, this Act sought to promote access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system. It sought to ensure that all learners would have the right of access to quality education without discrimination, and made schooling compulsory for children aged 7 to 14. It provided for two types of schools: independent schools and public schools. The Act's provision for democratic school governance through School Governing Bodies (SGBs) is now in place in public schools countrywide. The school funding norms outlined in SASA prioritise redress and target poverty in funding allocations to the public schooling system.

National Norms and Standards for School Funding (NNSSF): A key mechanism to achieve redress through distribution of the education budget was articulated in the NNSSF Act, 1998. This policy provided a framework for allocating “non-personnel recurrent costs on the basis of need.” It required each provincial education department to produce a “resource targeting list” informed by physical conditions, available facilities, the degree of crowding of the school, educator: learner ratios, the availability of basic services, and the relative poverty of the community around the school. The main effect of the revised formula is that the poorest 40% of schools receive 60% of the provincial schooling non-personnel budget allocation, and the least poor 20% receive 5% of the resources.

Early Child Development (ECD): The proposals set out in the fifth Education White Paper (2001) detail the approach taken by the Department of Education to Early Child Development. ECD refers to a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to nine years of age with the active participation of their parents and caregivers. Its purpose is to protect the child's right “to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential.” The strategic plan outlined in the paper as a means of achieving a solid foundation for the life-long learning and development of South Africa's youngest citizens, focused on the delivery of inclusive and integrated programmes, with a particular emphasis on the development of a national curriculum statement, practitioner development and career-pathing, health, nutrition, physical development, clean water and sanitation, and a special programme targeting four year old children with special needs from poor families and those infected by HIV/AIDS.

Other significant Acts which promoted inclusion beyond basic education included: the Further Education and Training Act (1998) and the Higher Education Act (1997). Both attempt to effect inclusion and equity in post-basic education.

With the passage of time, a strong lobby related to disability and children with special needs (SEN) emerged that argued that the existing policy framework ignored the needs of such children in effecting inclusion. The Ministry thus published the sixth Education White Paper (2001), which dealt predominantly with special needs education and the building of an ‘inclusive education and training system’. Concluding that specialised education had only been provided for a small percentage and usually on a racial basis, the paper argued that the curriculum and education system as a whole had generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population. In the light of these findings, the Paper recommended that the education and training system should promote genuine education for all and foster the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning. The principles guiding the broad strategies to achieve this vision included the acceptance

of principles and values contained in the Constitution, namely: human rights and social justice for all; participation and social integration; equal access to a single education system; access to the curriculum; equity and redress; community responsiveness; and cost effectiveness.

The Ministry believed that for the general education policy framework to be effective, it was crucial to address the thorny issues of curriculum and assessment that needed transformation. The key moves in this direction were:

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA): In October 1995, the South African Qualifications Authority Act was passed into law. The SAQA, responsible for overseeing the establishment of the NQF, was established in 1996. These Acts established the scaffolding of a national learning system to integrate education and training at all levels. The NQF seeks to bring together education and training, skills development, the needs of a critical democracy and personal, social and economic development. It is an essential expression and guarantor of a national learning system where education and training are equally important and complementary facets of human competence.

Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS): These envisaged a move away from a racist, apartheid, rote-learning model of learning and teaching, to one which is liberating, nation-building, learner-centred and outcomes-based. In line with training strategies, the re-formulation was intended to allow greater mobility between different levels and institutional sites, and the integration of knowledge and skills through 'learning pathways'. Its assessment, qualifications, competency, and skills-based framework set out to encourage the development of curriculum models aligned to the NQF in both theory and practice. Guided by the above principles, it defined specific outcomes and standards of achievement in eight learning areas. The critical and specific outcomes, together, represented major shifts in what is to be learned in schools, emphasising competencies rather than particular knowledge. Introduced into schools in 1998, Curriculum 2005 was reviewed by a Ministerial Committee in 2000. The Review Committee recommended that strengthening the curriculum required streamlining its design features and simplifying its language through the production of an amended National Curriculum Statement.

In 2000/1 the Ministry began to focus on the issue of values, a crucial element in effecting inclusion and a vexed problem given the apartheid legacy. In attempting to outline a values approach to education, the Ministry published a Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy, in 2001. This identified the ten fundamental values of the Constitution: Democracy, Social Justice and Equity; Non-Racism and Non-Sexism; Ubuntu (Human Dignity); An Open Society; Accountability and Responsibility; Respect; Rule of Law; and Reconciliation. The Manifesto further identified 16 strategies for familiarising young South Africans with the values of the Constitution

The values document set in process a more engaged focus on HIV and AIDS. In educational terms, the specific aspects of the broader HIV and AIDS strategy comprised a focus on awareness, information, life-skills, and support. This initiative represented an effort on the part of the Department of Education to respond purposefully to the crisis.

4.2.4 Structures and mechanisms of inclusion in South Africa

The enabling policy environment was coupled with structures which sought to protect and promote the policies of inclusion. These included:

Human Rights Commission: Chapter 9 of the Constitution confirmed the position of the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) as one of the “state institutions supporting constitutional democracy.” In February 2000, the South African parliament passed two acts that would give the SAHRC substantial new duties when they come into force. The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act requires the commission to include in its reports to parliament an assessment of the effects of unfair discrimination, and may request any person or state institution “to supply information on any measures relating to the achievement of equality,” assist complainants using the Act, or conduct investigations into cases.

Directorate of Race and Values in Education: The prime purpose of the Directorate is to monitor, evaluate and co-ordinate issues of race and values in education. Accordingly, it functions through its support and evaluation of policies and strategies to promote values in education and to improve racial integration and race equity in education. An additional role of the Directorate is to develop and support a policy on history in education as part of the department’s ‘Values in Education’ programme and in conjunction with the new SABC television production, ‘Looking Back Moving Forward’. Educational ventures such as these have demonstrated a commitment to the development and maturation of South Africa’s youth, especially with regard to fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of their past, the origins of the present diversity, and the rich potential of all South African citizens.

Gender Equity Unit: The National Department of Education has also established a Directorate for Gender Equity, based on the 1997 recommendations of the Gender Equity Task Team, in order to mainstream gender equity in all aspects of the education system and to work closely with provincial departments. Recently, provincial gender equity units have been created. Each province has now identified a “gender focal person” to head these units, though no clear mandate has been given to them beyond a general responsibility to study and advice on all aspects of gender equity in education.

4.2.5 Problems of implementation

While this platform has been broadly welcomed, key issues have emerged about its implementation. Interviews in this research with senior civil servants, politicians, and members of government structures and appointed task teams brought out a range of issues. For example, Naledi Pandor (Minister of Education, South Africa) expressed concerns about the power vested in provinces to undermine or even overturn national principles:

In order to transform you need policy frameworks, but you also need the nitty-gritty. You look at the regulations and the SASA and it largely depends on provincial decisions. Provinces have to define actions to formulate. We need to look at how and what regulations govern education and how they give effect to diversity. Realistically, we have to be far more watchful to ensure that the broad principles are given life.

The extent of which the governance arrangement was able to effect inclusion are apparent in the National Norms and Standards for School Funding (1998), as discussed above. This Act, however, according to Brian O’Connell, previous Superintendent-General, Western Cape Education Department was inadequate:

The state was playing with fire with 10% of the money left. So when the Norms and Standards Law came, the state decided it had to rank all schools in seven categories and give to the poorest schools seven times what is given to the richest schools. This is where the state makes its formal equity move – but you’re playing with 10% where as you really need to do it with 90%. Another way to have done it would be to have given a parcel of money to the poorest schools for personnel. But rules didn’t make that possible.

The power of SGBs to appoint teachers is an especially contentious one. Brian O’Connell attributed the appointments problem to an inconsistency in understanding between the national principles and local SGBs:

Because democracy is a new thing, many schools got it wrong. They didn’t understand. It became a contest between SGBs and schools and often appointments are made on every basis but the quality of person. In some schools SGBs work, but the provision of SASA is that SGBs can make appointments. If anything this perpetuates the class system and in the poorest schools structures don’t exist to take advantage of SGBs.

A report of the Human Rights Commission on school fees noted that because school governing bodies determine fee structures and ‘blacks’ are not well represented, this allows for discrimination. It was also noted that school fees might be only a portion of the expense of education. Moreover, even if parents are exempt from paying fees this may result in embarrassment and either resentful-exclusion or self-exclusion from SGBs or similar bodies accordingly.

The Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) was commissioned in 1996 by the Department of Education to analyse the education system from a gender perspective. In 1997 the Team released a report which indicated that schools are often unsafe spaces for girls. While current South African educational policies and legislation are emphatically anti-sexist, the shockingly high rate of rape in South Africa points to the high vulnerability of girls in school. The GETT report noted that while violence and harassment had been documented in the behaviour of teachers, and students towards other students, there was insufficient data about the prevalence of violence in schools, or about who the perpetrators were.

Finally, the report of the study, issued by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in 1999, *Racism, ‘Racial Integration’ and Desegregation in South African Public Secondary Schools*, illustrates the frequent incompatibility between policy and practice. While on paper policies seem to address issues of language, racism and multiculturalism, in practice significant problems still exist. The connection between these issues and actual discrimination are clearly presented in the study, however, by focusing on the school level, the study does not address macro level factors, particularly the role of policy makers. Thus, it provides a critical view of the implementation of policy, but not the factors that influenced how the policy was developed.

4.3 Policy in action: the institutional level

4.3.1 The study schools

It is at the school level that the different inflections and nuances of the enabling policy environment play themselves out. Three key issues emerge strongly in relation to the ways in which policy is implemented and experienced at the school level. We examine practices at the school level in relation to:

- *Policy*: what kind of inclusive and enabling school policy environment do individual schools create?
- *Governance*: the operation of the democratic structures of school governance, how it is managed, who is included in management, who participates, how they operate.
- *Access*: who gains admission, how is admission regulated.
- *Teaching and learning*: the nature of the learning experience at school, including how schools deal with questions of standards, language, relationships between teachers and pupils and so on.

An important theoretical point needs to be signalled in relation to the ways in which inclusion and exclusion play themselves out in the broader South African context. We made the point above that all forms of inclusion inevitably produce forms, often new ones, of exclusion. The study attempts to show how the mechanisms of state policy come to generate, both deliberately and inadvertently, their own forms of exclusion.

Central in this is understanding that the policy approach adopted by the state, in so far as it is a compromise between the old apartheid order and the new democratic order, is by definition already an exclusionary policy. The new educational system, scripted as it might be in the language of inclusion, retains its structural – geographic, infrastructural and physical – identity. The new post-apartheid school is in exactly the same place, the same neighbourhood and the same social environment as it had been during the old order. Given the racial and class nature of this context, and the limited degree to which it has changed during the new democracy – comprising either poor and straitened communities or a rich and thriving one – schools have had to work with their inherited legacies. These are profoundly decisive in shaping the school and leave it with its history largely intact and reproduced, continuing to define the school as an exclusionary space. Given these constraints, privileged children are not suddenly going to want to go to poor schools. Thus while constitutionally, schools are now open, practically they are not, and continue to be governed by the modalities of their pasts.

It is therefore essential to understand how conscious schools are of the reality that they continue to be exclusionary. A schematic attempt is outlined below to work with this issue. The basic point of departure is that all schools are, from a macro-level perspective, implicated in an exclusionary process. The question then arises as to how they reconstitute themselves, using the resources, both statutory and financial, provided by the state to respond to such exclusion. The analysis attempts to generate a refined model for understanding the kind of inclusion which the school promotes. The ‘continuum of inclusion’, as outlined in the methodology section, is used for each of the schools in this study, to differentiate school practices using the following:

- strong inclusion;
- moderate inclusion;
- weak inclusion.

As indicated in the methodology chapter, in analysing the practices of inclusion at the school level the study examined different groups of schools in three different provinces. The schools that were chosen had been previously ‘white’ (ex-Model C), or had previously been classified ‘coloured’ (ex-House of Representatives (HOR)), or ‘Indian’ (ex-House of Delegates (HOD)) or ‘African’ (ex-Department of Education and Training (DET)).⁸

The five previously ex-HOD (ex-‘Indian’ schools) and ex-HOR (ex-‘coloured’ schools) are an Afrikaans-medium former House of Representatives (for people classified ‘coloured’) primary school in a major country town in the Eastern Cape; an English-medium former HOD primary school in a relatively wealthy former ‘Indian’ middle-class suburb in Cape Town for people classified ‘Indian’ in the Western Cape, and three former House of Delegates schools in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

A description of each of the schools now follows in terms of the broad historical categories (see also Table 4.1)

Important for the purposes of this study is the fact that the five schools reported on in this study are significantly different from each other. Their contexts are strikingly different as are the histories that have shaped them. While it is true that ‘Indian’ and ‘coloured’ schools were generally better resourced, and often less scarred by the turbulence of the student uprisings of the 1980s and the 1990s, as a category of schools they are extremely diverse. They have very distinct spatial locations, very distinct histories and may be located at opposite ends of the spectrum of privilege in South Africa. As a group, however, they are perceived as being ‘better’ than most African schools. African parents, to escape the township schools, for whatever reason, see them as constituting a better promise for the future of their children.

Ruby Primary School is a former ‘coloured’ School, situated in a small former ‘coloured’ township in a fairly large Eastern Cape Town, managed under the Fort Beaufort Education District. According to the principal and parents interviewed, the township has a very poor and mostly semi literate population and a high rate of unemployment. The township is a beneficiary of the new government’s Reconstruction and Development Programme and has had very low cost houses built for the community. More than 70% of the ‘coloured’ learners interviewed reported that they were being taken care of financially by grandparents through old-age government grants (biological parents either being unemployed or having gone to one of the South African big cities to look for employment).

Lagaan Primary, the second school in this selection of schools is a former ‘Indian’ or House of Delegates School located in a former ‘Indian’ socio-economic area of Cape Town which has elements, typical of many ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ apartheid suburbs, of upper-income, middle-income and lower income families. From a religious point of view the area is primarily Muslim but has a large number of Hindu as well as some Christian families. The school is situated close to a small industrial area and has a vibrant commercial and trading zone that extends the length of the main road in which the suburb is found.

⁸ See note 7 on page 27.

Table 4.1 School Details

NAME OF SCHOOL	EX-DEPT	ENROLMENT					MED. OF INSTRUCTION	SOCIAL CONTEXT
		TOTAL	AFRICANS %	WHITES %	COLOURED %	INDIAN %		
Ruby Primary	HOR	300	60	40			Afrikaans	Poor working class
Lagaan Primary	HOD	800	15		5	80	English	Middle class
Bass Secondary	HOD	1200	80			20	English	Stable working class
Dover High School	HOD	+/- 900	80			20	English	Middle class
Amazon Secondary	HOD	+/- 1000	80			20	English	Stable working class
Marula Primary	HOD	520	60		10	20	English	Poor working class
Basildon Primary	DET	414	90				English	Middle class
Divinity Technical	DET	+/- 700	100				English	Stable working class/lower middle class
Bongalethu Secondary	DET	1001	100				English	Working class poor
Siyafika Secondary	DET	1020	100				English	Working class poor
Eastdale Primary	HOA	+/- 600	60	40			English	Upper middle class
Oasis Senior Primary	HOA	+/- 700	20	10		70	English	Middle class
Valley Primary	HOA	600	90		10		English	Middle class
North City High Afrikaans	HOA	800	0	90	10	0	Afrikaans	Middle class

The third primary school in this mix is called Marula Primary and is situated in an historic area where forced removals of people of colour had taken place during the apartheid period. The area is 10 kilometres west of the city centre of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. It was also the site for violent clashes between African and 'Indian' people in 1949. The area around the school is characterised by poverty, unemployment and illiteracy. The current population of the area is a mix of 'coloured', African and 'Indian' people and, as a result of the emergence of a range of settlements around the area, the school has become relatively mixed. The fourth school, Boss Secondary (as with all the schools cited in the study, this is a pseudonym which was negotiated with the school management team), is situated in a peri-urban high-density area close to Durban. The low cost homes in the surrounding area had been built, in the apartheid days, for the 'Indian' community. 'Indian' and African working class families now own these homes. Boss Secondary caters for grades 8-12 and draws students from the formal housing surrounding the school as well from the informal housing close by. The majority of the students walk to and from school and some use public transport. It is relatively well resourced compared to former African township schools in Durban.

The final school of these five is Dover High School located in a relatively affluent Durban suburb. This suburb was established as an 'Indian' group area, and many of its residents are Muslim. When the Group Areas Act (which decreed that areas would be racially defined) was abolished, more affluent families moved out and poorer families moved in.

Four ex-'African' schools were examined for the study, one of which was a primary school in a big Eastern Cape town (the same town in which the school Ruby found itself) called Basildon, Bongaletu High School in a big township outside a big city in the Eastern Cape, Divinity Technical Secondary School in an African township in Durban and another high school in another African township, also in Durban, called Siyafika Secondary School. Apart from Basildon which was started by lecturers at a local university, all the schools had previously been located within the Department of Education and Training system which administered urban African schools in the apartheid era.

Interestingly, and important for dispelling popular stereotypes of all 'African' schools as chronically dysfunctional, the four schools gathered together in this study were different from one another. Like their 'coloured' and 'Indian' counterparts, they drew on histories and experiences that set them apart from each other. However, running through their narratives were the constant themes of being less than their counterparts in the former 'white', 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools. Pervasive in each of the schools was a discourse of race and class that was hard to avoid.

Basildon is the only English medium public school in its town. Its establishment can be traced to 1990 when a group of five lecturers, who did not wish to send their children away from the town to boarding schools, came together to start the school. The school started in a church house with 41 children, three teachers and three classrooms for Grades 1, 2 and 3. From there, it moved to another old house that was renovated. It was then donated some rooms (prefabricated) by the university and one by the Building Works Department. The other classrooms came from projects and funds that were raised to provide a building of fifteen classrooms. At the time of completing the research, the school had an enrolment of 414

children (the majority being local African, with a few from North and East Africa, and a small number of 'Indian', 'coloured' and 'white' children.). There were sixteen members of staff (ten of whom were Africans and six 'white') nine of whom were employed by the School Governing Body. The school was managed by the principal (a 'white' woman) in co-operation with the teachers and the school governing body. While the average class size was 25, some of the classes were not conducive to learning because of their small size and poor resourcing. According to the school profile, no stationery was delivered in the year 2002.

The second school in this section, the Divinity Technical High School, is one of the two township Durban high schools looked at in this research. The school is interesting, essentially because it represents what one might describe as an elite African school. It has produced over the last five years, unlike most other African schools, a very high matriculation pass rate (above 80% pass rate in the senior certificate examination). The school also has a curious history: it was originally established by the Department of Education and Training (DET) as a high school focussing on technical education within an African township peri-urban setting. In 1978 the school received the financial support of a religious organisation from the 'Indian' community which allowed it to extend the existing school buildings. The additional school classrooms, the main school hall and the latest (2002) computer room facilities were all donated by this religious organisation. The physical quality of the buildings and campus are in sharp contrast to the neighbouring school with which a common boundary wall is shared.

Located in two different cities, the next two schools, Siyafika and Bongaletu, are more typical of the kinds of secondary high school that emerged in African townships in South Africa. Both of them were located in relatively poor and straitened communities and both struggled with their identities as academic places. Siyafika Secondary is an African township school in Durban. It is a large township school (enrolment in 2002 was 1020) with which the research team at the university have had previous involvement during the placement of student teachers for school-based teaching practice. It became evident during engagement with this school that most of the teachers had chosen to send their own children to schools outside the township schools. However the school EMIS data also indicated that during the course of 2002 there were 312 learners (31% of total enrolment) who had been newly recruited into the school.

Bongaletu High School is situated in a large township in the Eastern Cape Province and both the learners and staff are African with isiXhosa being the first language of most. Bongaletu High School has 1001 students who are accommodated in 18 classrooms. The school has a staff complement of 30 teachers and six support staff. The number of staff by gender is 13 male and 17 female teachers. The number of students by gender is 502 male and 499 female. The profile of the school reveals that Grade 12 received the lowest number of male students. This was attributed to drop outs or transfer to other institutions. This could be an indication that more female than male students were completing high school.

The four ex-Model C schools (former 'white' schools) studied were Eastdale School in the Eastern Cape, Valley Primary School in the Western Cape, North City Afrikaans High in the Western Cape and Oasis School in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN). In KZN two other ex-Model C 'white' schools were also studied but are not reported here. Model C is the designation given to these schools during the final years of the apartheid era when the then Minister of Education,

Piet Clase, gave them the option of taking on children of colour. This option became known as the Model C option.

While all four schools are ex-Model C schools they display marked different patterns of racial intake. For example, Oasis school has enrolled significant numbers of 'Indian' learners and Valley Primary School and North City still remain mainly 'white'. Moreover, as discussed later, the majority of the teaching staff in the schools is 'white'. More significantly for the report is the fact that the three schools typify very different approaches to inclusion.

Eastdale College is located in an Eastern Cape town located on the border of the former Ciskei Bantustan (the supposedly self-governing territories that came into being under the apartheid government) and the former eastern part of the Western Cape Province (also an apartheid era geographic demarcation). The school, located in the centre of the town, allows favourable access to 'white' students as they are able to walk to the school. However, for the students who do not live in the formerly 'white' suburbs, access to the school is difficult and time consuming.

Valley Primary School is situated in a seaside valley just outside the city of Cape Town. The entire valley is geographically separated from greater Cape Town by a mountain range. The catchment areas for the school are: Glencairn, Simon's Town and Kommetjie (all upmarket coastal suburbs or towns). Between the valley and Kommetjie there is a 'coloured' settlement called Ocean View. Ocean View is associated with drugs and crime (although recently the drug problem has mushroomed in Fish Hoek). Adjacent to Ocean View is a newly developed and growing informal settlement called Masiphumelela. Most of the inhabitants are 'black'. Masiphumelela has been the recipient of many community upliftment programmes, mainly spearheaded by local churches and Habitat for Humanity (a Christian-based welfare organisation that specialises in building permanent homes for the poor). The entire valley is home to many churches and Christians.

North City Afrikaans is a former 'white' school with a student population of approximately 90% 'white', mostly of Afrikaans descent and 10% 'coloured' students. The school was started in 1926 in response to the then new language policy of Afrikaans as medium of instruction in 1921. It was decided to start a high school in the city of Cape Town that had Afrikaans as the medium of instruction. North City Afrikaans High School offers Afrikaans as a first language and English as a first and second language. Besides the traditional learning areas, this school also offers hospitality, art, music and computer studies. Each grade has a mentor who facilitates the well being of each student in each respective grade, including general well being, discipline, life-skills, academic guidance and liaising with parents. In addition to the mentor system, the school also has a full-time counsellor who deals with discipline, social adaptation and other adolescent problems.

Oasis Senior Primary in KZN is situated at the juncture of an upper class 'white' suburb and a middle class 'Indian' residential area close to a historically disadvantaged institution of higher education. This former Model C school opened its doors in approximately 1971 as a 'white' institution to those who lived within five kilometres of the school. A female heads the school with the assistance of a female head of department. Both women have taught for more than twenty years at Oasis. In their opinion, their appointments to management positions and their

service history at this school are important factors in continuing the traditions of the school. They conclude that the school's reputation for delivering quality education and its family-orientated approach have attracted students from former disadvantaged communities.

4.3.2 School response to national policy

Crucial to inclusion is how individual schools respond to inclusion policy mandates. Thus, how schools understand, interpret, and respond to policy mandate crucially influences the operation of inclusion policies at the school level. The data reveals that generally the schools studied do not object to, or overtly reject, policy. Thus, compliance is the official position of all schools. However, there are racialised overtones to some of this compliance. There is also little evidence of productive or progressive attitude to state policy.

The ex-HOR and ex-HOD schools in the study did not have formal policies with regard to inclusion-exclusion. There were, of course, approaches in the school to these questions that amounted to what one might call a school approach and/or an assumed or implied policy. However these schools did not see the issues of inclusion-exclusion as ones for which they specifically needed to develop school-based policies. Rather, there was a perception that the macro policy of the state did this for them.

The issues here are complex. On the one hand, the fact that many 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools, particularly during the pre-1994 period, had made the decision to admit African students in defiance of government policy, led them to the assumption that they did not need to develop 'open' school policies. Courageous as they were in admitting African students, there still existed profoundly problematic understandings of difference, particularly of race in these schools. In many schools, for instance, teachers and students were complicit in framing 'normality' in the images of this or that understanding of what it meant to be 'coloured', 'Indian', and other labels, and often perceived the incoming African learners as 'deviant' because they were perceived to be not operating to their standards, their norms. At Ruby Primary School in the Eastern Cape, for example, the norm of the 'coloured' teachers and students, framed standards for the other students in the school who were simply expected to go along with their largely Afrikaans-dominant attitude to how teaching and learning should be managed. IsiXhosa-speaking children were not especially catered for. Teachers may have adopted sympathetic attitudes to the children individually, but the school did not recognise the need for a deliberate policy to deal with the challenge of the Xhosa-speaking learners.

Like their 'coloured' and 'Indian' counterparts, none of the African schools perceived inclusion-exclusion to be an issue that particularly applied to them. None of the schools, therefore, had policies that they themselves had generated about inclusion-exclusion. In addition, as with the 'coloured' and 'Indian' schools, the absence of explicit policies said much about how the schools saw themselves. They frequently positioned themselves as the victims of the previous apartheid system. The new state, however, was their state, implementing policies that they had fought for. It was the responsibility of the new state, which they had brought into power, to now lift them up. They argued, for example, that it was impossible to reproduce the kind of teaching which went on in formerly 'white' schools, even though they were often as qualified as their 'white' counterparts, because of the poor levels of resources made available to them, as an ongoing

legacy of apartheid. The degree of responsibility they had to take for their schools, particularly that of turning them into hospitable and teaching and learning-friendly environments, was not something which they considered to be their responsibility. That job belonged to the state. This became very clear at Bongaletu in the Eastern Cape where an issue of difference arose and where the teachers took the attitude that the kinds of problems that the children brought with them into the school had to be set aside once they entered the school gates, because it was their responsibility only to teach and not to have to deal with those other issues.

Unlike 'black' schools, former 'white' schools, the schools of the ex-House of Assembly, found themselves in an extremely ambiguous situation with the coming of the new government. Having been beneficiaries of an apartheid government and having visibly prospered under the old system, they suspected that they would come under particular scrutiny by the new government, and would have to give up many of their taken-for-granted rights and entitlements enjoyed in the past. Many policies adopted by the new government, including the differentiated 'Norms and Standards for Funding' did indeed place such schools in a situation where they were funded at lower levels for their maintenance and infrastructural costs. As a result, their relationship with the new government, was, and continues to be, fraught with significant anxiety about how they would be handled. They saw themselves as being 'in the state', but often not as belonging substantively to it, and, therefore 'of the state'.

The research in the 'white' schools suggests that they had largely taken on board the 'inclusionary' thrust of educational policy. It appeared, however, that many schools were exaggerating their degree of inclusiveness. They wished, often genuinely so, but sometimes for reasons of political expedience, to be seen as having embraced the new policy ideals of post-apartheid South Africa. This correctness notwithstanding, the schools were not unproblematic. Three distinct institutional responses to inclusion-exclusion reflect the complex approach taken in the schools.

The first institutional response was evident at Valley Primary School. The school added its institutional policy about inclusion-exclusion onto its existing Christian ethos, seeing the school's 'family' culture as an extension of its Christian identity. Rare amongst schools in South Africa, Valley Primary School was unusually self-conscious of inclusion-exclusion, projecting itself to be inclusive in the way families are. Much of the symbolic work, the rituals and practices at the school sought to engender an inclusive climate by emphasising the Christian values of family, care, and belonging. Racial integration and inclusion were effected by creating a language and an ethos of 'family' in which all belonged but with differing roles. Examples of this were the principal's address during assemblies where the school was constantly referred to as a family.⁹ Pro-family activities in the school included Mother Programmes where mothers (or grandmothers) volunteered to serve the school in various ways, and a Grandparents' Day where grandparents were invited to the school.

By contrast, Oasis saw itself as a repository of 'good' knowledge. Implicit but never really evaluated in these representations was the idea of 'good' as being 'white'. With its 'white' history, the school could trade and negotiate in relation to the new communities entering the school, for whom, undoubtedly, it was thought, acquisition of 'good' knowledge was the reason

⁹ It is a Christian philosophy of education that the school should be an extension of the home, reinforcing the values taught at home.

they wished to be in the school. Learners, it was argued, were buying into ‘quality education’ and meritocratic norms.

The third response was that of Eastdale College and North City, neither of which had developed an explicit approach to inclusion. In the case of Eastdale inclusion-exclusion at the school level took a pragmatic orientation with a view that learners had to get on with each other to ensure that the school could function. For North City Afrikaans High School, the situation was slightly different in that the school saw itself as providing a home for Afrikaans-speaking learners and as a school of choice for academically strong students in particular.

In the light of the above, one could argue that ‘African’, ‘coloured’ and ‘Indian’ schools tended to cede policy formulation to the state, whereas ex-Model C ‘white’ schools were more proactive in working with state policies at local levels. It is also evident that ‘white’ schools’ proactive stance towards policy formulation at their schools provided them with a way, while ostensibly in compliance with national policy principles and stipulations, of maintaining the status of dominant and established cultures. This raises a serious issue, namely how schools interpret their accountability to state policy. Interestingly, and ironically, ‘black’ schools invest themselves with the identity of the state and see themselves as being continuous with state apparatus. In the process, they cede responsibility for policy elaboration in the school. As a result, they present themselves as ‘weak’ practitioners of inclusion. ‘White’ schools, on the other hand, see themselves as having to operate in the state and not as members of the state. Operating in an environment of which they are suspicious, their position is often strategically compliant. They take on board all the policies but because of their distance from state power, actively transform the substance of the policy. In their case, strong practical implementation is evident, but on terms that they have been able to redefine. They emerge as what one might call ‘strategic’ practitioners of inclusion.

It is also important to understand how distinct notions of professionalism have assumed sectarian and even racialised forms. While a conservative professionalism flourished during apartheid in the ‘white’ teaching community, conditions in the ‘black’ schools, especially in the ex-DET system, encouraged weak self-understandings amongst teachers of their work. Rebellious and oppositional as teachers were in the old order, they were never fully professionalised into ‘teacherly’ identities where the issues of teaching and learning came to assume the central part of what they understood their vocation to be. Their identities as teachers, particularly in the closing years of apartheid, were often subsumed within a larger solidarity with the labour movement where their status as workers took precedence over their status as professionals. The focus of their lives as teachers was the policies of the state as opposed to their work as classroom practitioners. These issues did not receive strategic attention during the transition era, as a result of which, teachers were not able to explore fully the challenges involved in becoming stronger professionals in their new education system.

Thus schools relate to inclusion policy in ways that draw on their pre-democracy identities. In working with these old understandings of their identities as they reposition themselves in the current era, a number of difficulties and challenges arise in relation to policy, particularly how schools use the resources they inherited from the old system to position themselves in relation to the new policies of the new government.

4.3.3 Inclusion and governance

In general terms, as specified by the South African Schools Act (SASA), all school governing bodies (SGBs) are supposed to comprise representatives from the teacher, students and parent constituencies of the school. Principals are *ipso facto* members of the SGBs, but students are represented only in secondary schools. It is also expected that schools should be democratic in both the composition and the ways in which they function.

The SGBs in schools in the study were all properly constituted and in compliance with the requirements of the legislation. Significantly, however, the degree to which they could be regarded to have inclusively structured SGBs varied. The discussion below distinguishes between three kinds of SGBs with respect to inclusion, namely strongly inclusive SGBs, moderately inclusive SGBs and weakly inclusive SGBs.

Strongly inclusive SGBs

None of the schools in the study could be regarded as being strongly inclusive in terms of their SGB composition. While it is to be expected that public structures, of whatever kind, will invariably have their detractors and discontents, significantly, every school in the sample had important constituents or parent communities who felt marginalised or left out. Strongly inclusive SGBs who were both representative and democratic in their functioning did not exist.

Moderately inclusive SGBs

Most schools in the study fell into this category. While these schools had properly constituted SGBs, they either had stakeholders who were left out, or they functioned against the interests of particular groups. In terms of the former, particular groups were left out because of internal dynamics in the school. An example of this was the struggles between particular groups, such as parents and teachers or teachers and students. With respect to the interests of particular groups, a religious, cultural or, on occasion, educational imperative was intended to be the binding factor that produced the inclusionary atmosphere of the school, but, instead, produced exclusionary outcomes.

In most schools, significant segments of the school community found themselves marginalised because they were deemed not to be sophisticated or sufficiently capable, due to class, cultural or political factors. At both Bongaletu and Basildon, for example, SGB members were selected from the most respectable members of the community who, it was thought, would be able to both address problems in the school and command respect and trust within the school and broader community. At Amazon, and also to a certain degree at Bongaletu, where the educators and the school management contested the governance of the school, educators completely sidelined the parents and/or the learners. There, although the governing body at the time had been in office for the previous two years and consisted of 50% African parents, these parents did not play a significant role in the decision making process of the school and, their influence was minimal. No efforts were made in the school to address this difficulty.

At Bongaletu, while parents, according to the teachers interviewed, fulfilled their responsibilities, students appeared to lose out. Students complained of teachers and parents taking decisions and not involving them.

Political factors also shaped exclusionary practices. At Amazon, after 1994, many teachers at the school, became card carrying members of the ANC and actively campaigned for the ANC affiliated Union – the South African Democratic Teachers’ Union. These members started to challenge the authority of their school’s already weakened management structure and as a result of a complex series of developments, found themselves excluded from the school’s decision-making processes.

A further exclusionary, and, what one might term, a class effect, arose from the structural realities in which the SGBs were set. Most SGBs operated around timetables and schedules that excluded working parents. At Lagaan, for example, parents commented that the governing body and staff did not consider working parents when organising school community events such as fund-raisers, parent-teacher meetings and excursions.

A number of SGBs in the schools in the study functioned in ways which discriminated against the interests of particular constituents of the school, excluding as they sought to include. The two clearest examples of this were the schools where a religious character was most evident, namely, Lagaan, the mainly Muslim school, and Valley Primary School, the school dominated by a charismatic form of Christianity. At Lagaan, the principal, like her counterpart at Valley Primary School, was dynamic and forceful, but was also, like him, deeply embedded within a sectarian ideology, in her case that of the wealthier Muslim section of the school community. As a consequence of the overt Muslim character of the school, non-Muslim parents at Lagaan decided to forego their democratic rights because they lost confidence in their ability to assert their interests. They often simply stayed away from SGB meetings.

Similar effects were felt at Valley Primary School where the principal and the staff projected a strong Christian ethos. The principal, who was a forceful person, felt strongly about the Christian character of his school and sought to surround himself with men and women of like persuasion on both the staff and the SGB. The effect was to marginalise those who did not share their way of thinking.

Weakly inclusive SGBs

SGBs falling into this category made little effort to include those who were being marginalised by the school. Examples of SGBs such as these included the former ‘white’ schools in the study which were often either unconscious of their exclusiveness or, in fact, celebrated it.

One such school where exclusiveness was celebrated was North City Afrikaans which was compliant with the new policy in the way it had gone about establishing its governance structures, but which paid little attention to questions of representation. While its student enrolment now had significant numbers of ‘coloured’ students having been enrolled, the absence of their parents in the governance of the school was not an issue the school seemed to be aware of.

Deliberate attempts at excluding constituent groups were evident in some schools. One such example occurred at Divinity in Kwa-Zulu Natal where the school sector of the campus was under-represented to preserve the dominance of the school's technical education leadership. More serious was the gerrymandering of the principal at Eastdale where an attempt was made to preserve the 'white' character of the school's governance. The principal had deliberately sought to block the appointment of an 'African' as the SGB chairperson.

4.3.4 Access and inclusion

In this section, access is addressed through an examination of the question of affordability and through the procedures which hinder or facilitate increased enrolment.

a) Access and affordability

Strongly inclusive schools

The most strongly inclusive schools with respect to fees were the former 'African' schools where fees were not used as an exclusionary device. While the school fees were low, failure to pay was not used as the basis for withholding schooling rights from a learner.

Marula in Kwa-Zulu Natal, the one school where an SGB did not exist, where only 20 – 25% of learners paid their school fees in full, appeared to be coping with the question of fees more successfully than the other schools. No learner was excluded in any way, nor were parents embarrassed in any way. Those who experienced difficulties with school fees were encouraged to make arrangements with the school for part payment of fees.

Moderately inclusive schools

Moderately inclusive schools included schools such as Ruby and Lagaan where the fees were modest – from under one hundred to a few hundred rands per annum.

The issue of fees appeared to cause difficulties at moderately inclusive schools. At some schools, inclusion hinged on whether one could pay. Those who could pay were strongly included. A parent at Ruby said, "they call us only when they want money". At Lagaan at least three parents referred to the governing body and the types of decisions they made as benefiting some while others simply had 'go with the flow'. Divinity School fees were moderately high, R485 per annum. Parents who were not able to pay the fee felt that their children would somehow be singled out and perhaps isolated in the school.

At Ruby, according to all the constituent stakeholders interviewed in the school, namely the principal, teachers and parents, access was easily negotiated. School fees, nonetheless, were something of a sticking point. No parent was exempted from paying school fees. The principal encouraged them to pay on a once-off basis, or in instalments even if they paid as little as two to five rands a month. He felt that they were all in a position to pay as they received government grants. A teacher said: "The problem now is the parents who do not pay school-

fees. We try to send out as many reminders through the year. But they dodge; they do not pitch up for any meeting.”

At Lagaan where school fees had increased from R120 in 2001 to R450 in 2002, parents reported feeling embarrassed about the fact that they did not pay school fees. While they were not excluded, the fact that they did not pay led them to hold back in certain activities at the school.

Weakly inclusive school

In the case of the ex-Model C schools, fees constituted the major factor around which access was negotiated.

At Eastdale parents had to “be able to afford it” in order for their children to be part of the school. The application form asked questions about the background of parents and whether they could afford the school’s fees. Students whose families could not afford the school fees were not granted admission, or, once they were in the school, were systematically stigmatised.

More complex processes were at play at schools such as Valley Primary School which sought to be inclusive but found this was undermined by other policies such as the insistence on parents holding to the school’s uniform and other image standards. All students at Valley Primary School were required to buy the school uniform in the belief a neat uniform led to good discipline and a sense of pride and identity.¹⁰ This placed pressure on poor parents. School outings also caused inclusionary difficulties. School costs were levied on parents, which produced amongst parents the belief that failure to contribute was an individual failure. Parents felt ashamed when they were unable to afford excursions or extra-mural activities and felt that the school was too assertive in the way in which it collected outstanding school fees.

From some interviews a highly racialised understanding also emerged from some ‘white’ parents about fees and the culture of payment amongst ‘black’ parents. A ‘white’ parent complained that ‘black’ parents wanted what went on in ‘white’ schools, yet were not prepared to pay for it nor willing to make the necessary sacrifices.

b) Procedural and other obstacles to access

The publication of the South African School Act in 1996 signalled an important turning point in South African education. The Act explicitly outlawed exclusivity. No school could deny a child access unless it was full, and then the school had to be certified as being full by the provincial authorities. No school was allowed to discriminate in terms of race, class, culture, language and so on. Entrance tests were not allowed. Many schools continued, however, to regulate admission. Access and inclusion were controlled at all of the schools, including issues of pregnancy, age gaps between students, the rights of young men who had gone through circumcision rituals, and repeaters who sought admission from other schools.

¹⁰ Some students made comparisons between the uniform and dress code of schools in Ocean View and Valley Primary School. It was a point of pride that students at VPS wore a neat uniform, while those at Ocean View could wear civvies if they could not afford the uniform. Valley Primary School is in transition from one uniform to another. They have allowed parents to buy the new uniform only when they can afford it and when their children grow out of the old uniform.

Strongly inclusive schools

Schools where gaining access was relatively easy included most of the ex-DET, ex-HOR and ex-HOD schools in the study.

The Marula Primary School had an open door admission policy. The principal stated the school would “admit anyone who wants to learn”. There was no selection procedure and no one was turned away. At Lagaan in the Western Cape, interviews with teachers, parents and students suggested that admission was easy. Lagaan, unlike other schools in the Western Cape and the Boss Secondary School described below, did not give preference to learners who lived within a two-kilometre radius of the school. It also did not, like some other schools, give preference to learners who had had siblings or relatives at the school or subject applicants to an entrance examination. The official policy of the school was to accept all students no matter where they were from, provided there was an available place.

While learners often had easy access to schools in the former DET sector, this was often as a result of disorganisation. At Siyafika, while the school could account for the entry process of 85% of their new admissions, it was unable to explain how the remaining 15% (46 learners) were admitted into the school.

Moderately inclusive schools

In operation at moderately inclusive schools were conditions that sought to define the admission process to school. These took various forms including residence requirements, curriculum choices, home language and so on. Amazon, for example, admitted learners on the basis of their ability to pass the matriculation examination.

A few schools used place of residence as the means of distinguishing who their students should be. Open as the Boss Secondary School in Kwa-Zulu Natal was, new student admissions to the school were predominantly from people who had relocated to the township of Bonela, so that the main criteria for admission was residence in the area. This was also the case with Bongaletu. In this instance, moreover, local parents forced their children into the school whether the school management liked it or not. This often resulted in tension and conflict between the educators and parents. Place of residence was also used as a filter at Valley Primary School, but interestingly, most parents who were interviewed said that gaining admission to the school had been relatively easy.

The curriculum was frequently used as a sorting device in schools. At the Boss Secondary School, for instance, the principal explained, if prospective students sought to follow subjects not offered at the school, the school would counsel the applicants to seek admission elsewhere.

Relatively open as access was at Ruby, issues such as language complicated matters. At Ruby a parent complained that her son had been demoted to a lower Grade because he did not have an Afrikaans speaking background: “There is nothing we could do because they said he could not understand Afrikaans”. In this respect it is clear that parents of Xhosa speaking learners had conditioned or restrained access (see Sayed, 1997).

Weakly inclusive schools

The least open school was Amazon Secondary. The school had made a conscious decision to improve its matriculation results and so used student admissions as a means of effecting this. The majority of teachers favoured the admission of students only from the local area. In effect this meant a greater intake of 'Indian' learners.

In the conditionally 'open' schools, processes of obstructed admission were occurring through:

- English language proficiency: if the student had not been taught through the medium of English or Afrikaans, admission was denied.
- Special curriculum needs: admissions of such students were denied on the basis that the school did not have the capacity to accommodate them.
- Admission documents: the school had stopped accepting baptismal certificates as proof of birth. This came from the schools' experience in finding a large number of fraudulent baptismal certificates.
- Finance: the school insisted on deposits or half the school fee on registration.
- Verification: the school checked school reports of students seeking admission, and proof of residence was also called for.

In the context of this study, Eastdale was the only school that used entrance tests for admission rather than for placement purposes (contrary to the stipulations of the SASA). One 'black' parent commented that it was not easy to get his child through the school system because admission competition was high as the child had to be interviewed. This, he asserted, "disadvantages the community whose home language is not English". The student's prior schooling was also crucial in the admission process as parents explained that it was easier to gain admission if the student had attended a recognised pre-primary school.

At Oasis, the school accepted the first persons of colour (22 'Indian' and three African students in 1991). These students were carefully selected: "We took the cream of the crop" said a teacher. Selection was done on the basis of competency (a written test), past performance (previous school report) and parent interviews. As more students sought places at this school, Oasis introduced proof of residency in the immediate neighbourhood as an additional criterion. Residential proof legitimised four purposes. First, it allowed the school to limit the number of students of colour admitted. Second, it allowed the school to control the pace of desegregation. Third, it enabled the school to refuse admission to 'weak' students of colour living beyond a radius of approximately 1.5km. Fourth, it ensured the inclusion of students of affluent backgrounds whilst simultaneously excluding those from nearby townships and working class areas. The selection process succeeded in ensuring that these newly admitted 'black' students would be achievers, speak the language of instruction and come from economic backgrounds similar to 'white' students. 'Black' students thus selected did not create additional challenges for the teaching community.

While no schools were overtly discriminating on the basis of 'race', class or gender, in practice all of these factors were in use as schools introduced language tests through interviews and entrance examinations, consistently pushed up their fees to maintain what they thought were 'good'

standards and presented themselves as bastions of one or other culture. All these, in effect, were the mechanisms of inclusion-exclusion. Their approaches to access into their schools were evidently assimilationist. Of significance too, but to a lesser degree in poorer, working class and mainly ex-DET schools, is the emphasis placed on the ability to pay school fees. The commodification of education in this regard is stark, and all schools were in one way or another forced to market and to subject themselves to market principles.

4.3.5 Teaching and learning and inclusion

The curriculum is an important space in which a school will demonstrate its attitude to inclusion and exclusion. Important in this section are questions of ‘standards’, language use, the deportment and attitude of teachers and so on. These questions capture what one might understand to be the hidden curriculum of the school. It is in this domain of the school’s life that it transmits messages of what the school is about and how it wishes to be seen. Standards, in these terms, epitomise sharply what the hidden curriculum of the school is all about.

a) ‘Standards’ and inclusion and exclusion

‘Standards’ as a marker of a school are a good proxy for thinking about issues of diversity and inclusion-exclusion. At the heart of much of the dynamics within governing bodies is the question of what parents – ‘white’, ‘Indian’, ‘coloured’, and often African – think are appropriate standards for learners’ education. For the first three groups, it was a matter of protecting what their (apartheid) schools had achieved and democracy was now threatening. African parents, on the other hand, were happy with their children being assimilated into the existing standards of the schools into which they were admitted.

In keeping with the classification outlined earlier, where schools were placed in terms of their inclusiveness, none of the schools operated strongly inclusive attitudes to standards.

Moderately inclusive schools

In this category were schools and parents that were unhappy about standards falling as a result of integration. Complaint was their strongest weapon. This was the case at Marula, for example, where parents were unhappy about the appointment of an ‘African’ principal. Oasis, also, worked hard to maintain its pre-1994 shape and ethos, and found a pliant parent body, including ‘black’ people, who were in strong support of this approach. Ruby resisted the appointment of a non-Afrikaans teacher and struggled to achieve the withdrawal of this appointment. Amazon, interestingly, sought to increase its African enrolment, but looked upon their new entrants to the school as “dragging their school down”.

Weakly inclusive schools

In many weakly inclusive schools, parents were assimilated into the school’s curriculum through their mobilisation in school and extra school activities behind the school’s larger project. Homework was a critical space in which parents demonstrated their ‘worthiness’. At Eastdale this was particularly clear in the consistent and seamless representations of parents of their ‘responsible

parent' identities. All the parents mentioned that they helped their children, as was expected, with their schoolwork and made the necessary parental comments on the work. They also fulfilled, as was the expectation at school, the ideal of the concerned and civic-minded parent. These images were powerful in maintaining the identity of the school. The Afrikaans setting of North City provided a similar counterpoint. Parents and staff were in complete agreement about the nature of the school and what it stood for. The school, all agreed, served those who were prepared to work hard and who wished to prosper. At Eastdale, the students were acutely conscious of their parents' involvement with the school. One teacher stated that about 60% of the parents were actively involved while another stated that it varied. Another stated that Xhosa parents participated poorly.

At Divinity School, mothers appeared to take the major responsibility for keeping relationships with schools alive, with students indicating that when visits took place, 72% of the time it would be their mothers, and that when it came to meeting attendance, 78% of the time mothers again would take that responsibility. At Valley Primary School the responsible parent identity was strongly gendered. Mothers were crucial for maintaining the school's 'family' identity. It was to mothers that the responsibility was given of sustaining the Christian standards of the school. The school drew on existent and strongly encoded social structures within the school, many of which were not as familiar to and accessible to parents who were not 'white' and middle-class. For example, women exclusively ran the Mother Programme and the Catering Committee, which assumed that most mothers who had children at the school were not working/should not be working. These structures and approaches were important mechanisms for the reproduction and the maintenance of the school's essential 'white' and middle-class standards. Projecting these approaches as 'family orientated' allowed the school to assimilate newer parents, and even non-middle-class parents into its social project. Parents of students of colour thus had access and rights in the school, but on the school's terms, which were ratified and endorsed by the SGB, under the caring gaze of the 'white', Christian, father-principal.

The situation at Eastdale College was similar. The school had effectively assimilated parents into a middle class setting based on a particular image of what the school stood for. The main reason for parental visits was responding to requests to come to school meetings in relation to their children's progress.

b) Mediating learning and learner experiences

Styled as an outcomes-based curriculum and first called Curriculum 2005, and then, upon its revision, the National Curriculum Statement, the curriculum was one of the new government's blue-ribbon projects in its attempt to distinguish itself from the apartheid government. Curriculum 2005, and the National Curriculum Statement which followed it, addressed the previous systematic exclusion of people of colour from the political and social process in the country. The new curriculum was meant to be inclusive, progressive and, above all, designed to prepare young South Africans for their entry into a modern world as confident and enskilled people able to compete in a global market.

Formally, all the schools in the study were teaching according to the requirements of Curriculum 2005. How this was happening was however still heavily shaped by the country's racial and class history.

Strongly inclusive schools

No schools in the study practised what one might describe as strongly inclusive curricula, including the question of language.

Moderately inclusive schools

Most schools in the study fell into this category. The most prominent example was Valley Primary School where the school deliberately devised programmes that were framed around inclusive principles. Most schools, however, simply complied with the demands of the curriculum. This was especially the case at former 'African' schools.

The most explicit understanding of the importance of the curriculum as a site for mediating inclusion-exclusion was evident at Valley Primary School where specific strategies of monitoring the implementation of the curriculum were in place. Most importantly, these strategies were projected as inclusionary measures.

Weakly inclusive schools

Language use and medium of instruction were major issues in understanding processes of inclusion-exclusion in all the schools. Clear examples of this occurred at former 'white' schools such as Eastdale, Oasis, and North City High, but also at former DET schools such as Basildon. At Eastdale, the school adopted the attitude that parents wanted their children to learn English and so while it offered isiXhosa as a second language, English was privileged throughout the school. At Oasis the approach taken was that English represented a commitment to 'standards'. At Basildon, as was explained above, students who were not English proficient were either excluded or enrolled in lower classes. At North City language emerged as a strong factor in determining who gained entry into a specific stream. The students said that, "we had to split up at the end of Standard 6. They told you, you could go to second language or first language so the learners were split up there from like choosing which language they are going to do for Standard 7." With regard to criteria for selection into a language stream students report that "(n)o, they said in first language it is much more difficult work than in second language so most of the er, er... were doing first language but the teacher told us 'but you can take English if you are like going to become a professional or educator for English', or something like that". A limiting factor in these students' education was that they chose a language stream that was not their first or even second language.

The most extreme example of structured language exclusion happened at Ruby. Here Afrikaans was provided in ways that were considered fairly unproblematic by the school. Some of the educators were ambivalent about the introduction of isiXhosa. The school as a whole, however, was inflexible in its privileging of Afrikaans. Some parents were also resistant to the possible introduction of Xhosa as a subject in the school. This was the same with respect to English at Eastdale and Oasis.

A somewhat more enlightened but still problematic policy existed at Marula, Amazon and Lagaan. At Amazon, the school adopted a policy that appeared to address learner diversity by

including isiZulu. However, isiZulu was offered for the first time in 2002 and then only in Grade 12 and also only as an optional seventh subject. The intention of the policy was to help learners score well in their mother tongue and thus offset the problems that they usually experienced in Afrikaans. In terms of this, it must be stressed that the school was more concerned with improving its matriculation scores than accommodating learner diversity.¹¹

The situation was similar at Marula and Lagaan where English was unquestionably the language of dominance in the two schools. While isiZulu was offered at Marula, it was not taken seriously and not accorded examination status. At certain morning assemblies code switching did occur when isiZulu was used, making it a language of regulation rather than access. At Lagaan, isiXhosa was offered as a third language from Grade 4 onwards but it was not taught and tested at the same level as English or Afrikaans. Thus Afrikaans rather than isiXhosa remained the school's second language. Despite the efforts of the school to promote itself as a multicultural school catering for the needs of its isiXhosa-speaking learners, it remained the case that isiXhosa did not enjoy the same status as the other official languages at school. It was taught and tested on an almost ad-hoc basis. At the time of concluding this research, no Xhosa educator had been appointed either in a departmental or governing body position and there were no exercise books available for isiXhosa. Instead, Arabic, the other language also introduced at the school, came to assume far more status.

While language is clearly the major mechanism in the schools for inclusion-exclusion, there are other processes at work as well. At Lagaan, after the introduction of SASA and C2005, the thrust of innovation was to focus on religious instruction as the site where diversity could be addressed most effectively. The way in which this was done, however, privileged Arabic over isiXhosa. At Amazon, given the high levels of underachievement at the school, it was decided to shift away from subjects that were traditionally reserved for high achievers and a process of phasing out subjects like Computer Studies and Physical Science at Grade 10 was initiated. While the school improved its pass rate from 44% to 72%, as a result of rearranging its curriculum, and, in the process, received the award for the most improved school in the City of Durban District, it consolidated the status of 'Indian' learners as the high achievers in the school. In Grade 12, while there were distinctly more African learners than 'Indian' learners, almost all of the higher-Grade entries came from 'Indian' learners.¹²

c) Ethnicity and inclusion – the hidden curriculum

In terms of the hidden curriculum a number of factors were evident that illustrated how the schools understood what constituted the 'norm' of the school, often in racial or ethnic terms. At Bongalethu, for example, clan affiliation conditioned entry and participation in the life of the learners on an everyday basis. There were also, in addition to this, practices associated with social and leisure interests, gender and attitude to criminality that shaped patterns of inclusion-exclusion within the school.

¹¹ Having argued that the school sought to improve students' performance scores with this decision, it is necessary to make the point that there were second-language speakers in the school who were achieving high scores in languages other than their mother tongues. In 2001, one African student obtained a distinction in English – First Language – Standard Grade. None of the 'Indian' students obtained a distinction in English – Standard Grade.

¹² The matriculation examination offers students the option, in most subjects, of taking their examinations at the Higher or Standard Grades. Higher-Grade examinations call on higher-order thinking skills. For entry to university a student is required to obtain a matriculation exemption pass. For an exemption one has to take certain subjects at the Higher Grade and obtain specified minima in individual subjects. Students who take key subjects on the Standard Grade, such as mathematics and physical science, prejudice their chances of obtaining a matriculation exemption.

As at some of the other schools, Amazon also made attempts to address how it managed assemblies and some of its school gatherings. The prayer at the school assembly was often in isiZulu. Observance of Ascension Day was now part of the school calendar. This was not the case when the schools' student population was mainly 'Indian' and only Hindu and Muslim religious holidays were observed. Events that appealed to 'Indian' people were still, however, promoted at the school, such as the Rajesh Gopie show, a popular entertainment package. The school also relaxed its uniform requirements to accommodate 'African' hair. Braids and various forms of knotting of the hair were allowed.

4.3.6 Teachers and inclusion

This section focuses on how teachers, as distinct from their schools, interpret and understand policies of inclusion. What are their teaching approaches? What contradictions are evident in what teachers say and what they do? How do learners experience the classroom? How is identity negotiated in the classroom/school?

All the schools, for the purposes of this section, manifested the difficulties teachers would find at any school. Critical in making sense of teacher behaviour and teacher deportment, however, is recognition of the specific situations in which schools found themselves historically. In this respect, the character of the schools, teachers' class and race backgrounds, are crucial. This section will suggest that there are particular socio-economic historical themes that impact significantly on how teachers present themselves to their learners. In former DET schools, for example, while the themes of student misbehaviour, indiscipline, children not doing their homework and so on were persistent, the ways in which they were interpreted and responded to by the teachers had much to do with the positions teachers, as a socio-cultural group, occupied relative to the majority of their students. Teachers were located in a much more socially mobile space and drew on the cultural resources or the cultural capital of this mobility in relation to their students. This disposed them towards middle-class orientations. In the former 'white' schools, the ethic of 'rescue' was strong. Teachers saw themselves as saving children from themselves. As indicated above, language issues were central to the life of the school. They not only defined relationships in the playground but also constituted the focal point of teachers' work in the classroom.

This section of the report is essentially divided into two parts. The first part deals with the relatively culturally homogenous environments of the former DET schools, and the second part focuses on the work of teachers in former HOA, HOR and HOD schools. The argument made is that teachers, irrespective of their locations, are bearers of social meaning and as such, act out particular understandings of what is normal and what is not. This 'normalisation', even in the supposedly homogenous spaces of the largely African school, is heavily inscribed by class and gender, leading to inclusion or exclusion.

In the relatively privileged environment of Basildon, for instance, compared to the other schools, which did not have children from other cultural or 'racial' backgrounds, Basildon was middle-class in its orientation. This meant that teachers sought to model the behaviour of the children around practices of self-control and a purposive individuality. The teachers' foci at other schools were quite different. At Siyafika and Bongaletu, for example, the teachers had to

work with problems that were more urgent, such as drug abuse and criminality. At Basildon, for the most part, a middle-class civility prevailed. There was, however, an incident where a student complained of being sworn at by the ‘white’ principal. In the other schools, teachers tended to treat students in a different, more hierarchical way. Teachers and students were expected to know their places and to behave accordingly. This had a great deal to do with the inevitable class difference between most of the teachers and most of the students.

Given this, at Divinity, one parent remarked that “teachers do treat children differently – it’s their habit. Like conductors, who show disrespect to passengers and like clerks show disrespect to the people in the queue, teachers treat children harshly as it is their habit.” This respondent seemed to suggest that the hierarchies between students and teachers were acceptable, and that teachers should be afforded an elevated status as part of their positions of authority or superiority. Another parent is critical of the social activities that the school engages in when students are allowed to wear ‘civvies’ to school. But even in this more differentiated class environment, apparently hard and fast social distinctions between teachers were malleable. One parent, for instance, objected to the additional payment of two rands for her child to dress casually to school for what was called ‘civvies day’, but more importantly objected to “teachers socialising with the students”. She preferred the conventional role expected of teachers. Teachers in her opinion were to be respected from afar and children should not be seen as ‘partying’ with the teachers.

Bongalethu’s teachers insisted on preserving their distance from their students and expected their students to be submissive. They did not brook any challenge to the school’s rules. They operated from the premise that school only had rules, and even resorted to calling the police. When fights broke out on the school premises and students started using knives, the police were called in and there was a random body search of students by the police. Teachers also insisted that students wear uniform and remove accessories such as earrings, fancy jewellery and jackets. While this policy was no different to that of many privileged ‘white’ schools, it was the way in which the teachers approached the matter that made it different. Teachers argued that the individual beliefs of students and parents belonged to the community, whereas inside school they were expected to behave as school required. According to the teachers, the basis of school rules and principles consisted of an essential uniformity, which served to protect the students. Where problems did arise in the school they attributed this to people not teaching properly. They acknowledged that sometimes they had to act as parents, social workers, police, counsellors and so on, but decried the change in the students’ behaviour which they put down to the government’s permissiveness and the new South African democratic dispensation. The loss of their ability to use corporal punishment was seen as a major problem. In this context, not unexpectedly, students felt hemmed in and suggested, in the surveys, that they had few opportunities to express and discuss issues of differences and diversity in class. There was also the feeling amongst the students that the teachers did not know how to deal with problems in the school.

Basildon’s concerns were more prosaic, and had to do with finding ways of holding students’ attention in class and addressing their private anxieties. In class, it seemed, students invariably gravitated to what they perceived to be their racial or linguistic groups. Teachers tried to intervene to stem this trend but had come to accept that this was what the students felt

comfortable with. They used a variety of techniques including group work, quizzes, discussions and projects. Students helped each other to anticipate and plan for their classroom work. The teachers at Basildon appeared to be relaxed and all the classes observed were active and involved a great deal of talking, partly due to the outcomes-based style of teaching. It was also common to find students moving about freely. For the most part, the students were not singled out because of racial or cultural factors, and students that were not doing so well were encouraged in their work. Interactions between teachers and students were open and frank and students also seemed to get along with each other. Discipline also appeared to be relatively uncontentious. Students were detained during break or after school hours, asked to pick up papers, sent out of the room, kept busy with extra class work, or spoken to by the teachers. However, three teachers mentioned that they isolated students from their friends by mixing them with other groups when they misbehaved. In the context of nurturing tolerance in the school, this approach posed the danger of associating mixing with punishment which was unfortunate.

There are two further interesting issues that emerged in the study; The first emerged strongly in Bongaletu, in relation to initiation. Students who had gone through traditional forms of circumcision were scornful of those who had not and who were being circumcised in hospitals. Those who were circumcised in the traditional way insisted on being addressed with the prefix 'bhuti' and beat those who were not. In one instance, a student who was circumcised in a non-traditional way was asked to pay a case of brandy, but could not afford the 'penalty' and decided to drop out of school. The school took exception to the behaviour of the offender and placed him under suspension. The victim, in the meanwhile, found it too embarrassing and chose not to come back. While the teachers sought to accommodate the different approaches to initiation, they were unable to find ways of addressing the matter directly, and outsiders were finally brought in, in an attempt to address the matter.

The other issue relates to the attitude of African teachers who had elected to place their children in former 'white' schools. They constantly referenced their own work in relation to the 'white' school and condemned the quality of their own practice. They were aware that they offered their own pupils a different quality of education to that which their own children were receiving. They rationalised this, however, not as a consequence of their own inability to deliver a better education, but as a result of the resource context which prevented them from doing so. One of the teachers at Siyafika said, for example, "a good school is one that has a lot of activities and facilities like a Science lab, library. Most of our schools do not have libraries and extra-mural activities, like sport fields, swimming pools. Our school children only have theory that is in their heads because there is no practice." Thus these teachers framed their experience of teaching in the African township school in relation to their lived experience or vicarious experiences via their children's 'out of township' schools.

As discussed above, language can be a major factor in inclusion and exclusion. Two important schools for understanding how teachers use language are Eastdale and Ruby. At Eastdale, there was acknowledgement of the difficulties experienced with languages, and that students struggled and sometimes did poorly academically because they did not have an adequate grasp of the languages being used in the school. Most teachers mentioned Afrikaans as a problem, explaining that students took Afrikaans as a third language and tended to struggle with it, since

Afrikaans was not spoken in the homes of some students and that English, as a result of the media, was dominant. It was clear, however, that children were also struggling with their English, even when it was taught as the second language. Many students stated that they disliked Afrikaans, as they did not understand it, but one disliked Afrikaans initially but was now “changing my attitude because I want to pass.” Another stated he did not like isiXhosa and there was too much pressure and expectation that they should talk isiXhosa. Another said that isiXhosa is difficult to understand and interpret, while others said the same about English. Diffuse as these complaints were, they demonstrated a deep undercurrent of anxiety about not being included because of language in the school.

In some ways, the situation at Ruby was more extreme. Reluctant as the teachers were at Ruby in acceding to the possibility that their school could possibly include isiXhosa as a language, in the classroom where they found themselves face to face with students whose command of Afrikaans was slight, they were forced to change their approach. While the school was an Afrikaans medium school, over 50% of its population consisted of isiXhosa speaking students, large numbers of whom did not have any Afrikaans. Hostile to the possibility that the school might have to accept its dominant Xhosa composition, the school avoided the challenge of developing an official language policy, so that every single teacher was forced to improvise. One teacher said, “I use Afrikaans, my main language is Afrikaans, but if I find out that this boy does not understand, with my broken Xhosa, I try to explain, sometimes in English, because I want him to understand....” In the more senior classes, another teacher reported that sometimes he made use of the isiXhosa speaking learners who understood Afrikaans to explain to those who did not understand. The same teacher admitted that if the school could use both English and Afrikaans as media of instruction, children would do better at school. The pass rate at the school was only 45%. The five teachers interviewed at Ruby were clearly aware of the fact that their school was multicultural and bilingual and that the students had rights that were being violated. In the absence of a school policy they had begun to apply different strategies deliberately seating ‘coloured’ and African children together, arguing that this would help the ‘coloured’ child to learn isiXhosa and vice versa.

The students also used the different languages. As one student said ...We respect and understand each other’s culture. We play together and we use English, Afrikaans and Xhosa. We learn all the languages at school but we do not have Xhosa. I have Xhosa friends, there they are (pointing at them) and they teach me the language.

Others, however, expressed disappointment that isiXhosa did not enjoy status in the school.

As mediators of inclusion at Ruby, the teachers were clearly not succeeding. The depth of their learners’ feelings of alienation, so it seemed, was also not apparent to them.

Most teachers in the study had difficulty in dealing with their pupils in an equitable and dignified way, often because they came from the same group as those students who were being privileged. At Amazon in the junior phase, for example, while the ‘Indian’ pupils said in their interviews that they felt marginalised in the school, in reality, through the classroom observations, it appeared that ‘Indian’ learners received preferential treatment from the teachers. In two of the four Grade 9 lessons observed, the teachers interacted more with the ‘Indian’

students than with the African students. African students who verbalised that they were being ignored. The teacher's explanation for this differential treatment was that he gave more attention to the 'Indian' pupils in the class because outcomes based education disadvantaged them and he, therefore, had to compensate for this. He argued that the outcomes based education classes advantaged African learners who were not shy to express themselves. This also intimidated the 'Indian' learners. Therefore, he felt, teachers needed to concentrate more on 'Indian' learners. There were, however, attempts to reach out to the African pupils. For example, in one class, the teacher was proficient in isiZulu and encouraged the use of isiZulu by African students.

In the senior classes, students chose to sit in distinct racial groups, with little interaction between the races. Generally the 'Indian' students received more attention and in the senior classes, almost all the higher-grade entries were from the 'Indian' students. African students felt that they did not have the resources (time, money, etc) to compete with the 'Indian' learners and they (Africans) were just glad that they made it to the matriculation level. The observation schedules at Amazon also showed that males were marginalised in the Mathematics class while females were marginalised in the Economics class. However the teacher interaction in this instance showed no marginalisation with regard to race.

Positively, the teachers were making efforts to link their schools to the wider communities in which they found themselves and not only to their older and traditional feeder communities. At Ruby, the school had involved the wider community in helping build additional classrooms and considered this a great success in building its relationships with the community. At Amazon, ongoing efforts were underway to include the broader community in the corporate life of the school. In 2001, an African city councillor was invited to address a school assembly. She spoke at length to the learners and spoke mainly in isiZulu. Also at Amazon, even though motives were largely about the financial well being of the school, the school sent out a circular to parents that was written in isiZulu. Most teachers in all of these schools were not proficient in the mother-tongues of their students, which is why communication was limited in mother-tongues, but it could be argued that schools should do more to make their teachers proficient or to appoint mother-tongue speakers to their staffs.

The way in which teachers mediate inclusion is to emphasise difference, tolerance and respect. While all this is welcome, it tends to reinforce particular views of the other which are partly rooted in the apartheid history. In other words, the majority of teachers who are 'white' claim a commitment to inclusion on the basis of highlighting the difference of other groups. The research indicates that there is no engagement with what difference is and the dynamic nature of culture. Moreover, most teacher approaches in dealing with difference and problems in general consist of distinctly behaviourist attitudes and positive and negative sanctions to change actions.

Most teachers were also oblivious to the impact of their behaviour on the children. Exceptions occurred, however, in some schools. At Valley Primary School, some teachers understood the facilitation of inclusion as a right to be heard. One teacher, for example, made the following comment, "I think that all issues should be dealt in the classroom. They should be open. Everybody should have freedom to speak and to be heard and to be accepted for what they

have to say.” Another teacher claimed that they dealt with issues of inclusion on an ongoing basis:

... it comes up in daily discussions ... It’s like a daily thing. It’s not a specific task. I mean we do life skills where we talk about tolerance, not only in religion, but as far as sexual preferences, different cultures ... different races ... So it is discussed whenever the situation allows for it. So we bring it up almost daily you know like in discussions and that, so it’s an ongoing thing. It’s not just like a sit-down lesson, you know. It is ongoing.

The teachers at Oasis demonstrated, to some degree, respect and value for the individuality of each student. They made effective use of knowledge gained about ‘black’ students and endeared themselves to both students and parents for the manner in which their students were treated. However, the state of neglect of classrooms and the transmission mode of teaching pointed to a more complex attitude to their students and their responsibilities as teachers. The researcher who visited this school commented in his debriefing that he felt that the condition of the classes expressed the teachers’ disdain towards their students. He also commented that if the parents were prohibited from visiting classrooms, how could they gauge the quality of the education their children receive? However the teachers were satisfying both parent and student expectations and likewise, parents are complying with school regulations. These are moves that are in tandem with each other, though even these forms of compliance obscure deep challenges that lie inside of schools, for example the reinforcement of particular cultural stereotypes, such as ‘primitive’ village life.

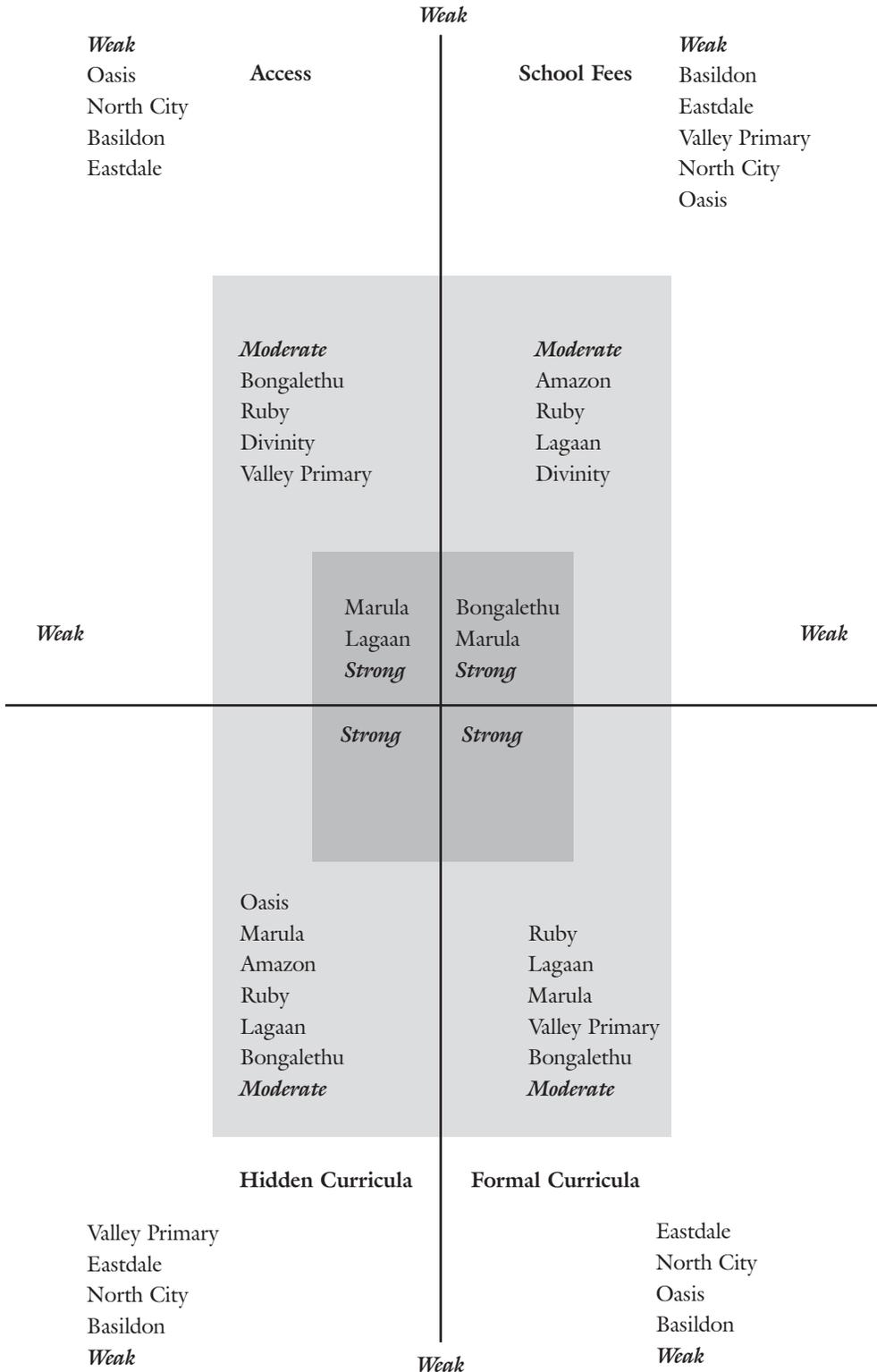
4.4 Policy conclusion and reflections

The outcomes of the practices that emerged in schools were more weak than strong, for the most part, with respect to inclusion. The cumulative impact of the approaches in the schools was essentially to produce schools that at best were aware of their new integrating circumstances, and, at worst, resentful of the changes they were having to effect.

Using the framework of strong, moderate and weak inclusion, we can, therefore, come to the following broad conclusions (also see Figure 4.1).

First, ‘black’ schools are generally more inclusive but manifest many contradictions. While schools such as Marula feature strongly with respect to access, as aspects of their governance platforms, they perform less well when it comes to those dimensions of school life that deal with the formal and hidden curriculum. None of the former ‘black’ schools present strongly in terms of what they consciously and unconsciously do to build inclusive environments in their schools. While one might say that strong exclusionary practices are not evident in these schools, they have not, on the other hand, taken much trouble to build deliberate policies of inclusion. Second, the former ‘white’ schools generally perform poorly at all levels. Even a school which performs moderately well in the access and formal curriculum dimensions, may be weak with respect to fees and standards. Other schools are uniformly exclusive. Contradictions in schools such as Valley Primary School reflect tensions between such schools’ awareness of their status as public open access institutions and their concern about retaining their status as institutions of excellence. This presents a challenge to policy-makers.

Figure 4.1 Inclusion and Exclusion in South Africa Schools



The following policy issues can be drawn from the research:

- Schools researched in this study are generally assimilationist in nature. As the evidence above suggests, all the schools in the study continue to operate within, and are defined by, the dominant ideology of race, class and gender. Paradoxically, despite the significant reforms the new government has introduced, these continue to shape how schools define themselves and determine how they include and exclude. The schools are strongly assimilationist in the sense that their modes of governance, their attitude to admissions and the ways in which they organise the curriculum continue to feed off and to be organised around the standards and the assumptions derived from race, class and gender understandings. Central in this explanation is that a radical disruption of this hegemony has not occurred. The result is that assimilation remains the order of the day in terms of the ways that parents and learners are recruited into the culture of the dominant groups.
- Schools operate strongly according to market principles. Through the use of school fees, schools reinforce the commodification of education and selective inclusion.
- African languages and indigenous knowledge systems are systematically marginalised.
- Schools have little or no official departmental or broader governmental support in assisting them deal with the challenges they face under these current transitional contexts and processes.
- At all levels, macro, institutional and individual, inclusion and exclusion always relate to each other.

Contrary to expectations, this study did not find the rampant and crude forms of exclusion that have been reported in the press. While it was clear that exclusion was at work, the schools were all, to varying degrees, seeking to operate within the ambit of the new South African Constitution. One could find, in all the schools, an awareness, language, and often, the practice of, inclusion.

Policy makers and civil society organisations need to consider:

- the extent to which right based ideals can be effectively implemented at school level;
- the ways policies are interpreted, re-articulated and re-presented at micro levels, and how institutions can take stock of these renegotiations and address them;
- the context, type and racial and cultural ethos of the schools which impact on the ways the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion are used and experienced.

Chapter 5: Education Inclusion in India

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the policies and practice of education inclusion in India focusing on scheduled castes and tribes. It considers the policy environment within which efforts to tackle exclusion are framed and examines in detail what occurs at the school level in terms of access, governance and teaching and learning. While it notes that the enabling policies of the state are generally in place, the reality is that no school in the study is strongly inclusive. On only two occasions, with respect to parent and school relations in one setting, and peer relations in another, do schools manifest inclusive characteristics. For the rest, every school in the study is weakly inclusive and operates according to the form prescribed by the law.

5.2 The policy context for inclusion in India

In India, commitment to end caste-based discrimination found a strong framework in the Constitution of the Republic of India. One of the members of the drafting committee of the Constitution was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, himself a member of an ex-Untouchable caste, and an outspoken and radical voice on ending untouchability and reforming caste-ridden India. At the inception of the Indian state in 1947, the principle of equality was enshrined in the constitution in several radical ways, as described by Weiner (2001:195):

Equality was to be achieved in part through democratic institutions and procedures, particularly universal suffrage without a literacy requirement, equality before the law, legislation banning discrimination, and through the establishment of a system of reservations that would guarantee representation to members of scheduled castes and tribes.

This vision enshrined the hope that India would become a country where social status and birth did not determine opportunity and social rank (*ibid.*). Equal opportunity through education in particular was seen as offering the best route out of discrimination and stigma. Equality was to be addressed through the provision of special opportunities to groups that the Constitution identified as necessitating special measures to aid their ability to share in the nation's progress. Two groups, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, were identified explicitly as beneficiaries of special privileges, as follows:

- reserved seats in Parliament and other elected bodies, proportional to their presence in the population;
- quotas for admission into secondary schools, colleges, medical and engineering schools;
- employment in government services and enterprises.

This commitment futhered that begun under the British colonial rule to extend special privileges to members of formerly untouchable castes (by then the practice of untouchability had been outlawed as a consequence of both social reform and colonial state action). India's governance structures, drawing from the vision enshrined by the Constitution, have thus always recognised caste as a basis of discrimination unacceptable to the modern Indian state. By following a programme of affirmative action in the areas of political representation, in public employment and higher education, attempts were thus made to ensure that members of

Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) were included more effectively in the mainstream of society and given access to opportunities from which they had been excluded. However, the continuing maintenance of severe restrictions on social relations between ex untouchables and other castes meant that they were heavily dependent for resource transfers and for basic survival on the goodwill of upper castes. While much of this has been dismantled through the actions of the modern state, and through processes of modernisation, not least the spread of education and urbanisation, some patterns of dependence still remain, particularly in relation to which power is socially organised (Jeffrey, 2003).

Variations in the local social relations between different caste groups underline the difficulties of sustaining a meta-discourse on caste-based exclusion, as different commentators draw on diverse empirical stories to present dissimilar accounts of the extent to which caste is a salient *social* category (as opposed to its political usage) and relevant to disaggregate for policy formulation purposes. Current public debates, which are too complex and large to summarise here, are positioned along questions of, *inter alia*: the extent to which targeted measures based on caste are divisive of India's social fabric or are appropriate ways to promote equity; and, whether income poverty is a better basis for targeting than caste, given the unequal distribution of wealth even within specific caste groups.

Policy measures can be divided into the following approaches:

- affirmative action, mandated by the Constitution, supported by anti-discrimination law;
- economic programmes implicitly targeting Scheduled Castes and Tribes;
- welfare provisions in education such as scholarships and hostels directly targeted at these groups;
- broader universal education policies expanding access to education services to all sub-populations;
- politically enabling measures such as decentralisation, with an overall vision that incorporates greater representation for people from marginalised groups.

Another broad way of categorising these policy initiatives is as:

- a) anti-discriminatory policies through legal protection from discrimination;¹³
- b) promotion of equal opportunities through reservations of seats or places in public employment, education and political bodies;
- c) welfare and economic development programmes aimed at promoting overall development and poverty-reduction.

Lack of analysis and evaluation of the impact of these different policy measures makes it impossible to conclude on the relative merits of different approaches. The impact of these programmes is also hard to capture in one single set of indicators. Patterns of change in economic indicators by caste are difficult to map and interpret, given variations in prevalence, extent and forms of caste-based discrimination, and the numerous jatis and subcastes that constitute caste relations in the local context. Most commentators agree that there has been a

¹³ For example, the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 (and Rules, 1995). For a discussion of the limitations, particularly of the 1989 Act, see Human Rights Feature (31 August 2003) 'Prevention of Atrocities Act: Unused Ammunition' (www.hrdc.net.sahrdc/hrfeatures)

marked change in the role that caste plays in determining access to resources, and its decline as a religiously sanctioned system of resource transfer (Jeffrey 2003, Mendelsohn and Vicziany, 1998; Weiner, 2001). However, the continuing relevance of caste can be seen in the ways in which local systems of power continue to function, with caste serving as a dominant lever for accessing social and political influence, though this varies in different local political and social contexts.

The relationship between politics and policy making, implementation and the ways in which policy is received at local levels is important to unravel, as it will have a bearing on the ways in which policies intended to address the needs of vulnerable caste groups have their desired impact. The ‘silent revolution’ in the transformation of caste-based hierarchies has been identified in terms of the increased access of lower castes to political power through political mobilisation and the rise of caste-based political formations and political parties (Jaffrelot, 2003). On the other hand, the impact of social and economic programmes aimed at increasing the welfare and alleviating the poverty of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes has been less noteworthy (Mendelsohn and Vicziany, 1998). A phrase that may capture this disjuncture between the political and social in Indian development is articulated by Jaffrelot: “India, at least in its earlier incarnations, may therefore be an extreme case of political democracy without social democracy” (2003:3).

It can therefore be argued that there has been on the whole a separation of political strategies and economic strategies for removal of caste-based discrimination and promotion of equal opportunity, and the two have operated in distinct ways. Administratively managed resource redistribution and political redistribution have, arguably, been operationalised in distinct spheres. The programme of democratic decentralisation embarked on by the Indian state since the early 1990s represents a shift in policy towards bringing together the political and administrative aspects of development. The interests of marginalised social groups such as Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have been promoted through reservations of seats for them at all levels of district and sub-district governance that form the decentralised structure of governance. Through these political mechanisms, it is assumed that local needs and priorities will be addressed and within that, particularly, the interests of marginalised groups. The impact of decentralisation on the social and economic fortunes of disadvantaged groups, however, remains unclear. With exceptions, such as West Bengal and Kerala (Isaacs and Heller, 2003), and Karnataka (Crook and Manor, 1999), the impact of decentralisation is only slowly unfolding, revealing variations in effectiveness as well as design.

The relevance of public modes of providing for the welfare of disadvantaged groups, particularly through affirmative action is called into question as increasingly the public sector shrinks and the private or non-state sector expands as a consequence of new economic policies. The issue of affirmative action has therefore become highly contentious. Similarly, the lack of systematic attention to fundamental programmes of redistribution such as land reform has been criticised.

The extent to which institutional capacity exists and meaningful reform of implementation systems aimed at ensuring that commitment to non-discrimination is translated into reality, remains questionable. Commissions and departments with the specific mandate to address SC

and ST welfare and development issues do not participate in the broad formulation of policy across sectors, and have no direct links with implementation processes or personnel.¹⁴ Their role as potential oversight bodies, monitoring the progress and performance of *Dalit* or *Adivasi* children, for example, is also not developed.

A quick scan of broad policy approaches, including constitutionally mandated obligations of the state, suggests that the complex problem of caste-based inequality and disadvantage are addressed through policy frameworks in a number of terrains. The extent to which these policy frameworks have translated into successful practice are determined by the institutional translation of these frameworks on the one hand, and the continuing operation of caste as a form of power and social capital (Jeffrey, 2003) in local contexts. These determine the extent to which policy frameworks aimed at exclusion based on caste can succeed in meeting their goals. The following section on educational policy examines these issues more closely.

5.2.1 Educational policy and inclusion in India

The decade of the 1990s was a watershed in Indian education policy making. This decade not only saw the opening up of the primary education sub-sector to external assistance, but the policy shift focused particularly on rapid expansion of primary schooling facilities (Govinda, 2002). In parallel, many Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) developed innovative schooling interventions aimed at targeting out of school populations, particularly among marginalised groups and in relatively neglected or remote geographical areas. After decades of neglect of primary education relative to higher levels of education, particularly in terms of resourcing, these developments provided a more promising framework within which to review state efforts to promote educational inclusion.

As argued above, the dominant policy mode of addressing caste-based discrimination has been through programmes of affirmative action (reservations through quotas), which directly target caste discrimination. Additional modes of addressing caste include economic programmes that target those below the poverty line, in the areas of food distribution, housing, income generation, micro-credit, amongst others. Given the bivalent nature of caste discrimination, operating through both social discrimination and economic disadvantage (Kabeer, 2000), many such economic and welfare programmes implicitly target Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe households as they also predominantly constitute the poorest.

Educational measures have been derived broadly from the constitutional mandate, but also have been driven by the scale of the challenge of universalisation of elementary education (UEE) based on the unequal access of children from marginalised groups to schooling. Specific additional measures aimed at targeting the enrolment and attendance of poorer and disadvantaged groups include scholarships for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe children for post-primary education, and residential hostels; more general measures include free textbooks, uniforms and midday meals. There are further special measures for girls. These vary by state and are implemented variously by Welfare Departments or the Education Department.

¹⁴ Interview, April 2002, Chairperson, State Human Rights Commission, Jaipur.

Separate allocations of resources for expenditure on the development of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe groups are also made, but, as Nambissan and Sedwal (2002:76) note, the separate allocation of resources addressing the development needs of these groups have been extremely inadequate; and although conceived to supplement distribution of other resources these programmes have “merely substituted the benefits available to Scheduled Castes under normal development schemes”.

While references to the relative disadvantage of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes had often been made in education policy documents, the lack of attention paid overall to developing the education sector rendered these pronouncements as somewhat irrelevant. Hence the focus below is on policy developments in the lead up to the 1990s, and thereafter, in the context of rapidly expanding access. The National Policy on Education (1986) (NPE), and its subsequent revision in 1992, set the frame for the departure in Indian education towards a focus on primary education and themes of equality within education, such as those based on gender, caste and ethnicity. The NPE 1986 was brought into existence with the then Prime Minister calling for a review of the country’s educational system. In a comprehensive review of the sector, a government report, *Challenge of Education – A Policy Perspective* (1985), provided a critique of the functioning of the education system which made it clear that the impediments to implementation of the earlier policy of 1968 lay embedded in systemic failure and not just administrative drawbacks. This document focused on: disparities of achievement by gender, caste and socio-economic class; enumeration of the infrastructure shortfalls in (particularly rural) schools; inter-regional disparities; the absorption of public expenditure by teachers rather than students with the per student investment per year declining at both centre and State level; the bias towards urban higher education rather than rural elementary education; and the non-achievement of the target of educational expenditure of 6% of GDP which was specified by the Kothari Commission (GOI, 1985).

The NPE 1986 emphasised four significant elements for Universal Elementary Education. The first is the achievement of equality. Apart from a series of observations about the relevance of education on the cultural, political, economic and social fronts, the NPE 1986 laid special emphasis on the role of education in the removal of disparities. This led to the elaboration of concerns with, and strategies for, addressing inequalities faced by women; scheduled castes; scheduled tribes; inhabitants of remote or geographically dispersed areas; minorities; and the handicapped or physically disabled (GOI, 1986).

The articulation of the goals of equality-oriented interventions differs somewhat from group to group. While the link between education and women’s equality is made explicitly in terms of the need for “basic change in the status of women”, in the case of Scheduled Castes, the central focus is “...their equalisation with the non-SC population” with strategies aimed at ensuring their participation on equal terms with the rest of the communities (GOI: 11). The task of bringing Scheduled Tribes on par with others however, includes both bringing them into the mainstream by providing schools for them, as well as catering to their distinctive socio-cultural characteristics including curricula and language tailored to their requirements particularly at the initial stages of education (ibid.). Inclusion is thus scripted in different terms for these different groups, displaying some sensitivity to the different underlying causes of inequality that these groups experience, but at the same time skirting around the more difficult issues of the nature

of identity-based differentiation, and the diverse cultural reasons why the 'equalisation' of their participation with other social groups remains a challenge. For Scheduled Castes in particular, the terms on which 'equalisation' is to take place are left unspecified; access remains implicitly the terrain on which achievements of policy are to be measured. This point particularly comes through in relation to the later discussion on the impact of new schools being opened in Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe areas of villages. Their generally lower levels of investment relative to other government schools (under the Alternative and Innovative Education Scheme, and the Education Guarantee Scheme) beg the question about the terms on which 'equal participation' is envisaged or articulated.

The 1990s saw significant shifts in education policy. Amongst these were:

1. *Greater focus on community involvement and mobilisation.* In 1991, a review by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) suggested revisions to the POA 1986, in order to build on the 'wisdom of hindsight' in the wake of the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) that was started in 1991. The revised POA in 1992 notes that the TLC, a post-POA innovation, placed policy focus on the importance of social mobilisation campaigns, involvement of voluntary efforts and people's participation combined with intense learning inputs and, in many cases, speedy achievement of functional literacy. The emphasis on 'micro planning' in the report also represents a move away from the earlier focus on episodic enrolment drives to participatory planning, wherein it was conceived that teachers and villagers would formulate family and child specific plans of action to ensure that regular attendance of every child in a school or non-formal education centre in order to complete at least five years of schooling or its nonformal equivalent.
2. *Focus on the expansion of infrastructure and quality of education,* in particular the need for substantial improvements of primary schools in order to repair what the report itself described as unattractive school environments, with buildings in disrepair and poor quality and insufficient instructional materials, which were acknowledged as demotivating factors for both parents and children. Linking quality reforms to the need to rapidly expand infrastructure has resulted in certain trade-offs in terms of implementation priorities. The overall re-design of the curricular content of primary education in the context of rapid expansion has led to what Tilak calls "the policy of 'minimizing the minimum needs'" (1990:14). The three-pronged strategy for UPE includes universal primary schooling access, non-formal schooling and adult literacy, and in each of these, minimum standards have been set which provide the parameters for curriculum development as well as evaluation of learning outcomes. These are often so minimal as to not constitute a satisfactory benchmark for ensuring that adequate teaching and learning takes place in classrooms. There is also no retention policy at the primary stage, with children being compulsorily promoted regardless of attendance and performance. While the rationale for this policy is presented as a shift of responsibility to teachers, to diagnose and remedy learning problems, rather than placing pressure on children to perform up to measured standards (GOI, 1992:107), a compulsory pass policy at primary level usefully prevents the stagnation of children in particular classes, particularly those who attend irregularly, and hence facilitates the achievement of a semblance of UPE. A no-retention policy in the absence of deep-seated quality reforms can be viewed as a pragmatic move.

The District Primary Education Programme encapsulated these policy shifts. Launched in 1994, the programme focused educational resources and planning at district-level, focusing through successive phases of expansion on districts with the lowest literacy and lowest levels of Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and female education enrolment levels. From a policy perspective, the targeting of educational resources to the districts with the highest numbers of educationally deprived children from marginalised social groups was an acknowledgement that these groups constitute the most educationally disadvantaged, and consequently need priority attention. This led to a very great emphasis in education policy documents on the importance of reaching Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and girls. Earlier models drawn on from elsewhere in the country in particular had highlighted the importance of non-formal schools for out of school children, area based planning, and community mobilisation and participation. These dominant modes of social development delivery became incorporated into DPEP, tying it in strongly, in rhetoric at least, to the decentralisation programme that had created local governance structures at district and sub-district levels. Through this mechanism, the work of education bureaucrats was to come within the purview of decentralised leadership, notably the panchayats. The 'bottom up' approach to educational planning was complemented by the design of data-based systems of monitoring and evaluation to keep track of progress under this ambitious programme (Pandey, 2000).

The literature on the 'achievements' under District Primary Education Programme is both vast and not amenable to conclusive synthesis. As Pandey (2000) notes, there were variations across states, and some states managed considerable progress, compared with others. Some states responded to reform agendas more speedily than others; others had a more entrenched set of social, economic and political inequalities that constrained progress. Govinda's assessment of progress in the decade of the 1990s – the decade of DPEP – suggests that aggregate indicators have shown improvement, although qualitative challenges, particularly in the area of including traditionally disadvantaged groups, remain.¹⁵

Reference to the education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is widespread in Indian policy documents and schemes, as is the reference to the language of community ownership and decentralisation. This in particular has been given powerful shape in the state of Madhya Pradesh's Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS), which since its launch in 1997 has contributed a newer institutional model to the challenge of education for all. It recognised that out of school groups continue to be overwhelmingly located in poor, unserved hamlets, and at the receiving end of unequal resource distribution and drew on a sophisticated rationale. At one level, the starting point of this initiative was the recognition by the government of Madhya Pradesh that deficiencies of public education, rather than insufficient parental demand, is the main cause of educational deprivation in the state. On the other, the diagnosis of educational problems as located largely in the social arena has led to innovations that have sought to overcome the constraints to participation on the part of disadvantaged communities.

In an implicit recognition of the unequal power relations that keep *Dalit* and *Adivasi* households out of positions of decision-making in local rural contexts, the EGS has sought to give communities without schools the 'right' to come together to articulate their demand for a school with a 'guarantee' that the state will respond within a period of 90 days, providing

¹⁵ See papers by Nambissan and Sedwal, K. Sujatha, and Govinda, in Govinda (2002) for a more detailed assessment.

teachers, their salaries, training for the teachers, teaching-learning material and contingencies to start a school wherever there is a demand from a community without primary schooling within one kilometre (provided there are at least 25 learners in case of tribal areas and 40 learners in case of non-tribal areas). The community is required to provide the start-up space for the school and suggest the name of a local resident as the teacher of the EGS centre. The Gram Panchayat is empowered to appoint such a teacher after the chief executive officer of the Janpad (block) Panchayat has verified the bona fides of the demand and the qualifications of the proposed teacher. The district administration organises the training for EGS teachers. This model is now widely adopted under the latest policy framework for Universal Education (discussed below), and many states have utilised this approach.

While Madhya Pradesh articulated this approach in terms of a ‘rights’ approach, viewing its cornerstone as building the ownership of deprived communities over these schools, many have decried these developments as being more a way to meet the fiscal challenge that India faces in financing universal education, using community ownership as a convenient ‘fig-leaf’ to mask what is perceived as the entrenchment of disadvantage within these groups (see for example, Kumar et al, 2001). These criticisms are raised because these schools tend to have poorer infrastructure, less-trained and qualified teachers and be dominated by only the poorest and most marginal groups in these villages, which does little to promote or facilitate social inclusion.

The impact of the EGS is as yet a matter of great debate and contention. Some reviews have been cautiously optimistic, others have been critical. Internationally, the lower unit costs of the model have also been hailed as a model for fiscally challenged developing nations; nationally the emerging debate is on the long-term equity implications of an approach that provides lower-quality resources to new intakes of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children, many of whom are the first to attend school in their families. Reflections on these concerns in our own study are discussed further below.

While EGS is one type of broad approach, it, and other innovative approaches of the 1990s have been built upon to develop an umbrella programmatic approach to universal education, the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA) (or Universal Education Mission). An ‘action’ policy framework, the SSA seeks to allow for a wide range of educational interventions that best meet the needs of the diverse Indian groups within the educational arena. In keeping with the dominant educational discourse of community-oriented development, the programme defines itself as “an effort to universalize elementary education by community-ownership of the school system. It is a response to the demand for quality basic education all over the country” (Government of India, n.d.).

The focus of the SSA is wide-ranging, incorporating institutional reform (management and delivery), sustainable financing, community ownership, and capacity building. The programme focuses on quality and social change in education through promoting decentralised educational planning. For *Dalits* and *Adivasis*, however, there is no articulation of any analysis of what constrains their education – like other policy and programme developments, the focus is largely on facilitating community participation through mobilisation of these disadvantaged groups in the planning process. In particular, community-based monitoring is emphasised, and it is envisaged that task forces will be set up to monitor the participation of girls, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The policy document also emphasises the importance of “the educational

development of these children”, calling for a sharpening of resource targeting, providing hostels, incentives or special facilities as required, setting up alternative schooling facilities in unserved habitations, amongst others. The development of an innovation fund for children from these groups is also mentioned. There is no mention of curriculum, quality or non-discrimination in this framework document with specific reference to *Dalit* and *Adivasi* groups.

The framework laid out by the SSA thus extends earlier trends by emphasising the importance of community participation in securing universal education. Whilst quality of education and better management are all emphasised, the dominant discourse has been one of community involvement, pegging on to the back of the wider move in Indian policy towards decentralised development. This shift, as noted earlier, demonstrates the move towards synthesising the administrative and the political aspects of development management. This framework also provides the context in which we review the ‘inclusive’ scope of current policy frameworks, in the light of the experiences of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children in school today.

The review above has already enabled us to point to the ways in which, despite a very strong commitment to the education of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes children, particularly girls, policy frameworks have tended to be fairly hollow in terms of articulating what the basis of exclusion is that the policies will address. The implicit message seems to be that the constraints for their participation lie in two arenas:

- their ability to reach school, given infrastructure problems (distance from their hamlets); and
- affordability (costs) and their location of schools (in upper caste areas), and constraints on their active participation in schooling matters, particularly in terms of their ability to be effective social actors.

Both sets of constraints have been identified as inhibiting the participation of these groups. Hence the focus has been on enabling participation in schooling through facilitating entry and promoting community-based decision-making. Most of the measures that have been targeted at *Dalits* and *Adivasis* are enabling policies, which we define as policies that promote environments for inclusion.

Enabling policies are both universal and targeted – some policies are framed to include all school-going populations, or communities within which schools are located, whereas others are targeted at particular social groups, notably *Dalits* and *Adivasis*. Further, some operate within education, and some within the community. The simplified table below attempts to represent this distinction.

Table 5.1 Types of Policies and Level

	In School	In Community
Universal	No official fees (primary school), free textbooks, free uniforms	Village Education Committees
Targeted	Scholarships, hostels	Places reserved for the participation of SCs, STs and women

Enabling policies are those that focus on the building of suitable environments for inclusion, and should be distinguished from systemic policies, which are about the structuring, resourcing and management of educational systems from the vantage point of inclusion.

However silence remains in Indian education policy in relation to issues of management, teacher education and curriculum. For example, the SSA gets around specific commitments by merely specifying that curriculum development will be decentralised to reflect local needs. By not specifying the terms of inclusion for these groups – what these might mean qualitatively – policy frameworks are ‘hollow’, providing no means of developing indicators for measuring progress on goals (except for narrow educational indicators such as attendance, transition rates and achievement scores). In the case of *Adivasis* there is some minor difference as compared with *Dalits* – the recognition of the distinctiveness of their language and its implications for textbooks and teacher training are noted. For *Dalits* however, the focus is on targeting incentives to promote access. We, therefore, argue that most measures explicitly targeting excluded groups bypass systemic reforms, that is they do not make any reference to the particular needs to transform curriculum and teaching practice in a way that addresses the modes through which caste and ethnicity-based differentiation operates in the wider social context. The lack of systemic policies around inclusion, also means that links are not drawn between enabling and systemic policy measures to institutionally link schools, teachers, and teaching learning practices to the wider policies of inclusion that the Constitution, for example, envisions. These points are elaborated in the discussion below.

A cautionary and qualifying note must be introduced here. Our focus on ‘systemic’ policies refers to policies that have clear and explicit mandates, resources and institutions of implementation that are derived from these mandates and adequately supported.¹⁶ This allows us to distinguish our argument from the possibility that some programmes, some initiatives and some actors may, despite the absence of specific ‘inclusion’ mandates and resources, work in ways that are inclusive in the ways discussed earlier in this report.

5.3 The school research sites

The research in India focused on a mix of rural and urban schools, covering primary, upper primary and secondary schools in two states. Two districts in each of two states were selected. State selection was based on overall education performance and the share of *Dalits* and *Adivasis* in the overall population. Both states are identified as having low social development indicators, particularly in literacy, both states have high proportions of groups classified as Scheduled Castes to total population, and Madhya Pradesh further has a high proportion of groups classified as Scheduled Tribes to total population. Both states have also recently made significant and innovative efforts to address education disparities.

¹⁶ It must be also noted here, that the underdeveloped nature of ‘policy’ (particularly policy as text) has been noted for the education sector by many earlier commentators. Despite shifts in policy language, critiques of national policy documents by academics and activists focus on the rhetorical language used to state commitments (Weiner, 1991), the platitudes made about education that have no bearing on concrete proposals for improvement, unreasonable and over-ambitious goals, confusion of objectives, inconsistencies of ends and means and specific contradictions between stated goals and resource allocation (Dreze and Sen, 1995).

The boxes below provide information on the schools and the sites.

Box 5.1 Research Sites

States:	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan
Districts:	Harda, Ujjain	Shriganganagar, Tonk
Schools studied per district:	2 Lower Primary Schools, 1 Upper Primary School and 1 Higher Secondary school	
Cohorts studied in each school/site:	3rd Grade [Lower Primary School], 6 th grade [Upper Primary School], 9 th Grade [Higher Secondary School]	
Out of School children per site:	2 cohorts of the age group 6-11 years, equivalent to cohort in 3 rd Grade 1 cohort of the age group 11-14 years, equivalent to cohort in 6 th Grade 1 cohort of the age group 14-16 years, equivalent to cohort in 9 th Grade	

In selecting the schools the researchers were asked to focus on the following criteria:

- the school should be located in an area that has a majority *Dalit* or *Adivasi* population;
- the school should have adequate numbers of pupils in the class, i.e. at least 30 students; and
- the school should have a mix of various *Dalit* and *Adivasi jatis*; and
- the school staff should cooperate with the research process.

Finding a school that matched all of these criteria was not easy and since this research began with a focus on a primary school in the district that matched the above criteria, the second primary school was usually chosen to try to maintain a balance usually between the rural and urban *Dalit* communities in the particular district. The understanding from the start of the research was to look at each school as distinct space in which *Dalit* children have particular experiences and a conscious effort to capture a range of distinct experiences, depending on the location and type of school, framed the choice of individual schools researched.

In Shriganganagar district, the research focused on one high school (incorporating primary school) in Shriganganagar town, located in the midst of several predominantly *Dalit* colonies. Therefore, in deciding on the second primary school in the district it was decided to focus on a rural school in order to capture the experiences of a rural *Dalit jati* community as well compare these experiences with urban *Dalit* life worlds. The four cohorts studied in this district were in two schools. Being a border district, gaining research permission was necessary, and freedom to move in an unrestricted way around the district was constrained. Only two schools were thus included in this district. In Ujjain, during the course of research in the first primary school selected it was observed that economically well-off *Dalit* parents sent their children to private schools, of which a large number, mostly unregulated, small schools, had emerged in Ujjain. Therefore, a decision was taken to study a small private primary school that was being run by a *Dalit* principal and attended mainly by children of the principal's *jati* in order to analyse whether

this school space was more inclusive of these *Dalit* children. However in order to get a sense of the experiences of *Dalit jatis* in rural Ujjain a middle school was selected in a semi-rural village off the Ujjain-Indore highway as well.

In Harda district, which is a predominantly *Adivasi* district, the choice of school often depended on whether the grade selected reflected adequate numbers of *Adivasi* children as well as the ease of access that researchers would have to these *Adivasi* villages. It was therefore decided to focus on a *Korku* village, which was accessible by bus from the block headquarters and had both a primary and a middle school located in it. Again to balance this choice of schools, a school established under the Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) that was mostly interior and not accessible by public transportation, and had a majority of *Gond* children, was also selected to reflect the two main *Adivasi* communities that inhabited this block. In Tonk the choice of the primary and middle school was made keeping in mind the majority *Dalit* population in the school, and since these were located in the block headquarters, an EGS school was selected which was reflective of specific *Dalit* and Other Backward Caste (OBC) communities that had not been covered as part of the primary school. Given the proximity of a women's university to this block headquarter, a girl's high school was selected in Tonk to ascertain whether the presence of this university had any impact on the *Dalit* communities in the town.

Box 5.2: School Characteristics, Harda District

Location	<i>Dalit/Adivasi</i> Communities Researched	Type of School	Reference Number
Rural village which main road runs through [V1]	Korku [<i>Adivasi</i>]	Lower Primary School(LPS) Mixed School Grades 1-5	H1
Rural village 4 kilometres further interior to the above village [V2]	Gond [<i>Adivasi</i>]	Education Guarantee Scheme School Mixed school Grades 1-5	H2
Rural village which main road runs through [V1]	Korku [<i>Adivasi</i>]	Upper Primary School (UPS) Mixed School Grades 6-8	H3
Block headquarters [T1]	Korku [<i>Adivasi</i>] and Balai [<i>Dalit</i>]	Higher Secondary School [HSS] Boys School Grades 9-12	H4

Box 5.3: School Characteristics, Ujjain District

Location	<i>Dalit/Adivasi</i> Communities Researched	Type of School	Reference Number
Ujjain city (C1)	Valmiki [<i>Dalit</i>]	Primary school (LPS); Mixed school; Grades 1-5	U1
Ujjain city [C1]	Bairwa [<i>Dalit</i>]	Private upper-primary school (P-UPS); Mixed school; Grades 1- 8	U2
Village 13 kms away from city (V3)	Balai [<i>Dalit</i>]	Upper Primary School [UPS]; Mixed school; Grades 6-8	U3
Ujjain city [C1]	Bairwa [<i>Dalit</i>]	Higher Secondary School [HSS]; Boys School; Grades 9-12	U4

Box 5.4: School Characteristics, Tonk District

Location	<i>Dalit/Adivasi</i> Communities Researched	Type of School	Reference Number
Village [V4] located on outskirts of block headquarters	Gurjar and Bairwa [<i>Dalit</i>]	EGS School, Grades 1-5	TO1
Town [T2], block headquarters	Raigars, Bairwas, Valmikis [<i>Dalit</i>]	Upper Primary School for Girls, UPS, Grades 1-8	TO2 and TO3
Town [T2], block headquarters		Higher Secondary School [HSS], Grades 9-12	TO4
City, district headquarters [C2]	Valmiki, Dhanak, Nayak [<i>Dalit</i>]	Government Secondary School	G1 and G2
Village [V4]	Meghwal, Majhabhi Sikh, Valmiki [<i>Dalit</i>]	Government Upper Primary School	G3 and G4

Box 5.5: School Characteristics, Shriganganagar District

Location	<i>Dalit/Adivasi</i> Communities Researched	Type of School	Reference Number
City, district headquarters [C2]	Valmiki, Dhanak, Nayak [<i>Dalit</i>]	Government Secondary School	G1 and G2
Village [V4]	Meghwal, Majhabi Sikh, Valmiki [<i>Dalit</i>]	Government Upper Primary School	G3 and G4

Findings from these school based studies are synthesised and presented below in terms of our focus on access, participation, curriculum and identity as aspects of ‘inclusive’ schooling.

5.4 Policy in action

5.4.1 Access: demand and supply aspects of inclusion

The earlier discussion distinguishes in the Indian case between policy frameworks that are enabling, and those that are systemic. It is argued that much of the focus on inclusion in education has been on the economic dimensions of deprivation, and not the cultural forms through which power is acted on in local contexts, which often reproduce inequalities through structuring the dependence of lower castes on upper castes, particularly in relation to livelihoods and basic services. While this is clearly changing in its forms in India, the continued deprivation of *Dalits* and *Adivasis* relative to other groups points to the embeddedness of caste inequalities in Indian society. The lack of connection drawn at both policy and institutional levels between enabling policies and systemic policies is highlighted in our study through our analysis of the ways in which enabling policies have largely worked to motivate the substantial shifts in access to schooling of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children. The expansion of schooling, fee-free entry (though as we will later demonstrate, unofficial and arbitrary charges are imposed on school-going children), the relative efficiency of in-school economic provisions such as mid-day meals, and free textbooks, and the availability of scholarships (albeit limited relative to the population of school-age children) for *Dalits* and *Adivasis* have all contributed to increased enrolment. Even though these policies are not implemented with full efficiency (for instance, textbooks were not always received on time, charges were often levied through the school period, and mid-day meals were often of poor quality), parents interviewed in our study were aware of, and noted, the importance of these policies in encouraging access. However, these policies alone cannot take the credit for motivating access – the demand for education was also high, with parents clearly acknowledging the importance of schooling for their children, and willing to do all they could within their means to get their children to school and keep them there. Despite inefficiencies, the supply of accessible schooling, and the ‘demand’ for schooling opportunities are increasingly coinciding. This ensures that entry to school is being increasingly secured, though pockets of hard-to-reach children remain.

a) Parents' desire for schooling

Access, especially to primary schooling, has been largely addressed in the sites our study covered, with few children out of school in the current primary school age population of 6-9. However, as other studies have also pointed out, the challenges remain those of retention of children in schools, quality of learning outcomes, and the continuing problems of economic disadvantage that make schooling a luxury for the poorest and most disadvantaged groups.¹⁷ A factor that motivates the access of children to school however is the rapid growth, particularly in urban and peri-urban areas, of private schooling, which offers parents, even those who consider it outside their sphere of affordability, a model of comparison and aspiration relative to government schools, and influences, through provision of choice, access to government schools. In one notable case-study from an urban centre in Madhya Pradesh, this resulted in a floating population of students enrolled in both government and private schools, which enabled students as well as teachers to meet their specific requirements. For government teachers, continued enrolment of children in government schools ensured that schools remained open because of sufficient numbers recorded on paper, and for students, enrolment in both allowed them to return to government schools if they were unable to pay fees in the private school at any given period of time. However for both teachers and students, formal government schools are increasingly being seen as the default educational option.

Evident from the data is the strong desire of parents for schooling for their children. It was noted earlier in this chapter that the success of the EGS scheme lay not so much in state commitment and efficiency as in the strength of parental demand for schooling. Most parents who were surveyed and interviewed, whether in urban or rural locations, said that they were sending their child, irrespective of gender, to school in order for them to become literate and numerate. These desires, of course, are always conjecturally defined. For the Korkus (an *Adivasi* group in Madhya Pradesh), this desire was linked to their interest in acquiring the culturally dominant state and market language – Hindi. A Korku parent reflecting this concern said, “(a)n educated child will learn to speak with official sahibs. Through going to school, the ways in which our children speak now will get sufficiently modified and they will not sound the way that we do when we speak.” Both urban and rural parents frequently also made the comment that the time for illiterates like them had long gone and that it was impossible in the modern era to function without gaining at least some literacy and numeracy skills. Evident is the fact that these aspirations were fuelled by the desire for making their children employable, and, also, for giving their children a sense of dignity. A Korku father whose son was at school in H3 commented, “(o)ur children have to study to increase the dignity of our people. Even if my son does not get a formal job then I will train him as a tailor so that at least he will run his own shop.” While these aspirations were often strongly gendered, and, predictably, favoured males, employment prospects were uppermost in the minds of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* parents. In Rajasthan, rural communities were often not aware about employment opportunities in public sector jobs. However, the knowledge that the state had made arrangements for them was an important motivating factor in ‘imagining’ the possibility that a job could be obtained with their education. Targeted state policies were thus appreciated, as being helpful in promoting alternatives and opportunities for children, even if the schooling they received was modest. Parents spoke appreciatively of state measures in education that worked well. The important feature of these attitudes is their consonance with the policy intentions of the state and their promotion of these policies.

¹⁷ See, for example, Jha and Jhingran, (2002); Ramachandran (2002); Govinda (2002).

Parents' understanding of their relationship with the state and government were however conditioned by their self-perceptions about their place in the world. Amongst the *Dalit jatis*, the community's present and prior histories of labour exercised a dominant influence on the future aspirations that parents articulated for their children. There was recognition of the realities that getting a job in the formal sector required, and the current economic conditions in which the parents lived, which in most instances made it difficult for them to educate further their children. Moreover, given that most of the marginalised *Dalit* and *Adivasi* communities in rural areas depended on subsistence agricultural wages or cultivated their own small units of land, they depended on their children's work in the fields and with the grazing of animals. There was also experiential recognition that formal schooling inferiorised manual labour. Therefore, their children's further uptake of schooling had potentially adverse consequences for these communities given both their increasing impoverishment and the larger power and financial networks that gaining a formal sector job involved. In Ujjain, the Valmiki community engaged in its 'traditional' inherited practice of cleaning within the modern state institution of the Nagar Palika [Municipal Corporation]. Unlike agricultural work, the cleaning tasks that the Valmikis engaged in had the stigma of an 'untouchable' past and Valmiki parents were keen that their children not continue with this form of livelihood. In contrast to this, the Bairwa *mohallas* (localities) in Ujjain had a history of working in the textile mills and had therefore successfully broken away from their stigmatised traditional livelihoods of curing leather. This affected the ways in which they framed the aspirations for their children since they had a history of formal employment which had subsequently been lost due to the closure of mills. The increasing pauperisation of these communities within the economic policies of the neo-liberal state continues to make manual labour of these children integral to the subsistence livelihoods of their parents.

What our research made apparent was that this does not in any way affect the *Dalit* or *Adivasi* parents' interest and keenness in sending their children to school. But the 'failure' of their children in school, both to learn and to secure jobs even when they do manage to finish schooling, requires them to preserve the abilities and inclinations of their children towards manual labour. As a Korku parent explained, "I make my son do both his school work as well as work in the fields and look after the cattle. What if he does not do anything with his school work. Then I will be stuck with a son who does not know how to work in the fields and so I teach him both. I cannot help him with his homework but I do sit with him and ask him to count and point out his mistakes to him."

Two key points about the role of the state and the role of target groups of policy emerge from this discussion. First, government has at its disposal a raft of legislative and policy measures to deal with the questions of inclusion. As many, however, have said, the implementation of these policies in practice has been conservative. The state has struggled with translating policy intentions into strong action. Second, policies have found a receptive and often grateful audience in subordinate groups. These subordinate groups, however, have themselves often recognised how dependent they are on the state for giving effect to the policies. The single most obstructive factor that is recognised by all as impeding the opportunities for subordinate groups is their lower-caste status. This lower-caste status comes into play as groups seek to navigate their way through the schooling system and into the world of work. Having to make strategic judgements about how much schooling will facilitate or impede their chances,

communities show deep insight into their plights but remain, nonetheless, dependent on the state for opportunities at the end of the day.

b) Access and admissions

In all of the government primary schools studied as part of this research, parents did not have any problems in gaining admission for their children. While this admission was possible throughout the year, most parents enrolled their children at the start of the school year. Generally this process involved paying a small fee ranging from Rs.2 – Rs.5 and signing a form which at times the teacher signed when the parent could not. Access was more constrained at the higher levels, however, where a range of factors came into effect, including school fees, the submission of caste certificates and other documents such as transfer certificates and grade attainment certificates.

In the discussion which follows, schools are classified in terms of inclusion in relation to accessibility.

Strongly inclusive schools

A fair number of schools in the study provided what one might call easy access to school. These schools included H1, U1, and H2, essentially the primary schools in the study. Any child over the age of six could obtain access to H1. The only ‘test’ that the child was subjected to was an informal test of age. A Valmiki (*Dalit*) mother at U1 explained, “(t)o admit Madhu [my daughter] into school I just went to school and gave them Rs.2 and then the teacher filled out a form for me which I signed and that was the end of the admission process”. At U1, some of the children explained that they had enrolled themselves. They arrived at the school with friends and enrolled without the help of their parents. At H2, the EGS school children had no problem with entry as well.

Moderately inclusive schools

Gaining admission at other schools, was, however, less straightforward. In schools where access was moderately easy, questions of fees and documentation arose. At U3, students had to present their caste certificate, their mark sheet and their residential certificate. Children from outside the village, additionally, had to present a transfer certificate as well as a letter from the *sarpanch* of their village. Obtaining a caste-certificate was a formidable challenge. The first step began with the applicant having to obtain the signatures of five people from the *mobolla* (locality) or village to attest to the *jati* of the person applying. This document then had to be signed by the *Janpratinidhi* or the local *Parshad*. Thereafter, the *Patwari* (registrar) had to attest to the person’s residential address with the person applying needing to supply proof that he or she had lived in the particular locality for the past fifty years. If the applicant had migrated to a new place in the last fifty years, then he/she would have to obtain a certificate from the original place of residence. These papers were then placed in front of the *tehsildar* and a temporary certificate and six months later a permanent certificate was provided.

An example where many of the factors listed in the paragraph came together was that of U2, the private primary school in Ujjain. Parents chose this school because the closest government primary school in the area required children to cross a busy urban street and parents were unwilling to let their children be subjected to this danger. While the fees were relatively high in this school, the admission procedure was as easy as in a government primary school and year-round as well.

Weakly inclusive schools

Schools where it was difficult to obtain admission had many of the requirements of the moderately easy access schools, but often these requirements were more intense and were overlain with the demands for higher school fees.

For entry into the rural middle school, H3, students had to go through the same kind of experience as those went through at U3. At the point of admission, students had to present their caste certificate, their mark sheet and their residential certificate. The fees were relatively high with a child having to pay Rs.25 as school development fees, Rs.5.35 as monthly fees and an examination fee of Rs.15 per year. More critically, schools such as these appeared to be unable to retain the children in school. Children dropped out at an alarming rate. Despite policy attempts to mitigate the access difficulties, direct and indirect costs associated with schooling continue to be a major reason why children leave school. In addition to this, the research also recorded school-related factors, such as poverty and corporal punishment, as exercising a major role in children leaving school. H3 had earned itself an intimidating reputation because of the frequency and severity with which teachers hit children and humiliated them. These children, mainly boys, spoke of various incidents in which Korku children had been punished, one of which included the teacher punishing a child for not having done homework by painting his face 'black' and then making him parade 400 yards from the school to the bus stop and back. Given this reputation of the school one parent said, "(o)ur children prefer to be grazing animals because there is no fear of physical punishment in this."

Summary

These school-related factors were at times a direct outcome of caste-based stigmatisation that *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children experienced. It was found, also, that not being able to pay the fees at the private school and lack of access to a government school had pushed most of the children out of U2. There were also gender factors at play. In large part, *Dalit* and *Adivasi* girls in both rural and urban schools usually dropped out of school by the end of middle school, if not earlier. After leaving school they largely confined themselves to household chores and although their dropping out can be linked to their impending marriage and the concomitant lack of schooled skills required for their future lives, most *Dalit* parents spoke of how they might have continued with their daughters' schooling if there were a single-sex school for girls available.

In the high school in Harda, H4, the students gained admission in the school through first buying an admission form for Rs.10 and turning this in along with their 8th grade mark sheet, their Transfer, Income and Caste certificates. After a few days their names would appear on the notice board and it was then that they had to pay Rs.50 as fees and Rs.100 as a donation.

Rural *Dalit* and *Adivasi* parents considered this donation quite steep and arbitrary as it varied, inexplicably, from year to year. According to the principal, the School Development Committee (Shala Vikas Committee) normally met before the school year began and worked out a budget on the basis of which the amount for the school fees was decided. However, rural *Adivasi* parents complained about the arbitrariness of the amount and stated that the improvements towards which their donations were supposedly spent were never visible to them in the school.

Parents across all caste backgrounds said that they did not send their girls to school because they were co-educational. One *Dalit* parent remarked that the school is one in which boys and girls learn together which is why some parents don't send their girls to school. If the schools were separate then his child would have definitely studied. The *mahoul* (environment/atmosphere) was not seen to be good, so anything could happen. The school did not have any female teachers for the girls to share their problems with. Male teachers, it was felt cannot do this adequately, nor are they sensitive to this.

Admission to school, as these discussions show, is simple at one level. The forms and the fees that children have to pay, appear to be, by themselves, relatively manageable. It is when the context in which the parents live is brought into perspective that the scale of the barrier becomes apparent. In summary:

- low as fees are, they place stress on the families' abilities to survive and are often the reason why families are forced to place their children into labour;
- caste identity and the political economy of caste, the formal identification through formal documentation, operate as both an incentive and disincentive.

5.4.2 Governance and inclusion

Central in understanding inclusion is recognising the gap that exists between policy and practice. In the South African section the discussion focused on what dominant groups within schools do with policy. The approach taken there was to distinguish, in broad strokes, between governance and curriculum, as sites for reviewing the relationship between policy and practice. This approach is repeated here with modification. The analytic approach that framed the South African discussion was that schools played a central role, in terms of the decentralising policy of the state, in defining the character of the policy as it was implemented. Governance, of necessity, constituted a large element of the discussion. In the Indian setting, school governance is configured differently, and serves a different purpose.

The governance of schools is structured in two ways: first, as an education system through the hierarchy of institutional authority represented by the Department of Education at central, state and district government level, and second, at a community level through the establishment of education committees. Unlike the South African case, decentralised educational policies in India do not focus on the school as the unit of decentralisation, but rather the community within which the school is located.¹⁸

¹⁸ There is however, an increasing move towards creating decentralised resource centres for teachers' development, creating peer networks of teachers at local level to localise problem solving. Under DPEP, decentralised Cluster Resource Centres have been established, and 'offer the potential of an approach' to local forms of knowledge being used by teachers in the classroom (Dyer et al, 2004:51).

The focus of decentralised education is not financial, as the funding of schools is centrally managed. Decentralisation in education operates through the formation of Village Education Committees (VECs)¹⁹ which operate like ‘user committees’ in sectors like water and health. The establishment of formal structures such as VECs by the state, designed to institutionalise and hence standardise, community involvement in education, rests on the view that such user-groups will be well-placed to represent these diverse interests. An underpinning assumption, therefore, “appears to be that productive social capital can be relied upon to facilitate co-operation in the process of achievement of common goals” (Subrahmanian, 2000). To aid this process, VECs are based on norms of representation that stipulate the participation of members of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe groups, and women, to prevent entrenched elites from dominating the groups.

VECs are expected to function as empowering community organisational structures, which can facilitate the programme strategy of community mobilisation as a precondition to active involvement of local stakeholders in the Programme. Specific objectives associated with the establishment of these bodies were to create an enabling environment at local level which would emphasise primary education as an important community goal, foster parental involvement in the education of their children, and build community actors as stakeholders.

While school staff theoretically are required to draw parents into the governance of schools, through school and village education committees, in practice these structures were found to be ineffective. In most schools the list of committee members for the school education committee was either non-existent, or where they did exist were fraudulent with names having been placed there without parents’ consent. Where committees did exist they were disregarded by teachers, were not promoted by the teachers, they seldom met and no teacher who was part of this study expressed any feeling of accountability towards decisions made by either the school or the village education committees. Significantly, teachers placed the responsibility for the failure of the committees on parents whom they stereotyped as uninterested.

None of the policy documents reviewed above makes explicit reference to the possible needs of ‘redress’ if complaints are raised about the quality of schooling or any other aspect of schooling. Problems of teacher attendance, absenteeism and other issues are expected to be addressed through the VECs (or their urban equivalent), thereby structuring the authority of community organisations over the schooling process and system. Thus systems of redress in education are linked to the wider modes of democratic decentralisation in operation (as discussed earlier), where access to basic services (and implicitly, the local social relations that underline this access) are to be managed through ‘representative’ community bodies. The extent to which these community bodies are able to manage and respond to discrimination arising out of local social relations is, however, questionable. Constraints in the democratic functioning of the wider decentralisation initiatives, particularly in relation to resolving caste-based concerns and issues, apply equally to these education user committees. Local power relations are likely to determine the extent to which parents report concerns they have about the treatment of their children in the school.

¹⁹ Also variously referred to as School Betterment Committees, or Parent Teacher Associations, or Ward Education Committees.

The lack of redress mechanisms located within the schooling structure confirms our earlier contention that the focus of inclusive policy has been on strengthening community structures, and not schools. An argument we would make here is that rights to educational non-discrimination or inclusion are therefore linked to the overall ability of disadvantaged or ‘discriminated against’ communities to leverage voice and wider rights in the community as a whole. These rights are, therefore, not directly mediated by the school as an institution. While parents are ‘free’ to express their concerns to teachers or about teachers to school authorities within the educational administration, there are no explicit processes or procedures for parents’ grievances to be articulated within the school. The ‘hollowness’ of the policy frame – particularly in terms of articulating the types of problems that *Dalit* or *Adivasi* children may encounter within the school within the overall lack of attention to processes of quality schooling – also serves to ‘delegitimise’ these types of grievances as there is no wider discourse in relation to schooling within which such grievances can be framed.

The lack of coherent policy frameworks that elaborate on the content of and processes within schooling also impact on the ability of teachers to mediate local social relations within the school. By separating out the school as an institutional site of governance from community-based processes of governance, the teacher’s role becomes, ironically, underemphasised in the context of rapidly expanded access over the last decade in particular, of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children. Teachers’ encounters with policies of inclusion are largely framed in terms of the enabling policies discussed earlier – managing midday meals, for example – and participating in or conducting meetings of the VECs. The lack of a policy that mandates the school itself to be an inclusive environment – given that schools are not the units to which policies or institutional mechanisms are addressed – means that teachers are not required to consider these enabling inclusive policies as a part of their mandate as educators. Teachers therefore lack any incentive to participate as mediators of social relations that play out within the school.

Further, teachers themselves bring to the classroom and school their own particular and often local set of social filters – i.e. caste, community, gender. In the current framework of policy, the identity ‘positionalities’ of individual teachers are not managed through the creation of a common minimum set of values that reinforce wider commitments to inclusion, and normative standards do not exist against which performance can be judged or incentivised. Drawing on our studies of two EGS/alternative schools and urban schools in our sample, we argue further that in the context of wider forms of change in the provision of education – with alternative ‘EGS’ type schools and private schools coming into play – teachers within the formal sector are seeing an erosion of their status as professional educators, as well as an increasing perception that formal government schools are being treated as ‘fallback’ options, viable only for those who cannot afford to study elsewhere. Incentives to provide good quality inclusive schooling within the state sector are thus further undermined.

Current teaching practice is also geared towards students who have the requisite ‘social capital’²⁰ in the form of support and resources in families and communities that enable them to function successfully in schooling environments. Most *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children in schools are the ‘newly included’, i.e. first generation learners. Most first generation learners in our sample lacked the ‘social capital’ that enables their families to navigate the world of learning, engage

²⁰ Following Coleman (1988).

with teachers and also support the learning process, thereby making pedagogical practices based on homework unfeasible. Homework is often relied on by teachers to supplement their (often poor) teaching within the classroom. Children who cannot marshal the resources or ‘social capital’ to complete their homework within the home are often considered ‘uneducable’ or unfit for learning within the classroom. The link between the school and the home is therefore seen as fundamental to teachers’ performance of their role, a link which is considered to be dysfunctional in the case of first-generation learners.

The challenge of working with a concept of ‘inclusion’ through addressing teaching practices further confronts the issue of the tension between technicist modes of teacher education and those that are embedded in valuing and respecting local knowledge. Dyer et al (2004) point to how the international dominance of the skills and knowledge-based paradigm in approaches to teacher development leads to the imposition of “training devised by external and decontextualised ‘experts’” (p.40). They argue that the nature of teachers’ knowledge and skills, and their application, are “embedded in and shaped by teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, and those attitudes and beliefs themselves reflect contexts in which teachers have grown up, taken their professional training, and now practise” (p.41). Teachers, in other words, deploy their own lenses and parameters for understanding, interpreting and reflecting the social world for their learners. However, as Dyer et al argue, until teachers’ beliefs and the way they play out in local contexts are “recognised, explored, and their implications taken on board, current modes of teacher training through in-service training are highly unlikely to fulfil the explicit premise (and promise) of decentralisation – responsiveness to those local contexts” (ibid.).

All of these different factors combine to place teachers in formal government schools in a difficult position with regard to promoting ‘inclusive’ policies. First, inclusive policies operate outside of the realm of the school, and teachers are not encouraged to identify and understand the principles underlying the enabling policies that have been put in place. Thus important policies that address the economic dimensions of disadvantage – fee-free schooling, midday meals – are understood as incentives to lure children who would otherwise ‘not study’, rather than recognising that they constitute part of a spectrum of rights that can support disadvantaged children’s participation in education. Second, teachers have been identified as a part of the core problem of systemic dysfunction, as evident in the expansion of alternative schooling, which seeks to recruit alternative teachers from outside the formal system, who are paid less, work on contract, are locally recruited, and seen to be inherently easier to train to work with disadvantaged communities. However, this apparently pro-inclusion shift coincides with a wider move to provide lower-cost, lower-quality education to the groups who are sought to be ‘included’, which constitutes an important and ironic policy tension. Third, the lack of clear policy mandates in all recent policy frameworks and programmes gives rise to ‘hollow’ inclusion policies, which provide no substance or institutional mechanisms that can make ‘inclusion’ meaningful. Teachers therefore have no alternative normative standards (apart from their own variable individual positions on issues of exclusion and inclusion) that they can refer to in order to gain guidance on how to manage processes of inclusion. Thus, teaching practices remain geared to the life worlds of children who possess the requisite ‘social capital’ to participate in schooling, and fundamentally militate against the different capacities, home environments, inherent knowledge and skills that first-generation learners, largely representing hitherto ‘excluded’ groups, bring to the school.

Policies that institutionalise school governance are, in general, weakly elaborated. In Madhya Pradesh, provisions exist for the establishment of Parent-Teacher Associations and Education Committees. The Madhya Pradesh Jan Shiksha Adhiniyam, 2002, for example, discusses the accountability of teachers to both the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Education Committee. In the same Act the duties of the PTA are set down as being to ensure attendance of teachers and students and monitor the achievement of learners. However, there is no fiscal or disciplinary mechanism available to the PTA to exercise any control over the teachers. And although the Education Committee can take action against teachers who do not attend regularly by withholding their salaries, it has no power to intervene in the difficulties that arise between upper-caste teachers and *Dalit* and *Adivasi* parents.

Reasons for the non-functionality of governance structures have been forwarded by commentators such as Chakrabarty (2002) and Chatterjee (1997), who explain that feudal relations continue to exist in most parts of rural India. The historic burden of backwardness and untouchability that frames the dominant upper-caste construction of these *Dalit* and *Adivasi* identities is not formally addressed within the establishment of these committees. Ironically, the responsibilities of a school education committee at the primary level in this study were restricted to issues of access with access defined as entry. Members had no control over any of the finances at the school, which otherwise might have helped give them some real power over decision-making. There were thus no schools in the study that manifested the characteristics of either strongly or moderately inclusive governance structures.

Weakly inclusive schools

Given the discussion above, most governance processes examined in the study were weakly inclusive, without exceptions. This situation was epitomised by the situation of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* parents in Madhya Pradesh where local parents had to resort to complaining to the local panchayat (local governance structure at village level) about the ineffective functioning of the school. In the predominantly Korku village in Harda, for example, it was the Kahar (an Other Backward Caste community) and Brahmin parents who petitioned the village *Panchayat* to complain about the teachers regularly arriving late for school. In the rural middle school in Ujjain, U3, a Charmakar father complained that, “I have approached the *Panchayat* several times about the teachers’ absence from school, their not arriving on time. When I speak everyone including the *sarpanch*’s (head of village council) husband nods his head but no one says anything nor takes any action against the teachers.” There was no other rural *Dalit* or *Adivasi* parent who spoke about having approached the *Panchayat* to redress a situation at school. This condition of weakly inclusive governance was exacerbated by the attitudes teachers took to their communities. To many teachers and administrators their accountability was to the authorities and not to the parents. The principal of the Ujjain primary school, U1, for example, explained, “the department gives teachers so much of extra-academic work that they do not even get adequate time to teach.” In this frame the teacher is strongly a state functionary. There were, however, instances where school-community relationships were relatively open and fluid. Such examples occurred at the Rajiv Gandhi School, T1 in Tonk, and the EGS school, H2, in Harda. In the latter, the Raj Gond (*Adivasi*) parents were often observed at the school checking on their children’s progress. On the face of it this could be interpreted as the success of the EGS model that required the *guruji* (teacher) to interact extensively with the village as part of his

survey activities, his work with the students' mothers on the *Padna-Badna* (Adult Literacy Campaign) as well as the fact that the school was held in the local temple, thus making it more accessible to the community. However, the twist in the tale was that the ease that parents felt with the *guruji* was possibly also because Raj Gonds are higher in the social hierarchy than the Balai *guruji*. The *guruji* complained of being mistreated and discriminated against by Raj Gonds, saying that there was a separate cup for him in the homes of the Gonds when he went on his home visits. It is also important to note that where parents did assert themselves in relation to the staff, this often arose when they had individual histories of being politically active or of being fairly well educated in relation to other members of their community.

A further barrier to effective community-teacher inter-relationships was evident particularly at higher grade levels, where the teachers themselves felt it was inappropriate to expect them to maintain links with the community. The secondary girls' school in T4 was particularly uninterested in maintaining links with the community and felt it an intrusion when parents demanded the attention of teachers. They drew professional boundaries around their teaching, and community liaison work was seen as falling outside of it. It is true that this was less so for primary school teachers who saw their liaison responsibilities with the community as part of their 'duties' as teachers. Their role, in the post-independence developmental state, particularly in rural areas, of having to perform government bureaucratic duties, such as collection of census data and helping with government literacy drives, also conditioned their attitude to parents and students. This engagement inserted teachers into certain power networks of the state vis-à-vis these communities, and allowed teachers to control and mediate the access of these communities to information and development funds. Of interest to this research is how differently administrators', particularly principals', caste identities articulated with and shaped their attitudes to the governance of their schools. In some instances where principals were of a lower caste background, their staff-members treated them with some reserve, as at schools U3 and H3. This was, however, not always the case. At H4 a previous principal had been held in high esteem by his staff members and members of the community.

In summary:

- formal mechanisms set up to promote parent teacher interactions were found to be non-functional in most of the research schools and communities;
- *Dalit* and *Adivasi* parents continue to feel powerless within these formal institutions both due to the committee's limited mandate and because of existing power hierarchies in rural communities that devalues the presence of these communities in decision-making roles;
- despite recent efforts at decentralisation, teachers continue to frame their accountability towards a monolithic educational bureaucracy rather than the local community;
- the extra-academic functions that teachers have to perform is often done at the expense of classroom teaching since the documentation that the educational bureaucracy requires from teachers on a regular basis is what the teachers believe themselves to be accountable for rather than their classroom teaching which is seldom inspected by the same bureaucracy;
- the historical denial of access of *Dalits* and *Adivasis* to formal schooling makes the parents of these first-generation school goers reluctant and awkward in their interactions with the school space, which in turn is interpreted by teachers as these parents' 'lack of interest' in their child's education.

5.4.3 Teaching and learning and inclusion

The curriculum, in its formal and hidden manifestations, is central in the development of the character of the school and its ability to be ‘inclusive’. It defines the textural experience that the child will have as he or she makes his or her way onto the school grounds every day.

As many examples in this report and the supplementary documentation generated indicate, there are many critical features of the modern Indian school that define the essential nature of the learning experience for the child. Important amongst these are the following:

1. *Caste*: Caste remains the most powerful predictor of experience. Though *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students have gained entry into primary school, the school space for their parents continues in large part to be unfamiliar and awkward. This awkwardness is interpreted by many primary school teachers as a “lack of interest in their child’s education”. Accusations of parents’ venality, intemperate behaviour, and ‘backwardness’ abound. In Harda, in the Korku dominated village, the teachers often used the widely prevalent understanding of *Adivasi* being ‘from the jungle’ to disparage parents and equated this with what they perceived as the *Adivasi* community’s innate inability to take an interest in their children’s learning.
2. *Hegemonic social relations*: Parents have difficulty in engaging, and give responses that mirror the prevailing dominant relations of power outside of the school space. In Harda where both *Adivasi* and non-*Adivasi* children study in the same village primary and middle schools, it was mainly the non-*Adivasi* parents who interacted both formally and informally with the teachers on a regular level. For the *Adivasi* parent in Harda their reluctance to engage with the teachers was mainly due to their inability to speak Hindi and therefore being unable to communicate at all with the teachers, none of whom spoke Korku.
3. *Meritocracy*: The Indian education system, based as it is on the principle of meritocracy, operates on a stringent performance regime, which privileges rote learning.
4. *Teachers’ constructions of children’s home life*: Primary schooling in India assumes that the child has a home environment which can academically support the child’s school learning. This dependence on home environment – which is tied to the history of upper caste monopoly over formal educational institutions – means that teachers do not express their primary responsibility in terms of ensuring that all children learn. The mindset of meritocracy and the phenomenon of caste come together to define the informal curriculum and the child’s very right to be in school, through is the notion of ‘educability’.

a) *The hidden curriculum: educability and inclusion*

Education theorists – in the context of race in the United States – make the point that teachers’ constructions of students’ ascribed learning potential is an integral part of understanding classroom transaction processes. Referred to as ‘educability’, this concept is particularly useful for analysing teachers’ constructions of first-generation *Dalit* and *Adivasi* school-goers in government primary schools. Given its focus on *Dalits* and their inclusion in formal schools this research anticipated finding instances of overt discrimination against these children. But what

was found, particularly in primary schools, was the systemic nature of this discrimination and its damaging impact on teachers' constructions of the 'educability' of particular *Dalit jatis*.

The primary schools that constituted the foci of the research were all made up of children from a dominant *Dalit* community while almost all the teachers were upper-caste. These teachers almost habitually invoked the notion of educability to explain the academic performance of the children. While teachers never explicitly referred to the innate inability of *Dalit* students to learn, they nonetheless mobilised all the connotations of ineducability to describe the children they taught – 'these children's homes' and '*moholla*' (locality), they would say.

The effect of these constructions of educability was invariably destructive and included the following:

- they directly conditioned teachers' pedagogical styles and approaches;
- they produced certain self-representations amongst *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students, who began to frame their self-constructions within the teacher's view of them and their abilities;
- teacher-student relationships became dominated by these constructions of educability producing a prejudicial and discriminative ethos within the school (for example, in both the primary and middle schools in Harda, Korku students were asked to sweep the school and fetch registers, while the task of serving the teacher water was done by Muslim and Kahar (Other Backward Caste) children.

Strongly inclusive schools

None of the schools in the study conformed to the ideals of an inclusive institution with respect to educability. It is assumed here that a strongly inclusive school would systematically and deliberately engage with the question of what was needed to promote the learning of lower-caste children. This was not the case anywhere.

Moderately inclusive schools

One school in the study, U3 in Ujjain, managed to mitigate some of the more pernicious effects of caste discrimination. At this rural middle school, where upper-caste and *Dalit* children studied together, the teachers did not reference children's abilities in terms of their caste-attributes. They simply described them as weak and strong students. In the 6th grade in the school, for example, the brightest students in class included a Balai boy. This was similar to what was observed in the Ujjain urban high school where teachers put the academic performance of 'poor' children down to the need for them to combine schooling and work. Further evidence of the school's more enlightened approach appeared in the more relaxed relationships between teachers and their students where all drank water from the same *matka* (pot).

Weakly inclusive schools

Aside from U3, the remainder of the schools practised serious forms of stereotyping with respect to the question of educability. *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children were uniformly regarded as

being academically weak simply because of who they were. In the primary school in Ujjain, U1, it was observed that teachers often discussed the Valmiki home environment as being an impossible one for children to study in and therefore blamed parents for a lack of interest in their children's education. The third grade class teacher, an upper-caste (Brahmin) woman said, "these Mehtars are illiterate or have very little education and because of this there is no *mahoul* (atmosphere/environment) in the house for studies. The parents drink and fight and are unable to help their children with homework. This school now has children of poor parents who do not care about their children." At the same time, however, it must be noted that competition from private schools meant that teachers, while criticising these *Dalit* populations, needed to retain them in school. Teachers in Ujjain thus often paid the school fees of students who were unable to pay, bought them pencils and notebooks and allowed for double enrolment. Teacher behaviour, it needs to be noted here, is often complex.

In Harda, constructions of the ascribed abilities of *Adivasis* in terms of their perceived 'ineducability' took on congenial tones with an upper-caste (Brahmin) primary school teacher in H1 stating:

Korkus will never improve. They will never learn to wear good clothes, oil their hair and have a bath before coming to school. I should cut their names and drive them out of here. Korkus are dirty, their parents are filthy and they will never change. I am tired of teaching Korku children because no matter how many times I explain and how many times I hit them, nothing seems to go into their heads. I give them homework, which they can never do and then they do not show up in school the following day.

Teachers at the middle school, H3, made similar remarks:

The children need an adequate environment at home in which to study. Most of the parents are illiterate and are not able to help the children with anything while at home. Forget help, they don't even tell their children to study while at home. Here instead of giving children books in their hand *Adivasi* parents give their children animals to graze.

Even at the EGS school, a school set up specifically to address the educational needs of *Adivasi* and *Dalit* students, it was found that negative constructions of the educability of the *Adivasi* child continued to exist. During the course of the research it was observed that the *Dalit* (Balai) *guruji*, when discussing the abilities of the Gond (*Adivasi*) children who attended the school, spoke of their lack of potential being linked to the fact that the children spend a large part of their day grazing animals. The *guruji* remarked, "the *Adivasi* child's learning and comprehension abilities are quite low. There is no *mahoul* (atmosphere/environment) for these children to study since they are all working. I teach them but their minds are on the animals they graze. They don't understand the lessons. Their parents instead of asking them to learn ask them to graze animals."

In Harda in the Korku (*Adivasi*) dominated village the teachers often used the widely prevalent understanding of *Adivasi* being 'from the jungle' to disparage parents and equated this with what they perceived as the *Adivasi* community's innate inability to take an interest in their children's learning. The internalisation of outsiders' constructions of the 'identity' of the *Dalit*

child was almost inevitable given the daily and almost ritualised ways in which children were being socialised into understandings about the differences between caste groups. Teachers in Shriganganagar LPS [G1], for example, invariably framed children in terms of their caste identity, either when discussing the failure of the children to perform well in school, which was most of the time, or on the rare occasions that they discussed a *Dalit* child's good performance. In most cases, their worst prejudices of the background of the child seemed confirmed, in some, they were challenged. The slippage between the individual child and the 'characteristics' of the caste group to which the child belonged was fairly consistent in the narratives of the teachers.

The particular characteristics with which they chose to describe the Valmiki children reflected a consistent set of prejudices – these were families that ate meat, drank alcohol and accepted gambling as an appropriate pastime. A striking example of the way in which teacher behaviour ritualised the internalisation of low self worth in *Dalit* children was recorded by the researchers in their classroom observations. One of the teachers, whilst introducing the researchers to his students, asked the children to stand up. As he went through their names, he asked them the following questions: name, father's name, does your father drink?; does your father gamble? Children who replied 'no' were asked the same questions in an increasingly louder voice, until they said 'yes'. These questions were asked particularly of children from the Valmiki community. Primary school teachers, as the above makes clear, were much more vocal about the 'ineducability' of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students than middle and high school teachers except for the Harda rural middle school. The reasons for this might lie in their dominant upper caste Hindu socialisation which allows them to view the everyday lives of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* communities as polluting and therefore less suited to education. But if this were true then why don't upper caste teachers in middle and high school use similar articulations to characterise their pupils? Instead these articulations of primary school teachers are perhaps an ironic indication of the greater academic burden that they perceive in their roles as primary school teachers. For high school teachers, the pressures to achieve results in examinations, combined with the fact that fewer *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children make it to post-primary schooling, perhaps enable them to view their role in more 'professional' terms than primary school teachers, for whom the boundaries between their role as teachers, and their role as local agents of the state, are blurred.

It is clear that the 'hidden curriculum' in the Indian school is heavily imprinted with caste, as is the case with the curriculum and race in the South African situation. The 'hidden curriculum' demonstrates how much the school is surrounded and indeed permeated with the social messages of the larger world in which it is set. This is evident in how teachers treat the children. Fortunately, however, it is mitigated by the ability of the children to operate across their caste boundaries. Only in Harda did the shadow of caste strongly define peer relationships. Everywhere else, students built friendships across castes, with children sharing food and water facilities. The discussion now moves to a consideration of the formal curriculum.

b) The formal curriculum: mediating learning and learner experiences

In the previous section an attempt was made to describe the world which the teachers informally construct in their relationships with children, how they treat them as they enter the

school and what kind of social environment they create for them. In this section, more prominent is the issue of how teachers conduct themselves in their professional capacities. The link between what children learn formally and informally is, often, both blurred and contingent, but the focus here is on the nature of the transaction that takes place between teachers and students around the experience of teaching and learning. Evidence from the research points to the fact that teachers did not have any relations with *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students, either within or outside the classroom and school. Within the classroom these relations were formal and very much within the orthodoxy of an authoritarian teacher with the students remaining quiet for the most part and obeying orders. There was no sharing of food observed across castes among teachers and students during the course of this research. Most schools also did not have extra-curricular activities as a result of which there was no formal space outside the classroom for these teacher-student relations to develop. Where these did exist, as in the high school in Harda, it was found that very few *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students participated in these activities. However, at the Ujjain high school, U4, *Dalit* students did play a major role in enhancing the school's reputation in hockey and no evidence of discrimination was found.

Curricular transactions constitute the core business of the school space and thus it is inevitable that the classroom will epitomise the ethos that the school wishes to create for itself. The ability of teachers to mediate the curriculum is crucial in generating worthwhile learning experiences for the students and this should ideally extend to the nurturing of students through the teacher's dominant role in shaping the ways in which students also interact with the teacher and with each other in class. However, in this research across all classrooms, whether primary or higher grades, it was observed that most teachers used traditional pedagogic methods with the primary school teachers stating that they received training in alternate pedagogic methods but found them unsuitable for their specific classroom contexts. For the most part teachers sat in one place while dictating to the students or having them copy from the board.

A strongly inclusive pedagogy is one in which the teacher constructs a learning frame that is relevant, searching, and succeeds in helping the learner locate him or herself within the educational themes or the materials that are used. Children feel a sense of affirmation and self-worth. While it may not always be their world that is the subject of analysis, they can locate themselves in relation to it. Even if it is critical, as long as it works with the learner's reality in a respectful way, it includes them. In the classification of schools below with respect to the degree of the inclusiveness of their pedagogical approaches, a strong determinant is how teachers construct school effectiveness. While the discussion relates to the earlier overview on educability, the strategies teachers develop to manage the challenge of being 'successful' teachers are central. Some of these strategies included screening, with the fear of falling standards being used to screen applicants to the high school and prevent those who are thought would bring down the overall academic performance of schools. Invoking academic merit was often a ruse that disguised embedded discriminatory attitudes. In Shriganganagar, for instance, teachers often complained that the influx of *Dalit* students with no history of education reduced the overall performance of the school in terms of examination results. The research suggested that high school teachers felt more accountable to students than Lower Primary School teachers, even if this took the form of ensuring that the students took private tuition after school to boost their performance. Students in Shriganganagar attested to the improved treatment they received from their teachers if they also took extra tuitions from them.

Foundational training also influenced how teachers went about their work. While some teachers reported that they had received training in innovative teaching methods, most argued that these methods were not appropriate for the children they taught. Language was also critical in shaping how teachers performed their tasks, a point exemplified below.

Strongly inclusive schools

None of the schools in this study fell into this category. There were no examples of schools where teachers were teaching in innovatively inclusive ways.

Moderately inclusive schools

In only one of the schools did it appear that the teacher exercised any sort of respect for the differences that the children brought to the class. This was in the Ujjain high school, U4, where the students spoke fondly of their Sanskrit teacher. The teacher used a more active pedagogic technique in the classroom constantly keeping the children engaged in their lesson and making sure that every child was part of the learning that was taking place in the classroom.

Weakly inclusive schools

Most of the remainder of the schools in the study could be said to be effecting weakly inclusive, or strongly exclusionary, pedagogical approaches. During the research it was observed that there was no effort by teachers to draw parallels between the contents of social science lessons and the everyday lives of the children even when these parallels were very apparent to the researchers who observed the classroom. The few times when the teacher did use the life-experiences of children in the classroom, as in the primary school in Harda, it was usually done disparagingly to highlight the caste-specific occupations of parents and therefore the child's obvious knowledge of the task involved. The shortage of teachers in a school, in addition to the unwillingness of teachers to teach, even though they were present in school, meant that for long periods of time children were left on their own, often with the class monitor in charge. In the government school in Harda, the teacher was responsible for teaching both the 5th and the 3rd grade because of the teacher shortage the school faced. Because of the pressure of the Board Examination in the 5th grade she paid very little attention to the 3rd grade, by her own admission about an hour a day. She said, "the 5th grade is taking the board exam this year and so I have to focus on them. There is a chance of 8-10 students getting a first division. I plan to complete the 3rd grade portion in a month." She managed to teach both grades simultaneously through appointing the brightest student in the 3rd grade – usually either a general caste or Other Backward Caste child – to stand in front of the class and read out loud. This child was also responsible for noting on a piece of paper the names of students who made a noise. When the lesson had been read, the teacher wrote on the chalkboard the questions and answers from the guide and the students spent two to three hours copying this information. In this class the chalkboard was small and the light shone on it brightly making it difficult for the children to read.

An additional problem arose for the Korku students who were often not able to copy correctly because they could not pronounce the Hindi word well themselves. Veena, a Korku child,

described her classroom experience in the following way, “Madam hardly teaches us. She just gives us some work on the blackboard and then leaves and then we have to sit in one place the whole day and finish this and if we even speak then she hits us.” These children were in fact prohibited from speaking in their mother tongue while in school. This situation was not unusual.

Regarding seating arrangements within the classroom it was found in large part that the children made the choice themselves about where to sit with the teacher exercising a minimal role in these decisions. In the primary school in Ujjain there was evidence of a divide more along gender than caste lines, with the girls in class all preferring to sit together in the front of the room. In the Harda primary and middle school this seating pattern was divided into *Adivasi* and non-*Adivasi* groups, with the former seated at the back of the class. In the middle school in Ujjain, U3, and the high schools, U4 and H4, this seating pattern was divided not on caste lines but rather along those who stayed in the village/city/town and those who came from elsewhere. Usually within this divide the clever students all fell into one of the groups and this was the group that usually sat in front of the teacher. But nothing was observed during the course of the research in relation to teachers rearranging the classroom in order to have the children who could not cope well academically sit in the front of the class.

A shortage of teachers also led to poor quality classroom transactions, with teachers having to juggle multiple classes. The rural middle school in Ujjain, U3, had five teachers to teach 115 students but with the teacher who taught English having become the *Jan Shikshak Adhikari* (Education Officer) he was in effect absent from the school for an average of twenty days of the month. Amongst the four other teachers at the school none was willing to take on his teaching load and he himself admitted that ever since he had taken on the *Jan Shikshak Adhikari* post, less than 60 per cent of the annual syllabus in English was actually taught in class.

In the high schools, teachers were often assigned subjects for which they had no training. This led to teachers avoiding their teaching tasks and preferring to spend time outside the class. Teachers who were interviewed said that they often found themselves teaching subjects for many years in which they were not formally trained and that they had difficulty explaining concepts to the students. In Ujjain, the 9th grade social science teacher was a biology graduate and in Harda the laboratory assistant often taught language and social science because of the shortage of teachers in the school. At the high school in Ujjain, the teachers read aloud from study guides in the classroom and had the students copy this down, with most of the students in class pretending to do this as they had the same guides themselves. In the high school in Harda, class was held for only two periods every day and the students relied more on the after-school tuitions that the same teachers offered. The rural boys who travelled long distances on their bicycles to come to school were usually at a disadvantage in taking extra lessons since they were the ones who could not afford it and who needed to help their family in the village with agricultural tasks. These rural students, however, spoke of feeling coerced by the teacher to take extra tuition and rural *Adivasi* parents spoke of the impossibility of a child passing without this. Private tuition was a firm part of teachers’ perception of what their jobs were all about. In the high school in Harda the school only met for two periods during the day, partly because, it appeared, students were encouraged and felt pressured by the teachers to take private tuition classes with them.

When teachers actually taught, they frequently used corporal punishment. Physical punishment was a normal and daily occurrence in most of the schools studied and *Dalit* and *Adivasi* children across schools often reported that they were the ones who were punished more than their upper-caste counterparts. Students were punished for not doing home work, disrupting the class, not having learnt a lesson by rote and arriving late for school. In the Harda primary and middle schools, H1 and H3, this list of reasons extended to Korku children who had not bathed and on whose nails and hair were considered too long. In Harda, children complained of being punished first and then being told why. In Ujjain's primary school, U1, the teacher held a stick in one hand while she taught. As pointed out earlier, most primary school parents, as the illiterate lower-caste parents of first generation school-goers, found it difficult to interact with school staff on academic issues and therefore confined their visits to the school to the time of admissions and the collection of wheat. However, it was found that in Ujjain, Valmiki parents reacted strongly to their children being punished by teachers in the primary school. There had been several incidents in the past when parents had come in and scolded the teacher for her excessive punishment. At this school, U1, the teachers were quite afraid of parents and even though they continued to teach with the stick held in one hand, they were very aware of the extent to which they could punish Valmiki children. However, the Valmiki community's handling of physical punishment appeared to be an exceptional case as this research threw up no similar example of a community taking on the school for its excessive penalisation of students.

Parents did individually voice several reservations about punishment and this research documents that in most cases parents would withdraw the child from school, and the child would drop out because of what they perceived as unnecessarily severe physical punishment. A Korku boy who had dropped out of the Harda rural middle school said, "I would get beaten everyday. The teacher would say this is the 'prasad' (blessing) to help you memorise the lesson better. I remember once a boy had not done his home work and the teacher 'coloured' his face 'white' with chalk and then made him parade 400 yards from the school to the bus stop and back."

In summary:

- pedagogy is a powerful indicator of the systemic trap in which lower-caste children find themselves. While it may be the case that pedagogy is generally conservative, the negative impact of this on marginalised groups is intense;
- the incidence of physical punishment appears to correlate strongly with caste, with lower caste children appearing to suffer disproportionately at the hands of teachers;
- many structural factors, including the shortage of teachers, compound the inability of teachers to develop pedagogical approaches that are inclusive.

5.5 Policy conclusions and reflections

At the heart of this discussion is the extent to which government policy moves from policy formulation to implementation. While there is commitment to expanding access through initiatives such as the Educational Guarantee Schemes, question marks remain about the federal and state governments' commitment to substantive equality and inclusion. Although

government has recognised the economic bases of inclusion, it has not fully addressed the cultural and the social factors leading to the exclusion of *Dalit* and *Adivasi* groups. In seeking to understand the symbolic terrain on which policy in India sits, there is a clear commitment by the Indian government to an Education for All (EFA) programme. Central planks of this commitment include, on the one hand, policies that seek to protect individual rights of citizens, irrespective of their religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and, on the other, policies that seek the state to give preferences to specified classes of citizens who are deemed ‘socially or educationally backward’, or are from the ‘scheduled castes and scheduled tribes’. The recognition of the need for the state to intervene explicitly on behalf of some disadvantaged groups to provide them with the basis for moving towards the wider goal of equality thus committed the state to a programme of redistribution and equity.

Policy actions in the education sector developed within the broad parameters of this non-discriminatory and affirmative action philosophy. As Weiner (2001) notes, equality, as reflected in the constitutional vision, was at that juncture sought to be achieved through socialist planning: the Indian government sought to be “broadly understood as an activist state that would do what the elite believed the market could not do in a developing country – accelerate investment and growth that would ultimately benefit all social classes” (ibid.). Equality of opportunity through education in particular was seen as a vehicle for progress towards a casteless society.

The extent to which this vision has endured through changes in policy, particularly in the context of the rejection of socialist planning and the shift towards a liberalised market economy, is cause for concern. In the previous chapter it was suggested that the process of decentralisation in South Africa served to locate the balance of power for implementation between the state and the school. In India, the situation is somewhat more complex. Evident in the South African situation is a clear dichotomy between the state and the school. While that relationship is dichotomised in some ways in India too, in so far as communities continue to have the power to buy themselves out of the public system, their relationship with the state is also, simultaneously, a dependent one. The state retains the capacity to determine the extent to which subordinate groups benefit through affirmative action provisions such as reserved seats in Parliament and other elected bodies, proportional to their presence in the population, quotas for admission into secondary schools, colleges, medical and engineering schools, and employment in government services and enterprises. Given this relationship, the greater burden for translating policy into practice, unlike South Africa, rests with the state.

However, as Kohli (2002) notes, the radical tone of much of the rhetoric that has shaped the symbolic frame of India’s development route has been conservative in practice with varied outcomes for different social groups. Two lines of critique have developed in relation to this. The first relates to the broad policy philosophy. Questions have been posed, for example, about the appropriateness of the redistributive thrust of affirmative action. Criticisms include the arguments that:

- the redistributive means do not fundamentally target the underlying class structures that reproduce caste inequality;

- affirmative action reproduces identity-based group formation, requiring marginalised groups to retain their group identities as a means of accessing new resources;
- entitlements are not ‘universal’, in that they do not guarantee each member of a disadvantaged group the resources of education or employment;
- to a lesser extent political membership, affirmative action creates divisions between the different groups who constitute the Schedules of caste and tribe, and creates layers of privilege within these groups.

The vision of education inclusion in India has been particularly tested by the financial challenges of providing equitable educational opportunity. Particular concerns have been raised about the fragmentation of provision under the umbrella *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* or ‘Schooling for All’ policy, the increase in the range of schools being made available through public resources, and their differing quality. In Madhya Pradesh, for instance, the focus has been on putting in place enabling policies aimed at expanding access for diverse out of school populations, which have to a great extent been successful in expanding access (the EGS in particular has achieved international acclaim). The persistent critique, however, has been that success has been achieved not so much as a result of state commitment, but, rather, as a consequence of community demand. A further index of the depth, or lack thereof, of state commitment to inclusion is the absence of policy aimed at transforming the quality of education. There is little mention of efforts to transform the quality of the learning experience.

The situation in which children find themselves in Indian schools, as the data has shown, are profoundly structured around their identities. While lower-caste children are able to access school, the quality of their experience is unsatisfactory. Continuing to define the nature of their experience of school are social, systemic factors and what one might call ‘agentic’ factors. Children and their parents find themselves having to manage the tension and the challenges of manoeuvring between the structural limitations that their society and the educational system imposes on them and the world of their aspirations and dreams.

Key conclusions to draw about this tension between structure and agency include:

- the social structure of caste is a dominant factor in determining how far and how deep a child’s learning experience will be;
- caste relationships condition families’ and children’s ability to imagine possibilities of further education and employment;
- caste-derived conditions shape relationships between communities and the school, and between students and their teachers;
- the state remains a critical factor in mitigating the worst effects of caste-discrimination;
- the state’s ability to impact on caste relationships is conditioned by the domination of the bureaucracy and the governance of the school by local upper-caste teachers;
- classroom experiences of teaching and learning continue to be determined by caste.

Dalit and *Adivasi* groups, and their children in particular, find themselves dependent on those who carry more authority than they do. This authority is framed socially and educationally. Outside of school their ability to navigate the caste system, and the wider economy in which caste is set, is limited by the history of their dependence. Where individuals

have been able to rise above the caste-system, they have struggled to reproduce the advantage they have achieved. The social system constantly holds their caste status in front of them. For example, they have to produce caste certificates to signal their membership of a particular caste.

Inside school, while the occasional triumph is recorded, such as the appointment of lower caste principals, and while children may, as in some high schools, develop friendships across the boundary of caste, for the most part, caste both prescribes the distance the child may go in his or her school career and defines his or her life choices, even with the benefit of a school career. To make any progress within the school, the subordinate has to accept the rules as they are defined in the script of the dominant groups. As for subordinate groups in South Africa, this acceptance is central in assimilation into the normative order of the dominant, prescribing the relationship with authority and place within the dominant order. Nowhere is there any sign of affirmation of the world they bring with them into the school. Their languages are seldom recognised, and their status is constantly referenced in relation to that of upper-caste groups. Significantly the state remains a critical source of protection for subordinate groups. In the context of the destiny their caste projects for them, the state is often all that stands between them and outright immiseration.

Finally, as the classificatory process in the study has shown, while there were three schools that provided easy terms of access, on only two other occasions did schools present themselves in moderately inclusionary ways. Most schools provided children with weak access and with conditions of learning that were conducive to dropping out than to the successful completion of education.

Chapter 6: Cross-case Analysis: Comparing Education Inclusion in South Africa and India

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have provided detailed analysis of the policy environments within which inclusive education policies in South Africa and India are framed. They have also examined the assumptions that underpin the policies and examined their reach and coverage, particularly how they are reflected at the school level. The analysis has highlighted the centrality of the link between schools and state mandates in making common cause to effect inclusion and has also provided reflection on the policy environment in each country.

In this chapter, attention is paid to some of the main cross cutting issues which influence the nature, content, and effect of inclusive education policies in South Africa and India.

6.2 Comparing policy environments in South Africa and India

Figure 6:1 compares the policy environment in both countries in relation to the historical legacies both countries have had to confront, the policy mandate, popular pressure and political will, and mechanisms and strategies.

Figure 6:1: The Policy Environment in South Africa and India

	South Africa	India
Inheritance and embedded structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race. • Embedded privilege beyond school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caste. • Indian government has little control over how everyday life of caste is played out on ground.
Policy mandates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activist state. • Constitutional and legislative guarantees. • Poor and ‘black’ people dependent on state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activist state. • Constitutional and legislative guarantees. • Lower-caste groups dependent on state.
Structures of inclusion: Protection and promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important structures such HRC, GETT, other. • Not always very effective but have highlighted key aspects of exclusion in education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare departments for SC and ST groups at federal and state level. • Commissions to oversee implementation of policies and civil liberties of excluded groups.
Popular will and political pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong government political will, constitutional bill of rights. • Popular pressure for and belief in the value of education opportunity as a means of social advancement. • Strong, desire from ‘black’ people for education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong government/state political will linked to electoral compulsions and <i>Dalit</i> ‘votebanks’. • Popular pressure for, and belief in, the value of education and education opportunity as a means of social advancement, articulated by demand of parents as well as civil society movements for the ‘right to education’. • Strong desire amongst <i>Dalit</i> and <i>Adivasi</i> for education.
Strategies: targeting and transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target population – poor/‘black’ learners in South Africa. • Affirmative action. • Funding and other redress mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target population – <i>Dalit</i> and <i>Adivasi</i> (and female) learners in India. • Affirmative action.

6.2.1 Dealing with inherited legacies: history and embedded social structures

Both South Africa and India have had to confront the specificity of their social situations with educational policies that recognise their social and colonial legacies. Each commands a special place in the international arena, India for its deep-seated caste inequalities, and South Africa for its bloody history of racial oppression. In each, marginalised and oppressed groups have experienced severe discrimination, not least in the sphere of education. Similar, in some ways, as the oppression and discrimination have been in the two countries, the forms that exclusion has taken, however, have been different.

In India, the social codes and the discriminations and exclusions that caste-position entails exceed the protective capacity of policy and legislation. Similarly, although 'black' and poor groups in South Africa enjoy the protection of a Constitution that has brought everybody within the state to the same legal standing, in South Africa the social and cultural capital that these groups have at their disposal is not recognised in circles of power. As a result, they struggle to access rights that have been theoretically defined as theirs for the taking.

6.2.2 The policy environment: Mandates and more policy mandates

Impressive constitutional and other policy efforts are a key feature of both countries in seeking to effect the inclusion of marginalised groups. Both countries have what one might call activist identities. The state is configured in each country as a rights-minded state which addresses not only the protection of rights of vulnerable groups but also their active promotion. The role that the state plays is thus both protective and anticipatory, in so far as it has to constantly be alert to the different ways in which the social structure conditions and limits the policies it makes for the protection of weak groups. The significance of the state is thus enhanced, calling for it to play a stronger role in relation to weaker groups in society.

The activist state, however, and this is the case with both countries, is also strongly ideologically defined. It has to project a strong welfarist identity and it has to manage this identity in relation to three articulating pressures, namely the often prescriptive global order, the influence of local dominant groups (who often are the managers of the state), and the demands and aspirations of the weaker and more vulnerable groups within the state. It is within the social dynamics of these three pressures that the state determines a strategy. Rhetorically its position places on it certain obligations, while the conjunctural circumstances it works with constantly limit how far or how deeply it is able to sustain the general trend of its policies.

Both South Africa and India, in relation to these dynamics, carry a strong burden of policy symbolism. This burden is centralised in the state. Other stakeholders within the state, namely vulnerable lower-caste groups in India and marginalised and poor 'black' people in South Africa, do not have the means, other than through mobilising popular support, to give effect to state policy. The target populations of state redress policy in both countries are, in the last instance, almost wholly dependent on the state for their advancement. Neither the lower-caste nor the 'black' and poor have the independent means to elaborate state policy beyond what that policy promises.

6.2.3 Political will and popular pressure

In both countries, even though mobilisation by both political parties as well as by popular movements, has continued as a key means of promoting social change and challenging exclusion, social and economic inequalities remain.

One feature of popular political pressure in both countries is the strong desire of subordinate groups for education. While, as discussed earlier, in India *Dalits* and *Adivasis* frequently choose to terminate their children's education, or tend to favour males, it is recognised that education provides opportunities for social mobility. The same desire is evident in South Africa, especially in the way in which subordinate groups, or groups with political histories make sacrifices for their children to attend good academic schools. These desires in both countries are aligned with government policy. Subordinate groups in both South Africa and India agree strongly with the direction their governments are taking, though implementation, particularly in India, continues to belie promises made by successive governments.

6.2.4 Mechanisms and strategies of inclusion: targeting and transfers

Affirmative action in both countries has been defined as a legal necessity to deal with forms of discrimination that either emanate out of formal and legalised modes of oppression and marginalisation or take their origin from social and public mores and practices that are deeply institutionalised. The point of affirmative action in these contexts is to deinstitutionalise discrimination and to replace the dominant power relations in those institutions with new legal provisions that deliberately address the barriers that prevented the subordinate groups from progressing in those societies. Because the structural realities in the two countries have been different, and have produced distinct exclusionary outcomes, efforts to effect redress have taken different forms.

In South Africa affirmative action was written into the Constitution. In India redress has been effected largely through the principle of affirmative action, in the spheres of higher education, public employment and local governance. In contrast to South Africa, where race forms part of the political debate, public policy discourses in India on eliminating caste based differentiation have been tackled at the level of the state and in welfare areas such as education. The national state retains the ability to determine the extent to which subordinate groups benefit through affirmative action provisions such as:

- reserved seats in Parliament and other elected bodies, proportional to their presence in the population;
- quotas for admission into secondary schools, colleges, medical and engineering schools;
- employment in government services and enterprises.

With globalisation and India's new identity as an emerging market and economic powerhouse, and its growing middle class, commitments to affirmative action in the spheres of higher education and employment are being questioned and revisited. In particular, two debates are current. These are the debate around expanding quotas in higher education to new caste groups considered 'backward' and the possibility of requiring the private sector to reserve jobs for

Dalits in the face of a shrinking public sector. Ironically, although these debates are not about primary education, there is a strongly articulated public view that improvements and greater ‘inclusivity’ in primary schools is the key policy tool, which if achieved would negate the requirement to ‘reserve’ higher education and employment opportunities for excluded groups. These debates are old and yet being rehearsed in a new economic context, and hence have particular currency at the present time.

With respect to education, a number of affirmative action programmes have been instituted. The evolution of the present-day compensatory discrimination approach, articulated within the Constitutional guarantee of equality as well as welfare targeted to the most deprived, merits study in terms of its impact on the lives of those targeted, and the extent to which it has facilitated inclusion of groups into education. Policies to make education more inclusive have focused on generating ‘demand’ through offering incentives such as scholarships, food rations and preferential access to higher education and public employment. They also focus on making community structures relating to schooling more representative of marginalised groups within villages.

Thus, formal mechanisms have been set up to promote parent teacher interactions in Indian schools. While Indian governance structures lack the formality of their South African counterparts, their intention of involving parents is similar. However, they were found to be non-functional in most schools and communities researched. *Dalit* and *Adivasi* parents continue to feel powerless within these formal institutions due both to the local committee’s limited mandate and existing power hierarchies in rural communities that devalue the presence of particular groups in decision-making roles. Teachers continue to see their accountability as being towards a monolithic educational bureaucracy rather than the local community.

In South Africa, on the other hand, attempts have been made to manage redress through a stringent framework of equalisation in state provision based on the principles of affirmative action in the form of constitutional enactment and targeted redress. Attempts to give affirmative action practical effect in South Africa have been complex and have been resisted by privileged schools. A controversial initiative was put in place by the new government in the middle of the 1990s when it ‘right-sized’ the teacher workforce in South Africa, laying down a pupil-teacher ratio for schools which was then used to establish the funding approach. Schools, irrespective of where they were located and their past histories, would receive the same per-capita funding from the state. The intention was to withdraw support from schools where teachers were in excess and to redeploy them to schools where there were shortages. When schools, moreover, were to make new appointments, they were required to appoint from what was called the excess list. This initiative was presented as a move to introduce equity into the system – and to affirm the needs of the poor.²¹ The plan, however, backfired badly because it both had the effect of removing teachers from poor schools who had managed to increase their teacher complement, and critically, was resisted by the better-off schools.

In terms of the latter, a key case arose when the Grove Primary School in Cape Town challenged the right of the Minister to appoint teachers to its staff. In this instance, Grove, a former Model C school, successfully challenged the power of the provincial department of

²¹ See Chisholm, et al (1999).

education to take away its right to appoint teachers. Significantly, it was the very structures that the state had instituted, through the South African Schools Act, namely, School Governing Bodies, that oversaw the action against the state. School governing bodies were established to facilitate stronger democratic participation of parents in schools but, as the Grove case illustrated, parents used these structures to defend narrow and often sectional interests. Moreover, the Court's finding for Grove did not bring an end to disputes between governing bodies and provincial education departments about the employment of teachers. There have been a number of cases where the courts have found in favour of schools, and have generally safeguarded the right of schools to take on only those teachers whom they want.

Recognising how much its policy of devolution of power to school governing bodies has made it possible for wealthier school communities to supplement the support they receive from the state with their own resources, the state has attempted to put in place subsidy mechanisms that favour poorer schools. It classifies all schools into five quintiles, from the least poor to the most poor, and makes financial allocations to schools for the non-salary component of their budgets on a differential basis. The least poor receive in this component of their budgets markedly reduced subsidies to pay for their electricity, water and other incidental costs. More recently, in 2005, the state introduced the concept of 'no-fee' schools for the poorest communities. In lieu of the fees that they would have collected, the Department has begun rolling out the policy of subsidising these schools to the extent of R400 per learner per annum (Department of Education, 2003). It needs to be emphasised, however, that the benefits of these developments have not yet impacted on the schools of the poor. As the relatively better-off families have left their communities, these schools have become more marginalised and are in a sense the second class system of education for the poor.

In policy terms, both countries have, beyond the level of state mandates, a difficulty in ensuring equity effects at the institutional and community level. It is these gaps which the next section considers.

6.3 Policy into practice in South Africa and India

Figure 6.2 compares practice at the school level looking at school policy, governance, access, and curriculum (which considers teaching and learning processes).

Figure 6.2: School Level Practice in South Africa and India

	South Africa	India
A) Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access required by law (procedural access). • Proxies for race discrimination include fees and language use. • Means to administer access include documentation, proof of residence, payment of fees • Language, fees discriminatory. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access required (procedural access). • Caste single most important factor for controlling access. • Means to administer access include documentation, proof of residence, payment of fees. • Language, fees discriminatory.
B) Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a single school in the sample practices strongly inclusive governance practices. • Governance strong part of reform agenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a single school in the sample practices strongly inclusive governance practices. • Non-functional governance reform.
C) Teaching and learning		
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-centred national curriculum – C2005. • Language major means of discrimination. • Assimilation into the dominant cultural order prevalent. • Cultivation of standards as exclusionary device. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional pedagogy – rote-learning. • Language major means of discrimination. • Assimilation into the dominant cultural order prevalent. • Educability used to justify discrimination against lower-caste children.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional identities of teachers. • Accountability to the state. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional identities of teachers. • Accountability to state and parents.

6.3.1 Access

No school in South Africa is allowed to deny a child entry into a school. In India, many measures have been instituted to ensure that children have access to school. Admission requirements in the two countries are clearly stipulated by law and policy. However, the processes of admission in the two countries are problematic, and in some respects discriminatory. While there are superficial similarities in the bureaucratic devices that are used to obstruct access, such as residential rules and documentation that has to be provided, the nature of the discrimination, however, is markedly different.

In South Africa, while there are a number of schools that provide easy access, this provision is

often, for lack of a better term, procedural as opposed to proactive. A small number of schools exist where children are admitted on a first-come-first-served basis. Many schools also provide moderately easy access. A significant number of schools, however, impede access through residential requirements, language use, and critically, the levying of high school fees. Language and school fees are the most important forms of discrimination used by schools, and on closer inspection, are often proxy measures for race. While race, of course, is never experienced in isolation from factors such as class, it is ultimately racial discrimination that defines the exclusion experience in South Africa.

In India access is easy in some schools, but this must be seen, as in the easy access to some South African schools, as being procedural. Much more problematic – the major difference between the South African and Indian schools – is the difficulty that Indian schools have in maintaining participation. Although children gain access, many drop out of school. These children are predominantly lower-caste and female. The difference between the two countries is in the in-school experience of inclusion. In the South African case, in the most exclusionary schools, children are kept out before they can enter, while in India, they are gradually pushed out.

6.3.2 Governance structures

In the area of governance, schools are located very differently within the nexus of power between community and state on the one hand, and teachers and the state on the other. Governance is a visible area of engagement in South African education, while it is less so for India.

Governance in South Africa constitutes a distinct site of measurement for assessing the extent to which a school is implementing the state policy of inclusion. In India schools are not seen as sites of governance. In the one country it is a measure for facilitating inclusion while it has not explicitly been given that function in the other. Governance is a distinct part of the policy machinery in South Africa, while in India it is virtually non-functional. Important possibilities might be considered here for the Indian context.

A second observation is that not a single school in either country can be said to be operating strongly inclusive governance mechanisms. Neither country was able to produce a school for the study where governance deliberately set out to deal with processes of exclusion and marginalisation. Moderately inclusive governance structures and mechanisms could be found in South Africa. For the most part, all the rest of the schools in the study were only weakly inclusive. This weak inclusiveness meant, on occasion, as in both Indian and South African cases, that schools did what they needed to in terms of the law, but, as in some South African former ‘white’ schools, they also actively excluded those they did not wish to have in their governance structures.

6.3.3 Teaching and learning and inclusion

Curriculum

In South Africa a national curriculum has been adopted – Curriculum 2005 (recently updated) – which is deliberately child-centred. Schools are allowed to infuse independent elements into the curriculum but operate along guidelines provided by the national department. The broad approach of the curriculum is what sets it apart from India, where the curriculum for the most part, is structured around traditional pedagogical approaches, such as memorisation. In contrast, South Africa has moved towards a competency-based approach, meaning the two countries have different learning approaches. However, similar exclusionary experiences are being felt. Language is used as a critical means of exclusion. In South Africa, exclusion is experienced in the almost blanket denial of access to mother-tongue learning. In India many children are forced to learn Hindi at the expense of their mother-tongues. As a result, structural exclusion is experienced at the heart of the formal curriculum.

In terms of the formal curriculum, the Indian schools in the study provide examples of curricular approaches that are severely exclusionary. No schools were found that could be described as providing strongly inclusive pedagogical approaches. One school had teachers who were managing their teaching in moderately inclusive ways. South Africa, on the other hand, had a number of schools where the curriculum could be described as moderately inclusive.

Not unexpectedly, there are many differences in the informal curricula of Indian and South African schools. In the Indian schools of the study, the most influential mechanism used by schools to shape the school ethos and climate was the notion of educability. In the South African context, the corresponding device was the notion of the ideal parent. Educability – a notion describing learning potential – is the most important construct Indian teachers have for managing their relationships with children and parents. In the discourse of educability in India, lower-caste children are habitually described as ‘ineducable’. Features of their home background, and their caste status, are naturalised as attributes that belong – sometimes congenitally – to lower caste groups. This discourse is used to justify the discriminatory treatment teachers mete out to their learners. In the South African context the ethos of school is maintained through the invocation of standards to discipline behaviour and govern relationships of parents with schools. Central are rules of deportment, language use, and responsibilities that parents – invariably heavily gendered middle-class mothers – are expected to display and reproduce. The effect is to exclude groups that do not have the social and cultural capital privileged by the school.

In both the Indian and South African cases, educability and the maintenance of standards are sites for the perpetuation of dominance and the mobilisation of hegemonic values. In both sites, the weak and the vulnerable are expected to assimilate into the hegemonic order. The dominant values, norms, and beliefs of the school are assumed to be those to which African, *Dalit* and *Adivasi* students need to adapt, and to adopt.

Teachers

Another difference in experience in the two countries arises out of the professional identities structured for teachers in the two countries. While accountability in South Africa pivots between accounting to parents, the state and ultimately learners, in India, teachers demonstrate – at least in the schools in the study – little accountability to children. The study yielded many examples of teachers only teaching for a small number of periods a day, teaching in ways that discouraged children’s curiosity for learning and regularly physically abusing children in the classes. These conditions in the classroom were responsible for the high drop-out rate of learners.

At the core of accountability are teachers’ understandings of their professional obligations. Strong racially defined differences exist amongst South African teachers as to these. Teachers in ‘black’ communities tend to cede their professional initiative to the state, while teachers in ‘white’ communities guard their independence from the state. This contrasts with the situation in India where teachers’ caste identities strongly influence how they manage their professional identities.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted the differences and similarities between both countries in tackling exclusion. While both countries are struggling with the key issues of race and caste, the ways in which these issues present themselves make the countries substantially different in terms of developing encompassing and inclusive policy agendas. Essentially, disentangling the deeply embedded social codes and habits that define caste from what are perceived to be their religious moorings, is a completely different order of challenge to the embedded racism that defines the South African landscape. However, analysis some of the key policy issues which emerge are as follows.

Aligning state policy frameworks with practice

In both contexts it is clear that the alignment of policy with practice remains a challenge, along with overcoming the inherited legacy. While the rhetorical value of the policy in both countries is high, its potential for implementation remains precarious. Strong efforts need to be made in both countries to establish mechanisms to support the implementation of policy and to ensure that there is much stronger correspondence between policy as pronounced and policy as practised.

However, the burden of translating policy into practice in the two countries is considerably different. In both countries, different as the relationship between the state and the school might be, the aggregate effect has been to produce a policy environment where outcomes are significantly different to promises. Radical inclusion is the intention of policy in both countries, but neither has succeeded in this ambition. Indeed, while the policy platform has sought to reduce the gap between the different social groups, they have instead widened. In both South Africa and India key policy challenges remain:

- the appropriateness of the redistributive thrust of affirmative action to fundamentally target the underlying structures that reproduce race and caste inequality:
- affirmative action reproducing identity-based group formation, requires marginalised groups to retain their group identities as a means of accessing new resources.

Increasing resource provision

For both countries the challenge of resource capacity is crucial in effecting inclusion. In education, the vision has been particularly tested by the financial challenges of providing equitable educational opportunity. Particular concerns have been raised in India about the fragmentation of provision under the umbrella *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* or ‘Schooling for All’ policy such as the increase in the range of schools being made available through public resources, and their differing quality. Success has been achieved not so much as a result of state commitment, but, rather, as a consequence of community demand. In South Africa, criticism of the state’s attempts to discriminate positively against poorer schools, by making larger subsidies available to them, has turned on the inability of the policy to recognise the structural contexts in which schools find themselves, with inherited challenges which small improvements in funding are unable to address.

This chapter has compared the main approaches to education and inclusion in South Africa and India that have emerged from the study. The final chapter suggests some recommendations for overcoming education exclusion.

Chapter 7: Policy Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Creating an enabling policy environment

The previous chapter highlighted the main similarities and differences between South Africa and India, paying attention to how the policies of inclusion and exclusion are played out at the institutional and community level, particularly in regard to issues of school level policy, governance, access, and teaching and learning. One of the main foci of this study was to examine critically the policy environment in South Africa and India with regards to education inclusion. From the study, a number of key features emerge about the policy environment.

First, it is evident that both countries have a very explicit policy framework geared to effecting education inclusion. In the case of South Africa, where there is a rich policy environment, there is a real difficulty in ensuring that the policies are aligned and joined up. Moreover, given the spate of policies produced, there has been insufficient attention paid to the manner of implementation and the human and financial resources required to give them practical effect.

Second, both countries, policies mix the notion of a rights-based entitlement approach to inclusion with a welfarist approach of care and helping the marginalised. The foot print of this mix is most felt at the institutional level where the perception of policy is one of benign institutions doing their 'best' for the marginalised.

Third, a key aspect and valuable orientation of the enabling policy environment in both countries is that they define public perception of intentions. This is extremely important globally as legislation in both countries, particularly South Africa, is referenced elsewhere in the world. However, in South Africa it is clear the dominant discourse is one focused on the production of citizens able to operate and succeed in an 'Western environment', an approach which is rarely subjected to any kind of policy scrutiny. The critical issue, for example, of the continued salience of 'African' custom, is seldom addressed. The broad direction of policy is to generate public participation within the framework of Western approaches to democracy and civil society. That this might have exclusionary effects is seldom addressed.

Fourth, the policy environment leaves open to question who is to be included and who is marginalised. In India in particular, the groups targeted for intervention pose difficulties, given the evolving nature of social categories, and the differences between *jatis* or kin groups that operate within caste categories. Thus, within the administrative category of 'Scheduled Caste' there are *jatis* that are more vulnerable to exclusion than others, based on the nature of their traditional occupation. Given the complexity of caste as a social category, the difficulty lies in the 'fixed' nature of explanation that policies rely on to determine the choices made. This is also the case in South Africa where attempts to overcome exclusion need to understand the complexities of the interrelationships between race, class and gender for effective policy planning

Finally, the key gap in the policy environment is what can be referred to as 'policy zeal', including almost religious optimism in the efficacy of an enabling environment for change. As the study reveals, much of the nature of exclusion is determined in the particular social relations that operate in society and the ways in which individual and community positions are shaped by the histories of class, race, caste and gender. Thus, it is important to explicitly

acknowledge the 'limits of policy' in effecting fundamental and deep seated changes in the hierarchical ordering of society and the social relations which circumscribes the lived realities of the marginalised. There is a need to confront the political economy of education reform, situating the production and interpretation of policy within the positions of those who make, shape, and implement policy. Policy itself is a contested terrain which often reflects the asymmetries of power in society.

Schools and communities do not reject the policy framework. Rather, how policies are interpreted, re-articulated and implemented at the institutional levels is at issue.

7.1.1 Models of changing policy and practice

Underlying the creation of an enabling policy environment, are the different understandings of how change can be effected in order to promote education inclusion. Three approaches to changing patterns of education exclusion are identified from the research.

The first is an incrementalist approach which seeks to effect change by expanding the range of services to the poor and marginalised. Thus inclusion policy is a mechanism to ensure that those who were historically denied opportunities are now able to do so. Such an incrementalist understanding of social change suggests that as more children from these groups enter schools, definitions and articulations of rights will increase, and action towards inclusion will be sustained based on the demands of children of these groups, and subsequent generations. However, this gradualist approach assumes inclusion does not need explicit and targeted public policy intervention.

The second approach sees inclusion policy change as a process in which normative frameworks shape and orientate practice. Thus policy becomes a way of signalling what is desirable, the assumption being that the practice that ensues is aligned with the signals. In this regard, much of what is considered inclusive education policy, particularly in the South African context, can be regarded as symbolic policy and not that which results in changed practices.

The third approach is that political will as manifest in state policy will deliver inclusion. However the reality is that this is not sufficient as the study has shown.

Against this backdrop three scenarios might be sketched for the inclusion-exclusion policy framework in South Africa and India. In considering these scenarios it is important to recognise they are not mutually distinctive, in that an effective inclusive environment in both countries would require:

- a state with the will and capacity to support implementation;
- attention to monitoring and mitigating/resolving exclusionary outcomes of policy;
- more joined up policy;
- tackling attitudinal and institutional exclusionary barriers.

Scenario One: Enhancing and increasing the role of the state

Given the strong pull of assimilationism and the conditioning and discriminatory effects it has on particularly marginalised groups, one more radical scenario is to enhance and strengthen state intervention, with a stronger oversight role for the state at all levels of the education system and an increased role in monitoring compliance with the regulatory and enabling policy frameworks. Such a role would mean that is the state that drives, directs, and monitors the implementation of inclusive education policies.

However, the likelihood of such a radical restructuring is small in both countries for a number of reasons. First, there is limited financial and human capacity to deliver a schooling system that can meet all of these demands. Secondly, the ideological centre of gravity in the country, at the heart of government, is constructed around the principle of a mixed free-market/welfarist state. There is little likelihood therefore that the state will stand in the way of parents (mainly middle-class) exercising their economic rights to superior academic provision. Third, in both countries the effect of education inclusion extends beyond the terrain of education. Education exclusion in both contexts is conditioned by other factors such as residential geography and embedded social structures. More state intervention will not in itself address this.

Scenario Two: Mediating the exclusionary effects of implementation

In this scenario, the state recognises the extent and the gravity of the problems it is confronting, and is particularly aware of the danger of a bifurcation of the public system and the possibility that the divide between the rich and the poor will increase. The state therefore modulates the worst excesses of policy implementation through placing limits on those freedoms enjoyed by the rich that impact on the wider society, by, for example, placing caps on school fees, introducing stronger policy levers to modulate and mitigate discrimination in the public school system and, increasingly, introducing into the educational debate the question of diversity in much more explicit ways than is currently the case.²² The state plays an interventionist role without compromising fundamentally other freedoms. The worst problems in the system are placed under the spotlight but this does not lead to radical changes of the system.

Scenario Three: A holistic inclusive policy environment

The effects of education inclusion policies which generate new forms of exclusion at the school are not in themselves a consequence of the education system alone. Instead, as the study has shown, such exclusion reflects the ways in which society is organised socially, politically and economically. Thus holistic and comprehensive policy approaches require a strategy that changes simultaneously the structural forces operating across political, economic and social terrains, and also the ways in which systems internal to the education sector operate.

²² This has already occurred in the case of South Africa where the new Minister of Education amended existing school governance legislation and regulations by tightening up the charging of school fees.

7.1.2 Rethinking policy mandates

A key starting point is the nature, form and content of the policies designed to overcome exclusion. In this regard, the following suggestions are offered:

- *A rights based policy approach*: A rights based policy approach is critical to ensure that policies of inclusion are conceived of as rights rather than ‘incentives’. Such an approach sees the marginalised not as backward people suffering an exclusionary deficit but as bearers of rights whose dignity needs to be reaffirmed and whose needs become the drivers of policy.
- *Feasible, flexible enabling policy*: Policies must reflect the context to which they pertain. While they may draw on global models of success, they should reflect the conditions to which they apply. Feasible policies are those which enable actors to use the framework to effect transformation.
- *Holistic, integrated policy*: Inclusion policies must be integrated with broader educational policy. If inclusive educational policy is located outside of the broader framework, it will constantly face problems of inarticulation with other educational initiatives. Inclusive education policy needs to take account of the contradictory nature of exclusions that address the various ways in which exclusion is manifest at all levels of society.
- *Participation*: Involving the excluded in developing policy should be promoted actively. A participatory process involving all social groups and in particular, the beneficiaries is crucial.
- *Political will and pressure*: Policy mandates need to be coupled with strong political will and enhanced social awareness to ensure effective implementation and desirable outcomes. Thus communities need to be active in arguing for and being party to how, inclusion policies unfold at all levels of the system. In particular, attention needs to be paid to strengthening the abilities of communities to hold schools accountable.

7.1.3 Capacity and support

Whatever the intentions of policy, the key driver is the capacity of the state and its institutions to ensure that policies are successfully implemented and that school and communities are supported in this process. Thus implementing inclusive policy is the responsibility of all levels of the system. There also needs to be oversight of the policy implementation process. Some of the ways in which greater support and attention may be given to facilitating successful implementation include:

- mobilising the support of structures which are existent in society and which are geared to the promoting and protection of rights. These include, for example, in the South Africa context, agencies such as the Human Rights Commission, the Youth Commission, the Pan-South African Language Board, and the Gender Commission;
- ensuring joined up work and focus of the various sub-branches of education Ministries. This entails ensuring that the different sub-branches of the education bureaucracy are geared towards a joined up inclusive approach.

- focal points in departments; it is important that in national ministries there is a focal point for effecting inclusion and equity;
- training for education officials with regards to inclusion.

7.1.4 Enhancing and strengthening monitoring

Enhanced monitoring of inclusionary efforts and identification of mechanisms of exclusion needs to be put in place. Enhanced monitoring also needs to develop an expanded notion of inclusion beyond formal access to school, including the achievement of learners from marginalised and disadvantaged communities and the disaggregating of expenditure in terms of beneficiary analysis. Ensuring inclusion occurs requires a commitment on the part of governments at all levels of the system to have in place robust and appropriate forms of monitoring so that policy remediation can occur. Effective monitoring also requires that an appropriate system of incentives is in place at the institutional level to encourage schools to monitor the progress of the excluded.

7.2 Putting policy into practice at the institutional level

The report argues that the key test of effecting inclusion rests on actions at the institutional level. In this regard a few entry-points are identified at the institutional level including access, the school environment, school governance and classroom teaching.

7.2.1 Ensuring access

The education system needs to address education exclusion by ensuring that all students eligible for education, especially those from deprived backgrounds, are meaningfully included in education programmes, and that students are aware of inclusion incentives. Some of the ways this could be achieved include:

- an inclusive system that secures funding, resourcing and mechanisms of distribution that ensure the provision of compulsory education to all students;
- addressing economic access through strategies which reduce the cost of education such as scholarships, conditional and unconditional cash grants, as part of holistic policy efforts;
- ensuring schools situated in wealthy areas and largely inaccessible to students from poorer areas address the politics and culture of difference through the curriculum, to help ensure that they do not remain islands of exclusion. It may also be helpful to consider twinning programmes which are structured to ensure that these schools interface with and prepare their students for the real world in ways that celebrate rather than tolerate difference.

7.2.2 Inclusive school policy

While it is evident that the state in both countries has an explicit policy framework for enabling inclusion, there is very little evidence that schools have generated policies to effect inclusion. While school policy statements by themselves do not ensure inclusion, they are key to schools indicating clearly a vision of, and commitment to, promoting inclusion. They also inform communities of the values that are deemed to be important.

At the same time, there is a need to ensure that an inclusive discourse permeates at all levels of the school environment including both governance and teaching and learning. This requires an awareness at the school level of the particular forms of differentiation associated with caste and race that give rise to discrimination against marginalised groups. Policies must consider how to include ‘previously excluded’ students in the system as a whole and in specific institutions that would previously have fostered exclusionary practices. School level policy is critical to ensure that the school as an institution is aware and focused on actions which tackle exclusion. Some actions which may be considered include:

- regions and institutions which reflect good performance in promoting and achieving inclusive educational environments must be acknowledged and praised;
- models of good practice should be widely publicised as a means of shifting mindsets increasingly towards the notions and practices of inclusion and away from exclusion;
- authorities should also step in to help those institutions in which exclusions persist;
- an inclusive school level policy should focus on the kind of education it wishes to provide and how it will achieve this irrespective of race, class, caste and gender;
- an understanding of schooling achievement and performance which explicitly addresses inclusion, taking a more comprehensive view of performance as a ‘process’ of learning, within which all barriers and constraints to a child’s performance within school may be reviewed and assessed, rather than a ‘deficit’ model of exclusion;
- strengthening teachers’ capacities to engage with these social processes as part of professional authority and capability.

7.2.3 Inclusive governance

Effective school governance that is participatory and reflective of all the interests of the school community is one of the most effective way to facilitate inclusion. Governance relates to both political governing structures that include stakeholders as well as the management of schools by head teachers and other members of the school management team. It also requires attention to how grievances and complaints are dealt with and the removal of barriers to making complaints. Leadership and management are regarded as key features in the effective operation of the school in implementing its inclusion strategies. Participative management, through which strong head teachers encourage participation of other staff members, fosters commitment to collectively owned goals and objectives. Policy relating to governance should also ensure that parents and students are meaningfully engaged in decision-making processes. Such inclusion generates participation in, ownership of and commitment to the education system, and its philosophies and programmes.

The policy should make provision for the inclusion of parents and students as full participants in the governing structures of the school. Student involvement in Student Representative Councils (SRCs) should also be encouraged and the means of developing a representative and active SRC established.

Governance structures should also be accessible and approachable, displaying an interactive role in relation to the institution. Governors should be representative of all groups as well as active members of the governing structures. Some specific aspects which may be considered include:

- simple and relevant management systems, including well-focused development planning and monitoring;
- skills in harnessing and managing resources from a range of sources, combined with excellent financial planning and control to ensure that the resources available are used well;
- developing codes of conduct within the school to enable teachers and communities to agree acceptable norms of behaviour within the classroom, recognising that this may be a difficult process;
- ensuring that there are mandated procedures that recognise parents' grievances as legitimate and lay down procedures for dealing with these in a way that is also fair to teachers;
- training and supporting school governing structures within a development perspective with the question of diversity being taken into account, in the course of the broad training that is provided to such bodies.

7.2.4 Inclusive teaching and learning

An inclusive curriculum

The curriculum is one of the areas through which unequal power relations may be perpetuated in both explicit and implicit ways. Curricula have to reflect inclusive education in encouraging wide ranging perspectives and opinions. However, the curriculum must also uphold certain principles on which inclusive education is based, such as rights and respect for diversity. Curricula should therefore both be honest about the history and reality of injustices, and equip students with the abilities to deal with difference.

Making the curriculum inclusive would include:

- citizenship education to ensure that students develop an understanding not only of their rights and responsibilities in society, but also of the unequal nature of societies and the need to redress injustices;
- ensuring that teaching materials are inclusive and do not in any way marginalise and discriminate against specific racial and caste groups;
- teachers promoting a culture of inclusivity by including all students and fostering collaboration and good relations between all students in their classes;
- changes in pedagogy, particularly away from a deficit model of the marginalised, as in the notion of standards in South Africa and educability in India.

In the curriculum, language emerges as a key marker of exclusion, particularly in the South African case. An inclusive language approach at the school requires elevation of languages other than English in schools. In this respect the decision recently made by the Western Cape Education Department in South Africa to have mother-tongue instruction in use until the end of the primary school phase should be taken up elsewhere in the country. It could also be suggested that schools become at least trilingual. There are few parts of South Africa where only two languages are dominant. In the rest of the country, children live in a regional medium of often three or more languages, and it is recommended that children are taught to be conversationally competent in these languages.

Teachers

Teachers are crucial to ensuring inclusion of marginalised learners at the classroom level and their motivation and commitment are central to the efficacy of inclusion policies. Policy needs to address the human resource development of all staff, especially teaching staff. Most importantly, these staff should demonstrate their commitment to a culture of inclusivity by ensuring that all students feel included in the classroom, having high expectations and providing support and strategies to help students achieve their potential. It is also important that schools avoid the development of cultures which 'tolerate' difference. Rather, a celebration of difference, and the means to express a range of cultures in a school, should be sought.

Suggestions include:

- incentive programmes for teachers that acknowledge good practice in fostering inclusion.
- a focus in teachers' appraisals on efforts to promote inclusion;
- supporting teachers to develop methods that facilitate inclusion and deal with issues of race and caste in the classroom;
- ensuring that the teaching body reflects to some degree the composition of the student body.

7.3 Implications for development partnerships

This section reflects on some of the policy implications of the research for development partnerships.

First, if particular groups of learners are excluded from schooling then the EFA and Millennium Development Goals will not be met. This requires a concerted focus and attention on the part of development agencies to the needs of excluded groups. The goals almost certainly cannot be achieved, and will not be sustained, without such policy focus.

Second, there is a need for development partners to enter into constructive dialogue with governments about the excluded, and to ensure that in the various modalities of disbursing aid, attention is paid to the needs of the marginalised. Thus, in sector policy dialogues, development partners need to consider ways in which those excluded from school can be included so that EFA and the MDGs are achieved. Otherwise in 2015 there will still be large numbers of out of school children from the poor and marginalised. A good sector plan needs to consider strategies along with robust monitoring of actions.

Third, support to government in the dialogue process must pay attention to supply and demand. Demand is affected by the disjuncture between policy intention and policy practice and strategies must be devised that enhance the learning experience. Otherwise inclusive policy which does not translate into an inclusive learning environment will result in the lowering of demand for access, as parents of the marginalised will not send their children to and keep them in school when they experience a learning environment that is alienating, not relevant, and poorly focused. Attention should be paid to the 'black box' of schooling, to ensure that the school finds ways to tackle exclusion in the learning environment that is constructed, in how

the school is governed and in how teaching and learning occurs in the classroom.

Fourth, it is crucial that development parties step up efforts with governments to ensure that the voices of the marginalised are heard. This means strengthening the capacity of the poor and civil society organisations to become effective partners in sector dialogue.

Fifth, where Sector Wide Approaches have been applied to development assistance, it is important to work with governments to ensure that their budgets within their Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks focus on effective plans and strategies to tackle social exclusion. Sector wide planning has developed in a patchy way. Often it does not include all aspects of social exclusion.

Sixth, external support can help to ensure that there is strong dissemination of good practice and lesson learning about strategies that work.

Finally, the development community has an important role to play with donor agencies and across global initiatives to ensure that there is a more joined up approach to dealing with social exclusion and that it receives prominent attention in international dialogue. There are projects and initiatives attempting to support governments and others to tackle social exclusion but very little coordination between them.

The above suggests that development partners need to develop coherent policies and strategies to support the development of education sector plan by governments that pay explicit attention to overcoming exclusion. While there are differing ideas about what constitutes such support, some of the more important actions include:

- ensure that education social inclusion features prominently in sector reviews, sector development dialogues, and other modalities of support;
- ensure that social inclusion is planned for, budgeted, and monitored;
- share and disseminate good practice on tackling social exclusion in education;
- encourage constructive policy dialogue with NGOs;
- consolidate and align international efforts to tackle social exclusion in education;
- ensure effective international monitoring, advocacy and dialogue on social exclusion in education;
- link support for policies tackling social exclusion in education with attention to learning experiences.

7.4 Implications for future research

There are many areas where further research is needed to increase the probability that more robust and effective policy can be developed to tackle social exclusion in education to ensure achievement of the EFA and MDGs. A short list includes:

- basic mapping of experiences in tackling social exclusion. This would entail detailed studies of different types of cross comparative experiences;

- review of experiences to strengthening demands and voices of the marginalised in different national contexts;
- tracer studies of the experiences of marginalised groups that have participated in schooling to compare outcomes;
- cross country analysis of policy on tackling social exclusion in education to compare approaches, create policy option frameworks, and assess viability and likely effects;
- cross country studies of strategies and mechanisms to effect social inclusion;
- review of development partners' rationales for, and activity in, supporting social inclusion in education.

7.5 Conclusion

None of these are easy areas within which to bring change. One challenge that arises is in relation to arguing for such broad-based systemic reform in countries such as India, still with a reasonable way to go in providing education 'for all' in terms of basic infrastructure. Yet, securing the participation of first generation learners is crucial to ensure sustainable inter-generational change. This is unlikely to happen unless some of the shifts suggested above start being put into place. The other challenge arises from the inherently political and contested nature of many of these issues, which will mean that policy and political actors may not readily buy into the rationale for some of the reforms proposed.

However, it is also important not to overestimate the challenge. Many of the proposals made above involve building on processes that already exist, even if weak in form and substance. While these are proposed as complementary inclusive policies and approaches, a starting point may be made based on what already exists as viable entry-points. For example, teacher training is an ongoing activity, monitoring of learning processes takes place and the education system communicates particular types of policy messages to local administrators and teachers. Building on these entry points could offer an important start to the process of altering the highly variable and often exclusionary norms and behaviours that characterise the current schooling environment. The argument here is for revitalising these in new ways to make the policy agenda of inclusion meaningful, feasible, and achievable to ensure Education For All.

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