



PRIVATE SECTOR RESEARCH STUDY SARVA SHIKSHA ABHIYAN

PRACHI SRIVASTAVA, CLAIRE NORONHA, AND
SHAILAJA FENNELL

REPORT SUBMITTED TO DFID INDIA
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BOO	Build-own-operate
BOT	Build-operate-transfer
CAL	Computer-aided learning
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DEA	Department of Economic Affairs
DFID	Department for International Development
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DISE	District Information System for Education
EGS	Education Guarantee Scheme
EMIS	Education management information system
HSTP	Hoshangabad Science Teaching Programme
JRM	Joint Review Mission
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
NCERT	National Council of Educational Research and Training
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organisation
NUEPA	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
PPCP	Public-private-civil society partnership
PPP	Public-private partnership
PSP	Private sector participation
REI	Rajasthan Education Initiative
RTE Act	Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
SMC	School management committee
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSE	Statistics of school education



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research study was commissioned by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in India to provide a broad overview of key issues associated with how the role of the private sector in education has evolved over the last ten years of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), the Government of India's flagship programme for universal elementary education. The terms of reference set the focus of this study on broadly covering public-private partnerships (PPPs) and the emergence of low-fee private schooling. Key points of the study are summarised below, in reference to the four main areas of analysis. Hyper linked page numbers are indicated in the right-hand column for quick reference.

Low-fee Private Schooling	
1. While the low-fee private sector in India has garnered much attention over the last decade, empirical research on the sector is limited. It is difficult to compare existing data because of differences in operationalization and because there is no official definition of the sector.	10
2. Presumed affordability of the low-fee sector for 'disadvantaged' groups <i>en masse</i> , is questioned, and is linked to issues of equity. A number of studies note limits of the sector (and private schooling more generally) because of cost factors, particularly as grade levels increase over the elementary and secondary cycles.	11-12
3. Evidence on the relative quality of the state and private sectors (including relative achievement) in the existing literature is inconclusive. In the absence of objective quality indicators, school choice may be a marker of perceived quality in certain instances, but in others it may also be related to perceived social status, prestige, gender norms, parental aspirations, or concerns with social closure.	12-15
4. There is very limited consideration of the interplay of the low-fee and government sectors on improving overall education sector quality.	15
Analysis of Official Data	
5. The last two NSSO education rounds showed a large increase in combined private aided and private unaided sector participation between 1995-1996 (pre-SSA) and 2007-2008 (during SSA). The increase is particularly dramatic in urban areas at both primary and upper-primary levels.	19
6. There were equity concerns. The gap between males and their female counterparts in urban and rural areas increased at the primary and upper-primary levels in 2007-2008, compared to the earlier period regarding participation in the combined aided and unaided sectors. NSSO data for 2007-2008 also showed that compared to the levels of total enrolment, there was an over-representation of children belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe groups in government schools, and under-representations in the private aided and private unaided sectors.	23-24

7. ASER sex-wise enrolment data for the larger states among those at the top end of private sector provision (i.e. Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh) indicated a gender gap.	23
8. There is a paucity of comprehensive data on the proportion of recognised and unrecognised private schools, particularly since unrecognised schools have not been captured in official datasets. EMIS data collection will attempt to include data from unrecognised schools. However, given the RTE Act's prohibition of unrecognised schools, it is unclear how forthcoming these schools will be.	26
9. Existing official data do not disaggregate private unaided schools by fee level making it impossible to track overall trends in the low-fee private sector relative other sub-sectors over time.	16; 26
10. There is a need for consistency across datasets. It is difficult to make comparisons across certain existing datasets (e.g. ASER, DISE, NSSO) due to different operationalizations.	26-27
<i>Analysis of Macro-Policy Planning and PPP Initiatives</i>	
11. The Twelfth Plan is more explicitly welcoming of the private sector and PPPs in social sectors and in education than previous plans. It seems latently to base conceptualisations around a contracting model however, there is no clear institutional framework for PPPs in education. This is aggravated by weak evaluation and monitoring systems for PPPs in social sectors, and a lack of a central database that accurately records current and past initiatives. Such considerations are important for issues of accountability and transparency.	27-28; 32; 41-42
12. The current discourse around PPPs in elementary education in India refers to a diverse set of actors, from not-for-profit NGOs, to national and multinational corporations, and private foundations sometimes set up by corporations. Different types of private actors may be involved in the same PPP initiative.	32-33; 38-39; 41
13. Over the SSA period there has been a change in the types of private actors involved, and in the nature of these partnerships. Civil society organisations, NGOs, and established philanthropic trusts were involved in the beginning of the SSA phase. These now operate alongside corporate actors under corporate social responsibility programmes and new private foundations.	38-40
14. PPP initiatives in education are a nascent sector, comprising a small percentage of total PPP initiatives according to official data. However, PPPs in school education, particularly elementary education are growing but difficult to track. They are largely unmapped, and there is little clarity on the role of the main providers and their scope.	36; 41-42
<i>The, SSA, the RTE Act, and the Private Sector</i>	
15. Despite the fact that SSA vision documents did not explicitly articulate a role for the private sector in expanding access, particularly regarding the schooling of disadvantaged groups, there was growth of private schooling and a number of PPP initiatives operated in education during the first decade of SSA.	37-38; 54
16. With the passing of the RTE Act, SSA is now conceptualised as the vehicle for implementing the RTE Act. This is a crucial and fundamental distinction between SSA as it was and SSA post-RTE, as the RTE Act is a legal framework and its provisions are legally enforceable matters of law.	42
17. While on the one hand the emphasis on PPPs and the private schooling sector has increased during SSA and in the current time, the RTE Act has altered the arrangements that are now possible.	41; 54
18. The RTE Act has generated polarised opinions with regards to the role of the private sector, and particularly the 25% free seats provision, the potential closure of unrecognised schools, and upholding specified norms for all private schools.	47-48; 50-52



INTRODUCTION

This research study was commissioned by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in India to provide a broad overview of key issues associated with how the role of the private sector in education has evolved over the last ten years of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA), the Government of India's flagship programme for universal elementary education. The terms of reference set the focus of this study on broadly covering public-private partnerships (PPPs) and the emergence of low-fee private schooling.

Additionally, the end of the first decade of SSA dovetails with the implementation of the RTE Act, bringing important changes to the general policy context framing the role of the private sector. Conversely, the RTE Act has implications for how SSA may evolve. A revised SSA framework based on relevant RTE provisions was devised for this purpose (see Ministry of Human Resource Development [MHRD], 2011a). As this was a subsidiary aim of the terms of reference for this study, we provide some indications on potential implications of the RTE Act on the private sector in relation to the new SSA phase.

The report is structured as follows. We begin by providing a brief overview of the different types of schooling provision in India. Next, we review the literature on private schooling in India and low-fee private schooling in relation to the SSA goals of access, equity, and outcomes, and then analyse official data sources to provide some idea of the relative contribution of government and private schools to elementary education. This is followed by an analysis of how PPPs have evolved over the Eleventh and Twelfth Five-Year Plans. The study examines new models of PPPs and implications for the private sector under the new SSA phase, ushered in by the *Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009* (RTE Act). Finally, the report draws on primary data collection comprising ten interviews with prominent members of academia, civil society activists, and donors to articulate current perspectives. The report concludes by noting a number of areas to be addressed in moving forward, taking into consideration the context of the RTE Act and a new phase for SSA.



THE SCHOOLING SCENARIO

There are three broad types of schools in the formal education system — government, private aided, and private unaided. Private unaided schools are further characterised as recognised or unrecognised schools. In principle, recognised schools are meant to meet infrastructure, curricular, and teaching norms.

The government school system operates in two to three tiers. Secondary schools (Class 5/6 to Class 10/12; Class 9 to 12) are generally operated by the state government, while primary schools (Class 1-4/5; Class 1 to 8) are managed by local municipal/*panchayat* bodies. Most buildings are publicly or community owned, and local bodies may raise funds to enhance school resources (Lewin, 2011). Integrated or ‘all through’ schools running from Class 1 to 12, like the Delhi State Government *sarvodayavidyalayas*, are relatively uncommon. In Delhi, these were established in the 1990s to provide ‘quality education to the children from class I to XII, under one roof as is being provided in the private...schools’ (Directorate of Education, 2006 qtd. in Juneja, 2010, p. 21).

There are several other types of schools including a small premium segment of government schools for special groups. This includes the Central Government-funded *kendriyavidyalayas* or Central Schools mainly for children of Central Government employees; *navodayavidyalayas* which are residential schools for talented rural children, and *sainik* schools run by the Ministry of Defence. Some Central Government departments operate a small number of schools such as the Department of Tribal Welfare (for tribal groups), Ministry of Labour (targeted for child labour), and Ministry of Social Justice (for children with disabilities) (see Juneja, 2010 for more detail).

The private aided sector may be thought of as a ‘public–private hybrid’, and has been increasingly thus conceptualised as the focus on PPPs has emerged in more recent years (e.g. Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, 2011b; Government of India, 2004). Private aided schools are privately managed but heavily funded (up to 95% of a school’s budget) through state government grant-in-aid. In practice, most state funding covers teachers’ salaries equivalent to those in government schools, and recurrent spending on non-teacher inputs (Panchamukhi & Mehrotra, 2005), while management must ensure that teachers meet set qualifications. Schools must raise their own funds for initial and on-going costs, typically through household contributions to school parent-teacher associations. Because of the nature and amount of state intervention in their management and financing some assert that they could be called ‘semi-government’ or ‘government-aided’ schools (Kingdon, 1996; Tilak & Sudarshan, 2001).

If we conceptualise the private sector as comprising schools that are both financially independent of the state and privately managed, then the true private sector is composed of recognised and unrecognised private unaided schools. These schools are autonomous, privately managed, and generally free of state financing. The RTE Act defines an unaided

school as 'not receiving any kind of aid or grants to meet its expenses from the appropriate Government or the local authority' (Section 2(n)(iv), Government of India, 2009a).

Private unaided schools span a vast array of operations with varying fee structures, from low-fee to elite, high-fee schools. They may be run by voluntary organisations, missionaries, philanthropic bodies, or individual owners as business enterprises, though in principle, and according to a 1993 Supreme Court ruling (*Unnikrishnan PJ and Others v. State of Andhra Pradesh and Others*), schools should not be run for profit (Tilak & Sudarshan, 2001).

Under the Indian Constitution, private schools could exist regardless of whether or not they were recognised (Balagopalan, 2004; De et al., 2002; Majumdar & Vaidyanathan, 1995). Many currently function on recognised or unrecognised bases, or owing to the earlier practice in certain states of granting 'temporary recognition', somewhere in between (see De et al., 2002; Srivastava, 2007; 2008b). However, with the legislation of the RTE Act effective 2010, unrecognised and recognised private schools that do not meet norms in Schedule 1 of the Act, have up to three years to obtain recognition or apply for 'upgradation' (as the case may be), or face school closure (Sections 18 and 19, Government of India, 2009a).

Finally, there is no official definition of 'low-fee private' schools in India. The term was first coined by Srivastava to refer to a seemingly relatively new (at the time) and expanding subset of schools in the private unaided sector that were targeting socially and economically disadvantaged groups. She operationalized them as charging a monthly tuition fee not exceeding about one day's earnings of a daily wage labourer at primary and junior levels (up to Class 8), and two days' earnings at secondary and higher secondary levels (grades 9 through 12) (see Srivastava, 2013 for historical analysis). In the absence of an official definition, researchers have operationalized low-fee private schools to suit the parameters of their studies, which is less clear in some cases than others. This makes comparison across studies on low-fee private schools difficult. The literature also refers to these schools as 'budget schools', 'private schools for the poor', 'low-cost schools', 'affordable private schools', or 'teaching shops'.



REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON PRIVATE SCHOOLING IN INDIA

While the low-fee private sector in India has garnered much attention over the last decade, empirical research on the sector is limited, and it is difficult to draw straightforward conclusions based on existing studies (e.g. Chudgar & Quin, 2012; De et al., 2002; Härmä, 2009; 2010; Ohara 2012; 2013; Rangaraju et al., 2012; Srivastava; 2006; 2007; 2008a; 2008b; Tooley & Dixon, 2005; 2006; Tooley et al., 2010). Critics of the more contentious work (i.e. by James Tooley and his colleagues) point to private sector lobbies in directing international dialogue on Education for All (Nambissan & Ball, 2010), and on the responsibility of the state to provide equitable access (Lewin, 2007; Watkins, 2004).

However, this debate is indicative of the wider literature on private schooling in India, and more generally. A number of issues require further research and analysis, and existing research must be interpreted with nuance. The following review outlines the broad themes emerging from research on private schooling in India, including work on low-fee private schooling. We focus our analysis on issues of access, quality, and outcomes in line with aims of the study.

PHYSICAL ACCESS

Though initially thought to be mainly an urban phenomenon, there has undoubtedly been substantial growth in private provision in urban and rural areas over the last two decades. In fact, Woodhead et al.'s (2013) longitudinal data in Andhra Pradesh showed that while the concentration of private schooling was higher in urban areas, growth was higher in rural areas. Much private sector growth is attributed to a well-documented malfunctioning government system (e.g. PROBE Team, 1999) and the resulting emergence of low-fee private schools (De et al., 2002; Härmä, 2009; Ohara, 2012; Srivastava, 2007; 2008b; Tooley & Dixon, 2006; Tooley et al., 2010), though large or representative statistical data on the latter are not, to the best of our knowledge, available.

Kingdon's (2007) analysis of four National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) survey figures estimates that between 1993 and 2002 nearly 96% of the total increase in primary enrolment in urban areas was due to the growth of private schooling. Pratham's Annual Status of Education Reports (ASER) since 2005 also show an increasing trend of private enrolment in rural areas, though there is variability on the extent of private enrolment between states (e.g. ASER, 2010).

Muralidharan and Kremer (2007), based on a representative sample from 20 states, found 28% of the population of rural India to have access to private schools in the same village, but for private schools to more likely exist in villages with high public school teacher absence, and surprisingly less likely in villages in states with higher per capita income. Though somewhat dated, Pal (2010), based on earlier PROBE school-, village-, and household-level data in five

states found that private schools were more likely to be present in villages with better-off households and better public infrastructure such as electricity, piped water, and road access. However, there are limits to this growth. For example, Govinda and Bandyopadhyay (2011) returned to three locations after a ten-year period, and found that private schools did not emerge in the most remote, which remained unserved.

AFFORDABILITY AND EQUITY OUTCOMES

With the emergence of low-fee private schooling, one of the most contested points regarding private provision is its presumed affordability. Research has shown that low-fee private schools are part of the private sector that is accessible to some segment of the population that would be considered to be from among relatively poorer groups, and that would not normally have had access to private schooling in the more typical context where the sector caters to elite or privileged middle classes.

The evidence on low-fee private schooling in India and elsewhere suggests that it would not be incorrect to characterise some of these students as first-generation learners or with parents with lower education levels relative to more advantaged and richer groups, and relative to these groups, as tending to come from households that participate in the informal economy to a greater extent, have lower paid jobs, make substantial sacrifices (economically and emotionally) to access the private sector, and are more likely to be affected by migration (see Akaguri, 2011; Akyeampong & Rolleston, forthcoming; Fennell, forthcoming; Härmä, 2009; Srivastava, 2006).

However, a number of studies note the limits of growth of the private sector in India and ensuing schooling participation because of cost factors, particularly as grade levels increase over the elementary and secondary cycles (Härmä, 2010; Lewin, 2011; Siddhu, 2010). This distinction is important and should be noted against totalising claims on affordability. There is ample literature confirming that tuition and other hidden schooling costs in state and private sectors are most prohibitive on the most disadvantaged and poorest (e.g. see Siddhu, 2010 for a review). As affordability is linked to issues of equity, these are important considerations.

Mehrotra and Panchamukhi (2006), based on household survey data with a representative sample covering more than 120,000 households and 1,000 schools spread over 91 districts in Indian eight states, found that private unaided schools did not seem to favour gender or caste-based equity in enrolment. Härmä's (2009) study on Uttar Pradesh found low-fee private schools to be unaffordable to the most disadvantaged in her sample, i.e. low-caste groups, Muslims, and households falling in the last quintile of the poverty index, while also showing aggravated gender equity. Asset ownership data in De et al.'s (2002) household and school survey of one district each in Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh confirmed that private school children came from somewhat better-off families, and this choice was relatively more favourable for boys.

Even research by Tooley and Dixon (2006), widely known as proponents of low-fee schooling, indicated potential gender bias in Andhra Pradesh. The authors found that 'in Hyderabad, boys, if they are in school, are more likely to go to private unaided school' (Tooley & Dixon, 2006, p. 451) than government schools, with similar results in rural Mahbubnagar, representative of the schooling situation more generally. Later work in Bihar by Tooley and his colleagues shows similar negative patterns for girls' enrolment in private unaided schools (Rangaraju et al., 2012). Woodhead et al.'s (2013) analysis of unique large-scale longitudinal data in Andhra Pradesh showed that while uptake of private schooling increased between the two cohorts of children in the study, access was inequitable. Scarce family resource allocation was affected by urban/rural location, gender norms, wealth, parents' education level and aspirations, birth order, and sibling gender and age.

Tooley and Dixon's (2005) work also intimates that low-fee private school proprietors were themselves wise to the fact that the more disadvantaged among their clients, described typically as orphans, financially unstable, or migrants, would be unable to pay the 'low' fees charged. Thus, 17.7% of places from their sample schools in Hyderabad were provided for free or at concessionary rates (Tooley & Dixon, 2005). However, there is controversy surrounding the researchers' implications that these concessions were philanthropic (Sarangapani & Winch, 2010). Other research shows that such concessions are likely marketing ploys by private school owners to retain their clientele (Härmä, 2009; Srivastava, 2007).

It remains to be seen how effective the RTE Act will be in compelling all private schools to allocate 25% of their places in Class 1 (or pre-primary as applicable) for free to 'children belonging to weaker section[s] and disadvantaged group[s]' (Section 12(1)(c), Government of India, 2009a) until they complete elementary education. Results from one of the earliest analyses of the provision by Noronha and Srivastava (2012) in a Delhi slum were not favourable. They found that it was the relatively more advantaged households among this group that secured free places. Further, households accessing private schools considered 'prestigious' or in middle-class neighbourhoods under the free seats provision incurred significant schooling costs (i.e. transportation, private tuition, capitation fees, etc.), amounting to more than fee-paying households accessing the less desirable local private schools.

RELATIVE QUALITY

Evidence on the relative quality of the state and private sectors in the existing literature is inconclusive. While the relative malfunctioning of the state sector has been generally accepted as the impetus for private sector growth, whether private schools are uniformly of superior quality is fraught with debate. This has to do with the variance in results among studies that attempt to compare relative quality, but also with considerations about what we mean by quality.

Tikly and Barrett (2011) make an important contribution to the education quality discourse, arguing for the integration of context-specific social justice approaches beyond the more common human capital and rights-based discourses that have permeated the education literature. This has certainly been missing from the literature assessing relative quality of the state and private sectors in India. The latter discussion has been largely influenced by school effectiveness-type studies assessing relative achievement levels in core subjects such as mathematics and language, or comparing facilities and teacher or classroom inputs across school types. The focus on schooling processes and social outcomes has largely been missing from such analyses, as have the long-term implications and impacts of private provision in the context of uneven provision to the disadvantaged.

INPUTS

A number of studies have compared a range of school inputs across private and government schools (e.g. De et al., 2002; Goyal, 2009; Härmä, 2009; Muralidharan & Kremer, 2007; Pal, 2010; Tooley & Dixon, 2006). The evidence from existing studies is mixed.

Some showed that on a range of basic infrastructure and resources, private schools generally fared better (Kingdon & Teal, 2007; Pal, 2010; Tooley & Dixon, 2006). However, Muralidharan and Kremer (2007) found no significant difference in private and public school infrastructure, and 'the results with state and with village fixed effects suggest that conditional on being in the same village, private schools have poorer facilities and infrastructure than the public schools' (p. 11).

Private schools generally fared better on teaching-related inputs (e.g. absenteeism, teaching time in class, pupil-teacher ratios) (Goyal, 2009; Härmä, 2010; Kingdon & Teal, 2007; Pal, 2010;

Muralidharan & Kremer, 2007; Tooley & Dixon, 2006). However, government schools generally fared better on teacher-related inputs (e.g. training, experience, salary) (e.g. De et al., 2002; Goyal, 2009; Härmä, 2009; Kingdon & Teal, 2007; Muralidharan & Kremer, 2007; Pal, 2010; Tooley & Dixon, 2006).

Employing relatively poorer trained and less well-paid teachers particularly in lower-fee schools is a cost-cutting measure to keep fees at comparatively lower rates by reducing recurrent costs, and has been found to have adverse effects on teacher retention (De et al., 2002; Härmä, 2009; Ohara, 2012; Srivastava, 2007). Provocatively, Nambissan (2010) asserts that there has been a general acceptance of less skilled and poorly paid teachers as suitable alternatives for expanding education to disadvantaged children: ‘the advocacy of budget schools for the poor and for “para skilling” to cut costs and maximise profits is a travesty of social justice and the right to education for their children’ (p. 735) (see also, Sarangapani, 2009).

ACHIEVEMENT

A number of studies have attempted to assess relative achievement of state and private schools serving disadvantaged groups. Muralidharan and Kremer (2007) found that in rural Indian private schools, controlling for family and other characteristics reduced the private school advantage that Class 4 students had on a standardised math and language test. Pratham’s national rural 2009 ASER survey showed that once characteristics other than the type of school were controlled for (e.g. mother’s education, father’s education, private tuition, etc.), the learning differential between government and private school students fell dramatically (ASER, 2010). Furthermore, in some states (i.e. Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu) the controlled difference showed a negative relationship between private school attendance and local language achievement. Tooley et al. (2010) found a private school advantage in mathematics and English (to be expected since many private schools were purportedly English-medium), but this achievement gap narrowed when background variables were controlled for, and disappeared in the case of Urdu.

However, the issue of sorting into school types, i.e. children from better-off and better informed families tending to enrol in private schools, is an important factor in discerning achievement outcomes. Chudgar and Quin (2012) highlight four studies that have attempted to explicitly account or correct for the selection issue (Desai et al., 2008; French & Kingdon, 2010; Goyal, 2009; Kingdon, 1996). These studies tend to find a significant positive private school effect, but after making the appropriate corrections it is weakened. Nonetheless, Chudgar and Quin point to the limited generalizability of these studies.

Notably, Chudgar and Quin’s (2012) analysis uses a more rigorous technique, and attempts to explicate the differences between private and government schools in rural and urban contexts using the India Human Development Survey 2005, a nationally representative survey of 41,554 households, and, crucially, also between low-fee private and government schools. They found the private school advantage to become largely, statistically insignificant when using a propensity score matching technique, and that children in low-fee schools may perform no better than those in government schools. The significance of existing studies lies in the need for nuanced interpretation when speaking of relative quality in terms of achievement, recognising the heterogeneity of outcomes.

RECOGNITION STATUS AS A QUALITY MARKER

Quality assessment is further complicated since official external signifiers such as recognition status meant to confer certain minimal standards regarding basic infrastructure, teacher qualifications, and curricula, are not always accurate markers. A number of studies (Ohara, 2013; Srivastava, 2008b; Tooley & Dixon, 2005) found that low-fee and other private schools gained recognition through informal practices and bribery, not meeting set norms. This

encourages the development of a 'shadow framework' or system of rules and practices which undermine the formal regulatory framework, weakening the recognition system as an enforcement mechanism to maintain basic quality standards (Srivastava, 2008b).

Ohara (2013) presents an analysis of the potential implications of the RTE Act for low-fee private schools operating in Delhi. Her study revealed the strong contestation mounted by private school lobbies against changes to the regulatory environment. Larger and more profitable recognised schools also opposed the regulations because some of them simultaneously ran unrecognised schools, seeking later to expand their operations by 'chaining' or 'branching'. It remains to be seen whether the RTE Act's compulsion on private schools to obtain recognition will result in a greater adherence to quality norms or aggravate perverse incentives.

QUALITY PERCEPTIONS AND RECUPERATION

Finally, in the absence of objective quality indicators, school choice may be a marker of perceived quality in certain instances, but it may not be in others. This is not to say that households do not judge on certain attributes of what they consider 'good' schooling, but private school choice may also be related to perceived social status, prestige, gender norms, parental aspirations, or concerns with social closure.

Srivastava's (2006; 2008a) study showed that motivations to access low-fee private schools in Lucknow District, Uttar Pradesh were complex and sometimes born out of a desire of some parents to distance themselves from more 'backward' or 'less educationally aware' parents in their communities. In this vein, some household aspirations, if set against discursive gendered, classist, and casteist contexts, may not simply reinforce a desire to access 'better schools', but may also reproduce existing social inequities (Jeffrey et al., 2005; Rao, 2010).

Much of the literature on India indicates a preference for accessing the private sector (including private tuition) to a greater extent for boys because of institutional factors including assumed labour market returns, patrilineal marriage customs, cost constraints, and significant class, caste, and other socio-economic factors (De et al., 2002; Härmä, 2009; Noronha & Srivastava, 2012; Rao, 2010; Siddhu, 2010). While Srivastava's (2006) analysis was an exception, showing as many girls in low-fee private schools in her case study as boys, the reasons behind this choice were often gendered, though there was evidence that the mental models affecting that choice attempted to challenge dominant perceptions.

Assessing the accuracy of low-fee private school choice and schooling decisions as markers of quality is crucial since the classical literature (stemming from Western contexts) espoused school choice as a lever for enhancing competition between public and private schools, thus, increasing the quality of the education sector as a whole (e.g. Chubb & Moe, 1990; Hoxby, 2003).

A suitable application in this regard is Hirschman's (1970) framework of exit, voice, and loyalty in response to the low quality of a service. Exiting to a competitor is meant to provide a signal for the organisation to correct deficiencies, whereas voice is meant to express dissatisfaction with the service, but is predicated on a notion of loyalty to the organisation. The limited work on the low-fee private sector in this regard (see Fennell & Malik, 2012 for Pakistan; Srivastava, 2007 for India) has concluded that the exit of the mobilised poor to the low-fee private sector is unlikely to have the recuperative effect of increasing the quality of local state schools because incentives are not tied to these mechanisms (Srivastava, 2007), and there is a substantive time lag for effects to take place (Fennell & Malik, 2012).



ANALYSIS OF SCHOOLING DATA ON GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Where possible, we extracted secondary data corresponding to primary and upper-primary levels (elementary education) for analysis in this section, and for the age-group of 6-14 in line with aims of the study.

Data on government and private schools are provided by a range of sources. These include data collected from schools by administrative sources and from households through census or sample surveys. Data for all states and union territories on recognised schools are collected by state education departments. These are published annually by the Department of Education, MHRD as Statistics of School Education (SSE).¹

Since 2001-2002, there has been an annual collection of enrolment and performance data at elementary level for the District Information System for Education (DISE) educational management information system (EMIS) dataset, compiled and disseminated annually by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA). While some states have covered unrecognised schools from time to time, it was recently announced that there will be an attempt to extend this across the country.² DISE data are available online within a year of data collection.

An important source of data from household surveys is the education rounds of the National Statistical Survey Organisation (NSSO). The 64th round in 2007-2008 is the latest round of data available. Further data sources include Pratham's annual surveys compiled in ASER reports, as well as smaller and ad-hoc surveys conducted by independent research organisations, academic institutions, and individual academics.

In general, the data on government and private schools show increased private participation over time, and considerable variation across Indian states and also at district level within states. Macro-level estimates of the private sector, however, are difficult owing to the fact that a number of private schools are unrecognised, hence, unaccounted for in much official administrative data. Moreover, administrative units rarely classify or disaggregate data by fee level, even for recognised schools, making official national comparisons and longitudinal analyses of the low-fee private sector impossible.

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TYPE AND ENROLMENT DATA

Table 1 presents the latest data from administrative sources. It shows that in 2010-2011, the proportion of schools under private management providing primary and upper primary-level

¹ The Statistics of School Education are annually published in the Selected Educational Statistics by the MHRD.

² Data from unrecognised schools were collected in Punjab and Haryana in 2005-2006. Since then it is being done in other states.

education was around 20% — a little more than 5% were aided schools, and around 14% were unaided schools. But there were wide variations within the states.

Table 1: Proportion of Government, Private Aided and Private Unaided Schools Providing Elementary Education, 2010-2011

State	Government	Private Aided	Private Unaided
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	79.80	0.74	19.46
Andhra Pradesh	73.75	3.12	19.62
Arunachal Pradesh	92.32	1.64	5.99
Assam	68.63	11.04	3.63
Bihar	97.91	0.03	0.54
Chandigarh	61.96	4.89	32.07
Chhattisgarh	90.22	0.93	8.69
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	91.92	3.70	4.38
Daman and Diu	78.18	2.73	19.09
Delhi	55.21	5.10	39.69
Goa	70.76	24.88	4.23
Gujarat	82.34	1.93	15.72
Haryana	71.66	1.74	23.34
Himachal Pradesh	86.74	0.16	13.10
Jammu and Kashmir	81.86	0.00	18.14
Jharkhand	90.67	2.67	3.38
Karnataka	78.26	4.46	17.23
Kerala	38.30	54.63	6.83
Lakshadweep	100.00	0.00	0.00
Madhya Pradesh	81.69	0.84	16.52
Maharashtra	70.90	19.04	10.00
Manipur	61.94	14.78	20.24
Meghalaya	61.19	27.83	10.68
Mizoram	80.41	2.27	16.80
Nagaland	74.35	0.00	25.65
Odisha	86.99	6.39	4.35
Puducherry	62.06	4.80	33.15
Punjab	65.57	1.56	8.83
Rajasthan	73.71	0.85	24.07
Sikkim	74.52	3.00	22.48
Tamil Nadu	65.47	15.28	18.99
Tripura	96.15	1.09	2.76
Uttar Pradesh	75.18	3.97	20.62
Uttarakhand	76.34	2.43	19.68
West Bengal	87.73	0.66	8.99
Total	78.15	5.20	14.22

Source: DISE data

Certain states, largely in eastern India, had a high proportion of government schools, i.e. Bihar (97.91%), Tripura (96.15%), Jharkhand (90.67%), Chhattisgarh (90.22%), West Bengal (87.73%),

Odisha (86.99%), and Himachal Pradesh (86.74%). States with a relatively higher proportion of private aided schools were: Kerala (54.63%), Meghalaya (27.83%), Goa (24.88%), Maharashtra (19.04%), Tamil Nadu (15.28%), and Manipur (14.78%). Private unaided schools were highest in the largely urban states of Delhi (39.69%), Chandigarh (32.07%), and Puducherry (33.15%), though a range of other states also had a relatively high proportion of unaided schools, i.e. Rajasthan (24.07%), Uttar Pradesh (20.62%), Uttarakhand (19.68%), Andhra Pradesh (19.62%), Tamil Nadu (18.99%), and the north eastern states of Sikkim (22.48%) and Nagaland (25.65%).

NSSO data provide a clearer picture of access since they give the proportion of students enrolled in schools under different management type (see Table 2). As these are household data, students accessing unrecognised schools would also be included under the category of private unaided schools, though they are not disaggregated. These data show that, overall in India, the majority of students enrolled attended government schools in primary (72.6%) and upper-primary (69.9%). The proportion of students attending private aided schools increased between the two levels, from 6.5% at primary level to 12.3% at upper-primary. While the private unaided sector claimed a higher total share of students at both levels, the proportion of students between the two levels decreased (from 20.3% in primary to 17.3% in upper-primary).

At both primary and upper-primary levels, the distribution of urban students was higher in private unaided schools than their rural counterparts, i.e. 43% and 33% of urban students enrolled attended private unaided schools in the primary and upper-primary levels, respectively, compared with 14.3% and 12.1% of rural students at the same levels. This pattern also holds for the proportion of urban children as compared to rural children enrolled in private aided schools at both levels (16.1% compared to 3.9% in primary; 21.8% compared to 9.2% in upper-primary). However, the private unaided sector had the largest percentage of urban students enrolled, compared to any other sector at primary level for that group.

Table 2: Distribution of Students in Primary and Upper-Primary classes by School Management Type in Urban and Rural Areas

	Students Enrolled in Primary Classes (%)			Students Enrolled in Upper-Primary Classes (%)		
	Government	Private aided	Private unaided	Government	Private aided	Private unaided
Rural	81.4	3.9	14.3	78.3	9.2	12.1
Urban	39.6	16.1	43.0	43.2	21.8	33.0
Total	72.6	6.5	20.3	69.9	12.3	17.3

Source: NSSO 2007-2008, Annex A, Table 19

Note: The proportions do not add up to 100 as there is a small proportion who did not know/report school management.

Comparing data from the last two NSSO education rounds (52nd and 64th) shows a large increase in combined private aided and private unaided sector participation between the 1995-1996 (pre-SSA) and 2007-2008 (during SSA) periods (see Table 3). It is interesting to note

Table 3: Proportion of Enrolled Children in Private Aided and Unaided Schools Combined

Year	Rural Areas				Urban areas			
	Primary		Upper primary		Primary		Upper primary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1995-1996	7.7	8.0	5.1	4.7	21.4	21.2	12.4	11.8
2007-2008	20.1	15.8	21.8	19.4	60.9	56.9	55.8	53.6

Source: 52nd and 64th NSSO Education Rounds

that while there was quite a large drop in combined aided and unaided enrolment between primary and upper-primary for urban males and females in the earlier period, the absolute figures increased for all groups at both levels, and the drop between levels decreased for all groups, with the exception of rural females in 2007-2008. Finally, and perhaps counter-intuitively, the gap between male and female participation in the combined sectors increased at the primary and upper-primary levels in 2007-2008 for rural and urban groups, compared to the earlier period.

The broader state-wise distribution of students by school type across primary and upper-primary are provided in Table 4 below using 2007-2008 NSSO data. These data show that state-level distribution of students in government, private aided, and private unaided schools is wide-ranging.

State-wise, the lowest proportions of government and local body school enrolment at the primary level were in Kerala (35%) and Nagaland (35%), and the highest in Lakshadweep (100%), Tripura (94%), Assam (93%), Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha, all at 91% each, and West Bengal and Dadra and Nagar Haveli at 89% each. The picture at the primary level regarding private aided and unaided schools shows that Nagaland (45%) and Kerala (33%) led in the private aided sector, while Punjab (43%), Haryana (42%), Manipur (40%), Rajasthan (35%), Kerala (33%), Andhra Pradesh (31%), and Uttaranchal (31%) led in the private unaided sector.

The picture changes somewhat at the upper-primary level, with Kerala (41%) showing a marginal rise and Nagaland (28%) a further decrease in the percentage of students enrolled in government and local body schools. The comparison across private aided and unaided sectors shows that Nagaland (52%) continued to be the leading state, followed by Kerala (41%), and in Maharashtra (37%) and Goa (32%), the private aided sector emerged as significant in upper-primary. In the private unaided sector, Manipur led (40%), while Punjab saw a substantial drop to 31%, and Haryana (39%), a small drop from the primary level.

Table 4: Distribution of Students Enrolled in Primary and Middle Stage by School Management Type (%)

State/Union Territory	Primary			Middle		
	Govt.+Local Body	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Govt.+Local Body	Private Aided	Private Unaided
Andhra Pradesh	64	4	31	70	4	26
Arunachal Pradesh	91	2	7	94	3	3
Assam	93	3	4	93	4	4
Bihar	91	1	8	92	1	7
Chhattisgarh	91	2	7	90	3	7
Delhi	61	9	27	68	8	20
Goa	60	20	20	64	32	3
Gujarat	78	9	13	70	17	13
Haryana	53	5	42	53	8	39
Himachal Pradesh	75	2	23	81	2	17
Jammu and Kashmir	66	7	26	70	7	23
Jharkhand	88	2	9	84	4	12
Karnataka	72	9	19	73	11	15
Kerala	35	33	33	41	40	18
Madhya Pradesh	81	4	14	79	5	16
Maharashtra	70	16	13	52	37	11
Manipur	50	9	40	47	12	40

State/Union Territory	Primary			Middle		
	Govt.+Local Body	Private Aided	Private Unaided	Govt.+Local Body	Private Aided	Private Unaided
Meghalaya	70	21	7	68	24	8
Mizoram	71	7	22	76	5	18
Nagaland	35	45	19	28	52	20
Odisha	91	0	8	90	4	6
Punjab	45	10	43	57	10	31
Rajasthan	60	4	35	61	4	34
Sikkim	87	0	13	91	1	8
Tamil Nadu	65	14	21	70	18	13
Tripura	94	2	3	97	1	2
Uttaranchal	67	3	31	71	4	25
Uttar Pradesh	64	7	28	57	13	29
West Bengal	89	2	9	91	5	4
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	82	2	16	90	4	6
Chandigarh	59	23	17	79	9	12
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	89	3	8	90	1	10
Daman and Diu	69	2	29	87	2	11
Lakshadweep	100	0	0	100	0	0
Puducherry	52	20	28	60	26	14
All India	73	7	20	70	12	17

Source: NSSO 2007-2008, p. 71

Though not directly comparable data sources, variations in enrolment by school type across Indian states are also reflected in ASER data. The 2012 ASER data on enrolment across school type are provided in Table 5 below. Given the nature of the dataset, we must bear in mind that ASER data only cover rural areas.

State	Government	Private*	Other [†]	Out of School	Total
Andhra Pradesh	60.3	36.5	0.6	2.6	100
Arunachal Pradesh	75.3	21.7	0.3	2.7	100
Assam	75.4	16.0	4.2	4.4	100
Bihar	88.3	6.4	1.5	3.7	100
Chhattisgarh	83.8	13.5	0.1	2.6	100
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	84.4	12.3	0.3	3.1	100
Daman and Diu	84.4	14.9	0.4	0.4	100
Goa	48.7	49.2	2.0	0.1	100
Gujarat	85	11.8	0.2	3.1	100
Haryana	48.8	49.2	0.5	1.5	100
Himachal Pradesh	70.0	28.9	0.0	1.1	100
Jammu and Kashmir	51.4	43.7	2.6	2.3	100

State	Government	Private*	Other ⁺	Out of School	Total
Jharkhand	78.5	15.5	1.7	4.4	100
Karnataka	75.9	21.9	0.3	1.9	100
Kerala	40.0	59.6	0.2	0.2	100
Madhya Pradesh	77.8	18.2	1.0	3.1	100
Maharashtra	62.9	35.4	0.3	1.5	100
Manipur	30.8	67.3	0.4	1.5	100
Meghalaya	45.1	47.9	1.8	5.3	100
Mizoram	72.4	24.8	1.2	1.7	100
Nagaland	59.8	38.5	0.1	1.7	100
Odisha	89.6	6.2	0.2	4.1	100
Puducherry	60.5	38.8	0.4	0.4	100
Punjab	53.4	45.1	0.2	1.3	100
Rajasthan	53.4	41.1	0.5	5.1	100
Sikkim	67.8	28.7	0.8	2.7	100
Tamil Nadu	70.3	29	0.2	0.6	100
Tripura	96.3	3	0.1	0.6	100
Uttar Pradesh	42.7	48.5	2.5	6.4	100
Uttaranchal	60.8	36.6	0.8	1.8	100
West Bengal	87.9	6.9	1.9	3.3	100
All India	67.0	28.3	1.2	3.5	100

Source: ASER, www.asercentre.org

Note: *ASER data do not distinguish between private aided and unaided schools.

+ ASER data from school surveys include EGS and *madrasas* in the 'other' category. This aggregation is not consistent across all surveys. In the 2011 surveys, *madrasa* was provided as a disaggregated category but this was not so in 2012.

The 2012 ASER survey data show that the states with the highest percentage of children enrolled in the private sector are Manipur (67.3%), Kerala (59.6%), Haryana and Goa (both at 49.2%), Uttar Pradesh (48.5%), Meghalaya (47.9%), and Punjab (45.1%). The lowest rates are in Tripura (3%), Bihar (6.3%), West Bengal (6.9%), and Odisha (6.2%). ASER data generally show higher proportions of children in the 6-14 age group enrolled in the private sector than NSSO data, but part of this variation may be because the category is operationalized to include aided as well as unaided schools. The findings of the ASER data are in line with the secondary literature that has indicated that states such as Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh have a fairly large private sector.

A further category provided by the ASER data is the estimation of out-of-school children. Uttar Pradesh (6.4%), Rajasthan (5.1%), Meghalaya (5.3%), Jharkhand (4.4%), and Odisha (4.1%) had the greatest proportion of out-of-school children, while Tamil Nadu (0.6%), Tripura (0.6%), Daman and Diu (0.4%), Puducherry (0.4%), Kerala (0.2%), and Goa (0.1%) were at the bottom. A further observation is that while there is variation across states in the numbers of out-of-school children, they fall within a range of 6.3%, which is lower than the variation within enrolment in the government or private school categories.

ENROLMENT BY SCHOOL TYPE FOR DIFFERENT SOCIAL GROUPS

ASER sex-wise enrolment data for the larger states among those at the top end of private sector provision (i.e. Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh) are presented in Table 6 below. The data indicate that there is a 5% to 15% gap between enrolment rates for boys

and girls, as follows: Punjab (47/41), Haryana (55/41), and Uttar Pradesh (51/42). The gap is negligible only in the case of Kerala (59/58.6), which has the highest level of enrolment in private schools. These data raise concerns about gender equity in relation to enrolment and the private sector.

As the literature review above showed, some studies have found that private school access is affected by existing social norms. This may help to contextualise the findings for Kerala relative to Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh, which have a poor record of gender equality and sex ratios at birth. There is also evidence of slight gender disparity in the out-of-school data, with girls' levels being almost 2% greater than that of boys in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.

Table 6: Sex-wise Distribution of Children between 6 to 14 by School Type in Selected States (2012)

State	Boys					Girls				
	Govt	Pvt	Other	Out of School	Total	Govt	Pvt	Other	Out of School	Total
Kerala	40.4	59	0.2	0.3	100	40.9	58.6	0.3	0.3	100
Haryana	42.9	55	0.4	1.7	100	54.7	41.6	0.6	3.1	100
Punjab	50.4	47	0.2	2.3	100	55.7	41.5	0.2	2.6	100
Uttar Pradesh	38.4	51.6	2.1	7.9	100	44.5	42.9	2.6	10	100

Source: ASER, www.asercentre.org

Concerns about equity are also raised when examining 2007-2008 NSSO data (see Table 7 below). These show that compared to the levels of total enrolment, there is an over-representation of children belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe groups in government schools (11.2% compared to 9% for scheduled tribes; 23.2% compared to 20.3% for scheduled castes in the total population), and under-representations in the private aided (4.5% and 14.2%, respectively) and private unaided sectors (3% and 12.3%, respectively).

Muslim children and those belonging to other backward class groups were fairly well represented across all sectors; though in the private aided sector, Muslim children were slightly over-represented, and in the latter, slightly under-represented. As expected, children belonging to the 'other' category are under-represented in the government sector, and substantially over-represented in the private aided and unaided sectors.

Table 7: Distribution of Children Enrolled in Classes 1 to 8 by Social Categories (%)

	Government			Private Aided			Private Unaided			All		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
Scheduled Tribe	11.2	12.3	4	4.5	6	3	3	3.6	2.4	9	10.7	3.1
Scheduled Caste	23.2	23.2	22.9	14.2	16	12.3	12.3	13.7	10.7	20.3	21.5	16.1
Other Backward Class	38.2	39.2	31	34.2	37.5	30.6	38.6	44.7	31.1	37.9	39.9	31
Muslim	13.1	11.9	20.5	16.6	15.2	18.1	13.3	11.6	15.3	13.4	12.1	18
Other	14.4	13.3	21.6	30.5	25.3	36.1	32.8	26.4	40.5	19.4	15.8	31.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: NSSO, 2007-2008

TEACHING-RELATED INPUTS

Pupil-teacher ratios have been considered in the wider literature to potentially contribute to differential performance across school types. There is some new evidence on teaching-related inputs provided by the pupil-teacher ratio in the DISE data, which shows considerable variation across states (see Table 8 below).

States	All Schools	Government	Private Aided	Private Unaided
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	10	10	19	12
Andhra Pradesh	20	18	28	23
Arunachal Pradesh	18	18	20	17
Assam	21	25	14	16
Bihar	58	58	50	46
Chandigarh	24	28	14	19
Chhattisgarh	24	24	32	23
Dadra and Nagar Haveli	40	43	36	31
Daman and Diu	30	30	36	28
Delhi	36	40	36	30
Goa	24	17	29	25
Gujarat	31	30	42	36
Haryana	26	27	26	26
Himachal Pradesh	16	15	26	18
Jammu and Kashmir	13	12	N/A	15
Jharkhand	41	41	44	40
Karnataka	26	24	41	28
Kerala	21	20	22	23
Lakshadweep	14	14	N/A	N/A
Madhya Pradesh	35	40	38	28
Maharashtra	30	26	36	34
Manipur	19	13	27	25
Meghalaya	16	15	18	17
Mizoram	14	13	16	19
Nagaland	20	16	N/A	27
Odisha	26	29	13	18
Puducherry	16	13	26	17
Punjab	19	20	28	21
Rajasthan	26	26	26	26
Sikkim	12	13	12	10
Tamil Nadu	29	28	41	26
Tripura	19	19	34	22
Uttar Pradesh	44	40	51	52
Uttarakhand	23	21	28	26
West Bengal	30	32	24	17
Total	30	31	31	29

Source: DISE 2011-2012

Pupil-teacher ratios widely vary across states and school types. Bihar had the highest overall ratio of 58 students to a teacher in 2010-2011, followed by Uttar Pradesh at 44 students to a teacher, and Jharkhand at 41 students to a teacher. Among the large states with the lowest ratios were Himachal Pradesh (16) and Punjab (19). A number of smaller states such as Meghalaya (16) and Mizoram (14) also had among the lowest ratios. Among the largest variations in teacher-student ratios across school type were identified in the following states: West Bengal, with 32 in government, 24 in private aided, and 17 in private unaided schools; Tamil Nadu, with 28 in government, 14 in private aided, and 26 in private unaided schools; Odisha, with 29 in government, 13 in private aided, and 18 in private unaided schools; and Bihar, with 58 in government, 50 in private aided, and 46 in private unaided schools.

The 2012 ASER dataset provides data on learning outcomes by school type. Table 9 presents ASER data on reading levels of students in government and private schools in four states, i.e. Haryana, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal. The ASER data for Punjab, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu show that compared to private schools, the results for reading at the top level (i.e. 'story') show better performance in government schools. Though we cannot make direct linkages, the results for the latter two states, nonetheless, sit oddly against the DISE data finding that in West Bengal, pupil-teacher ratios are higher in government schools than private aided and unaided schools, and in Tamil Nadu, the government pupil-teacher ratio is higher than in private unaided schools.

It would be an interesting future exercise to see if the DISE 2010-2011 data on pupil-teacher ratios can be overlaid onto the learning outcomes ASER data. In any case, the differences between different datasets, one that provides data on pupil-teacher ratios and the other on learning levels, in addition to differences in geographical coverage, indicate the need for consistency across datasets if we are to learn about key aspects of outcomes across school types.

State and School Type		Nothing	Letter	Word	Para	Story	Total
Haryana	Government	10.5	15.1	11.2	12.2	50.9	100
	Private	4.6	13.3	10.3	12.2	59.6	100
Punjab	Government	5.6	13	8.8	11	61.6	100
	Private	7.5	20.1	11.6	10.1	50.7	100
Tamil Nadu	Government	9.4	9.2	17.6	20.5	43.3	100
	Private	13.2	12.7	20.9	20	33.2	100
West Bengal	Government	8.5	15.4	12.6	14	49.5	100
	Private	9	16	19.1	16	39.9	100

Source: ASER data, www.asercentre.org

GAPS AND LIMITATIONS IN EXISTING DATA

A number of gaps and limitations in the existing data complicated the preceding analysis, and indicate issues that need to be addressed across and within widely-used datasets. Firstly, there is a paucity of comprehensive data on the proportion of unrecognised and recognised private schools currently in operation. The figures for unrecognised schools, in particular, are shrouded. It was recently announced that India's next EMIS data collection phase will attempt to include data from unrecognised schools. However, given the RTE Act's prohibition of unrecognised schools, it is unclear how forthcoming these schools will be. It is likely that official attempts to collect data from unrecognised schools will be difficult since many operate in contravention of the official regulatory framework. Thus, some unrecognised schools may not admit to their status to being a school, claiming instead, to being pre-primary or private

tuition centres, for example, as the formal regulations governing them are more relaxed (Srivastava, 2007; 2008a).

Secondly, it is likely that there are distortions in data even for recognised private schools (e.g. under-reporting fee levels and over-reporting teachers' salaries and qualifications) since there is pressure to comply on paper with official fee caps and other requirements. These may be further aggravated especially in the case of private schools given the RTE Act's compulsions to meet Schedule 1 norms for recognised schools as well.

Thirdly, as previously mentioned, there is neither an official definition of 'low-fee private' schooling, nor do existing official datasets classify or disaggregate data by fee level, even for recognised schools. This makes official national comparisons and longitudinal analyses of the low-fee private sector impossible.

Fourthly, it is difficult to make comparisons across certain existing datasets due to different operationalizations. For example, ASER 'private' sector data do not distinguish between aided and unaided schools. This makes it difficult to make comparisons across private school categories in ASER data and the categories of aided and unaided used in NSSO and DISE data. DISE data collection has itself not been consistent across annual rounds, making cross-year comparisons difficult. Lastly, since NSSO data are household data, the accuracy of household-reported data on school management type, particularly between private aided and unaided schools, is also subject to error. As is the case with all household data, such datasets can only be validated by independently checking the registration and management status of reported schools.



ANALYSIS OF ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH FIVE-YEAR PLANS AND PPPs

MACRO-PLANNING CONTEXT FOR PPPs AND EDUCATION

PPPs were initially promoted by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance as the preferred strategy to build and expand India's infrastructure (i.e. highways, railways, ports, airports, telecommunications, and power) with the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank taking the lead in technical assistance (DEA, 2007). In 2003, the PPP Sub-Group on Social Sector of the Working Group on Public–Private Partnership (established under the Prime Minister's Office in 2002) was tasked with exploring the feasibility of PPPs in social-sector development, including in elementary education.

For the Eleventh Plan, nine working groups and four steering committees were established to make policy recommendations for the education sector, one of which was the Steering Committee on Elementary Education and Literacy. Within this working group, only the Sub-group on Adult Education was mandated to suggest 'new interventions required in respect of public private partnerships' (Planning Commission [Education Division], 2009, p. 52).

The importance explicitly accorded to PPPs in education during the planning process for the Twelfth Plan was much greater. This time, two of the nine working groups were newly formed, i.e. the Working Group on Private Sector Participation Including PPP in Higher Education, and the Working Group on Private Sector Participation Including PPP in School Education (PSP and PPP) (see Box 1 for terms of reference). Additionally, both the Sub-group on Elementary Education

Box 1: Terms of Reference for the Working Group on Private Sector Participation Including PPP in School Education

1. Examine the various dimensions of public private partnership in school, vocational, and teacher education sector
2. Identify and frame viable PPP models in education sector and formulate policies for PPP in the sector
3. Develop clear and transparent guidelines for identification and selection of interested private partners to support/run the residential schools
4. Examine the present rules and regulations that inhibit private investment and suggest suitable modifications/amendments in existing statutes
5. Devise suitable policies to invigorate the educational and banking sectors in the overall context of PPP in social sector
6. Examine the viability gap funding and viability support funding in PPP models
7. Examine how PPP can ensure equity concerns and promote inclusion
8. Review existing PPP success stories in educational enterprises and examine ways of adopting it

Source: Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, 2011b, p. 11

and the Sub-group on Adolescence Education of the Working Group on 'Elementary Education and Literacy for the Twelfth Five Year Plan' were tasked with suggesting 'broad parameters of a policy for promoting public private cooperation and involvement of Civil Society/[non-governmental organisations] NGOs' (Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, 2011a, p. 10) for elementary education of equitable quality and for adolescents, respectively.

UNPACKING THE ELEVENTH AND TWELFTH PLANS REGARDING EDUCATION SECTOR

Srivastava's (2010) earlier analysis of the Tenth and Eleventh Five Year Plans showed an increased focus on involving private sector actors in education over the Eleventh Plan period, through an undefined mechanism of 'PPP mode'. The analysis showed that proposed strategies strongly linked PPPs in education with privatisation, and further, that they posited a diminished role for the state in education financing, management, and regulation, despite assertions to the contrary.

Nonetheless, in comparison to the Twelfth Plan, the tone of the Eleventh Plan's rhetoric surrounding PPPs and private actors in social sectors and education was more tentative and shrouded around discussion of increased public sector involvement. The Eleventh Plan Approach Paper stated:

Achieving the 11th Plan targets for health and education requires a greatly expanded role for the state in these areas. This is because access to essential public services such as...education [...] is not an automatic outcome of rising incomes. It calls for deliberate public intervention to ensure delivery of these services (Planning Commission 2006, p. 101; emphasis added).

The Twelfth Plan approach, however, was much more explicit about the use of the private sector in social sectors, and in education at the elementary level as well as in expanding secondary provision, stressed as one of the main goals given increases in elementary enrolment over the Eleventh Plan period. Notably in elementary education, the Approach Paper positions the 25% free seats provision of the RTE Act — which remains a controversial clause (see discussion below) — as the impetus to suggest ostensibly removing entry barriers for further expanding the private sector.

In the Twelfth Plan, possibilities will have to be explored for involving private sector more meaningfully to achieve the objective of expansion and quality improvement. Recognising the importance of private schools, the RTE Act mandates that all schools, whether they receive financial aid from the government or not, must reserve 25.0 per cent seats for children from disadvantaged households. However, barriers to private entry are high which need to be re-examined (Planning Commission, 2011, p. 97; emphasis added).

Expansion of private provision is stated in the Twelfth Plan Approach Paper as an imperative in universalizing secondary education, noting the fact that the majority of secondary schools are already privately managed. The tone surrounding government action in this regard seems subsidiary to the 'vigorous' efforts of exploring further private sector arrangements:

While stepping up public investment in the sector by the Central and State Governments would be necessary, it is imperative that the private sector capabilities are fruitfully tapped particularly as a majority of our secondary schools, including aided schools, are under private management. Models for PPP in this sector also need to be vigorously explored (Planning Commission, 2011, p. 98).

The noted equity problem regarding aided schools (Juneja, 2010; Kingdon, 1996) is not addressed in Plan documents. While private aided schools provide secondary education to many children, accessing these schools is not easy. Juneja (2010) argues that data from cities like Mumbai where aided schools are the main form of secondary education show that many

students, in fact, previously accessed private primary schools. Thus, children who could and did pay for primary education took subsidised places at secondary level, and those who could not were excluded.

A number of other problems have been noted about the aided system, such as decrepit infrastructure, corruption, and lack of accountability. Suggestions posited to deal with these issues have included incentives to enhance teacher and management performance rather than teachers' salaries, changing the nature of financing by linking it to student enrolment, and raising adequate funds.

The propensity to expand the private sector in framing the Twelfth Plan approach was taken forward in the overall thrust of the draft Twelfth Plan, which encourages 'private sector participation directly as well as through various forms of PPPs, wherever desirable and feasible' (Planning Commission, 2012a, pp. 87-88) as a major financing strategy to achieve the macro-level goal of 'faster, more inclusive, and sustainable growth' during the Plan period. Citing a report by the Asian Development Bank, expansion of PPP projects are lauded in terms of 'a race' (at least in infrastructure development) that India is winning, ahead of Japan and China (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 98). The Twelfth Plan's thrust on private sector involvement is equally discernible in three social sectors (i.e. education, health, and skill development), stating that private sector

...initiatives will be expanded and reinforced during the Twelfth Plan, especially in social sectors such as...education [...]It is envisaged that by the end of the Twelfth Plan...PPPs would have successfully forayed into the social sectors to promote universal access, while ensuring quality in the delivery of services (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 98).

However, increased private sector participation and PPP strategies in social sectors and education are not without controversy in the public debate in India. As such, the Eleventh Plan Approach Paper suggested a public relations exercise to garner public support to 'make PPPs acceptable' and 'create credible PPP projects that evoke a positive public response' (Planning Commission 2006b, p. 41). The Twelfth Plan explicitly acknowledges the debate: 'Resort to PPPs in the social sector often raises concerns about the commercialisation of services that are normally expected to be provided free or highly subsidised' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 18), and notes that 'these are important concerns' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 18). It nonetheless proposes 'extending the concept of PPP to social...sector projects' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 18). Crucially, it retains the possibility of user charges in social sectors (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 96).

The Twelfth Plan proposes well-drafted concession agreements, strict monitoring, and penalties for non-compliance as mechanisms to address concerns. Though the mechanisms for increased stakeholder participation are unclear, it puts faith in the involvement of local people to monitor and design PPP social sector projects, introducing the term, 'People—Public—Private—Partnerships' (PPPPs) for such initiative as 'a valuable innovation which should be applauded' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 18).

Public service delivery is generally characterised in the Plan as 'deficient', 'tardy', and 'inefficient' noting that 'defective delivery breeds corruption' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 293), in contrast to a purportedly more efficient, effective, innovative, and better quality of private sector service. Unlike the vague recurring mention of 'PPP mode' in the Eleventh Plan, much of the discussion in the Twelfth Plan is latently oriented towards a contracting model.

The Twelfth Plan provides more specification than its predecessor, outlining an institutional framework for PPPs that should 'remain firmly grounded in principles which ensure that PPPs are formulated and executed in public interest with a view to achieving additional capacity and delivery of quality public services at reasonable costs' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 88).

While much of the institutional framework rests on developing large infrastructure projects, it proposes establishing standardised documents and processes for bidding, concession agreements, and guidelines and manuals, highlighting that a model concession agreement for school education is currently being prepared by the Secretariat for PPP and Infrastructure at the Planning Commission. Notably, it calls for establishing a 'nodal Secretariat for PPP' in each state responsible for identifying, conceptualising, and coordinating PPP projects, which is seen as a capacity building exercise.

The Twelfth Plan bemoans the quality of learning outcomes in school education, which is highlighted as the main challenge in education. Expanding both the numbers of and access to private providers is presented as the most viable strategy through which to increase the quality of schooling. There is no substantive discussion on strengthening inspectorates, and apart from undefined and cursory mentions of delivering teacher training through PPPs, there is no clear strategy for improving teacher training. Both of these have been highlighted time and again as key initiatives for broad-based education change (see Kumar 2008; Nambissan, 2010; Tilak, 2007).

Box 2 presents the 'monitorable' targets for education over the Eleventh and Twelfth Plan periods, which are intended as a core set of indicators that can inform the work of Central, state, and local governments, civil society organisations, and international agencies. Box 3 presents strategic areas under SSA during the Twelfth Plan.

Box 2: Eleventh and Twelfth Plan 'Monitorable' Targets for Education

Eleventh Plan Targets	Twelfth Plan Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Reduce dropout rates of children at elementary level from 52.2% in 2003–04 to 20% by 2011–12 ◆ Develop minimum standards of educational attainment in elementary schools to ensure quality education ◆ Increase literacy rate for persons of age 7 years or more to 85% by 2011–12. ◆ Reduce the gender gap in literacy to 10 percentage points by 2011–12. ◆ Increase the percentage of each cohort going to higher education from the present 10% to 15% by 2011–12. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Increase mean years of schooling to seven years by the end of the Twelfth Five Year Plan ◆ Enhance access to higher education by creating two million additional seats for each age cohort aligned to the skill needs of the economy ◆ Eliminate gender and social gaps in school enrolment (i.e. between girls and boys, and scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, Muslims and the rest of the population) by the end of the Twelfth Five Year Plan

Source: Planning Commission, 2007, p. 23; 2012a, p. 35

Box 3: Strategic Areas in SSA for the Twelfth Plan

SSA will continue to be the flagship programme for developing elementary education during the Twelfth Plan for realising the rights to elementary education for each and every child.

There would be four strategic areas under SSA during the Twelfth Plan. These are:

- xix. strong focus on learning outcomes;
- xx. addressing residual access and equity gaps;
- xxi. focus on teacher and education leadership;
- xxii. linkages with other sectors and programmes.

Source: Reproduced from Planning Commission, 2012b, p. 55

The allocation for general budgetary support to education by the centre has increased in the Twelfth Plan. Claiming 12.71% of the share of total projected allocations (up from 11.17% in the Eleventh Plan) (Rs. 453,728 crore in real figures), it is ranked third highest in public

financing of all major sectors (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 82). However, it is unlikely that this will be enough to cover all education expenditure in the sector as a whole. As Mehrotra (2012) estimates, an additional Rs. 1,710 billion is required to meet universal elementary education targets as per RTE Act norms alone (p. 68). This amounts to over one-third of the Twelfth Plan allocation for the entire education sector. The Plan acknowledges that there will be a shortfall of public resources in all sectors, including the social sectors, and stresses that 'It is, therefore, imperative that resources have to be attracted from the private sector to ensure that targets' are met (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 96).

Similar to the proposal in the Eleventh Plan, the major PPP initiative proposed in school education is establishing '2500 schools under PPP mode' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 96) to 'meet the government's objective of establishing *world-class schools for providing quality education* to underprivileged children who cannot afford to pay the tuition fee that good private schools charge' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 96; emphasis added). However, unlike in the Eleventh Plan, the Twelfth Plan is more explicit about the PPP model school strategy.

It outlines a contracting model between the private provider and the government, which would include tuition support for children from disadvantaged groups. Notably, there is no capital support and land would have to be procured by the private actor. Unlike in other sectors, there would be no financial bidding for the contract. Providers are meant to be selected according to 'predetermined criteria relating to capacity and track record of the respective applicants' (Planning Commission, 2012a, p. 96).

The Plan documents frequently make mention of the education sector as an area that many states have experimented in, although specific PPP state education projects are not mentioned. This may be because as noted by the Working Group on PSP and PPP in School Education report, there are no major examples of PPP projects in school education, though the private aided sector may be considered an antecedent (Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, 2011b).

In this vein, the Working Group on PSP and PPP in School Education, while generally favourable to PPPs in education, was less enthusiastic. It noted the near negligible amount of service contracts in areas such as computer instruction and the Mid-day Meal Scheme. Nonetheless, it recognised the need for increased public and private resources to meet RTE commitments, but stressed that a PPP education sector strategy should fit into the overall education sector priorities, and its effectiveness should be 'guided by the extent it helps to compliment and strengthen public sector education service delivery' (Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, 2011b, p. 23). Furthermore, it adopted a more critical stance, outlining constraints and risks to instituting PPPs in education, analyses which were missing from the decidedly more optimistic Twelfth Plan documents.



PPPs AND EDUCATION SECTOR

In this section we attempt to outline conceptualisations of PPPs and their application to education in the literature, before examining the scenario in India. This is followed by an analysis of PPPs in the education sector during the SSA decade, and potential changes during the RTE context.

The current discourse around PPPs in India may have been latently influenced by the macro-planning context. For example, the Twelfth Plan welcomes PPPs as a 'viable alternative to improve access to quality school education while ensuring equity and social justice' (NCERT, 2009, p. 4). The broader PPP discourse in education incorporates diverse entities from not-for-profit NGOs, to national and multinational corporations, and private charitable foundations sometimes established by corporations, and further, international NGOs, donor agencies of foreign governments, and UN bodies. The MHRD note on PPP even goes as far as including 'volunteerism' referring to private individual effort: '[m]any individuals are keen to contribute their mite to spread of education and improvement of quality of education. The country has a large number of retired persons who are physically fit and are willing to be associated with teaching in Government school. This group includes a number of retired teachers as well' (Note on PPP, MHRD, 2008, p. 19).

As a mode of offering school services, PPPs are relatively new and have not been rigorously evaluated (Fennell, 2007; LaRocque 2008). Nonetheless, international agencies are generally positive about them (e.g. see Genevois, 2008; Patrinos & Sosale, 2007; Patrinos et al., 2009). The World Bank has been prominent in PPP advocacy in India and internationally, arranging a number of conferences and consultations on the topic and facilitating PPP processes.³ Nonetheless, a World Bank study concluding that PPPs offer 'equitable access' and improved learning outcomes to the marginalised, notes that the evidence base is far from adequate (Patrinos et al., 2009).

Definitions of PPPs are often broad, though there could be less flexible interpretations. Genevois's (2008) definition suggests that, strictly speaking, PPPs are business agreements between two parties, one government, and the other, a business group or corporation, to achieve a certain goal:

The term public-private partnership has many different definitions, especially across different sectors. In a strict definition, a public-private partnership is a model of development cooperation in which actors from the private sector (private corporations, corporate foundations, groups or associations of business) and the public sector

³ One example is the Public-Private Partnerships Days, a global meeting for public sector practitioners which has been held since 2006. The last conference was in February 2012 in Geneva, and jointly hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the World Bank Institute, and the Asian Development Bank. See <http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/about/topics/public-private-partnerships>.

(Ministry of Education, local authorities and schools) pool together complementary expertise and resources to achieve development goals (p. 7).

The actual scenario is far more complicated as our earlier description suggests. According to Genevois (2008), PPPs often imply multi-sector partnerships since they involve the private sector and non-for profit organisations, such as NGOs, research institutions, social entrepreneurs, and charitable foundations, referring to PPPs as a form of public-private-civil society partnerships (PPCPs) with twofold benefits: '[f]irst, they bring local knowledge about priority beneficiary needs, limits to affordability, gender and cultural sensitivities. Second, they provide ongoing communication channels to the local population and opinion formers' (p. 8). However, different agents with different motivations and allegiances share the same space, and goals are often multiple and contested, as actors unite under some (often fuzzy) notion of 'partnership' (Srivastava, 2010).

Patrinos et al. (2009) point out that the most common PPP agreement in education is formalized through a contract. One definition of education contracting is:

the process whereby a government procures education or education-related services, of a defined volume and quality, at an agreed price, from a specific provider for a specified period where the provisions between the financier and the service provider are recorded in a contract (Patrinos & Sosale, 2007, p. 2).

However, since the language of PPP contracts comes from the infrastructure sector (Mehta et al., 2010), not all its forms (see Table 10 below) appear appropriate or immediately transferable to education, especially in relation to disadvantaged groups. For example, the usual build-own-operate (BOO) and build-operate-transfer (BOT) terminology is highly infrastructure focused, whereas education processes and outcomes are much more complex and nuanced. In addition, the usual way of recovering the investment costs through user fees is not suitable for basic education of disadvantaged groups, especially under the RTE context. The draft national plan on PPPs suggests an annuity based BOT model described thus:

In sectors/projects not amenable for sizeable cost recovery through user charges, owing to socio-political-affordability considerations, such as in rural, urban, health and education sectors, the government harnesses private sector efficiencies through contracts based on

Traditional design and build	The government contracts with a private partner to design and build a facility to specific requirements
Operations and maintenance	The government contracts with a private partner to operate a publicly owned facility
Turnkey operation	The government provides financing, the private partner designs, constructs, and operates facility for a specified time period, while the public partner retains ownership of facility
Lease-purchase	The private partner leases a facility to the government for a specified time period, after which ownership is vested with government
Lease or own-develop-operate	The private partner leases or buys a facility from the government and develops and operates the facility under contract to the government for a specified time period
Build-operate-transfer	The private partner obtains an exclusive contract to finance, build, operate, maintain, manage, and collect user fees for a facility for a fixed period to amortize its investments and at the end of the franchise, the title reverts to the government
Build-own-operate	The government either transfers ownership and responsibility for an existing facility or contracts with a private partner to build, own, and operate new facility in perpetuity

Source: Reproduced from Patrinos et al., 2009, p. 12

availability/performance payments. Implementing annuity model will require necessary framework conditions, such as payment guarantee mechanism by means of making available multi-year budgetary support, a dedicated fund, letter of credit etc. Government may consider setting-up a separate window of assistance for encouraging annuity-based PPP projects. A variant of this approach could be to make a larger upfront payment (say 40% of project cost) during the construction period (Government of India, 2011b, p. 6).

Within this broad context, a number of contracting arrangements in education are outlined by Patrinos and Sosale (2007) (see Table 11 below). In practice, however, PPPs in education encompass a wide range of initiatives, with several different forms having been implemented internationally. Examples include voucher systems, private sector management of schools, school funding programmes, adoption of schools, capacity building initiatives, and infrastructure partnerships to build/maintain schools (LaRocque, 2008).

Table 11 Typology of Educational Contracts		
What Government Contracts For	Definition	Contract Types
Management, professional services (input)	Government buys school management services or auxiliary and professional services	Management contracts Professional services contracts (curriculum design)
Operational services (process)	Government buys school operation services	Operational contracts
Education services (output)	Government buys student places in private schools (contracts with school to enrol specific students)	Contracts for education of specific students
Facility availability (input)	Government buys facility availability	Provision of infrastructure services contracts
Facility availability and education services (input and output bundle)	Government buys facility availability combined with services (operational or outputs)	Provision of infrastructure contracts with education services contracts

Source: Patrinos and Sosale, 2007

LaRocque (2008) outlines different public and private financing and provision arrangements, including traditional private and public schools (see Table 12). He highlights that there has been a shift from traditional forms of partnership that include private philanthropic initiatives such as school sponsorship, donations, and adoption of schools, to the private management of public schools, private school funding, voucher systems, and school infrastructure initiatives. In other words, LaRocque found that private finance initiatives in the public system are being replaced by public finance of the private system.

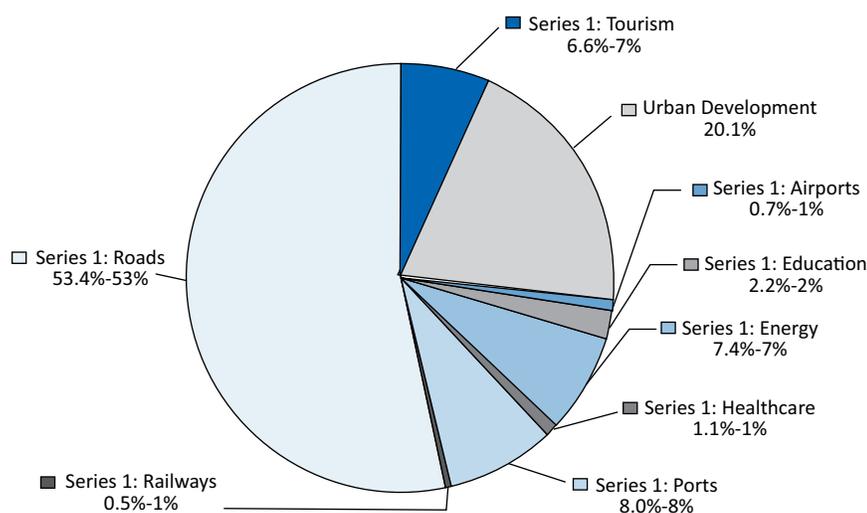
Table 12: Public and Private Financing and Provision Arrangements in Education		
Financing	Provision	
	Private	Public
Private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Traditional fee-paying private schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Private philanthropic ventures ◆ Tuition fees and other user fees in public schools ◆ Adopt-a-school programme
Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Contract schools ◆ Charter schools ◆ Voucher programmes ◆ Private schools subsidy programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Traditional public schools

Source: LaRocque, 2008

In India the scenario is fairly mixed, though public financing of private initiatives is not that common, particularly in the social sectors, and formal PPPs are a relatively new development. Until 2006, the 86 PPP projects were mainly for infrastructure development (i.e. roads and bridges) (Ernst & Young, 2012) but a new phase has since begun. Between 2009 and 2011 there was a rapid increase from 450 projects (total project cost of Rs. 224,175.75 crore) to 758 (total value of 383,332.06 crore) (Government of India, DEA, Note on PPP, 2011). Out of these, only 2.2% were for education (see Figure 1 below). In 2009, only one PPP project in education was implemented (value of 93.32 crore), but in 2011, this number had increased to 17 (total value of 1,849.7 crore) (Government of India, DEA, 2009b; 2011).

As the Plan analysis above showed, there is an attempt to introduce further PPP arrangements in social sectors. In education, the 25% free seats provision of the RTE Act can be conceptualised as an education services contract according to Patrinos and Sosale’s (2007) typology above, and can be construed as indicative of a new phase of PPPs in education in India. Private aided schools (i.e. private management of largely publicly funded schools), however, are an old feature of the system.

Figure 1: PPP Projects in India by Sector – update as of July 2011



Source: Ernst&Young, 2012

We attempted further to understand the current scenario of PPPs in education by analysing existing sources.⁴ The task was complicated by discrepancies and contradictions in available data. The general focus of the analysis was on states with a large proportion of PPP initiatives, though the northern states with low literacy levels were also considered. The analysis showed that the uptake of PPP projects varied across states. Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Karnataka had a much larger number of PPP projects compared to others like Odisha and Rajasthan (see Table13). The data in the table refer to the report on PPP by the DEA as updated to July 2011 (Government of India, DEA, 2011a) and the Report of the Working Group on PSP including PPP in School Education as on August 2011 (MHRD, 2011b).

⁴ The PPP database website, related documents of the DEA, Ministry of Finance, the state website on PPP cell, and related documents, where available, were considered.

State	Number of PPP Projects	Rs. (Crore)	Number of PPP Projects in Education	Rs. (Crore)
Andhra Pradesh	96	66,918.3	7	1,069
Bihar	6	2,093.8	0	0
Haryana	10	11,163.1	6	276
Karnataka	104	44,658.9	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	86	14,983.4	0	0
Maharashtra	78	45,592.0	0	0
Odisha	27	13,349.7	1	N/A
Punjab	29	3,562.5	5	441
Rajasthan	59	15,027.3	1	600
Uttar Pradesh	14	26,595.8	0	0

Source: Government of India, DEA, 2011a; MHRD, 2011b

There were some difficulties and inconsistencies in the analysis of data available on the DEA's PPP database website. Firstly, according to the above reports, the number of PPPs in education as of July 2011 was 17, with a total value of Rs. 1,849.7 crore (Government of India, DEA, 2011a). However, there was no information on which states undertook these initiatives.

Secondly, according to the Report of the Working Group on PSP Including PPP in School Education, the number of PPPs in education rose to 22 projects as updated on August 2011. Here state-wise information was available as presented in Table 13. Complicating the picture, according to the DEA website there are about 27 PPP projects in education with state-wise information, but it is not possible to know the last update for these data. In addition, state government websites show a larger number of PPP projects, perhaps of smaller value or in the planning and pipeline stage. This was the case for Rajasthan which listed 58 projects, 22 of which are in the pipeline. Most of these related to engineering colleges and polytechnics.

The lack of accurate documentation and the mismatches found in analysing the data indicate that there is no central database recording PPP initiatives. This is problematic in mapping PPP initiatives in the education sector, and also regarding transparency and accountability. As we show below, there are several PPP initiatives in elementary education in India, but these are mainly visible on individual bases on institutional and state websites.

SSA, RTE, AND PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION

During the SSA decade in question, the participation of NGO and private charitable foundations has been considerable, whereas that of the private for-profit sector increased towards the latter end of the period. Apart from the aided school system prevalent in India from colonial times, the type of partnership between state and private actors in formal education provision and delivery was quite different from that outlined above. There were many problems within the education system with varied challenges. Tasks like identifying problems of out-of-school children or reaching vulnerable groups through innovative methods were encountered on enormous scale. Private initiative and advocacy groups were prominent in pressuring the state to deliver education to such groups.

During the District Primary Education Programme and the post-1986 National Policy on Education period, NGOs were formally given recognition in such partnerships. They were seen by the state as particularly fit providers for delivering education to difficult-to-reach groups (e.g. in underserved and remote areas or in instances of child labour) through non-formal

methods (Fennell, 2007) (see Box4 for examples). This was further encouraged during the SSA period which visualised collaboration with NGOs, the private sector, and civil society organisations (Nair, 2004). NGOs were seen as occupying the alternative innovative education space, and were instrumental in running Education Guarantee Scheme (EGS) centres.

Box 4: Examples of NGO Partnerships

The M Venkatarangiya Foundation of Andhra Pradesh is prominent in establishing bridge camps used to bring children affected by child labour in Ranga Reddy District back into school. An early example of curriculum reform is the celebrated Hoshangabad Science Teaching Programme (HSTP) which began in 1972 in partnership with the Government of Madhya Pradesh and two NGOs, the Friends Rural Centre in Rasulia and Kishore Bharati, to experiment with the use of the 'discovery' approach to learning science in village schools. Foundations like the Sir Ratan Tata Trust also funded interventions implemented by NGOs such as Muskaan in Bhopal, Samvesh in Madhya Pradesh, and Lokmitra in Uttar Pradesh.

Source: Various institutional websites (see Appendix 1)

Currently, major PPP initiatives in primary education are carried out by a range of partners (see Table 14 below). These partnerships take different forms. NGOs are the traditional players and many, both Indian and international, like Bodh, Eklavya, Rishi Valley Education

Table 14: Some Major Initiatives in Elementary Education in Recent Years 2000-2012

Initiatives	Provider	Time Period	
		2000-2005	2006-2012
Learning enhancement for students through technology (CAL)	Educomp, Intel, IBM, Education Initiatives, Central Square Foundation, Azim Premji Foundation, GMR Varadalakshmi Foundation	8	27
Learning enhancement for students through technology – teacher training	Intel, Microsoft, Azim Premji Foundation, Educomp	30	7
Assessment	Education initiatives, Rajiv Shiksha Mission, UNICEF, NUEPA, CIIL, HBCSE, University of Michigan, ICICI Bank Foundation, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai, World Bank, Harvard University, Azim Premji Foundation, UNMCT (Torrent) Ltd. CSR initiative	2	6
Mid-day Meal Scheme	Naandi Foundation, GMR Varadalakshmi Foundation	6	2
Adopt-a-school	Bharti Foundation		49 schools
Pedagogic support (curriculum development, teacher training support, and provision of teaching-learning material)	ICICI Foundation, Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Care India, Eklavya, Bodh, Rashtreeya Vidyalya Educational Consortium (RVEC), Muskaan (Bhopal), SRF Foundation, GMR Varadalakshmi Foundation	11	10
Learning enhancement – specific skill/subject	Azim Premji Foundation, Pratham	5	12
Capacity building of school management committees (SMC), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET), Block Resource Centres, and RTE-related issues	Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Oxfam, Bodh, Lokmitra, Samavesh, Save the Children	2	6
Residential schools	Bodh	1	

Source: State government and institutional websites (See Appendix 1)

Trust, Kalikavatna, Oxfam, Care India, and Save the Children, have longstanding activities in education. In some cases, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) can be signed between an NGO and government. For example, Pratham, widely known as the most prominent and possibly the largest NGO in India, has signed a MoU with the Government of Uttarakhand for the Pratham English Programme (see Box 5 for some of its activities).

Box 5: Examples of Pratham’s Education Initiatives

Pratham’s Read India programme aims to improve early reading enhancement skills in government schools across many states. It also runs the Pratham English Programme and the Activities-based Learning (ABL) Programme. Pratham also works with the governments of Odisha, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh to improve teachers’ skills. In Hyderabad, Pratham has supported SMCs and district administration in strengthening the capacities of 288 government schools.

Source: Pratham, 2012

There are also newer actors, such as corporations that establish partnerships as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and a growing and increasingly diverse philanthropic sector (see Box 6 below). Private foundations like the Bharti Foundation and Azim Premji Foundation, relatively newer entrants, are operating in education alongside older, more established foundations like the Sir Ratan Tata Trust and international players like the Aga Khan Foundation. These philanthropic organisations can act as funders and give institutional grants directly to governments or to NGOs, with whom they sign agreements. They can also build partnerships with private companies. For example, the Azim Premji Foundation is implementing a computer-aided learning programme in partnership with the State Government of Gujarat and Intel.

Box 6: Increasing Diversity of Actors: Some Recent Initiatives by Philanthropic Organisations and Corporations

Philanthropic Organisations	The American India Foundation has worked with several NGOs in Kutch, Odisha and Maharashtra to understand the problems of children from migrant families and how the education system could be adapted. The GMR Varalakshmi Foundation works with state governments across India (mainly in Karnataka, Delhi, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu) to provide multi-pronged support for infrastructure development (e.g. construction of classrooms, toilets, playgrounds, provision of classroom furniture etc.); training and support of ‘Vidya Volunteers’ to work with students in schools where the teacher-student ratio is poor; and providing teaching-learning materials. ICICI Foundation has worked in Rajasthan since 2007 to support and enable education functionaries to deliver ‘quality’ education and strengthen teacher education by supporting the DIET in providing in-service teacher education and curriculum development. In 2009, the Sir Ratan Tata Trust provided grants for strengthening School Management Committees, Block Resource Centres, Cluster Resource Centres and DIETs in Uttar Pradesh.
Corporations	Companies and multinationals are particularly active in supporting IT-related activities in education through CSR initiatives. The Intel Teach Programme provides in-service and pre-service programmes for teachers. The IBM Kidsmart Programme provides a ‘Young Explorer Unit’ in primary schools and aims at facilitating competency-based learning, classroom teaching, teaching material development. Other corporations like Educomp and Education Initiative are working with a number of state governments in the fields of assessment and computer-aided learning. Edureach, a programme of Educomp, has so far established partnerships with 14 states, covering 13,792 schools and affecting 7.5 million students between 2005-2009 (Edureach, 2009). Education Initiatives has a focus on development and assessment of learning skills through computer-based activities.

Source: State government and institutional websites (see Appendix 1)

Private companies can also sign MoUs with state governments, as in the case of Education Initiatives, an assessment firm called in by several state governments. But the same type of work can also be funded by a donor agency or another corporation. Projects with Education Initiatives have been commissioned, for instance, by the World Bank for the Andhra Pradesh Randomized Evaluation Study and by Google for the Student Learning Study Project.

The newer PPP initiatives comprise both the building and management of schools as well as computer-aided learning (CAL) initiatives. An increasing number of initiatives have IT-related activities where companies and multinationals are more active (see Box 6 above). An illustrative example of the former is the Bharti Foundation's activities under the Rajasthan Education Initiative (REI). Using the 'adopt-a-school' model, it took over the management of 50 government primary schools in Jaipur and Alwar districts in Rajasthan in 2005. Local staff were recruited to replace government staff, as the schools were not functioning well. The model also has five government Satya Bharti Adarsh Senior Secondary Schools running in partnership with the State Government of Punjab, 250 operational Satya Bharti Schools, and 196 primary schools (Greenfield Schools) built and run by the foundation on land either donated or leased-out by the community (see Box 7 for further description on the partnership arrangements).

Box 7: Partnership Arrangements for the Satya Bharti Programme

The Bharti Foundation signed a MoU with the School Education Department of Rajasthan to assume the operation and management of 50 rural government schools in line with its SatyaBharti model. This MoU was one of many signed with private actors and civil society organizations under the REI, a campaign launched by the state in 2005 to encourage PPPs as a mode of increasing school quality and access. Under this agreement, the state continues to finance ongoing, state-wide schemes for government schools, including the provision of free mid-day meals and textbooks. However, all recurring costs and interventions are financed by the foundation, including the provision of teaching materials, uniforms, ongoing teacher training, infrastructure maintenance and improvement, ICT equipment, and operational and managerial costs. Controversially, a major part of this intervention has been the removal and replacement of government teachers with lower-paid teachers trained and remunerated by the Bharti Foundation.

Source: Baur, forthcoming

As is the case with some of the examples above, there can be heterogeneity of partners within the same initiative following a tripartite (or multi-partite) model, which implies the support of a local organisation. For example, the REI has involved multinational computer companies offering training in CAL, as well as Bodh, a reputed NGO, which focuses on education processes and community school relationships, and two private foundations, the AzimPremji Foundation and Bharti Foundation. Other examples include Oxfam's work with state governments, supported by local NGOs; the Aga Khan Foundation's support of Bodh initiatives, which ultimately work with the Government of Rajasthan; the IBM Kidsmart initiative in government schools which is implemented through collaboration with the Bharti Foundation, SRF Foundation (formerly known as the Society for Education and Welfare Development), and Pratham in developing content and training.

In the RTE period, NGOs have played a prominent role in advocacy activities and in passing the RTE Act. It has been partly credited to NGO lobbying particularly through the National Alliance for Fundamental Right to Education, a coalition of some 2,000 NGOs. Many provisions of the RTE Act were directly related to giving better provision to disadvantaged groups, with contributions from international partners like UNICEF. For example, stress-free learning in the RTE Act is said to be an offshoot of UNICEF's Joyful Learning Campaign.

While on the one hand, the emphasis of PPPs with private sector actors is much clearer in the Eleventh and Twelfth Plans, the RTE Act has altered the arrangements that are possible in principle, particularly regarding NGO initiatives and low-fee private schools. Implicit in the RTE Act is the lack of a formal place for alternative education arrangements, and by implication,

for NGOs that traditionally operate along these lines, and for low-fee private schools that do not meet specified norms (discussed further below and in Boxes 8 and 9). Nonetheless, the RTE Act has provided other spaces for potential partnerships in areas such as capacity building initiatives, increasing awareness about the Act, and strengthening local bodies and SMCs. For example, the RTE Forum, a network of more than 10,000 NGOs is geared towards implementing the RTE Act.

It may appear from the prolific examples listed above that India is awash with partnership initiatives in education. In reality, however, PPP initiatives are unmapped and the terrain is vast. Due to the lack of a clear enabling framework for implementation and inaccurate data, there is little clarity on the role of the main providers and the scope of their contributions. There is also little information on the exact nature of partnerships established between different private actors and government and other public bodies, or on the ways in which different providers facilitate or implement particular services. Stemming from his analysis on civil works and infrastructure development under SSA, Smawfield (2013) suggests 'ring-fencing' areas in the budget for private non-state actors which may lead to clearer roles in partnership activities. Finally, there is little understanding on the provisions for monitoring and evaluating goals, which are crucial in a context of rapidly increasing numbers of PPPs.



SSA, RTE, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

SSA, a centrally-sponsored scheme for the time-bound universalization of elementary education in the first decade of the 2000s, is now conceptualised as the vehicle for implementing the RTE Act. This is a fundamental shift, as the RTE Act is a legal framework, and its provisions for free and compulsory elementary education are *legally enforceable matters of law*. This is a crucial and fundamental distinction between SSA as it was and SSA post-RTE, heralding important changes in the ways that education must be conceptualised and delivered. It also has several implications for the private sector.

The SSA period saw increasing recognition of the newly emerging low-fee private sector. There were suggestions from successive Joint Review Missions (JRM) that NGOs and the private sector contributed to maximising SSA's impact (e.g. JRM 9, p. 36). However, the JRM vision seemed more critical than openly approving of new private schools. While there was an underlying acceptance that low-fee private schools were necessary in increasing schooling capacity (JRM 16), a number of JRM's stressed that more information on the number of low-fee private schools, particularly those that were unrecognised, was required in order to better estimate school provision requirements for upper-primary schooling (JRM 9; JRM 12; JRM 16).

While JRM's acknowledged the overall low quality of government schools that contributed to the popularity of low-fee private schools, they also noted the variable quality of the latter (JRM 9; JRM 16). However, given that the majority of children still access the government sector, JRM 16 noted that rather than focusing on private school closures under the context of the RTE Act, increasing the quality of government schools *en masse* provided the best hope:

If poor quality of outcomes in government schools is the main factor behind the popularity of private schools the answer lies in improving quality of outcomes and not in shutting down the private schools. In the long term a responsive public school education system is the best answer towards providing a quality and equitable education to all (JRM 16, p. 10).

With the passing of the Act, the MHRD (2011a) issued a new SSA framework, stating: 'The changes are not merely confined to norms for providing teachers or classrooms, but encompass the vision and approach to elementary education as evidenced in the shift to child entitlements and quality elementary education' (p. 5). Regarding private schools, the new SSA framework is mainly concerned with the monitoring of private schools and coordination them, in particular regarding the 25% free seats provision. Box 8 summarises the main areas of activity covered by the new SSA framework regarding private schools and the way they are implicated on the basis of the RTE Act.

Box 8: Main Areas of SSA Activity Regarding Private Unaided Schools Based on RTE Act

- ◆ Monitor that the 25% free seats provision is maintained in unaided schools
- ◆ Monitoring of gender and social inclusion provision/support for gender and social inclusion: social audits should report on school and classroom practices and detection of gender-based discrimination
- ◆ Research, Evaluation, Monitoring, Supervision (REMS) funds expanded to include private unaided schools
- ◆ District plans for universal access through neighbourhood schools to include children admitted under the 25% free seats provision
- ◆ Micro-planning exercises by school management committees should take into consideration schools attended in the local area including unaided schools*
- ◆ Grievance redressal to have links and coordinate with private schools
- ◆ Recommendation for DISE to collect data on unrecognised and recognised schools

Source: MHRD, 2011a

Note: *This applies to all schools other than unaided schools as they are not mandated to have school management committees.

The RTE Act was the result of a lumbering process of deliberation and public debate, causing much controversy. The process began in 2002 and continued through most of the SSA decade in question. A chain of successive bills beginning in 2004 was drafted in response to Article 21A in the 86th Constitution Amendment Act 2002 affirming the right of every child between the ages of six and 14 to free and compulsory education (Jha & Parvati, 2010; Madhavan & Mangnani, 2005).

Fuelling the debate is Section 12(1)(c) of the RTE Act compelling all private schools to allocate 25% of their places in Class 1 (or pre-primary as applicable) for free to 'children belonging to weaker section[s] and disadvantaged group[s]' to be retained until they complete elementary education (Class 8).⁵ Private schools are to be reimbursed for each child enrolled under the quota at the level of state expenditure per child or tuition fee charged at the school, whichever is less (Section 12(2), Government of India, 2009a).

Proponents claim that the free seats provision is an equity measure aimed at opening up a highly stratified school system to disadvantaged children. It is also seen as the only way to achieve universal elementary education because of insufficient state sector capacity and state resources (Jain & Dholakia, 2010). Critics maintain that the provision marks the most explicit institutional legitimisation of the private sector in education without sufficient effort to strengthen the decaying state sector (Jha & Parvati, 2010; Ramachandran, 2009).

Complicating the implementation of the RTE Act are powerful private school lobbies that launched a Supreme Court case arguing that the provision impinged on their right to run their schools without undue government interference, and that the Act was unconstitutional. However, in April 2012, the Supreme Court ruled a verdict upholding the Act and its provisions.

Interestingly, in Delhi, there was an earlier 2004 Supreme Court judgment directing action against private schools allotted land at concessional rates that did not institute a similar previously set quota (Juneja, 2010). However, some education officials, implementers, and private school principals in Noronha and Srivastava's (2012) study on the early phase of the RTE Act's implementation felt that it was not seriously upheld by the administration due to

5 'Disadvantaged' groups is defined as a child belonging to 'the Scheduled Caste, the Scheduled Tribe, the socially and educationally backward class or such other group having disadvantage owing to social, cultural, economic[sic], geographic[sic], linguistic, gender or such other factor, as may be specified by the appropriate Government, by notification' (Section 2(d), Government of India, 2009a). A child belonging to weaker sections is one whose parent's/guardian's income is lower than the minimum limit specified by the appropriate Government (Section 2(e), Government of India, 2009a), which in practice, commonly refers to annual income below Rs. 100,000 as set by the Ministry of Finance.

a general *laissez-faire* attitude towards the expansion of the private sector, in view of more pressing SSA goals at the time. Some interviewees in that study felt that this lack of action, a confusion on the difference between SSA as a programme and the RTE Act as a legal directive outlining entitlements, and the considerable political clout that many of the older, more established, elite schools had complicated the implementation of the RTE Act and its 25% free seats provision.⁶

Though all general provisions of the Act apply to private unaided schools, Noronha and Srivastava (2012) found the following to be of immediate concern: the 25% free seats provision and related conditions for access and reimbursement; prohibition on charging fees or instituting screening procedures of any kind for admission; conditions for recognition, withdrawal, and associated sanctions for existing and new unaided schools; and Schedule 1 operational standards for schools including infrastructure and associated qualifications levels for and expectations of teachers (see Box 9 for specific provisions).

Box 9: RTE Provisions Immediately Applicable to Private Unaided Schools	
<p>12(1)(c) For the purposes of this Act [...] [a recognised unaided school] shall admit in class I, to the extent of at least twenty-five per cent of the strength of that class, children belonging to weaker section and disadvantaged group in the neighbourhood and provide free and compulsory elementary education till its completion:</p> <p>Provided further that where a [recognised private unaided school] imparts pre-school education, the provision...shall apply for admission to such pre-school education</p>	<p>25% free seats provision in elementary education from Class I</p> <p>Applicable to pre-school sections</p>
<p>12(2) The [recognised private unaided school]...shall be reimbursed expenditure so incurred by it to the extent of per-child-expenditure incurred by the State, or the actual amount charged from the child, whichever is less, in such manner as may be prescribed:</p> <p>Provided further that where such school is already under obligation to provide free education to a specified number of children on account of it having received any land, building, equipment or other facilities, either free of cost or at a concessional rate, such school shall not be entitled for reimbursement to the extent of such obligation.</p>	<p>Reimbursement at state expenditure level or tuition fee, whichever is less</p> <p>Exemptions to reimbursement</p>
<p>13(1) No school or person shall, while admitting a child collect any capitation fee and subject the child or his or her parents or guardian to any screening procedure</p>	<p>No admission or capitation fees; no screening procedures</p>
<p>18(1) No school, other than a school established, owned or controlled by the appropriate Government of the local authority, shall after the commencement of this Act, be established or function without obtaining a certificate of recognition from such authority, by making an application in such form and manner, as may be prescribed.</p> <p>18(2) The authority prescribed under sub-section (1) shall issue the certificate of recognition in such form, within such period, in such manner, and subject to such conditions, as may be prescribed:</p> <p>Provided that no such recognition shall be granted to a school unless it fulfils norms and standards specified under section 19.</p> <p>18(3) On the contravention of the conditions of recognition, the prescribed authority shall, by an order in writing, withdraw recognition:</p>	<p>No school to be established without recognition</p> <p>Recognition conditions</p> <p>Recognition withdrawal</p>

⁶ To date, the provision has not been honoured by many of these schools. At the time of writing, the Hindustan Times, 27 February 2013, had a front page item on the subject. The Delhi Directorate of Education has ordered all schools who have taken land at concessional rates, to admit the mandated proportion of children under the provision. This includes minority schools that have been kept out of the purview of the RTE Act under the Supreme Court ruling of April 2012.

<p>Provided that such order shall contain a direction as to which of the neighbourhood school, the children studying in the derecognised school, shall be admitted:</p> <p>Provided further that no recognition shall be so withdrawn without giving an opportunity of being heard to such school...</p> <p>18(4) With effect from the date of withdrawal of the recognition under section (3), no such school shall continue to function</p> <p>18(5) Any person who establishes or runs a school without obtaining certificate of recognition or continues to run a school after withdrawal of recognition shall be liable to fine which may extend to one lakh rupees and in cases of continuing contraventions, to a fine of ten thousand rupees for each day during which such contravention continues</p>	<p>Alternative arrangements for students</p> <p>Opportunity for school hearing</p> <p>School closure upon withdrawal</p> <p>Sanctions: Rs. 100,000 + Rs. 10,000/day</p>
<p>19 No school shall be established, or recognised, under section 18 unless it fulfils the norms and standards specified in the Schedule</p> <p>19(1) Where a school established before the commencement of the Act does not fulfil the norms and standards specified in the Schedule, it shall take steps to fulfil such norms and standards at its own expenses, within a period of three years from the date of such commencement</p> <p>19(2) Where a school fails to fulfil the norms and standards within the period specified under sub-section 2(2), the [appropriate] authority shall withdraw recognition granted to such school in the manner specified under sub-section (3) thereof.</p> <p>19(3) Where a school fails to fulfil the norms and standards specified under sub-section (2), the authority prescribed under sub-section (1) of section 18 shall withdraw recognition granted to such school in the manner specified under sub-section (3) above.</p> <p>19(4) With effect from the date of withdrawal of recognition under sub-section (3), no school shall continue to function.</p> <p>19(5) Any person who continues to run a school after the recognition is withdrawn shall be liable to fine which may extend to one lakh rupees and in case of continuing contraventions, to a fine of ten thousand rupees for each day during which such contravention continues.</p>	<p>Schedule 1 quality norms for recognition</p> <p>Three-year period for un-recognised schools to meet standards</p> <p>Recognition withdrawal for schools post three-year period if:</p> <p>Failure to meet Schedule 1 standards in allotted time</p> <p>School closure upon withdrawal</p> <p>Sanctions: Rs. 100,000 + Rs. 10,000/day</p>
<p>21(1) A school, other than a [recognised private unaided school] shall constitute a School Management Committee consisted of the elected representatives of the local authority, parents or guardians of children admitted in such school and teachers</p>	<p>Recognised private unaided schools exempt from forming a school management committee</p>
<p>23(1) Any person possessing such minimum qualifications, as laid down by an academic authority, authorised by the Central Government, by notification shall be eligible for appointment as a teacher</p> <p>[...]</p> <p>Provided that a teacher, who at the commencement of this Act, does not possess minimum qualifications as laid down under subsection(1), shall acquire such minimum qualifications within a period of five years.</p>	<p>Minimum teacher qualifications applicable to all</p> <p>Five-year grace period to acquire qualifications</p>
<p>28 No teacher shall engage himself of herself in private tuition or private teaching activity.</p>	<p>No private tuition activity</p>

Source: RTE Act, Government of India, 2009a, reproduced from Noronha & Srivastava, 2012

While the 25% provision has generated the most powerful opposition, there is also debate regarding the low-fee private sector, particularly on unrecognised schools in the sector. Sections 18 and 19 compel all schools to seek recognition, which can only be obtained if they meet set norms on infrastructure (i.e. space, numbers of classrooms, drinking water, separate boys' and girls' toilets, playground), pupil-teacher ratio, and a minimum level of training requirements for all teachers. Although there is a window of three to five years for these conditions to be met, schools that do not comply are threatened with closure and sanctions.

In response, a lobby of domestic private school associations and advocacy groups, local schools, and international actors (Nambissan & Ball, 2010; Ohara, 2013) has organised in opposition, mounting an argument on the efficiency of private sector delivery. NGOs that have non-formal initiatives to provide schooling to vulnerable groups will also have to rework their strategies. For example, non-formal 'schools' can operate as learning centres supplementary to, but not substitutes for, formal schools under the Act.

Implementers and school principals in Noronha and Srivastava's (2012) study were sceptical about realistically achieving social integration through the free seats provision, not only because of the deep social fissures that exist, but also because of the lack of preparedness of principals and teachers in instituting child-friendly inclusive pedagogical practices as mandated by the Act. Dangers of labelling between free-ship and full fee-paying children were raised, particularly regarding high-fee schools seen to be more reluctant in conforming to the clause, citing past experiences of the mid-day meal scheme in government schools with reported cases of caste-based discrimination (see Thorat & Neumann, 2010). Implementation may also be complicated by the reimbursement model for the quota, particularly for schools charging lower fees that may not have the upfront capital to accommodate more students while simultaneously upgrading facility and teacher inputs.

The full implications of the RTE Act's provisions on private unaided schools are not obvious. This is partly because many of the procedures for implementing specific provisions had not been established as of April 2010 when the Act came into effect, leading to a lack of clarity for private schools and implementers, but also, because school responses to major institutional change require a much longer time to accurately assess. Nonetheless, almost three years after its enactment, there are strong advocates and opponents to the Act and its provisions as was apparent from our interview data below.

ARTICULATING PERSPECTIVES

We conducted elite interviews with a group of ten respondents to glean perspectives on the interface between the SSA, the RTE Act, and the private sector. Interviewees had considerable experience of the SSA decade in question, and at least half of them spent over thirty years working in the area of education for disadvantaged groups. Three interviewees were from donor agencies, three from NGOs, three were educationists/academics, and one was an ex-bureaucrat still active in education.

Interview questions focused on perceptions of the contribution made by the private sector during this period with regard to the SSA goals of access, equity, and outcomes especially regarding low-fee private schools and PPPs. Of particular interest was the research evidence on which their views were based. Another area of enquiry was attitudes to the RTE Act, specific provisions of the Act, and the challenges facing the universalization of education with special reference to the private sector.

Low-fee private schooling, PPPs, and the RTE Act all had supporters as well as critics. On some issues there was relative consensus, but on others, strident polarization was evident. In particular, the tensions in differing attitudes on the role of the private sector and the way it has developed were clear, as was the fact that its role is contested and evolving. It appears that it will take some time for the situation to reach a more stable equilibrium.

Interviewees' perspectives were also framed within the context of the research evidence on low-fee private schooling, PPPs, and the RTE Act. Two of these three major areas, the RTE Act and PPPs in India (especially in their newer forms), are nascent and require more substantive research. Although there is now some research on the low-fee private sector, interviewees felt that, on the whole, it was inadequate and lacked rigour, and could be clouded by ideology and propaganda. The following interviewee, though openly lobbying for low-fee private schools, presented the situation, thus:

[Laughing] Hmm. We talk about evidence-based public policy ourselves but I find this becomes a far trickier issue. Evidence is whom you talk to, right? So if you talk to [name of researcher omitted], she says no evidence suggests this; you talk to somebody else then the evidence suggests quite the opposite...

So what will be your selection?

[Laughs] That is why I think...Actually I am an economist by training. We have a particular way of looking at the world... [Laugh] I think at the end of the day, evidence does matter at the margins and in some areas you really don't know how it's going to work out. Evidence would play a role and should play an important role in the process of decision. But some of the things are about first principles, and there I think it's pretty hard to just debate on evidence. There is lots more that comes to the table despite the fact, whatever people want to say — they are unbiased or non-ideological — but still it brings some form of ideology to the table. —Respondent No. 10, NGO

Respondents felt that both the lack of research in some areas, and contradictory claims in others, makes informed policy decisions difficult. Several interviewees faulted research done in India, including some commissioned by SSA, on the basis of the quality of its analysis. Others highlighted the polemical nature of the research itself, for example, research advocating for low-fee private schooling and on learning achievements. It was also felt that domestic research capacity could have been more robustly built during the SSA decade. One interviewee felt that there was lack of a nuanced research strategy around different dimensions of SSA over time. He emphasised the importance of contextualising research as each state has developed differently, as has SSA across India:

Each state has a history and the recent history of programs like SSA, and older structures in some cases have remained strong. In some cases, structures are not so damaged but there are other states which have destroyed them [...]One recommendation — let's create dossiers for each state, what they have been through in these tumultuous years. —Interviewee No. 6, Educationist

PERCEPTIONS ON THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND LOW-FEE PRIVATE SCHOOLING

Overall, the very theme of this study aroused strong reactions in several respondents. Some wondered how one could talk of 'the role of the private sector', when SSA was about improving government schools. Others interpreted the question differently and saw low-fee private schooling as having made an enormous contribution to access and quality, and according to one respondent, preceding SSA from the early 1990s onwards.

However, the response to the low-fee private sector was not entirely positive. Some interviewees stated that learning achievements were only marginally better than in government schools, and that there were concerns regarding equity and affordability. These were raised by the following interviewees about low-fee private schools and private schools more generally.

Research body is showing that it's not performing particularly better bulk of private sector, everybody recognizes that it's affordable private school for the poor but not for the poorest. Härmä's study and Young Lives show that there is increased gender inequality in private school —Interview No. 2, Donor

It should be recognised that private schools are of varying nature. Pratham says the private sector schools are better, but this is not true. [...] these government schools are useless...but the low-cost privates are as bad. So it is not about eliminating as dealing with equity issues.

—Interview No. 8, Donor

Some of the research on private schooling attracted strong debate, as indicated by the following interviewee:

Tooley's answer is a simple solution, and policy makers are looking for a simple solution. The education sector does not have a simple solution.

—Interview No. 1, Donor

PERCEPTIONS ON PPPs

There were mixed reactions on the nascent PPP sector. Some were favourable, though several cautionary insights were articulated, including those based on an in-depth study of one such PPP initiative. The following respondent seemed to have carefully considered various private sector options, and decided that PPPs were the best of these. The view was that either the state or a philanthropic organisation had to fund PPP education initiatives, but the role of the state was crucial in regulating the quality of education provided.

We need PPP models — Gyanshala with Bihar Government, Bharti Schools in Rajasthan. As soon as you involve government, private sector will not be interested. Venture capitalists will not give enough, as the price point is so low. No use in setting up low-fee schools. It has to be a supplement. State has to be the arbiter of quality.

—Interview No. 2, Donor

There were others who felt it inadvisable and disquieting to introduce PPPs. The following interviewees raised issue with a number of well-known partnership initiatives, particularly concerns over public monies going to corporations.

Punjab was the first state to auction a school building to a private provider to run a school. Then Rajasthan outsourcing to Bharti Mittal, outsourcing libraries to Pratham and teacher training to AzimPremji. CBSE [Central Board of Secondary Education]-Pearson tie up, and in two years Pearson will run the research centre, and then Pearson will sell its tests...For two years Pearson will run the research centre and then it will be self-sustaining. State has an MNC [multi-national corporation], the world's biggest firm in testing, children's social networks, private tuition at home. In this case, funds the state will provide will go into private hands. And later on, parents will pay for these companies. Navodaya schools wanted a hall for coaching for IIT [Indian Institute of Technology] entrance. Contract to be given to a named private firm. To that extent does the siphoning of government funds go.

—Interview No. 6, Educationist

At the same time the state seems very willing, as Plan documents indicate, to outsource schooling as an alternative to managing schools. The state regards teachers as a liability and wants to out-source them and does not want to provide them.

—Interview No. 6, Educationist

Sponsoring private groups was seen to be at the cost of the decline of government institutions. The interviewee above felt that NCERT has been side-lined in the process, while its curriculum is adapted by a foreign group. A similar view was expressed regarding NGOs testing learning achievement, where it was felt that no attempt was made to compare or link with existing NCERT methods and data.

The overall sense was that the government was not keen on taking responsibility for teacher quality, hence, PPPs were attractive forms of provision that would take the government 'off the hook'. But dangers in such an approach were highlighted. One respondent spoke about what

he felt were limited and narrow teacher training methods adopted by a particular company to which teacher training had been outsourced:

...people hire local people and put in them in suits to teach curriculum, pedagogy. These are youngsters who have no real classroom experience. They complain when they teach that it is the pupils who cannot understand what they are teaching.

—Interview No. 8, Donor

In fact, unsound pedagogy was one of the critiques of the PPP model in general. Box 10 presents the reflections of one interviewee who was involved in a detailed study of a five year PPP programme. Many of the projects under this programme were concerned with training teachers or students to use technology to enhance learning (CAL). The concerns raised are important for a nascent sector like PPP in education in India, where PPP structures and processes are still being formalised.

Box 10: Reflections of a Respondent on a PPP Initiative

One respondent reflected on CAL initiatives that were part of a larger PPP project spearheaded by a philanthropic organisation. The actors involved in the CAL initiatives were mainly from large companies, and included multinationals under CSR. According to the vision document, the overall PPP project was meant to be a win-win for the private party and the government. However, the interviewee felt that a general uncritical attitude arose because the initiative was implemented within a larger climate of approval for the private sector, or because there was a feeling that evaluating a philanthropic initiative was not appropriate. The interviewee noted the following points:

1. The impact and sustainability of these short initiatives was likely to be small. There was only one longer-term initiative for school provision and school adoption by a private foundation.
2. There was no formal evaluation, i.e. baseline, midterm, or final evaluation.
3. There was no system to evaluate the materials used.
4. There was no system to test the pedagogical soundness of the methodology or teacher quality. Teaching personnel were often local untrained recruits.

Source: SSA Private Sector Study interview data

RESPONSES TO THE RTE ACT

The RTE Act aroused the most heated responses. Contestation was centred on the role of the private sector, exemplified in the following response:

RTE having slipped in — we will need to wait. If it had come in 1910, based on the Gopal Krishna Gokhale model, or the 1920s Gandhi model it could have been very different. RTE has come in 2010, and when the government has shifted to a privatised model of development. Manmohan Singh said, 'Do you want me to be the first PM that makes the country go broke?'

—Interview No. 5, NGO

Another respondent took such strong objection to the RTE Act because of its implications for the private sector that he said it was framed as an 'anti-private sector' act rather than an equity focused one. Other respondents were less critical. One interviewee, for example, appreciated the Act and explained opposition to it as stemming from the Act's implications for low-fee private schools on the one hand, and the elite private school sector on the other:

It is a good act, if taken in the right spirit, and it is sad that it has taken so many years... The whole resistance to RTE is based on two counts — it is going to kill the low-cost private schools, and secondly, it is an interference in elite freedom.

—Interview No. 8, Donor

The 25% free seats provision had various interpretations. For respondents who were most concerned with equity issues in schooling, it was considered path-breaking since it forces even the most elite schools to accommodate children of the poor. As such, and perhaps

surprisingly, it was conceptualised as the contemporary version of the principles undergirding the 'common school', giving at least some children the ability to enrol in elite neighbourhood schools. However, the private school lobbyist in our study felt that the provision could have been instituted on a voluntary basis. He felt that powerful forces opposing the RTE Act would have been weaker this way, and the less costly private schools could have benefited from the 25% subsidy.

Regardless of these perspectives on the interplay of private sector schools in the RTE context, several respondents felt that the Act is aspirational, and that results will not be achieved quickly. The 25% free seats provision was seen as a piece of social engineering, the effects of which will be experienced years later. These respondents felt the full impact of the Act will take decades to be understood, and that the lack of real political will poses a challenge. Some, like the second interviewee below, felt that as a result, the lack of time-bound targets also made it difficult for broad acceptance of the Act.

If you had asked me in 1929 what were the chances of the Sharda Act being successful, one could make similar bleak predictions.⁷ It is a major piece of reform – I would give 50 years for the impact to show... The number of cases which have already been filed – an amazing number of cases. No social policy law needs less than twenty years to see its full repertoire. The fact that there will be an impact – probably the most important act for children... I think already private schools are realising its new dimension [i.e. the 25% quota]. India's middle classes are looking at poor children for the first time as children, rather than as children of the servant. In ten years, there will be evidence on the success of this social mixing, and arrangement. Results will be mixed. Many will deal reasonably well. Social engineering will have worked. And if teacher training improves then it will be a major issue. I think 25% is a creative input... We could not expect more from a caste-riddled society. —Interview No. 6, Educationist

RTE has a mind-set that was reflective of the 1970s... A reasonable, doable, and pragmatic approach is what is needed... If RTE had a statement that guaranteed capability, '*paanchsaalmeinyeh guarantee hai*' [in five years we can guarantee this] parents would have responded. —Interview No. 5, NGO

The other major objection was centred on the inputs/outcomes debate where interviewees felt that inputs, norms, and processes were separated from learning achievements. Thus, the RTE Act was criticised for not articulating precise learning goals. Some of this however, was linked to earlier SSA initiatives, particularly, to the lack of building teacher training capacity in the system over the years. Some interviewees, thus, faulted SSA for having allowed the teacher education system in the country to collapse, making it difficult to fulfil current RTE aims:

...but institutional capacity building... SSA is just a programme... parallel structures and we lost ten years in institutional capacity building so teacher education really suffered. —Interview No. 9, Ex-bureaucrat

CCE [continuous comprehensive evaluation] depends on sufficient parallel attention to teacher training, and that is one black hole over twenty years. SSA tried to improve in-service training. Pre-service training has gone to the dogs.

Would you say that this has endangered RTE?

When teacher training is in the dumps it is endangering not just RTE, but everything. —Interview No. 6, Educationist

Nonetheless, a number of interviewees pointed out that norms about teacher certification are taken as a given under RTE. As one interviewee stated:

7 Reference to the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929.

RTE does not permit untrained teachers and this will cause the country to sweat. DIETs are being pushed to improve. —Interview No. 3, NGO

Regarding learning achievements, Pratham's ASER studies repeatedly highlighting poor learning achievements in government schools, were a focus of debate. For some, they fulfilled a significant role in forcing the government to face poor learning achievements. According to one interviewee, a donor, ASER results were a 'wake-up call to the government'. However, concerns were also raised about the tests. One issue which was highlighted was that since testing was done in the language of the school, it could be problematic for new entrants for whom the home language is likely to be different. Others also questioned ASER methodology. These concerns are encapsulated below.

ASER test - lots of media attention... I am not surprised by the ASER results. But 'spot' testing in the problem and the use of textbook-based testing is that the language used in the book is not their first language. The Maithili, Bhojpuri, and other home-language family children, are at a disadvantage with using Hindi-language books. It takes eight years for such children to get comfortable with the Hindi textbook language for learning.

The Eklavya work shows that the text uses '*ladka*' and '*ladki*' [standard terms in Hindi for 'boy' and 'girl'] while the children use '*mauda*' and '*maudi*' [equivalents in dialect]. Those children going to school continued to use '*mauda*' and '*maudi*' even after they had been introduced to '*ladka*' and '*ladki*'. So a teacher needs to be trained to do more language bridging, and if done, then such learning can be secured. This was done across six Hindi-learning environments. ASER does not understand this. Their research is just doing the test.

ASER-In the classroom Report is an excellent report, published by UNICEF/ASER. It showed wonderful results, and reproduced a page of a Class 2 textbook, and it cannot be comprehended. After doing the report they did spot tests using that very textbook, and showed that the children failed. Was there any point in doing this test, knowing that the results will be bad? There is no pedagogic methodology and the spot tests are wrongly regarded as test standards and a bible. —Interview No. 3, NGO

There was a sense among some interviewees that such testing resulted in unwarranted generalisations, as students did not come from comparable backgrounds:

In these outcome surveys, where is the room for equity?... [a] first generation school-goer cannot be compared to a third generation educated family. By merging these into one, you undermine the way in which SSA has taken equity.

—Interview No. 6, Educationist

Respondents highlighted other factors contributing to low achievements such as the general inability of children to cope with a curriculum that was too ambitious, either because they were too young, or because conditions at home were not conducive.

There is evidence that 40% of children go to school before they are six years. If the curriculum continues to provide Class 1 teaching syllabus which is above the comprehension of Class 3 and 4 children, then this defeats the process. Sixty percent of mothers have not been to school. Seven hundred thousand households and 73% of children did not have books other than the textbook or religious books. —Interview No. 5, NGO

Running through all the various strands of the debate on concerns about low-fee private schooling, PPP trends, and RTE mandates, were fundamental disagreements about what constitutes quality in the school system. Interviewees were polemical on this point.

One side defined quality as learning achievements and felt, that by extension, any teacher who can deliver good performance is the keystone, viewing teacher certification irrelevant to this end. This perspective rested on seeing progress as moving away from teacher certification, regarded as 'inputs', to seriously considering learning achievements.

Quality has been brought in even later but that is understandable. A lot of discussion on quality was on how to define quality, and at the Ministry this has been a major point of discussion. In the Ministry perspective tendency to talk in terms of inputs – whether teacher was certified, it took a longer time to talk of national assessment.

—Interview No. 1, Donor

So, the capability must be the focus, because the child cannot wait. If you want inclusion and equity then the focus should be on the achievement goals. If capability is at the centre then I cannot wait till I have 100% qualified teachers. If you take your curriculum seriously – if you don't have eight years, then if you have bathrooms, is meaningless.

—Interview No. 5, NGO

On the other hand, there were respondents who viewed the teacher as a professional, not just a manager of learning, who was also responsible for outcomes of education in domains beyond the cognitive. According to one interviewee, who characterised the society as 'caste-ridden' and 'patriarchal', there was a strong need for a teacher cadre that was reflective and could engage with students:

The teacher is there to hand out the worksheets, then to take it back. A supervisory role. For the SSA model this is a reductionist perspective. The original four goals are lost, because when you script the education so tightly, the teacher becomes a manager of hand-outs rather than a teacher. SSA is also about living equitably. As SSA works — in those four goals is the social meaning of education and if the teacher is only the custodian of hand-outs, yes, you will have improved scores but that you will achieve in maths and reading.

Maths should empower children to make calculations, say about their environment, to represent data in a certain form... should be able to handle data in another context. This is a holistic perspective on the child's development.

Low-fee private school makes teachers responsible for a very limited number of goals. Violence, corporal punishment, and pandering to the worst demands from parents. We are seriously undermining the quality of the teacher... you need to learn what caste, patriarchy mean – requires a great deal of sociological training of the teacher. Those things can't be done by teachers who transmit curriculum.

—Interview No. 6, Educationist



CONCLUSIONS

During the decade of universalising elementary education under SSA there was growth in private schooling (including low-fee private schooling), and a number of PPP initiatives operated in education. These phenomena occurred within a parallel macro-planning process that was generally supportive of the private sector and PPPs.

This was despite the fact that SSA vision documents did not explicitly articulate a role for the private sector in expanding access, particularly regarding the schooling of disadvantaged groups. The stress was on universalizing education by improving government schools, expanding facilities to unserved areas, and enrolling out-of-school children. However, civil society and NGOs were active in this area, and SSA welcomed such intervention. Over time, private sector activity including that from other actors, such as private foundations and corporate sector actors emerged as significant players in a larger variety of initiatives towards the end of the first SSA decade.

With the passing of the RTE Act, the SSA is now conceptualised as the vehicle for implementing the Act. This is a fundamental shift, as the RTE Act is a legal framework, and its provisions for free and compulsory elementary education are *legally enforceable matters of law*. This heralds important changes in the ways that education must be conceptualised and delivered, and has several implications for the private sector, and more importantly for the interplay between public and private actors.

As our analysis shows, the Twelfth Plan accords a greater space for private sector initiatives and PPPs in education, positioning their expansion as crucial to improving the quality of the sector. In elementary education, it positions the 25% free seats provision of the Act, which remains a controversial clause, as the impetus to ostensibly removing entry barriers for further expanding the private sector.

However, internal to the planning process there was a difference in the voracity of enthusiasm. The newly created Working Group on PSP and PPP in School Education for the Twelfth Plan background planning process was mandated to sketch out the parameters for 'promoting public private cooperation and involvement'. The group was more reserved than the final Plan document notes. While it recognised the need for increased public and private resources to meet RTE commitments, it stressed that a PPP education sector strategy should fit with overall MHRD education aims. It also outlined a number of associated risks that do not appear in the final Twelfth Plan.

Regarding the private schooling sector and potential equity of access, our analysis of existing data indicated some concerns. While the last two NSSO education rounds showed a large increase in combined private aided and private unaided sector participation between 1995-1996 (pre-SSA) and 2007-2008 (during SSA), the gap between males and their female

counterparts in rural and urban are as also increased at primary and upper-primary levels in 2007-2008, compared to the earlier period. NSSO data for 2007-2008 also showed that compared to the levels of total enrolment, there was an over-representation of children belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe groups in government schools, and under-representations in the private aided and private unaided sectors.

ASER sex-wise enrolment data for the larger states among those at the top end of private sector provision (i.e. Kerala, Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh) also indicated a gender gap, negligible only in the case of Kerala. While the NSSO data were collected prior to instituting the RTE Act's provisions, the ASER data were collected in the early phase of its implementation. It remains to be seen how private schooling access will be affected in the long-run under the new phase of SSA and the RTE Act context.

Moving forward, we note a number of areas that should be addressed in taking into consideration the context of the RTE Act.

Firstly, it may have appeared from the number of PPP examples listed in our analysis that India is awash with partnership initiatives in education. In reality, however, PPP initiatives are unmapped and the terrain is vast; there is little clarity on the role of the main providers and their scope. The Twelfth Plan seems latently to base conceptualisations around a contracting model however, there is no clear institutional framework for PPPs in education. This is aggravated by weak evaluation and monitoring systems for PPPs in social sectors, and a lack of a central database that accurately records current and past initiatives. Such considerations are important for issues of accountability and transparency.

Secondly, while on the one hand the emphasis on PPPs and the private schooling sector has increased during SSA and in the current time, the RTE Act has altered the arrangements that are now possible. For example, non-formal education activities as substitutes to formal provision are no longer viable. The operation of unrecognised schools, which has been partly attributed in the literature (and by interviewees in our study) to a *laissez-faire* attitude under SSA to expand school numbers, is also no longer possible. It is, thus, crucial to address the viability of various private sector activities in education as against the spirit of the RTE Act and in regards to its compulsions, and consider appropriate arrangements.

Thirdly, based on existing literature, assumptions about the quality, affordability, and coverage of the low-fee private sector need to be systematically assessed. This is primarily because of the difficulty of comparing results from existing studies due to variations in operationalization, as well as the lack of nationally representative or comparative data on this sector, and more generally. In the context of RTE, the interplay between the low-fee private and government sectors is perhaps more important in understanding the possibility of achieving longer-term goals of access, equity, and outcomes.

Finally, we note the need for immense political will regarding pedagogic change in all schools, government and private alike. The need for teacher education programming geared towards RTE principles, and an invigoration of some form of an inspectorate system are two institutional changes recommended by educationists. These are said to have dwindled under SSA. The new phase of SSA may seriously consider the role of pedagogic change in addressing acknowledged low levels of learning outcomes.



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APPENDIX 1: LIST OF WEBSITES CONSULTED

State Government Websites for PPP (Last access on 25 February 2013)

Assam Government and Public Private Partnerships: <http://assamppp.gov.in/>
Andhra Pradesh Government and Public Private Partnerships: <http://www.ppp.ap.gov.in>
Bihar Infrastructure Development Authority: <http://www.idabihar.com>
Gujarat Infrastructure Development Board (GIDB): <http://www.gidb.org/>
Haryana Government and Public Private Partnerships: <http://pppinharyana.gov.in>
Karnataka Infrastructure Development Department: <http://www.idd.kar.nic.in>
Karnataka Public Private Partnership Database: <http://119.226.79.212/pppdb/Home.aspx>
Madhya Pradesh: <http://www.dif.mp.gov.in/>
Maharashtra Public Private Partnership: <http://pppinmaharashtra.com/>
Orissa Public Private Partnership: <http://www.ppporissa.gov.in/>
Punjab Infrastructure Development Board (PIDB): <http://www.pidb.org/>
Government of Punjab: <http://punjabgovt.nic.in>
Punjab Urban Planning and Development Authority: <http://puda.nic.in/welcome.html>
Rajasthan Government and Public Private Partnerships: <http://ppp.rajasthan.gov.in>
Uttarakhand Public Private Partnership Cell: <http://cell.upppc.org>

Institutional and NGOs websites consulted

Aga Khan Foundation: www.akdn.org/akf_education.asp;
Azim Premji Foundation: <http://azimpremjifoundation.org/Schools>;
Bharti Foundation: http://www.bhartifoundation.org/wps/wcm/connect/bhartifoundation/BhartiFoundation/Home/Satya+Bharti%20School%20Program/About%20the%20Satya%20Bharti%20School%20Program/PG_about_bharti_program
Bodh ShikshaSamiti: <http://www.bodh.org/programmes.php>;
CARE India: <http://www.careindia.org/education-0>
Education Initiatives: <http://www.ei-india.com/lisa-projects/>
Educomp: <http://www.educomp.com/Services/ICT.aspx>
Eklavya: http://www.eklavya.in/go/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=12&Itemid=55

GMR Varalakshmi Foundation: <http://www.gmrgroup.in/gmrv/programmes.html>
IBM: <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility/2011/communities/education-communities.html>
ICICI Foundation: <http://www.icicielementaryeducation.org.in/focus-areas-64.htm>
Intel: www.intel.com/cd/corporate/education/apac/eng/in/239067.htm
Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation (MVF): <http://www.mvfindia.in/sttategy.htm>
Microsoft: http://www.microsoft.com/india/msindia/msindia_up_partnerslearning.aspx
Naandi Foundation: www.naandi.org/
Oxfam India: <http://www.oxfamindia.org/what-we-do/essential-services/education>
Pratham: <http://www.pratham.org>
Save the Children: <http://www.savethechildren.in/what-we-do/education.html>
Sir Ratan Tata Trust: http://www.srtt.org/institutional_grants/education/elementary_education/elementary_education.htm.

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Development

