Parents' Views Regarding Their Children's Education and Future in Pakistan

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Declaration

'I, SADIA ASHRAF confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.'

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Abstract

This research aims to uncover lower pay-scale salaried parents' views about the education and future of their children in Islamabad, Pakistan. Educational opportunities for various regions and segments of population are inequitable due to a stratified system of education in Pakistan. Parents' views depict their perception of the real educational opportunities available for their children and their capability to optimally access these opportunities. Rich qualitative data, generated through in depth interviews with a purposive sample of small but diverse group of salaried parents in Islamabad, has revealed how they perceive their constraints and their capability to make best educational choices for their children. I have combined theoretical concepts from Amartya Sen's capability approach and Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice to analyse my data. The analysis has revealed various strategies adapted by participating parents to expand their choices and capabilities regarding the education of their children. The analysis uncovered three significant areas of parental behaviour regarding children's education: their capacity to aspire, to get admission to the school of their choice, and to engage in children' education in and out of school. Parents' capability regarding their children's education is found to be influenced by their dispositions and the combination of resources in their possession. Parents have demonstrated that activation and conversion of the form of capital in their possession, reduces their disadvantage or augment their advantage. Those parents who are able to activate the cultural and social forms of capital in their possession, considerably expand their capability to choose the school they prefer for their children, and their agency as well. To expand their capability to support their children's education in and out of the school, they combine their individual family members' resources to generate a new form of collective capability, which

I call family capability, that is driven by shared functionings regarding children's education

Impact Statement

The focus of my research is the views of the urban lower middle-class salaried parents regarding the constraints faced by them in providing education for their children in Islamabad, Pakistan. This research reveals a diversity in these parents' capability to secure and provide best educational opportunities for their children. The research findings point to the significance of enabling conditions in expanding a family's capability to reduce their disadvantage through activating and using the resources in their possession. I have found that families as units, use various strategies to reduce their disadvantage or gain advantage for their children in the field of education; most effective strategy involves activating and combining individuals' resources to optimise individual and collective benefits. This family strategy generates a collective capability which I call *family capability*. Family capability expands its members' freedom to achieve their shared and valued functionings and goals regarding the education of their children.

The concept of *family capability* can potentially impact research, family, and society by generating interest in further research and initiating new policy debate; such outcomes may be instigated by disseminating the notion of family capability through publishing in academic journals. My research hopes to incite an academic and policy interest in the strength of the family as a unit which could be an instrument of development in the traditional society of Pakistan and other low and middle income countries. I anticipate that the concept of family capability could lead to **further research** to explore, 1) the potential of family as an instrument of change in low and middle income countries, and 2) to identify the conditions that enable family to expand their capability to overcome poverty of educational opportunity; and 3) to uncover social benefits of expanding family capabilities.

This notion of family capability may also generate **policy** interest regarding 1) the social value of *the family*, 2) greater emphasis on *family* in policy discourse, 3) shifting policy thrust to family as the target unit of social policy;

and 4) public Investment in expansion of family capability as a social security network in low and middle income countries. The adverse effects of unrealistic policy targets and ineffective implementation for underprivileged, can be reduced by focusing on expansion of their family capability. To achieve their illusive targets of universal enrolment, the social policy should focus on creating enabling conditions for the expansion of family capabilities regarding children's education. The social policy that enables and engages family, can potentially influence more individuals than any other approach in Pakistan. A social policy that aims to expand family capabilities regarding the education of their children can:

1. Reduce intergenerational transmission of poverty of opportunity
2. can strengthen social cohesion by expanding underprivileged families' capabilities regarding their children's education
3. reduce the impeding impact upon future economic and social development of persisting educational poverty for individuals and groups.
4. Add economic and social value to the educated underprivileged

Thus, I envisage numerous beneficial outcomes for low and middle income families and society across the globe.
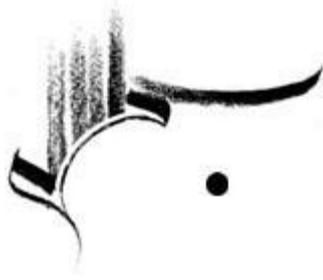
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Table of Contents

13

Abbreviations

AJK	Azad Jammu and Kashmir
APS	Affordable Private Schools
BPS	Basic Pay Scale
CA	Capability Approach
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
EMIS	Educational Management Information Systems
FA/FSc	Faculty in Arts/Science (Equivalent to 12th grade, Higher Secondary School Certificate or HSSC)
FDE	Federal Directorate of Education
FGBS#15	FG Boys Higher Secondary School #15, Chak Shahzad. Islamabad.
FGGS#12	FG Girls Secondary School #12 NIH, Islamabad
FGJMS	FG Junior Model School
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GEM	Gender Equality Measure
GoP	Government of Pakistan
HDI	Human Development Index
HSMC	High Scoring Middle Class
High School	Grades 9-10
Higher Secondary	Grades 11-12
ICT	Islamabad Capital Territory
KP/KPK NWFP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Since 15th April 2010) North West Frontier Province
LCP	Low Cost Private (Schools)
LEAPS	Learning and Educational Achievement in Punjab Schools
LSMC	Low Scoring Middle Class
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Studies

Matriculation, Matric	10th grade equivalent
Middle School	Grades 6-8
MoE	Ministry of Education
NEAS	National Education Assessment System
NEP	National Education Policy
NES	National Education Census
NIH	National Institute of Health
PEIP	the census of private educational institutions in Pakistan
PIHS	Pakistan Integrated Household Survey
PTM	Parent-Teacher Meeting
PPP	purchasing power parity
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
Primary School	Grades 1-5
PTA	Parent Teachers Associations
SMC	School Management Committees
Taqdeer	Fate; predestination; The Quran describes destiny in terms of God's decree before the creation of the universe.
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN HDR	United Nations Human Development Report

Meanings of Arabic Words

Alhamdulillah	Praise be to Allah (for his benevolence)
Alim	Religious scholar
Ilm	Religious education
In-sha-Allah	if Allah wills
Hafiz	One who has learnt Quran by heart
Hifz	Learning Quran by heart
Mashallah	With the will of Allah
Madrasah/Madrasahs	Religious school/Plural of Madrasah
Masjid	Mosque
Purdah	Seclusion of women

Introduction

1. Schooling Options: Constraints or Choices

Education is the most effective instrument for upward social mobility and high educational aspirations amongst working and middle-class families in Pakistan indicate general perception of the value of education as an instrument of betterment in people's lives. However, unequal educational opportunities constrain less privileged families' chances to realise their aspirations for the future of their children. This thesis sets out to understand how families formulate their aspirations and how they struggle to achieve their goals regarding their children's schooling.

Parents' own education, their economic resources and social contacts are among the resources that may facilitate their children's admission to their preferred school. Whereas, a widely stratified education system in Pakistan along with the discriminating social norms, immensely constrains less resourced parents' school choice. Apart from the three main types of schools, i.e. public and private schools and Madrassahs, multiple categories are found within each type of schools. The government policy supports a 'class-based hierarchical school system' (Tomlinson, 2015); Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) for example, has established separate schools for working-class children in Islamabad. Likewise, private schools differ not only according to the social class they cater but also the syllabi taught. Even madrassahs teach different curriculum on the basis of the religious sect they represent. This diversity in school types suggests multiple choices of schooling, however, as discussed in this thesis, choices are highly constrained for most parents. The current rate of 77 % enrolment (5-9 age group) at primary level and 39% at secondary level (AEPAM, 2018, p. 22) indicate presence of a 'choice' of 'no school' on the menu of school choice in Pakistan. Thus, this long list of schooling options may be viewed

as indicative of constraints rather than parents' choices regarding the schooling and education of their children in Pakistan.

The dire situation of education in Pakistan has not only been an area of concern for policy making but an interest for research as well. Research has identified various causes for the state's inability to achieve the target of universal enrolment since Pakistan's inception in 1947. For example, low public investment in education (Munshi and Bhatti, 2009, p. 14), lack of access, facilities, and teachers (ASER, 2015; FDE, 2013; Sawada and Lokshin, 2001; UNDP-Pakistan, 2016) poverty (UNDP-Pakistan, 2016) economic and social norms (Qureshi and Qayyum, 2017), political instability, poor management, supervision and corruption as reasons for poor policy implementation (Majoka and Khan, 2017) are some salient elements identified by researchers as the causes for low enrolment rates in Pakistan. All these elements indicate deprivation of opportunities and lack of enabling conditions, which are further deteriorated due to the cyclical deprivation of educational opportunities. Out of 15 indicators of deprivation, education claims highest weightage at 29.7% on the national MPI (Multidimensional Poverty Index) (UNDP-Pakistan, 2016). This evidence points to the significance of inadequate educational opportunities regarding the deprivation level of the poor in Pakistan. The UNDP report also confirms that almost 18% children are not attending school in Pakistan due to school quality issues, which include lack of teachers, access, affordability, lack of female/male teachers or substandard schools (UNDP-Pakistan, 2016, p. 9).

The evidence presented above indicates that even those 77% of children who are attending school, may not have the equitable opportunity for betterment of their circumstances due to substandard education. Where disadvantaged rural and urban parents have *chosen* school for their children, children receive low quality of education imparted in under-provisioned urban and rural public schools and Low Cost Private (LCP) schools. The low level of learning in government schools reinforce rather than alleviate their pupils' disadvantage (Jamil, 2017, p. 7). As compared to the absolute disadvantage of rural parents, the lower-middle and

working-class urban parents experience a relative disadvantage in the context of better educational facilities around them. Whereas, the rural parents' constraints are mainly about non-availability of school or very low quality of school, urban parents' constraints are caused by their lack of capability to access the best schools around them due to scarcity of economic and relevant cultural resources. These parents and their problems have generated little research interest so far; where and if they are researched, their inability to support their children's education is generally interpreted as their lack of interest in their children's education (e.g. Chohan and Qadir, 2013). This misperception conceals the causes for parents' lack of interest, if at all, and policy and structural failures that lead to their 'disinterest'. Gender norms are a significant cause of low enrolment of girls in rural areas (Hashmi, Zafar and Ahmad, 2008; Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011); however, poverty (Saeed and Zia, 2015) non-availability of school (Burgess et al., 2009; Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011), male teachers or safety concerns for girls (Asghar and Zahra, 2012, p. 120) can be equally significant causes for girls' low enrolment. Lack of enabling conditions due to ineffective policy and undermining and suppressing their voices in public dialogue regarding the policy matters, augment the disadvantage of the marginalised. Qualitative research can be an effective instrument to explore and uncover varied subjective constraints faced by disadvantaged segments of society.

2. Cognizance of Constraints: The Topic of this Research

The main thrust of the research on education has been the lack of schooling facilities in Pakistan; little attention has been paid to explore how adverse circumstances impact on school going children's families' real options regarding their education. The purpose of this qualitative research is to explore the nature of freedoms and constraints experienced, by Pakistani urban parents in low-level salaried jobs, in achieving their desired education for their children. I seek to uncover the views of these parents regarding

their aspirations for education and future of their children and their perception of the options available to them and constraints on achieving their desired goals for their children. I also explore their strategies to negotiate through their constraints to reduce their disadvantage and achieve what they aspire for their children.

The course of my job in the field of education provided me an opportunity to interact with HSSC and graduate students, parents, my colleagues in higher education and support and clerical staff, from various social strata and diverse origin. My interest in parents' choices regarding their children's education is kindled during my long career in education. Although I have taught at a higher education institution, I observed that the clerical and support staff constantly struggled with numerous constraints regarding the educating and career choices of their children, which often they made on the behalf of their children. I observed that even urban parents' educational choices for their male and female children are narrowed by their perceived constraints rather than real opportunities. Even though the field of Home Economics that I teach in, offers six specializations with varied professional and career opportunities for the graduates, the general aspiration envisaged by most parents and students is to train as better homemakers; the gendered future role perceived for them is embedded in their cultural context and eliminates other professional career options from their desired future. These narrow gendered aspirations, in spite of multiple career options, make me wonder about the process of aspiration formulation at the very basic level and the influences that define the boundaries of parents' aspirations for the future of their children.

3. Research Design and Theoretical Framework

My interest in uncovering parents' views and ideas led to a qualitative research design with in-depth, semi structured interviews. The key questions for my research are:

(1) what are the aspirations and goals of lower middle and middle-class government employees for the future of their male and female children?

(2) how do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations, school choices and engagement in their children's education? And

(3) how do families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities regarding their children's schooling and education?

I chose the residential colony of NIH (National Institute of Health), a national organization in Islamabad as the main site for my qualitative research. This organisation includes primarily civil servants, many of whom can be described as lower-middle-class because they exhibit some middle-class characteristics. They are mostly skilled technicians and office workers in lower pay scales, have secure government jobs, official accommodation in an exclusive residence facility for the employees of NIH and other perks like subsidised transport facility for their children who attend schools in Islamabad. Due to all the additional benefits granted by their organization, these government employees fare better than most other government employees in similar jobs and pay scales. However, most of them are from rural origin and lack those cultural resources which are more valued in urban educational setting; for example, many participating mothers are illiterate, some families moved to Islamabad several years after the head of the family with a few years' rural education experience for their children. Such characteristics position them at relative disadvantage to their urban colleagues and neighbours and in spite of their many middle-class characteristics, several participating families are unable to exhibit the ideal urban middle-class dispositions. I have chosen this site, firstly, because though broadly middle-class, the diverse origin of the employees ensures diversity of sample, and secondly, because of a hypothetical homogeneity of educational opportunities available to the inhabitants of this colony, due

to three specially constructed schools in the colony for employees' children and the various options in Islamabad. Doing fieldwork at one site offers a naturally controlled environment along with many similarities in lifestyle in a very diverse group of respondents. To resolve the issue of participating families' categories, I developed a simple scorecard and placed the families with a total score in a single digit in the category of Low-Scoring-Middle-Class (LSMC), while those with a score in double digit in the High-Scoring-Middle-Class (HSMC) families (See Apeendix-4; p.114).

To make meaning of my qualitative data, I have combined Amartya Sen's Capability Approach and Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of capital, habitus and field. These theoretical concepts are useful in analysing the impact of parents' resources, social structures and enabling conditions on their capability to achieve their aspired outcomes regarding the education of their children.

This thesis comprises of eight chapters:

Chapter-1: The first chapter presents an overview of this thesis and introduces the reader to the context of this research.

Chapter-2: I review the literature to draw attention to the structural constraints on schooling opportunities and schooling options for underprivileged parents in Pakistan. The literature review focuses on the enabling conditions, or lack of thereof, for the opportunities for basic education.

Chapter-3: The capability approach concepts of capability, functioning and agency are synthesised with three concepts from Bourdieu's theory of action, i.e. habitus, capital and field, to formulate a comprehensive theoretical framework for my qualitative research.

Chapter-4: Explains the methodology for my research, including introducing the site and sample, and the rationale for semi-structured interviews. I also examine the latent threats to the trustworthiness of my qualitative data, like power relations between the interviewer and

interviewee, the production and presentation of the data in multiple languages, and ethical concerns about researching the emotive topic of parents' constraints regarding the future of their children.

Chapter-5: is my first data analysis chapter, addressing two key questions: What are the aspirations and goals of participating parents for the future of their male and female children? And how do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations? I explore the concept of aspiration formulation as a capability that is influenced not only by the cognisance of the resources but also by the habitus of the individual. The analysis uncovered three aspects of aspiration formulation: (1) the capacity to aspire is unequal even within the same family; (2) significant influence of habitus on parents' aspirations for their children; and (3), parents adapt their aspirations to their perceived opportunities in the context of the resources available to them. Parents' strategies to adjust their aspirations according to the form and relevance of the capital in their possession are also examined in this chapter and it was found that due to the advantage of access to more resources fathers had more capacity to aspire realizable aspirations, as compared to mothers.

Chapter-6: In chapter 6, parents' views about the choice of school for their children have been analysed. I seek the answers to three sub-questions specified for this chapter: (1) How does school choice reflect family goals and aspirations? (2) How do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their school choices? And (3) how do families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities? The degree of advantage open to this group of parents is indicated by their capability to choose the best schooling option on their menu of choice. This analysis has found that parents' capability of school choice is varied not only due to difference in the set of capital in their possession, but also due to their varied habitus. Gender and the capability to activate the form of capital in their possession are found to be significant influences in this regard. Various forms of social capital have also been found to be significant as a strategic instrument in reducing the impact of lack of

economic resources and irrelevance of cultural forms of capital on family's menu of resources. Shared goals and sharing of individual's capabilities to generate family capability have been found to be an effective strategy to expand the collective capability of the family regarding the choice of school for their children.

Chapter-7: In this chapter, I have analysed parents' capability to engage in their children's education in and out-of-school. Answers to three questions is sought in this cahpre: Which parental capabilities impact on their engagement in their children's education? How do parents utilise their resources to expand their capabilities regarding their engagement in their children's education? And how do they endeavour to bridge any perceived gap between the resources possessed and those required for a satisfying involvement in their children's education? These questions are derived from the second and third key questions. It is found that parents' own academic capital is most significant for this capability. My analysis found that the strategy to generate a family capability was most successful in this aspect of parental behaviour, too. The gendered division of space into public and private, far and near and male and female have emerged as a significant basis of sharing this responsibility between the two parents. Mothers have gainfully activated parental authority to establish a routine of strict discipline for children, to compensate for their lack of academic capital regarding children's studies at home. Part-time paid tuitions near exams, is a frequently used strategy for their older children by the LSMC, with low academic capital.

Chapter-8: In the last chapter of my thesis, I present the concept of family capability; I perceive this concept as a strategic combining of individual capabilities to expand the collective capability of the family to achieve family's shared aspirations and goals. Based upon the analysis of my qualitative data I have presented three types of family capabilities: (1) Family capability to aspire, (2) Family capability to choose the preferred school, (3) Family capability to involve in education. The third capability is further categorised into family capability to participate in school, and family

capability to engage in out-of-school education. I argue that families who are cognisant of the value of the form of capital in their possession and have the capability to activate these forms to convert into or generate new forms, are able to expand their desired capability to the optimal level. Parents' capability to activate their capital to the best advantage of their family is immensely impacted by their dispositions; parents from rural origin and with less education face an undue disadvantage in the field of urban education because they lack the relevant and effective schemes of perception, thought and action, in the context of urban education and thus struggle with constraints in their efforts to make worthy contribution in accumulation of academic capital for their children. I contend for focussed research in this area of family capability to inform equitable policy making.

Schooling Opportunities and Public Policy in Pakistan

Pakistan is a developing country with an open market economy, where the options for even basic education are controlled by the market. This accentuates economic rather than social concerns as motivators for social rationales for parents' choices of schooling for their children. Amartya Sen argues that basic education has a public-good component, because its shared communal benefits transcend individual gains from schooling and thus effective provisioning by state is required, for those services to have an effective reach. The communal benefits of basic education, he contends, can facilitate social change and enhance economic progress (Sen, 1999a, pp.128-9).

Schooling options in Pakistan range from no school to multiple types of schools, including public, private and Madrassah, indicating a stratified education market that caters for clients with varied capacities in terms of fulfilling the requirements of each available option (see. Appendix-5 for details). Despite the variety of school types available, a range of constraints limits many parents' capability to make schooling choices for their children. The various types of schools also indicate the failure of public policy in providing equitable schooling opportunities for basic education in Pakistan. I present the structure of formal education in Pakistan in Table-2.1, before starting my discussion of the literature, so as to introduce the reader to the education system in Pakistan.

Table-2.1: Structure of Education in Pakistan

Level of Schooling		Grade	Age Group
Elementary Education	Pre-primary	UA-K[1]	4-5
	Primary	1-5	6-10
	Middle School	6-8	11-13
Secondary Education	High School	9-10	14-15
	Higher Secondary	11-12	16-17

Source: PES 2016-17, p.4

This chapter focuses on the literature regarding the primary level of education, because firstly, primary school is the entry level to education for the majority of children in Pakistan and secondly, the options and opportunities at the entry level of schooling determine the future options and opportunities for children. I have focussed on the research literature in Pakistan and looked at it in the context of the latest policy at the federal and provincial levels. This review focuses on constraints regarding schooling options in Pakistan in the context of public policy. Much of the research evidence is based on quantitative studies. I review the statistical evidence, and develop an argument that the structure of education in Pakistan is deeply unequal, operating to constrain parental choice in complex ways. The first section of this chapter looks at public policy promises and provision of education. The focus of this section is the extent of disparities in educational opportunities and the factors underlying these. This section leads into the discussion on various constraints faced by parents on the schooling choices in Pakistan. The next section looks at the menu of schooling options in Pakistan and how these result in the reproduction of advantages for some and disadvantages for others by expanding or limiting their choices through a system of exclusion that favours specific combination of resources possessed by the choosers. The last section of

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[1] Formal *katchi* class is a pre-primary class for 3-5 year olds.

this chapter reviews the concept of equity in education with reference to quality of education and the infrastructure of the schools in Pakistan.

1. Policy: Promises & Provision

Three aspects of public policy need to be examined in the context of education in Pakistan: political provision in the form of laws and legislation, administrative commitment in the form of sector specific policies and their implementation, and financial commitment in the form of budgetary allocation. Since Pakistan's inception in 1947, the education policy has promised free and compulsory education for all and sought to achieve universal primary enrolment. The target for universal enrolment has never been achieved though; according to the most recent government statistics the net enrolment rate at primary level was 54% in 2015-16, which is 3 percentage points less than 2013-14 (ESP, 2018, p.157). The government's continuous failure to achieve the enrolment target indicates not only lack of capability, but also suggests a lack of commitment to expand its capability regarding the same. This issue bears special significance for my research due to the constraints caused by policy on parents' schooling choices for their children. I shall look at the most recent legislation in the following section, as reference point for uncovering the inherent constraints on opportunities of education for all.

2. Laws and Legislation

The provision of free and compulsory education for all five to sixteen year old children is the responsibility of the state[2] (GoP, 2010). The right to free and compulsory education is 'determined by law' (Op cit) and this specified age range means free and compulsory education up until the end of high school. Careful scrutiny is required to ascertain where the legal responsibility for compulsory education lies. According to the plan of devolution of administrative power to lower levels through eighteenth

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[2] Article 25A

amendment in 2010 the departments of school and college education were to be administered at provincial and district level (Khan and Mirza, 2011, p. 164). In December 2012, the federal government passed a bill on '*the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2012'* (henceforth RTFCE-2012) and according to this Act:

> 'Every child, regardless of sex, nationality or race, shall have a fundamental right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school' (GoP, 2012).

It fixed the responsibility on the *appropriate government* to establish schools in every neighbourhood within three years from the Act's commencement (Clause-6, 7) and children's attendance was made the duty of the parents (Clause-8). Private schools are bound to provide free education to disadvantaged children for up to 10% of their enrolment in every class (Clause-10). There shall be no screening for admission in a school (Clause-2-I). The Act formalises the mechanism for involving civil society through formulation of School Management Committees (SMC) at the school level, including membership of parents and women (Clause-16). There has also been the establishment of Education Advisory Councils (Clause-22), at the provincial government level, including persons of 'knowledge and practical experience in the field of education, child rights and child development'. These bodies are tasked with taking the necessary steps in their respective domains to ensure attendance of all eligible children; the SMC has power to penalise parents who refuse to enrol children. In 2013, Sindh and Balochistan made corresponding legislation to implement Article 25-A, borrowing mainly from the RTFCE-2012 (ICG, 2014, p,2) whilst the Punjab government followed suit in 2014. However, the 'Punjab Free and Compulsory Education 2014 bill' minimises the role of civil society experts envisioned under federal, Sindh and Balochistan laws. The KP passed their Free and Compulsory Education Act in 2017. According to the federal and provincial Acts, provision of education up to high school is the responsibility of the 'appropriate government'. Under the federal Act, the government has to make provision of schooling opportunity

for out-of-school children, disadvantaged (clause-2-d) and disabled children (clause-2-c).

3. Administrative Commitment

Prior to the 18th amendment to the constitution of Pakistan in 2010, education was a joint federal and provincial function. Policy, plans and the national curriculum were formulated at the national level, while the provinces developed their own planning and implementation schemes within the framework of national policy and the curriculum (I-SAPS, 2011; Khan and Mirza, 2011, p. 8). The promulgation of Article 25-A limited role of the federal government and posed a challenge in framing of new laws and interpretation of the constitutional provision in the context of the devolution of education (I-SAPS, 2011, p. 17). According to Hasnain (2010, p.140), the local governments prioritise provision of physical infrastructure like roads, water, sanitation and rural electrification at the expense of education and health and these priorities has been driven by provincial priorities in response to public demand. Hasnain's analysis implies that voters connect public expenditure on infrastructure to improvement in their areas by their political representatives and prefer such projects over education and health in Pakistan and even public sector development is shaped by a market model, where the voters are sold their desired goods, rather than long-term development projects in health and education sectors. Low 'public demand' for education has meant that the political class has been able to justify low allocation of financial resources for the provision of education, particularly in the less developed regions of the country. The policy trend of prioritising physical infrastructure at the cost of education is alarming in view of low enrolment rates in the country and the falling behind the target of universal enrolment given that Pakistan being a signatory of international covenants, e.g. SDG. However, Hasnain's view that education is low on the priorities of the citizens of Pakistan runs counter to the phenomenal growth of Low-Cost-Private (LCP) schools since 1990 as

evidence of people's desire to educate their children (See Private Schools, p.55).

4. Financial Commitment

With the enrolment rate of 57% at the primary level (ESP, 2018, p. 157) and an allocation of 2.2% of GDP for education in the federal budget (ESP, 2018, p. 157), (Table-2.2), the federal and provincial legislation for free and compulsory education seemed to be too ambitious. In sum, the government needs to prioritise education in public policy, for the Acts passed can be effective only when backed up by serious political, administrative and financial commitment. Presently, public funding of education in Pakistan is lowest among the South Asian countries. The country falls in the category of *Medium Human Development* on the Human Development Index (HDI)[3], ranking 150 among 188 countries in 2018, 3 levels down since 2016. Of the South Asian countries, even Afghanistan allocated a higher percentage of their GDP on education than Pakistan. Among this group of countries, only Bhutan has lower gross primary enrolment ratio than Pakistan (UNHDR, 2016; UNHDR, 2018), as indicated in the Table-2.2.

Table-2.2: Comparison of Literacy, enrolment & Percentage of GDP spent on education among South Asian countries

HDI Rank 2016	HDI Rank 2018		Government Expenditure on education (% of GDP) 2016	Government Expenditure on education (% of GDP) 2018	Literacy rate 2006-2016 Adult (% ages 15 and older)	Gross primary enrolment ratio (% of primary school–age population) 2012-2017
69	60	Iran	3.0	3.4	84.7	109
73	76	Sri Lanka	1.6	3.5	91.2	102
105	101	Maldives	5.2	4.3	98.6	102
131	130	India	3.8	3.8	69.3	115

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[3] HDI is a summary measure of average achievement in the three key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, being knowledgeable and have a decent standard of living (UNDP).

132	134	Bhutan	5.9	7.4	57.0	95
139	136	Bangladesh	2.0	2.5	72.8	119
144	149	Nepal	4.7	3.7	59.6	134
147	150	Pakistan	2.5	2.8	57.0	98
169	168	Afghanistan	4.8	3.2	31.7	105

Source: UNHDR, 2016 & UNHDR, 2018

The Government of Pakistan has given the figure of 2.2% as the expenditure on education (ESP, 2018, p.157) which is much below the figure of 2.8 given in the above table. The low spending on education has been an historical trend in Pakistan. Figure-2.1 illustrates how the education budget has never exceeded 2.5% of GDP since 2000-01 in Pakistan and was reduced as low as 1% in 2004-05.

Figure-2.1: National Expenditure on Education
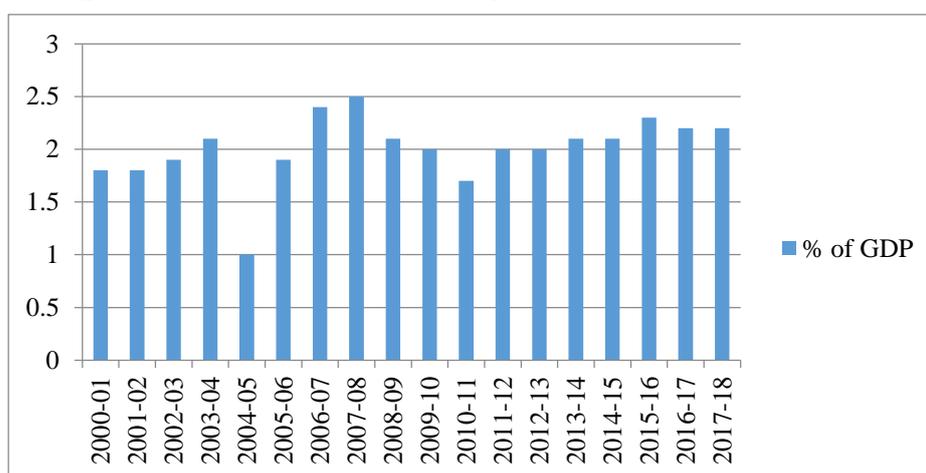
Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2007-08 to 20017-18

These figures are significant in view of the fact that after the RTFCE-2012, the budgetary allocation for education in the next budget remained 2.1% of GDP in spite of the fact that the Act required provision of a school in every neighbourhood within three years of its commencement. The RTFCE-2012 also commits federal government to sharing financial obligations with the local governments (clause-7-2), a measure without which regional and gender disparity in education cannot be reduced. Increased public investment is imperative to reduce setbacks in the public education system. The International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity calls for governments to increase domestic public expenditures to support

universal provision of primary education in low- and middle-income countries by 2030, which requires an increase from 4% to 5·8% of GDP expenditures on education and is equivalent to an annual rate of growth in public education spending of 7% over a 15 years' period (ICFGEO, 2016, p.22). Public spending on basic education indicates states' commitment to the goal of universal primary education. The meagre budgetary allocation barely meets the recurring expenditures (Faiz et al., 2016, p.19); this situation results in accentuating the disadvantage of the marginalised because they are deprived of the schools presently and there is little provision for establishment of new schools in the small amount allocated for education.

5. Constraints on Schooling Choices in Pakistan

The education statistics indicate the marked disadvantage of the poor, female, rural and tribal population with significantly lower enrolment rates than other cohorts. Membership of multiple disadvantaged groups, like the poor, rural and female, usually compounds the disadvantage of a child. The RTFCE-2012, undertakes to 'ensure that the disadvantaged child is not discriminated against and prevented from, on any grounds whatsoever, pursuing and completing education' (Clause-3-f). The RTFCE-2012 defines a *disadvantaged child* as 'a child who belongs to a socially and economically disadvantaged class, or group or is in a family whose annual income is lower than the minimum limit specified by the appropriate Government'. This Act, thus, seeks to protect the right to education for all the disadvantaged groups mentioned above. The following sections looks at the research conducted to uncover the constraints on the schooling options of the disadvantaged groups in Pakistan.

6. Poverty and Child Labour

Poverty is not merely lack of income, it is lack of freedom to do valuable things (Sen, 2000, p.5). Sen includes illiteracy in deprivation of basic

capabilities along with premature mortality and undernourishment, specifically for children (Sen, 1999a, p.20). The role of the state and public policy, thus, should be to provide equitable opportunities for the deprived people in the society to expand their 'freedom to do valuable things'. For example, it should deliver real opportunities for equitable schooling for all school-age children regardless of their parents' income, gender, religion, race or origin, as the RTFCE-2012 aims to do. The state must ensure that the education system prioritizes the poor and reaches the most disadvantaged and marginalized (ICFGEO, 2016, p.19). Public provision of quality education expands the educational opportunities for the disadvantaged children. Asghar and Zahra (2012) conducted research to analyse the benefit of public spending on education for the poor and the incidence of public spending at each level of education in the national and provincial contexts. They used the household level data from the *Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey 2007-08.* These authors elicited that the bottom four income deciles benefited most from public spending on primary education, whilst more affluent people prefer private schools due to the perceived higher quality of education (ibid 2012, p.120). Their finding is confirmed by ASER-2016, according to which, 77% children from the poorest quartile attend government schools (2017, p.7). Thus, mainly poor people are the beneficiaries of public spending on primary education and thus, they concluded that the public policy for primary education in Pakistan is pro-poor. They found that the share of upper income deciles increases at tertiary level of education, as 65% of public spending on education was shared by the upper three deciles as compared to only 11% for the bottom 30% of the population. It is confirmed by research that 46 percent of low-income countries' education budget is spent on the top 10 percent most educated students (ICFGEO, 2016, p.20). However, Asghar and Zahra's conclusion that public spending on primary education is pro-poor, because the poor are beneficiaries of public education at the primary level is simplistic, since they also acceded that enrolment in public schools decreases with increase in household income, probably because affluent parents send their children to private schools due

to low quality of public schools (Asghar and Zahra, 2012, p.120). I argue that most parents' choice of public school is driven by affordability rather than quality of education in Pakistan; private schools are generally perceived as better quality schools with better future prospects for their students. The lower quality of education in public schools has been confirmed by the lower levels of learning found for their students (Figure-2.6). The public primary school, thus, is not an equitable opportunity for the poor; it is the only option. The higher ratio of upper deciles at higher levels of education in public institutions, confirms parents' preference for a good quality of education in the choice of school for their children at all levels. Moreover, the lower quality education in public schools places their students at relative disadvantage to private school graduates, for admission to higher education institutions. In sum, whilst public spending on basic education may reduce the disadvantage for the deprived at the earlier levels, the reverse is the case at higher levels, as only the more advantaged privately educated young people reach the academic thresholds for entry to public higher education institutions.

Saeed and Zia (2015) have identified poverty as having an important impact on female and rural enrolment. They found that gender disparity in enrolment is much wider lower down the wealth index, with a difference of 21 percentage points between the enrolment of boys and girls in the poorest quintile as compared to one of 4% for the richest.

Figure-2.2: Wealth Index: Enrolment by Gender

Enrolment by Gender

	Poorest	Poorer	Richer	Richest
Overall	59	70	78	85
Male	67	76	82	87
Female	46	62	73	83
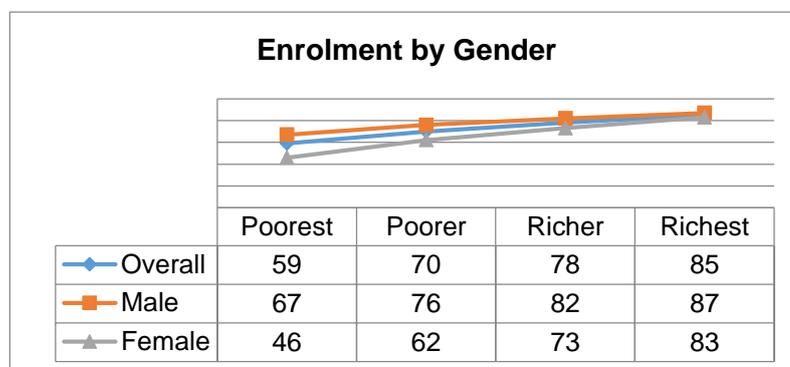
Source: Saeed (2017), p.17

Without undermining the significance of poverty in enhancing the effect of gender, I refer to the regional differences in enrolment indicated in the Figure-2.5 to argue that the difference in the enrolment in male/female and rural/urban areas might be reduced through the expansion of public schooling facilities.

The disadvantage of the children from lower income families is also indicated in the higher percentage of out-of-school children in the lower-income groups (Nguyen and Raju, 2015, p.11). The latest income disaggregated data for out-of-school is from PES 2018 which is presented in Fig-2.3. The staggering figures presented here raise doubts about the claim of there being a pro-poor public education policy in Pakistan.

Figure-2.3: Percentage of Out-of-school Children by Income Group
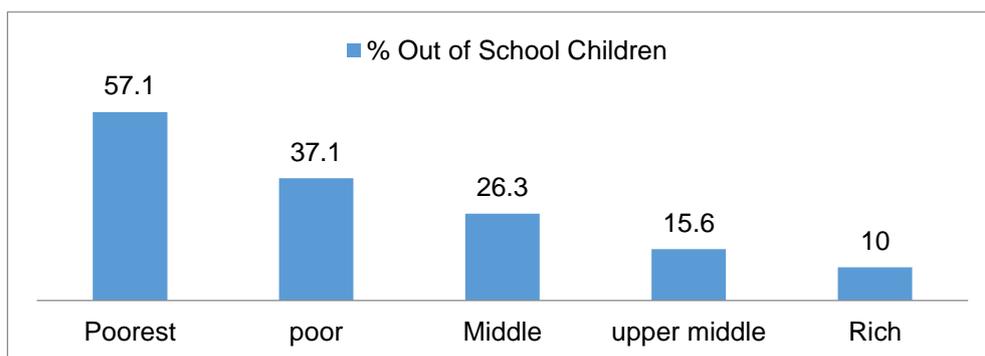
Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2016-17 (2018)

Poverty (e.g. see ASER, 2016; Asghar and Zahra, 2012; CREB, 2012; Jamal, 2014; Mahmood, Saqib and Qasim, 2017) and non-availability of schools (e.g. see Burgess et al., 2009; Iram et al., 2008; Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011) have been confirmed as significant deterrents to school attendance. Thus, poverty and lack of public provision of education compound the disadvantage of the poor people in Pakistan.

Child labour is another factor that compounds the disadvantage of poor children. The probable financial loss for families, of school attendance over children's participation in paid employment or unpaid work on the family farm or in the household constrains many children's schooling

opportunities. Pakistan's 2010-2011 Labour Force Survey reveals that employment ratio for 10-14 years old children is 13.0 per cent and between the ages of 10-17 years is 19.9 per cent, and more than two-third of these children are employed in agriculture sector. Out of these, 67.9 percent children are engaged in unpaid family work and the remaining 32.1 per cent are paid workers or self-employed (Khan and Lyon, 2015, p.67). The most recent estimate by the ILO gives a figure of 3.4 million children between 5 and 17 years participating in the workforce in Pakistan (Khan, 2015). Child farm labour is a significant indicator of poverty and a major reason for low enrolment in rural areas. According to Khan and Lyon (Khan and Lyon, 2015, p.68), the percentage of 10-14 years children in paid employment is 12.9 and 10.1 respectively for girls and boys. Children from poorer households are engaged in waged work, while those from land rich households mostly work on family farms (Bhalotra and Heady, 2003). The latest available statistics on labour force participation for the ages between 10 and 14 years by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics presented in the Figure-2.4 are in line with these research findings, where it can be seen that more than 12% children between the ages of 10 and 14 are engaged in paid employment in Pakistan, at present. These statistics indicate higher rates of child labour in the agricultural regions of all provinces. I would like to draw attention here to the higher percentage of boys in paid employment all over Pakistan (Figure-2.4) in the more populated regions of the country. These statistics indicate the dimension of gender that disfavours poor boys, by pinning on them the responsibility of supporting the family from an early age in cases of financial hardship.

Figure-2.4 Labour Force Participation

	Urban Male	Urban Female	Rural Male	Rural Female
■ Pakistan	5.66	2.26	12.31	16.18
■ Punjab	7.61	2.14	13.04	15.46
■ Sindh	3.15	2.27	16.96	21.95
■ KP	5.57	2.42	6.74	13.11
■ Balochistan	2.35	2.24	8.81	13.61
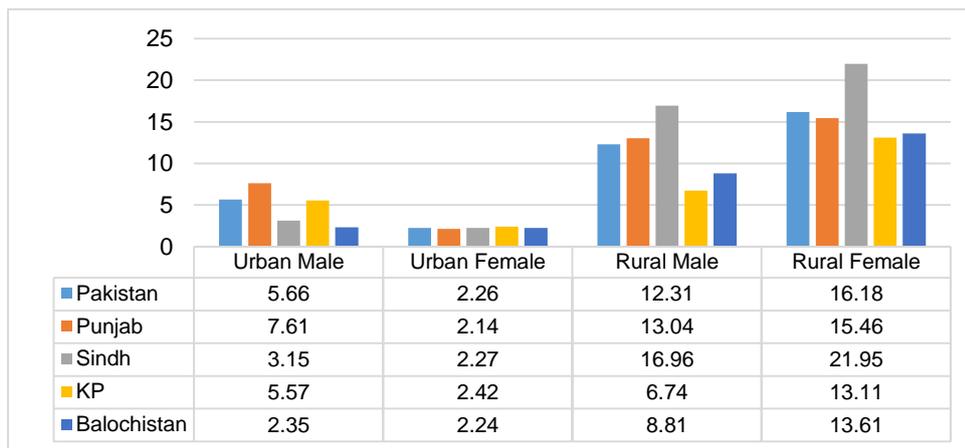
Source: Labour Force Participation Rates, 2017-18, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (GoP)

The higher rates of girls' engagement in work in rural than urban areas indicated in the Figure-2.4, point to a likely cause of low female enrolment in the rural areas of Pakistan. Pakistan has lowest attendance rate among South Asian countries for children between the ages of 8-16 years (Khan and Lyon, 2015, p.67). Bhalotra and Heady purported that policies directly promoting school attendance may be more prolific in reducing gender gaps in enrolment than discouraging child labour (2003, p.12). The RTFCE-2012 calls for heavy fines, imprisonment or both for employers of school age children 'on remuneration or otherwise', in cases of nonattendance of school of the child employed. Similarly, the Balochistan Act recommends a minimum fine for child employers, whilst the Sindh, Punjab and KP governments have no clause against child labour in their bills on free and compulsory education. The rate of child labour specifically for girls is significantly lower in urban areas except for Balochistan; (Figure-2.4). The gender variance in the labour force participation in different regions could be viewed as reflecting different patterns of shifting and maintaining traditional gender roles inside and outside the house.

The significant question that needs to be explored in this context is in what circumstances parents actually prefer a child's engagement in economic activity over education and what factors impact on their decision of no-school and child work. For example, they may be constrained by **social**

norms, such as gender norms limiting girls' education in certain parts of the country (Hashmi, Zafar and Ahmad, 2008; Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011), poverty, or lack of a school in their village (Burgess et al., 2009; Iram et al., 2008; Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011; Mahmood, Saqib and Qasim, 2017). In any of these situations, the state bears the responsibility for the continuation of their disadvantage through strengthening a system of non-discrimination. The current arrangements have the state, in effect, favouring possession of economic as well as cultural and social capital, or what Bourdieu describes as symbolic violence[4] or the reproduction of cultural arbitrary[5] of the dominant or of the dominated classes through a discriminatory education system (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011, p.5). The state, thus, has failed to establish enabling conditions where people can base their decisions on what they actually have reason to value (Walker and Unterhalte, 2007), rather than being constrained by the existing social and economic inequalities.

7. Regional and Gender Disparity in School Availability and Access

The state commits to providing free and compulsory education to every child in their neighbourhood (GoP, 2012) (Clause-3-1). Physical accessibility issues can include distance from the school, absence of a school in the area, inadequate infrastructure etc. The issues in relation to access impacts on girls' enrolment more than that of boys. A recent study by AEPAM (2018) indicates wider gender gap in enrolment in rural public

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[4] '…symbolic violence is exerted whenever any power imposes meanings and imposes them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its ability to impose those meanings' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977, p.13).

[5] 'In any given social formation the cultural arbitrary which the power relations between the groups or classes making up that social formation put into the dominant position within the system of cultural arbitraries is the one which most fully, though always indirectly, expresses the objective interests (material and symbolic) of the dominant groups or classes' (Bourdieu, and Passeron, 2011, p9).

and private schools; this disadvantage is highest in rural public high schools which may be due to non-availability of high schools for girls in the villages.

Table-2.3: Percentage of Enrolment (Public/Private) by Stage, Gender and Location

	Public			Private		
	Overall	Urban	Rural	Overall	Urban	Rural
Primary Male	56.67	54.21	57.07	56.20	54.16	58.50
Primary Female	43.32	45.78	42.92	43.79	45.83	41.49
Primary Total	100	14.02	85.97	100	53	46.98
Middle Male	50.93	48.76	51.48	56.18	54.53	58.27
Middle Female	49.06	51.23	48.51	43.81	45.46	41.72
Middle Total	100	20.23	79.76	100	55.94	44.05
High Male	55.98	49.16	60.13	57.81	57.19	58.95
High Female	44.01	50.83	39.86	42.18	42.80	41.04
High Total	100	37.87	62.12	100	64.68	35.31

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2016-17 (2018)

Gender difference in enrolment in rural private schools is almost same across various levels of schooling; whereas statistics show more gender variation in rural public school enrolment at various levels. It means that parents who choose public school for their children are more likely to consider the option of *no school* for their daughters; or conversely, presence of a private school in the vicinity increases the schooling options for girls in rural areas.

The continuation of the trends of disadvantage or reproduction of the cultural arbitrary (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011) illustrates on the one hand the state's failure to alleviate these disadvantages, and on the other hand, society's acceptance of the established order of inequality. Sen explains complicity of the deprived thus:

> Deprived groups may be habituated to inequality, may be unaware of possibilities of social change, may be hopeless about upliftment of objective circumstances of misery, may be resigned to fate, and may well be willing to accept the legitimacy of the established order (Sen, 2006b, pp. 9-10).

Acceptance of the legitimacy of the established order is most obvious in the aforementioned persistent gender bias in enrolment in certain regions of the country. For example, educational statistics indicate higher enrolment rates at secondary level for girls in urban areas of Punjab and lowest in Balochistan (Figure-2.5); whereas, lowest female enrolment rates at secondary level in rural Balochistan and rural Sindh indicate higher bias against female education in these regions. A concise tabulation of the enrolment trends derived from PSLM (2016) is presented below.

Figure-2.5: Enrolment by Education Level In Pakistan Urban/Rural And Provinces (%)

	Primary Urban Male	Primary Urban female	Primary Rural male	Primary Rural Female	Matric Urban Male	Matric Urban Female	Matric Rural Male	Matric Rural Female
Balochistan	78	65	63	32	26	16	15	5
KP	82	73	77	60	34	26	34	16
Sindh	75	72	61	41	39	33	20	8
Punjab	81	79	70	62	39	44	24	21
Pakistan	79	75	69	56	38	38	25	17
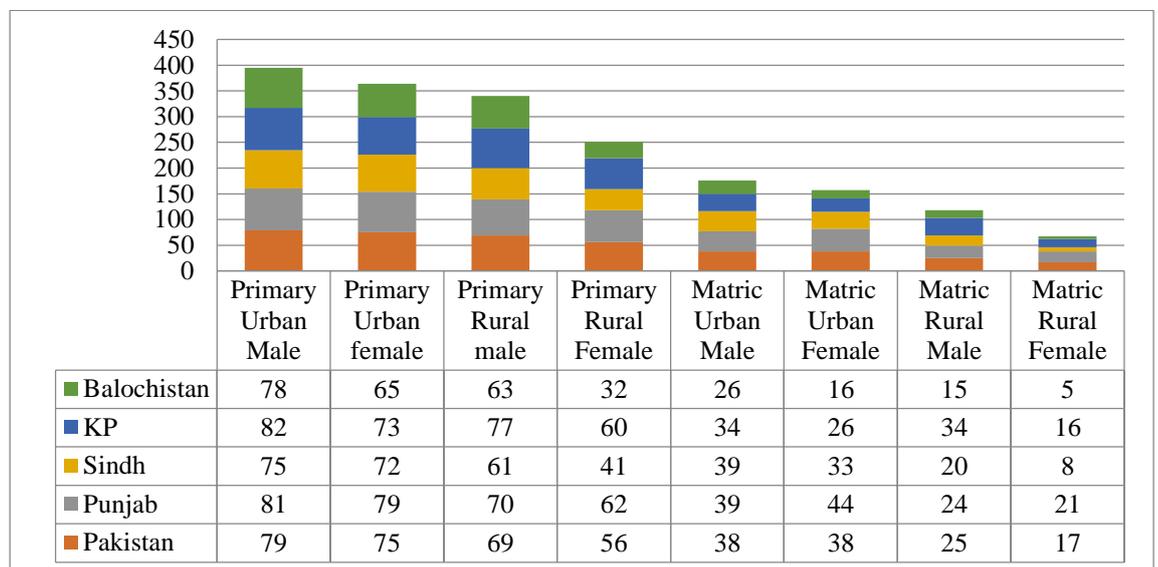
Source: Calculations based on PSLM2014-15 (2016)

The statistics indicate that the ratio of enrolment favours males at the primary level in Pakistan; however, gender difference in enrolment is not as high in Punjab and Sindh as in KP and Balochistan. Gender disparity in enrolment is widest in Balochistan, rural Sindh and rural KP. Asghar and Zahra speculate that overprotection of females in these provinces is one cause of gender disparity in enrolment (Asghar and Zahra, 2012, p.120). However, there is no denying the fact that it is state's failure to establish enabling conditions for female education in these regions and that its failure to do so signals an acceptance of male symbolic power through the reproduction of the cultural arbitrary of the dominant or of the dominated.

8. Gender and Social Constraints

Social reasons, like cultural and religious beliefs, social exclusion, low status social positioning, low parental perception of girls' education etc., also restrict girls' education. Jacoby & Mansuri (2011) uncovered the impact of social boundaries imbedded in the traditional norms of social segregation as a significant aspect of access, specifically with regards to girls in rural areas of Sindh and south Punjab in Pakistan. They found that regardless of the actual distance, access to school was linked with the problematic issue of crossing the geographical boundaries of the rural settlement, in particular, for the high-caste girls in Sindh and southern Punjab. A huge gender gap in enrolment of 9-15 year olds was found in the underprivileged southern Punjab and rural Sindh; two regions with geographical as well as cultural proximity.

Image-2.1: Map of Pakistan

Jacoby and Mansuri contend that in rural settlements in these regions children from the dominant caste have advantage in school enrolment and low-caste children living in high-caste dominant settlements are disadvantaged in terms of school attendance. They listed the cost of attending school for low caste rural children as including: (1) school fees and other monetary costs; (2) foregone labour in the home; (3) inconvenience and risk of walking to school; and (4) psychic cost of social pressure, reputational harm and stigma etc. All these factors, specifically number 3 and 4 are more relevant to girls' enrolment in the rural areas of

Pakistan and confirm Khan et al. (2011) finding in their research in all provinces, AJK and federal capital. According to Jacoby and Mansuri, hierarchy of castes was as strong a boundary as the geographical boundaries, specifically for girls, due to the custom of *Purdah* (seclusion of women) linked with the honour of the family. Due to long standing familial, caste or patronage ties between the households in the same settlement, women folk fear less harassment. Going to school in another settlement poses more threat to the security of girls in rural areas of Pakistan. Hence, the presence of a school in the settlement, according to Jacoby and Mansuri, increases the likelihood of girls' enrolment by 18.6%, which they argue is a figure very close to the conditional gender gap in enrolment. Their research highlights the social-cultural aspect of girls' safety as an important issue in the context of access to school.

A compilation by Khan, Azhar and Shah (2011) of parents' reasoning for discontinuing their female children's schooling indicates multiple concerns related to access.

Table-2.4: Reasons for Not Attending School

	Overall	Boys	girls	Urban	Rural
Education is expensive	9.2	11.1	7.5	10.9	8.8
Schools are too far	5.9	4.1	7.5	1.4	7.0
Had to help with household chores	13.7	1.7	24.2	13.0	13.9
Help with work (assist in family owned business/ land)	6.7	11	3.0	5.2	7.1
Parents have not allowed	16.2	1.8	28.7	8.9	16.3
Due to job or work.	16.8	34.8	1.2	10.9	17.4

Source: PSLM 2014-15 (2016)

Parents not allowing is the most frequent reason for girls not being able to attend school all over Pakistan, as indicated in Table-2.4. It is noteworthy that more rural than urban parents prohibit their daughters from attending school. Thus, the probable underlying causes may well be rooted in rural social issues, including safety risks for girls while travelling to school. Inadequate transport facilities make going to school even more risky and more expensive for children. Yasin and Aslam (2018) uncovered various reasons for girls' dropout from school in rural areas of Pakistan like lack of

value given to female education and family's reluctance to spend money on girls' education due to the fact that they will not benefit from girls' education after their marriage, fear that girls may learn bad habits/behaviour from school, constraining influence of extended family like grandparents, uncles and cousins, incompetent teachers, early marriage of girls and fear of harassment.

9. Gender and Safety Concerns

Social spaces and norms are not the only adverse influences on girls' education in rural areas of Pakistan; physical distances also cause concern for their safety. KidsRights (2013, p.20) confirms that Pakistani girls face violence both at school and on their way to and from it. That is, they are more likely to be the victims of discrimination, sexual abuse, punishment and social intolerance. Moreover, girls' safety is more at risk in rural areas, where schools are established in difficult to reach areas and there is a lack of transport facilities. Because children often walk to schools, girls are more exposed to sexual violence or bullying by men and boys. In Pakistan, the concept of family honour is attached to the behaviour and reputation of female family members, thus parents may choose to keep their girls at home, rather than risk their safety (ibid, pp.14,19).

A girl child's security and school distance were stated as reasons for dropout by a considerable percentage of parents. Both of these issues put serious constraints on girls' education in Pakistan (Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011). This premise, if true, indicates the need for girls' public schools in every neighbourhood to create enabling conditions for girls from all income groups, as envisaged by the RTFCE 2012 and supported by *The Punjab Free And Compulsory Education Act 2014.* This issue is little explored in areas with the lowest female enrolment rates, like Balochistan and rural KP. The reasons for never attending schools, cited in the Pakistan Social and Living Measurement Survey 2014-15 (2016, p.65), by 10-18 year olds also confirm girls' safety as being a significant reason for their not attending school.

I could not find any research focussing on this significant aspect of access in rural and urban areas of Pakistan, but was able to find some images to illustrate the situation for a reader unfamiliar with the problems regarding education, specifically in relation to rural and urban areas of Pakistan.

Image-2.2: Access

Girls commuting to school in urban or rural areas are at risk of violence

i.   Gender and Security Threats

A significant aspect of access in Pakistan is the concern for the security of the children due to the law and order situation. The recent history of militancy in Pakistan has impacted on education in the terror stricken areas of KP, FATA and Baluchistan in two ways: firstly, hundreds of thousands of families have been forced to leave their homes due to the war-on-terror in these regions, their children being deprived of basic education, as a result (KidsRights, 2013, p.22); and secondly, terrorist attacks on schools, colleges, teachers and students have created an environment of fear in these regions (Khan and Seltzer, 2016). The attack on a school in Peshawar in 2014 caused the death of 132 children. This significant impact on the opportunities of basic education is under-researched and requires focused study to uncover the influence of these circumstances on access to basic education. Khan and Seltzer' (2016) research findings challenged the popular perception about immense decline in enrolment in KP and FATA due to terrorism, the most affected areas by terrorism. They acknowledge the implications of terrorism and conflict for the gender-based gap in education and have enumerated the likely outcomes of terrorism on

education: (1) risk of violence, harassment, or abduction for girls (2) families may have to dislocate thus compromising girls' schooling opportunities, (3) scarcity of economic resources may divert resources away from girls' and to boys' education (4) boys are more likely to be recruited as child soldiers and thus deprived of education, and (5) and likelihood of an increase in Madrassah enrolment. To assess the impact of Taliban campaign to stop girls over 10 years' age from attending school, Khan and Seltzer used PSLM data from 2004-05 to 2008-09, (the Taliban were removed through military operation in the North West regions of Pakistan during 2009). They ended their study at this point because a massive flood in Pakistan during the summer of 2010 forced many families in the terror stricken regions to dislocate and it was hard to discern the effects of Taliban from those of the flood on enrolment. They pointed out that gender gap in enrolment had been a historic trend in KP; girls' enrolment rates were lower than the average rates for boys' and girls' enrolment in the country. Their research confirmed an adverse impact of Taliban campaign against education, particularly for girls over ten years of age (ibid, p.14). They did not find a strong link between the Taliban campaign and Madrassah enrolment, as less than 2% children were enrolled in Madrassah over the period of their study (p.15). They found considerable difference in the incidents of attacks on schools in KPK. Their results suggested a 5.5% decline for boys' and 10.5% decline for girls' enrolment in the Swat and Peshawar districts, the regions most affected by terrorist attacks on schools.

Other research has also confirmed adverse impact of terrorism on education (e.g. see Ali, Kiani and Ahmed, 2018; Zaman and Amin, 2017; Ali, Kiani & Ahmed, 2018; Zaman and Amin, 2017). Although there has been a decline in the incidents of terrorism over the years, educational institutions are still targeted by extremists in Pakistan. According to Human Rights Watch, the government of Pakistan does maintain data on attacks on educational institutions. They quote the data from Global Terrorism Database, according to which there were 867 attacks on educational institution in Pakistan, between 2007 to 2015; and according to The Global

Coalition to Protect Education recorded at least 203 attacks between 2013 and 2017. Just in August 2018, 12 schools were attacked in Gilgit-Baltistan region, at least half of these were girls' schools (HRW, 2018). Hussain (2016) in a newspaper report has identified multiple reasons for continuing attacks on educational institutions: (1) educational institutions are comparatively soft target due to heightened security at military and government buildings, embassies hotels etc. (2) Public schools symbolise government in tribal areas and are thus target to undermine government's authority and image in these areas, (3) ideological opposition to the education imparted in schools, (4) perception of modern education as a corrupting influence due to contrary interpretation of faith, (5) abhorrence for modern secular education, (6) attacks on educational institutions has immense psychological impact on public, and generally intimidate masses. The lasting impact of terrorism is relevant to almost all families with school going children due to the threat to the lives and well-being of every child who leaves home for school.

The research presented in this section has drawn attention to the significance of policy in creating equitable schooling opportunities by providing quality schooling in the public sector along with favourable infrastructure and supportive policies to address the constraints embedded in the social-cultural norms and geo-political situation. Despite the necessary legislation being in place to provide ten years free and compulsory schooling to all children, few practical measures have been taken to make this law effective. Lack of political commitment is evident from the low budgetary allocation for education at federal and provincial levels. The presence of a stratified system of education, and low quality public schooling enhances the disadvantage of the underprivileged groups in the country. It has also emphasised the scope and need for research on the significance of policy in expanding equitable educational opportunities for citizens from all segments of the society. The next section looks at the various schooling options and their significance in creating and expanding schooling opportunities in Pakistan.

10. Schooling Options and School Choice

Poverty and gender have been identified as having the most adverse effects on parents' decision to enrol their children in Pakistan, as discussed earlier. The existing research has elicited significant gender concerns along with economic ones in relation to parents' decision to not to enrol or to withdraw their children from school. Parents' preference for education and schooling of their children is an under-researched area in Pakistan. Parents' preference for a specific type of education/school bears special significance in the context of this study. Firstly, the presence of three alternate types of schools that is, public, private and religious schools, hypothetically, would appear to expand parents' school choice in Pakistan; however, it represents a diverse supply side catering for diverse demand and iniquitous distribution of resources. Secondly, this diverse menu of choices indicates a social divide based on a combination of economic, social and cultural factors. Parents' preference for a specific type of school may also reflect their aspirations for their children. For example, a parent who wants a religious education for his son, most likely aspires for a religious career for him. Choice of a specific type of school is also indicative of parents' resources or capability set; private schools charge fees, whereas government schools offer free education and Madrassahs provide free education as well as free board and lodging to their students. Thus, a Madrassah should be the most desirable and the private school the least preferred when it comes to parents with limited economic resources choosing a school for their children; however, the research findings discussed in the next section depict a different picture.

Parents' choice of schooling for their children in Pakistan is not a simple process of selecting the best school available. School choice is mostly driven by the perception of the real choices available in view of the resources of the choosers, rather than consideration or assessment of the entire range of school options present. The state's inability to provide a

school in each catchment area opens the market for private investors catering for varied income groups. This situation not only creates scope for diverse types of school, but also diverse types of education, i.e. religious education is provided mainly by Madrassahs, 'western' education by expensive private schools and public schools provide education designed by the state. These various types of education follow their own curriculum and methods of teaching. Thus, the decision-making about children's education includes not only inductive or deductive, but also reductive 'moments' of choice (Bowe, Gewirtz and Ball, 1994, p.75). The choice of school from among these various types is indicative of parents' cultural as well as economic resources. Those who choose religious education for their children possess a very different set of economic and cultural resources to those who opt for western education, for example. Thus school choice tends to re-emphasize and revitalize social division in education (Op. cit.).

Preference for a specific school is shaped by various influences. Bourdieu argues that, the 'system of preferences' depends on all the previous choices of the decider as well as on the conditions in which these 'choices' have been made (Bourdieu, 1990, p.49). Thus, parents' own experience of education, may impact their choice of school. Further, parents' preferred type of school or education may not always be achievable for them, because of various constraints situated in their available resources, e.g. the forms of capital in their possession. Choice, according to Sen, is the freedom to achieve what one values (1992), and influence of choice on preference, especially the dependence of preference on the identity of the chooser may have different motivations and several alternative explanations (Sen, 1997). For example, gender disparity in enrolment in various regions of Pakistan, might have different explanations due to the disparate socio-cultural contexts of the choosing parents (Table-2.5). Parents' choice of school for their children is indicative of their capability, of the real choices available to them and of what they value and prefer for their children.

i. No School

Hart (2013, p. 137) contends, 'Choices are reflected by the functionings an individual actually pursues but they cannot be said to be wholly reflective of preferences.' Parents' choice of school in Pakistan starts with the most basic decision of whether to send a child to school at all. Research indicates an uneven pattern with considerable regional and gender disparity in enrolment across the country, indicating a strong influence of social-cultural factors in enrolment (see also Asghar and Zahra, 2012). In 2016-17, 23% children at primary level (5-9 years' age) were out-of-school; 29% girls and 17% boys of this age group did not attend school. In the 5-16 age group, 44% children (40% boys and 49% girls) were out-of-school in the same year (AEPAM, 2018). These statistics indicate gender as a significant influence in the choice of no-school. Striking regional differences presented in Table-2.5 also point to the social-cultural influences on parents' schooling decisions in Pakistan.

Table-2.5: Percentage for Out-of-School Children from Primary to Secondary Education by Province/region

	Total		Boys		Girls	
	5-9 Yrs.	5-16 Yrs.	5-9 Yrs.	5-16 Yrs.	5-9 Yrs.	5-16 Yrs.
Pakistan	23	44	17	40	29	49
Punjab	17	40	15	39	19	41
Sindh	31	52	23	27	40	58
KP	13	34	2	21	25	49
Balochistan	54	70	44	64	65	78
FATA	31	57	13	43	51	73
ICT	4	12	4	14	4	10

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 2016-17 (2018)

However, some parents' decision to keep their child out-of-school does not necessarily mean they prefer illiteracy for their children; for example, the highest percentage of out-of-school children being in the lowest income group (Figure-2.3) indicates lack of economic resources as being the reason for nonattendance of these children, rather than their parents choosing not to send them to school. The most obvious structural

constraints are shortage of schooling provision and poverty (ASER, 2016; ASER, 2017; Asghar and Zahra, 2012; Burgess et al., 2009; CREB, 2012; Iram et al., 2008; Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011; Saeed and Zia, 2012). As noted above, diversity of regional cultural norms bears significance in relation to female education, specifically in the tribal areas of KP and Balochistan as well as the rural areas of Sindh (ASER, 2016; ASER, 2017; Asghar and Zahra, 2012; Jamil, 2017) (Table-2.5).

ii.   Madrassah

The majority of Madrassahs are in private sector in Pakistan and like other private institutions, are heterogeneous in their curriculum and/or facilities. Punjab and Balochistan have acknowledged Madrassah education in their respective acts of free and compulsory education. Madrassahs comprise about 5% of all educational institutions in Pakistan (AEPAM, 2015, p.8). Research evidence does not support the popular perception of an increase in Madrassah enrolment in Pakistan during recent years. The national data presented in the latest *Annual Status of Education Report 2016* (ASER, 2017), includes only rural areas and their statistics indicate 1.4% children between 6 and 16 years of age in rural areas (1.8% of total enrolment), and 1.0% in rural Islamabad are enrolled in Madrassahs.

Table-2.6: Percentage Enrolment by Type of Schools in Provinces (rural)

Province	Govt.	Pvt	Madrassah	Others	Out-of-school
Islamabad-ICT	53.2	45.3	1.0	0.4	5.7
Azad Jammu and Kashmir	50.1	48.9	0.8	0.1	2.6
Gilget-Baltistan	55.1	41.1	2.2	1.6	12.8
Punjab	57.2	30.1	1.4	1.3	13.6
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	72.6	25.6	1.5	0.2	14.1
Federally Administered Tribal Areas	71.3	25.4	2.7	0.6	16.0
Sindh	87.9	11.0	0.6	0.6	21.6
Balochistan	59.4	3.4	2.3	0.2	34.8

Source: ASER-2016 (2017)

The rates of Madrassah enrolment are not homogenous across the country, for as Table-2.6 shows, attendance is highest, in rural areas of FATA[6] and Balochistan, representing 2.7 and 2.3% of total enrolment respectively, (ASER, 2017). These statistics would appear to indicate the influence of culture on school preference, because these are tribal regions and share a border with Afghanistan. However, if looked at together with the number of out-of-school children in Balochistan (Table-2.5) economic and other social-cultural factors may become more significant. Andrabi et al. (2005) found that the non-availability of school was a stronger influence on school choice than income or religious inclination in the rural areas of Pakistan. This factor however, needs further probing through focused research. According to AEPAM (2018), the ratio for male to female enrolment in Madrassahs is 64% and 34% respectively which reflects the overall national trend of lower female enrolment in education in general. Madrassahs could possibly be used to expand female literacy and education in regions where parents do not allow their daughters to attend regular school, but have shown some acceptance of religious education (Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011).

Research also confirms some parents' preference for religious education for their girls, a trend that needs further probing. Khan, Azhar and Shah (2011) conducted a study on the lack of primary schools in Pakistan, covering all four provinces, Azad Jammu Kashmir and the federal capital. Nearly 4% of the dropped-out girls in their sample of 292, stated that their parents wanted them to become *Hafiz-e-Quran*[7], as being the reason for leaving regular school (ibid, p.7). Parents may prefer religious education for their daughters, because it is perceived to be a valuable asset for future mothers; or because a Madrassah is considered safer for girls than attending regular school.

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[6] Federally Administered Tribal Areas

[7] One who remembers the Quran by heart.

iii.   Private School

Chubb and Moe discuss two common features of private schools, whether religious or secular: one, they are not controlled directly by society through a democratic procedure and two, they are controlled indirectly through the marketplace (1991, p.27). Increasing subscriptions to private schools indicate their popularity in the marketplace, but additional finances are required, even for low-cost ones (ASER, 2015; Saeed and Zia, 2012). The increase in private school enrolment in Pakistan since the 1980s has been remarkable, with the numbers having exhibited a more than 800% expansion from 1983 to 2000 (Aslam, 2007b, p.6). The share of private schools in terms of total enrolment is 36%, (AEPAM, 2018) with the frequency being even higher in Islamabad, standing at more than 45 % children of the age between 6-16 years enrolled in private schools (ASER, 2017) (Table-2.6). High private enrolment in Islamabad is a significant indicator of parents' school preference considering the best public education facilities are provided there, although these are not accessible to all parents as discussed in Chapter-6. Overall enrolment in Pakistan grew in villages where private school were present (Andrabi, Das and Khwaja, 2008, p.351), and regions where private enrolment had increased (Jamil, 2017).

Parents' choice of private schooling is influenced by multiple factors, the most obvious being the family's SES, with other motivators including quality of education (Ansari, 2018; Jamil, 2017; Saeed and Zia, 2012), access and safety (Aslam, 2017; Bashir and Sadiq, 2006; Carneiro, Das and Reis, 2016; Durrania and Halai, 2018; Sawada and Lokshin, 2001) and perception of better employment opportunities in the future (Ahmed et al., 2013, p.28; Rahman et al., 2018). Parents with higher aspirations and greater motivation regarding their child's schooling may choose private school (Aslam, 2009; Siddiqui, 2017; Siddiqui and Gorard, 2017). The establishment of LCP schools in urban as well as rural areas has created opportunities to attend private schools for many low income families. CREB research in Punjab, found that whilst wealthier parents are more likely to

send their children to private schools, accessible private schools are also available for the poor (ASER, 2017; CREB, 2012; Siddiqui and Gorard, 2017). The typical rural private school charge a median monthly fee of around a day's unskilled wage (Carneiro, Das and Reis, 2016; Siddiqui, 2017).

Chubb and Moe contend that private schools have the advantage of being controlled by the people who run them; they decide what they will teach, how they will teach it, who will do the teaching and how much to charge for their services (1991, p.29). Private schools in Pakistan are a heterogeneous group of institutions like elsewhere in the world. The fees charged by them range from very high to nominal amounts affordable for lower-income families (Aslam, 2009; Siddiqui, 2017). Despite being considerably less than the 53% in the highest quintile, 19% children in the lowest quintile also go to private schools in Pakistan (ASER, 2017). Girls' private school enrolment also increases with the level of education in Punjab (Ahmed et al., 2013; CREB, 2012; Saeed and Zia, 2012). A marked difference between rural-urban private enrolment is also indicated by Pakistan Education Statistics 2016-17 statistics, in which it emerged that 48% of children at primary level were enrolled in private schools in rural areas of Pakistan as compared to 53% in urban areas (Table-2.3).

One argument for preference of private over public schooling is the expectation of higher rates of return on private education. Tough eligibility criteria for overseas and government employment as well as professional careers may be motivating parents to invest in private education in anticipation and aspirations for better employment and career opportunities for their children in the future (Aslam, 2009; CREB, 2012, p.28). This argument assumes that there is better quality education in private schools. Parents who aspire for employment opportunities with the requirements of higher education for their children are more likely to choose private schools (Ahmed et al., 2013, p.28; Siddiqui, 2017). Aslam found in her research a significantly higher proportion of female workers have attended private school (2007a, p.8). She found elsewhere that parents with high aspirations

choose private schooling for their children (Aslam, 2009; Siddiqui, 2017); and those who did so for their daughters were more educated and appeared to have high aspirations for their futures. This argument also explains the pro-male bias in household expenditure in Pakistan due to the difference in expected rates of return on male and female children for parents because traditionally sons take care of their parents in their old age, while daughters' education benefits their husband and in-laws more (Aslam and Kingdon, 2008). Aslam and Kingdon (2008) found a significant gender gap in favour of boys in the household expenditure on education, specifically in the Balochistan, NWFP (KP), FATA and rural areas. They attribute this difference to the lower probability of girls' enrolment in these areas and thus zero expenditure rather than to lower expenditure conditional on enrolment.

Inadequate provision of public educational facilities in terms of access and quality has created scope for a stronger role of private education in Pakistan. The recent trends in private enrolment bring to fore the undeniable role of these schools in the real schooling options for Pakistan. Firstly, private schools are addressing the supply side gaps in terms of the provision and quality of public schools. Secondly, as a heterogeneous group of institutions with diverse curricula and fee structures, private schools can cater for the educational needs across the population. The most recent legislation instructs them to provide free education to disadvantaged children for up to 10% of their enrolment in each class (RTFCE GoP, 2012). No practical steps however, have been taken to implement this Act. Moreover, providing a few places in private schools for poor children cannot effectively address reducing the huge gap in educational opportunities for disadvantaged cohorts. Finally, this law is hard to implement because a large number of private schools are unregistered (Aslam, 2007b, p.5) and thus, cannot be regulated by the government.

iv.   Public School

The state is the largest provider of basic education with 88% of primary educational institutions in the public sector and as aforementioned, 61% of primary children are enrolled in their schools (AEPAM, 2018, pp.7,9). However, a decrease of 6% has been observed in the number of primary schools since 2012-13, according to PES, 2016-17 (AEPAM, 2018, p.13). These statistics are alarming in the context of dire situation of school attendance in the country as whole. PES 2016-17, states three reasons for the decline in the number of primary schools (ibid, , p.13):

- Up-grading of primary schools to higher levels:
- Closing of non-functional schools;
- Merger of schools, due to non-availability of teachers or lack of enrolments.

An increase of about 2% in the enrolment for boys and 3 % for girls is indicated since 2015-16 (AEPAM, 2018, p.15). Girls' enrolment in government schools have increased since 2014 from 35% to 38% and 37% to 40% in private schools (Aslam, 2017, p.11). Almost 80% enrolment at primary level in government schools in rural areas (AEPAM, 2018, p.15) (Table-2.6) reconfirm the significance of the role of state in providing opportunities for basic education, specifically for the marginalised. These statistics also draw attention to the state's lack of commitment to preventing discrimination against 'disadvantaged children' (RTFCE GoP, 2012). By reducing the number of public primary schools, the state is contributing to enhancing the disadvantage of the underprivileged by rolling back its provision for free and compulsory education, instead of turning non-functional schools into functional ones.

Along with distance and fee, the quality of the school has been found to be an important factor in relation to choice in Pakistan, with infrastructure being an important indicator associated with its quality (Carneiro, Das and Reis, 2010, p.3; Carneiro, Das and Reis, 2016). According to Jamil (2017, pp.8-

9), the status of facilities like drinking water, toilet, boundary walls and electricity in public primary schools has improved significantly in Punjab, KP and ICT, while the other parts of the country remain below 80%. The provision of these facilities are imperative for improvement in enrolment and retention because the lack of these basic facilities discourages parents from enrolling their children in public schools, especially their girls.

Image-2.5: Infrastructure

Under-provisioned schools

Distance is significant in the choice of school for girls, not only owing to safety concerns, but also, because expenditure on transport adds to the cost of their schooling. As parents tend to spend less on girls' education (Carneiro, Das and Reis, 2016, pp.3, 14), those with lower incomes may choose not to enrol their girls at all, if their attendance means additional costs on transportation. Any addition in the educational expenses in the form of any charges, uniform and/or books may adversely affect parents' school choice. Carneiro et al. (2010, p.18) contend that as compared to more expensive private schools, public schools and LCP schools are impacted upon more in terms of enrolment if the fee increases.

Even though the RTFCE-2012 encourages 'enterprises, institutions and other segments of society' to establish schools to facilitate free and compulsory education, the state cannot be acquitted from their responsibility to cater for the educational needs of the underprivileged. The availability of public schools can make a difference for those children who do not attend school, because private schooling is too expensive (Table-2.4).

11.   Equitable Schooling

The previous sections looked at the research evidence in terms of the disparities in schooling opportunities in Pakistan. To reduce these disparities and to provide equitable, free and compulsory education for all children, Pakistan needs a comprehensive strategy. To understand the notion of **equity in education**, I draw upon the work of Unterhalter (2009). She contends that equity is a process of making equal and fair, arguing for a capability approach perspective to look at the issue of equity in education, because this stresses the need to take human diversity as a central concern when making interpersonal comparisons. She distinguishes different forms of equity in terms of the processes that complement each other in expanding capability sets, purporting that:

> From the bottom it is important to look at agency, from the top to look at rules and institutions that frame negative and positive freedoms linked to a theory of justice, and from the middle to ensure flows of resources, a dynamic between ideas and values that is attentive to limits and judgments, but not just meagerly constrained by these assessments (p.422).

This perspective could guide a comprehensive strategy for achieving equity in education, one that challenges the disparities in the educational profile of different regions of Pakistan. Specifically, it incorporates agency for the individual to choose what they value; it requires the state to make provision for individuals to exercise their agency and the institutions to take into account the diverse resources and values of the individuals and groups, when establishing the rules for admittance. This section reviews the

research on the quality of education and infrastructure as various aspects of provisioning equitable education in Pakistan.

12.   Quality of Education

Provision of equitable schooling opportunities is not merely the presence of a school, for it covers the quality of the education provided as well. This review finds that quality of education is much lower in public schools as compared to private schools in Pakistan. Jamil draws on ASER 2016 data to conclude that poorest and girls suffer most in the context of equity of education (2017, p.7). She points out that highest percentage of children from poorest quartile (77%) attend government school and highest percentage of children from the richest quartile (53%) attend private schools. The data reveals that poorest quartile has the lowest learning levels (Figure-2.6). The ASER data also revealed that girls performed even lower than boys on these learning tests. Jamil argues that in areas where girls' enrolment rates are higher, for example ICT, their performance is better than boys on learning tests (2017, p.7). I find her linking learning with only attendance rates a bit simplistic, because the high female enrolment and attendance highlight the role of cultural milieu of such areas where female education is valued highly and girls are given equitable opportunities for education. Attending private schools for a better education, however, is not an option for economically disadvantaged children. Saeed and Zia (2012) argued that even the low cost private schools (LCP) are not affordable for the lowest income quintile; hence, disparities in parents' income are the reason for iniquitous educational opportunities, for parents' income determines the attendance of private or public schools, with the latter providing inferior quality. They conclude that parents with more financial resources can spend more on the education of their children and thus provide better schooling opportunities for them. They confirm the significance of parents' financial resources in providing quality education for children and the disadvantage of those who lack financial resources. Their research also confirms that schooling options for children from poor

households are limited to no school or low quality public schools. They highlight the role of policy in reproduction of disadvantage through a state supported system of low quality education that constrains the options of equitable education for the underprivileged and marginalised children. The cultural disadvantage of little or no parental education compounded with low quality of schooling limits the learning of those who go to public schools, thereby resulting in intergenerational reproduction of disadvantage. Figure-2.6 presents statistical evidence of the differences in learning levels of children in public and private schools in Pakistan.

Figure-2.6: National Urban Learning Levels
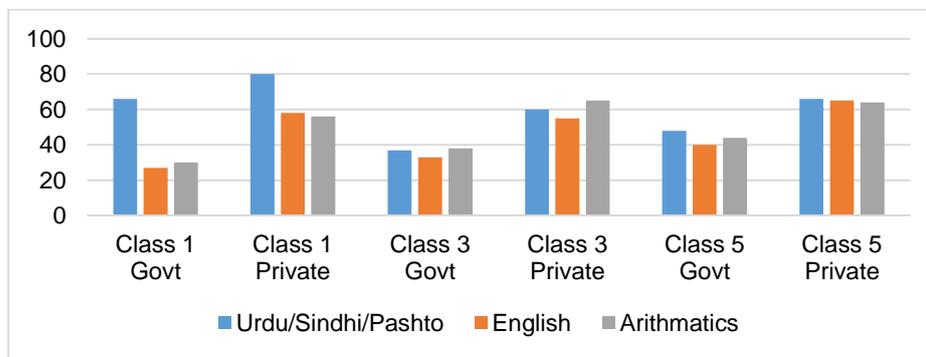
Source: ASER-2016 (2017)

The statistics presented in this figure show the lower educational performance of public schools in standardised tests for three levels of primary education, in comparison to private school children at the same levels. Other studies also confirmed learning advantage of private school over public school students in Pakistan (Ashley et al., 2014; Javaid, Musaddiq and Sultan, 2012). Jamil (2017, p.12) found that ASER-2016 data confirms gender gap in public and private schools' enrolment across Pakistan; however, it also indicates a gradual narrowing of the gap over time. However, FATA and Balochistan still indicate a wide gap between boys' and girls' enrolment. It means the educational disadvantage is simply higher for girls due to girls' higher enrolment in public schools.

i. Infrastructure

School infrastructure is an important indicator linked to the quality of school by parents (Ahmed et al., 2013). School buildings, boundary walls and latrines are the features of infrastructure that may well be associated by parents with the security and safety of the child, specifically for girls. A school in the open exposes children not only to elements of nature; it also involves many other potential threats. This is a neglected area in research in Pakistan and needs to be explored so as to uncover the extent of the impact of such constraints on parents' choices in relation to their children's schooling.

Image-2.3: Public schools with no-building

School with no-building exposes girls to more risks

13. Conclusion

The focus of this research is parents' views about the education and future of their children in Pakistan. Several structural constraints on the choice of school have emerged from the literature reviewed in this chapter. Instead of expanding public educational opportunities to facilitate the disadvantaged, the state has been reducing the number of public schools in already low literacy areas and has been encouraging a greater role for the private sector in the field of education. More private investment leads to a broadening of schooling opportunities and options. However, on the other hand, the social consequences of this policy are evident in the widening of the existing chasm between the rich and poor in the country. The schooling options in the private sector are only available to those with adequate

economic resources. The low quality of public school education combined with parents' low levels of education or illiteracy, actually deprives poor public school pupils of equitable opportunities to access higher education in comparison to the better educated private school graduates from middle-class families.

Sen argues that social opportunities for education, in the form of arrangements made by the society, may help encourage individuals' initiatives in overcoming their respective deprivations (Sen, 1999a, p.xii). However, this literature review has shown that the present system of diverse types of schooling denies the individual equitable opportunities to overcome their deprivation. Instead, it reproduces what Bourdieu and Passeron (2011, p.5) call cultural arbitrary of the dominant or of the dominated classes. The education and social policies safeguard the interest of the dominant classes, who have more political influence on public policy; the policy secures the educational advantage of the more affluent by depriving and excluding less advantaged people –the dominated- from the social, economic and political advantages of education.

This review has highlighted the huge disparities between educational opportunities for male and female, urban and rural, rich and poor as well as across the provinces. The literature presented here has also suggested the need to research the constraints embedded in the deprivation of cultural and social resources. Peculiar combinations of the various types of resources determines the real options for the chooser and the lack of any type of resource constrains their options. The research evidence has also uncovered the impact of social and cultural norms, like gender and caste segregation, on educational opportunities in Pakistan. These influences are illustrated through intra-household differences in enrolment, for example, low female enrolment in certain regions as opposed to high female enrolment in other regions. Varied aspirations for or expectations from their male and female children motivate different schooling decisions by parents. Dreze and Sen (2002, p.155) emphasise the importance of identifying the various means that can influence parents' attitudes towards education.

They argue that aspirations are not independent of the perception of the opportunities, in particular, female education, they contend, is influenced by cultural norms, role models and public discussions.

A lot of evidence provided in the literature review has been derived from statistical surveys, due to the lack of qualitative research in these areas, with a focus on the constraints on the options and opportunities for schooling at the household level. The statistical evidence has been instrumental in presenting an overall picture of the topic under investigation, whilst it also brings to light the immense need for research to uncover the impact of these contradictions of policy and practice on the individual decisions regarding the education and schooling of children in Pakistan. The review of literature has also revealed the need to uncover parents' own perceptions regarding the real options of schooling available for their children and the ultimate impact of these on their children's future. While the disadvantages are highest amongst the poorest as well as in rural and tribal areas, this review has also shown constraints at multiple levels of society. For example, many urban families are still unable to access quality schooling in spite of the wide range of schools available in the urban areas. However, the literature has very little to say about parents at the middle levels of the socio-economic strata, about what constraints they face, or which resources they draw on when making choices for their children's education. This gap in the existing body of research provides justification for the current investigation, with its focus on the constraints perceived by lower-middle class parents in Islamabad.

Chapter 3

Theoretical Framework

The review of the literature in the previous chapter has substantiated that there are huge disparities in educational opportunities amongst classes, gender and regions in Pakistan. The evidence presented has highlighted a stratified education system, failure of public policy to address the existing gaps in structural provisions for primary education, low public spending on education, lack of political will, unfavourable social norms, like norms against female education, regional and gender disparity in literacy and enrolment and the low quality of education in some public and private schools, where available. These complex circumstances impose layers of constraints on parents' decision-making regarding the education and schooling of their male and female children. To look more closely at constraints for a group of parents' schooling choices, a theoretical framework and conceptual lenses are required that can encompass a broader perspective of the constraints as well as opportunities for individuals in this context. The literature review discovered that there has been scant qualitative investigation of the constraints embedded in the social adversities and inadequate structural provision for schooling opportunities for the disadvantaged. Most of the research conducted in this regard has comprised quantitative surveys. Vaughan (2007) argues that over-reliance on quantitative data can compromise the understanding of the differential experiences of individuals and hence, qualitative research is required to deal with the direct experience and individual contexts of people. She contends that quantitative description of inequality is inadequate for capturing inequality as a social construction (ibid, p.110). Hence, to understand the range and complexities of the constraints on individuals' choices for their children, qualitative studies are essential.

My research is aimed at exploring lower pay scale government job, salaried, parents' views about the future and schooling opportunities for their children in Islamabad, Pakistan. I seek to uncover their perceived advantages as

well as the disadvantages in this regard and their perception of the real schooling options available in the context of their preferences. I also seek to investigate the focal parents' perceived ability to be involved in school and at home education of their children. All the research participants' and their families live in Islamabad; whilst they have come from various parts of the country, most work in the same organisation and live in the same neighbourhood. Thus, hypothetically, all have similar schooling opportunities for their children, but, for many of them, the difference between their expressed preferences and their actual school choices indicate a dissonance between their options and their desires regarding their children's education. Accordingly, LSMC parents' perceptions of the dissonance between their aspirations and real option, and the causes behind the gap between what they want for their children and what they have achieved, can uncover their individual constraints. For better comprehension of the subjective contexts of parents' educational decision-making, I needed a theoretical framework that provided scope for exploration of the two aspects of this research: firstly, the real opportunities available to parents to realise their aspirations for their children through choice of the 'right' school; and two, their capacity to pursue their goals through meaningful involvement in their children's education in school and at home. Both aspects are influenced by the combination of economic, social and cultural resources they possess and their ability to use these optimally. For instance, aspiration formulation and choice of school are shaped by the social norms and values regarding education, parents' knowledge of education system as well as the availability and affordability of the type of school they prefer for their children. Their ability to become involved in their children's education at home and in school is influenced by their own education, social skills, time and financial resources. A parent who is unable to assist her children in their homework due to her low level of education may arrange private tuition, if she can afford it. Parents' ability to make effective utilisation of the resources in their possession is crucial for the advancement of their children's educational careers in their preferred direction. However, people possessing the same initial resource-set may

have different outcomes due to heterogeneity in their ability to make use of their resources. Diversity in the choice of school by parents with similar resources, or difference in the choice of school for their male and female children indicates a disparity in how resources are utilised at the individual level. Moreover, parents' perception of their success in achieving their desired goals contributes to their sense of agency regarding their children's education.

This research seeks to investigate parents' aspirations and goals, their perception of the freedoms and constraints on their opportunities for achieving their valued aspirations, and their sense of agency in obtaining their desired goals. To uncover the individual differences in parents' perceptions and choices regarding the schooling and education of their children, two sets of theoretical ideas are introduced in this chapter: Amartya Sen's Capability Approach and Pierre Bourdieu's theory of action Bourdieu's work has been generative in analysing parental choice in education in other countries e.g. UK (as will be discussed further in subsequent chapters), but has not been applied for this purpose in Pakistan. Nor has CA been used for this purpose. My research therefore covers new ground, in looking at parents' choice in Pakistan through a very different theoretical framing. In the following sections, I will discuss first the Capability Approach followed by the three concepts from Bourdieu's theory of action, i.e. habitus, capital and field. Subsequently, I explain how I intend to synthesise these approaches in my research.

1. Capability Approach

Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum are the two eminent proponents of Capability Approach (CA). The former focuses on what people are able to do and be, on the quality of their life as well as on removing obstacles in their lives so they can live the life they value, whereas the latter's approach is a partial theory of justice (Robeyns, 2005, pp.94-95). Nussbaum presents CA as moral-legal-political philosophy and argues for the political principles that the governments should guarantee to all its citizens through its

constitution; she provides a well-defined list of 'central human capabilities' which she argues should be incorporated in all constitutions (ibid, p.103). Sen, on the other hand, is interested in liberal political philosophy, focusing on capability rather than utility in works on social choice; a field that relies on formal, mathematical reasoning language. Sen's notion of capabilities is that of real and effective opportunity, whereas Nussbaum's concept of capability is targeted at people's skills and personality traits (ibid, p.104). Nussbaum's focus on the development of individuals' capabilities through legal constitutional procedures is true to the core concepts of the capability approach and quite instrumental for comprehension of the deprivation faced by the underprivileged; however, in spite of a comprehensive list of central human capabilities, her theory does not posit concrete, attainable solutions to remove or reduce the disadvantage of such people. Sen, on the other hand, does not specify the capabilities required to enhance the quality of life, but his open-ended concepts have been effectively utilized to underpin policy measures for creating enabling conditions for expanding capabilities. Although I have relied more on Sen's work, I find both these theorists helpful for analysing my qualitative data, because I seek to uncover parents' own views about the freedoms and constraints in achieving their desired goals regarding the future of their children

Sen's Capability Approach (CA) focuses on what people are able to *do* and *be* (Saito, 2003, p.19). Due to its emphasis on freedom to build what people actually value (Alkire, 2005a, p.1), CA offers the potential theoretical underpinning for analysing the qualitative data of this research so as to uncover the constraints parents face when making educational choices for their children. CA is a general normative framework for the assessment of development (Unterhalter, Vaughan and Walker, 2007), individual well-being and social arrangements and policies and proposals about social change in society (Robeyns, 2005, p. 94). Unterhalter (2003, p. 668) sees CA as a means of investigating distributional issues and concerns with educational equality.

The focus of my research is individuals' ability to achieve other-regarding goals as parents and their own perception of their ability regarding their children's education. Individual's satisfaction with their life or their well-being is contingent upon their cognizance of their ability to achieve their goals regarding the education and future of their children. The set of resources commanded by individuals and the enabling conditions created through social structures expand or constrain such individual abilities. Understanding of inequality and diversity of the opportunities available to these individuals needs theoretical concepts that can objectively view subjective circumstances of individual respondents in wider social contexts. The capability approach provides such theoretical concepts that can aptly explain and frame such qualitative data. In this section, I consider the relevance of the basic theoretical concepts of CA for the analysis of the individual differences in parents' preferences and choices as well as their own perceptions about their agency on this matter.

i.   The Basic Concepts

CA is based on a view of living as the combination of various 'doings and beings', with quality of life to be assessed in terms of the capability to achieve valuable functionings (Sen, 2008, p. 271). The process of achieving valuable being requires individual's involvement as an agent. I discuss the three basic concepts, i.e. capability, functioning and agency, in following subsections, thereby establishing their relevance to my data analysis.

a. Functioning: Valuable being and doing

The notions of *functionings* (doings and beings) and *capability* (the opportunity or freedom to realise these functionings) are two core concepts of Sen's capability approach (Leßmann, 2009, p. 450). *Functionings,* Sen purports, are the constitutive elements of living, the achievement of a person, i.e. what they manage to do or to be and reflect part of the state of that person (Sen, 2008, p. 271). In other words, they are the beings and doings that people value and have reason to value (Alkire, 2008a, p.5). Hence, the parent who cannot achieve the goal of private schooling for her

child due to economic constraints has not achieved her *valued being*, even though her child is attending a public school. Sen argues, 'there is always an element of *real choice* in the description of functionings, since the format of "doings" and "beings" permits additional "achievements" to be defined and included' (Sen, 2006a, p.45). Resources like goods and income are related to functionings (Alkire, 2005a, p.1) as means to achieve the valued state of being.

b. Value: As in Valued Being and Doing

The notion of *value* is integral to the concept of functioning. Parents' desire for good schooling for their children grows from their perception of the value of education in achieving their aspirations for their children's future. An important contribution of CA is to highlight how education involves intrinsic and instrumental values (Saito, 2003, p. 24). Lanzi (2004, p.2) forwards the notion of value that education brings to people's lives, contending that its overall value is the sum of its *instrumental value* (e.g. qualifications), *intrinsic value* (agency, autonomy and wellbeing) and *positional value* (i.e. social relations or access to social goods). The intrinsic value of education may impact on a person through influencing their values on matters such as female education and instrumental value may expand economic and social opportunities for them, whereas education adds to their positional value; all three aspects are relevant to this study. For example, parents' own education shapes their educational preferences and choices for their children, also delivering a specific social positioning that may facilitate the achievement of their goals regarding the education of their children. That is, parents' education attributes a positional value and expands their freedom, thus being a capability, whilst choice of their preferred school is the functioning they seek to achieve. In sum, education is a capability as well as a valued functioning.

c. Capability: the alternative combinations of functionings

A person's capability is indicated by her ability to achieve her desired goals. The parent above may have admitted her child to a good public school, but did not have her preferred school on her 'choice menu'. In other words, she lacked the capability to achieve what she valued. Sen defines *capability as* 'the alternative combinations of functionings the person can achieve, and from which he or she can choose one collection' (2008, p.271). Since the achievement of individuals' desired functionings is conditional on their capabilities, the capabilities, as opportunities as well as freedoms, are crucial in the achievement of one's *valued* states of being and doing. This notion inheres freedom to choose from among multiple options, whilst also suggesting the likelihood of absence or lack of such freedom for some. The *capability set* of a person pertains to her freedom to achieve various functioning combinations. The alternative functioning combinations available to a person in terms of choices are all important for judging their advantage (Sen, 2006a, p.445). Specifically, a person's advantage in life is the freedom to choose between alternative functioning bundles (Sen, 1987b, p.15), thus absence or lack of such freedom means a disadvantage. CA emphasises human diversity in determining individuals' capability in a specific context, whereby one aspect is the combination of available resources or the *capability set* for the achievement of a desired functioning. Hence, parents' capability regarding their children's schooling is influenced not only by the availability of a school, but also, favourable social, cultural and economic circumstances. For example, the existence of just a mixed-sex school in a community will constrain the schooling options for girls with parents who prefer the practice of Purdah for their daughters.

The mere presence of an option may not make it achievable for all; people may have diverse capability to avail themselves of same opportunity. Leßmann explains the interdependence of the availability of an option and the freedom to take it up as follows: 'The achievement of a functioning typically presupposes on the one hand the availability of certain

commodities and on the other hand the ability of the individual to use these commodities accordingly' (2009, p. 450). Persons with dissimilar capability sets may achieve similar functionings, whilst those with an identical capability set may choose dissimilar levels of functionings (Kaufman, 2006, p.290). Families living in the same vicinity may send their children to different schools, because some do not succeed in the admission test for the best reputed school in their neighbourhood. Opportunities to achieve similar levels of functioning with a dissimilar capability set indicate favourable social structures and equitable opportunities for most. Sen's concept of effective freedom is a state of affairs in which a person's choice is respected and things corresponding to their choice happen, even without their having any control over the procedure that make it the case (ibid 2006, p.293). Hence, the real opportunity of equitable education for children would indicate that parents' have effective freedom. Parents' effective freedom of school choice is compromised due to non-implementation of the policy of no-screening for admission to public schools (RTFCE 2012, Clause-2-1) (Ch-2, P.31), as children are selected through rigorous criteria for admission into the better public schools. Presence of good public schools, thus, does not necessarily open up real schooling options for all children.

The CA perspective brings to the attention the role of state and society in providing equitable opportunities for a valuable life, by expanding individual and collective capabilities through favourable policy measures and social arrangements. Robeyns argues:

> What is ultimately important is that people have the freedoms or valuable opportunities (capabilities) to lead the kind of lives they want to lead, to do what they want to do and be the person they want to be. Once they effectively have these substantive opportunities, they can choose those options that they value most (2005, p.95).

This kind of freedom would allow parents to choose the type of education and school they want for their children; non-availability of the type of school parents prefer for their children makes them feel they have 'no choice' regarding the education of their children (Reay, 1996, p.588). The

distinction between achieved functionings and capabilities is that of achievements and valuable options, or what has been realised and what is effectively possible (Robeyns, 2005). Social arrangements significantly impact on the real options available to disadvantaged people, whereby apart from the non-availability of a specific type of school, rejection for admission to a particular school also withholds the choice from parents. Mere presence of a good school in the neighbourhood does not make it a realised choice for the children of the master as well as those of servant. The fundamental strength of Sen's CA, according to Alkire, is the clarity that the objective of justice and poverty reduction should be to expand the freedoms of deprived people to enjoy 'valuable beings and doings' (Alkire, 2005b, p.117).

d. Conversion of Resources

An agent's capability to achieve her valued doing and being is not only influenced by her set of resources, but also by her capability to utilise them in the most effective manner. Individuals also vary in their capability to 'transform' their resources into their valued functioning (Sen, 1985, p.198). The degree to which a person can transform a resource into a functioning is termed the conversion factor, which pertains to the relation between a good and the achievement of certain beings and doings. Robeyns has enumerated three types of conversion factors: 1) *Personal conversion factors, which include a person's* metabolism, physical condition, sex, reading skills and/or intelligence; 2) *Social conversion factors*, which cover public policies, social norms, practices that unfairly discriminate, societal hierarchies, and/or power relations related to class, gender, race, or caste; and 3) *Environmental conversion factors comprising the* physical or built environment in which a person lives, including aspects such as geographical location, climate, pollution, the proneness to earthquakes, and the presence or absence of seas and oceans (Robeyns, 2005, p.99). Influence of conversion factors on transformation of resources into capabilities brings to the fore the significance of a person's personal, social and environmental factors in shaping her capability. In general, conversion

factors are the non-monetary constraints on an individual's capabilities (Binder and Broekel, 2008, p.4). Accordingly, a child's sex or disability, parents' education level or income, gender norms and the social value of education, absence of laws to prevent child labour and/or harsh mountainous terrain can play a significant part in parents' aspirations, goals and choices regarding the education of their children. Thus the concept of conversion factors adds another dimension to the concept of capability through highlighting the significance of non-monetary resources in achieving the valued doings and beings.

The notion of conversion factors can also be useful in understanding diversity in parents' educational aspirations and preferences for their children as well as the extent to which they are able to achieve their desired goals due to the heterogeneity in the resources in their possession. Reay, for example, contends that within the same educational context middle-class options are often different to those for the working-class when it comes to their children's schooling (1996, p.590). Intra-household differences in decisions regarding boys and girls also illustrate the significance of conversion factors for example, 29% girls as compared to 2% boys never attended school in Pakistan, because their parents did not allow them (Table-2.4); this huge difference indicates impact of social conversion factor regarding educational decisions for boys and girls.

e. Parental Agency: Forming and Achieving Goals

Agency is a significant concept in relation to a person's freedom to choose valuable doings and beings. In this section, I present the concept as perceived through the CA lens and its relevance to my research. Sen understands agency as the capacity to act and bring about change (Bowman, 2010, p.4). Agency refers to a person's ability to form goals, commitments and values (Sen, 1987d, p.203). A person's agency cannot be understood without understanding their aims, objectives, allegiances, obligations, and their conception of the good (Sen, 1985, p.203). Terms like *commitments*, *allegiances* and *obligations* integrate others as partners or

beneficiaries of the desired goals of the agent. Kabeer elaborates upon the notion of agency by holding that it pertains to an individual's ability to define goals and to act upon them. Agency, according to her, includes an individual's *effective power* and the motivation and purpose they bring to their activity; their sense of agency- "the power within" (Kabeer, 1999, p.438). This kind of agency would view the individual as an actor with the ability to use their resources effectively in achieving their desired goals. Agency, thus, means not only the capability to form goals but also that of achieving them.

The two aspects of agency - to form goals and to achieve them - depict the conceptual and the practical aspect of parents' choice of school. However, agency goals are complex, because they include not only a person's goals for herself, but also her other-regarding goals (Agarwal and Panda, 2007, p.362); parents' agency is other-regarding and inheres the feature of the responsibility of exercising agency on the behalf of their children. The intrinsic value of agency is evident in individuals' other-regarding goals at the cost of personal well-being (Lanzi, 2004, pp.2-4). The capability of achieving goals is a multifaceted concept; Sen's notions of *effective power* and *procedural control* uncovers this complexity to some extent. The *effective power* refers to an individual's freedom to achieve her chosen results, whilst *procedural control* pertains to the freedom to be part of the decision-making and to exercise control over the process of choice (Sen, 1985, p.209). Both concepts signify democratic participation of individuals in bringing about favourable social circumstances in relation to achieving their desired goals. Valuing individuals' needs and preferences like prioritising education and health in public policy may enhance their agency regarding their own and their family's health and education. Thus, the presumption that public demand favours infrastructure over health and education in Pakistan (Hasnain, 2010, p.146), undermines parents' *effective power* and *procedural control* in realising their valued goals regarding the education of their children. The significance and multidimensionality of agency in the context of school choice demands

further probing, for which I rely on the five features of Sen's account of agency as listed by Alkire (2008b, p.6), these being as follows.

i. **Agency is exercised with respect to goals the person values**. The valued other-regarding goals of the participating parents would be enrolment of their children in the school of their choice. A staggering 29% of girls as compared to 2% of boys, between the age of 10-18 years, do not go to school in Pakistan, because their parents do not allow them to (Table-2.4). These findings, however, need further probing to uncover the underlying values and to establish the links of 'no school for girls' with parents' agency in this matter.

ii. **Agency includes effective power as well as direct control**. This aspect of agency is influenced by the enabling conditions and the resource set of the agent. Enabling conditions are established by collective social action to enable people to achieve what they value. The enabling conditions should be context specific and sensitive to social characteristics including 'human diversity, complex social relations, a sense of reciprocity between people, appreciation that people can reflect reasonably on what they value for themselves and others, and a concern to equalize, not opportunities or outcomes, but rather capabilities' (Walker and Unterhalte, 2007, p.3). Poverty and lack of security for female children in Pakistan are two significant reasons for high dropout rates for girls (Khan, Azhar and Shah, 2011) and indicators to the role of enabling conditions in schooling choice for male and female children. *Effective power* and *direct control* flourish under enabling conditions and are created through favourable social structures.

iii. **Agency may advance wellbeing or may address other-regarding goals.** Sen's notion of agency is about the individual who is free to 'choose' goals including those other than for their own well-being. Agency so viewed, involves an individual's capability to form and achieve goals for self and others based on their conception of good. For example, working class parents might choose a school for their children at the cost of their own well-being since in sending their children to a school they are sacrificing the potential earnings of their children as well as having to pay for their schooling (Filho, 2008; Jacoby and Mansuri, 2011, p.8).

iv. **To identify agency also entails an assessment of the value of the agent's goals.** Parents' choice of private school, for example, may be motivated by their concern for children's safety (Bashir and Sadiq, 2006;), or their high aspirations for their future (Aslam, 2007b). However, such decisions differ in their underlying values.

For instance, rural parents' choice of a LCP school in their community may not necessarily be based on their preference for a private school, but rather on the ease in access, security concerns, popularity of the school in the community, and/or it being the only school option in their village. In other words, the value of parents' preferred school in the light of their 'conception of the good' needs to be assessed in the context of their aspirations and aims for the future of their children (Sen, 1985, p.204).

v. **The agent's responsibility for a state of affairs should be incorporated into his or her evaluation of it.** Alkire argues that the assessment of the "responsible agent" includes the assessment of his or her responsibility in bringing about the resulting situation (Alkire, 2008b, p. 5). Therefore, parents' responsibility regarding the choice of school needs to be assessed in the context of their real options or capability set. Saeed and Zia (2012) found that the lower-middle income group were deprived of quality education due to high fees in private schools and low quality of education in the government schools in Pakistan. Research also confirms low levels of learning in public school children (Fig-2.6), (ASER, 2015). Working-class parents enrol their children in a low quality public school because they cannot afford the preferred private school known for good quality education and as such, the choice of school indicates the individual's constraint rather than agency. These parents lack the power to achieve what they value for their children and cannot be held responsible for the low quality of education provided to their children in the public school, because of their restricted choice. However, the presence of a good public school will enhance parents' effective power as well as their agency in that they will more likely be able to achieve their aim of a rewarding education for their children.

The above discussion leads to the conclusion that individual's agency depends on their capability set comprising three subsets: 1) their personal resources; 2) opportunities provided by the state; and 3) resources generated through social interaction specifically favourable norms and values. Parents' choice of a well-reputed private school for their daughter, for example, requires financial resources, equitable opportunity for admission to this particular school, and social value of female education in their family and community. Absence of any of these factors may curtail their *effective power* and *direct control*.

A significant aspect of agency is the variance in individual capability to form and achieve goals, specifically due to intra-family inequality as in family members' individual capability-sets; for example, females have lesser agency in family decision-making, because they have fewer resources in their possession or control. However, in general, women are not totally excluded from the process of family decision-making in Pakistan and their agency may be understood through the concept of procedural control as active involvement in bringing about the desired results. Kabeer (1999, p.438) expands the notion of agency by contending that it is not restricted to decision-making, as it can also take the form of '…bargaining and negotiation, deception and manipulation, subversion and resistance as well as more intangible, cognitive processes of reflection and analysis'. She argues that agency can be exercised by collectivities as well as individual. This contention is significant for two reasons: one, it creates a scope for consideration of female agency in the family milieu through indirect, subtle strategies that influence family decision-making; and secondly, it introduces the concept of collective agency in relation to a family's combined efforts for the achievement of shared goals.

f. Capability Approach and Parents' Educational Choices

The focus of my research is the aspirations and goals of lower-middle and middle-class parents regarding the future of their children in Pakistan. I seek to uncover the impact of resources and enabling conditions on parents' aspirations and their ability to achieve their aspired goals and the strategies they adopt to overcome the dissonance between their resources and their goals. The basic concepts of CA, i.e. functionings, capability and agency, offer the scope for a meaningful analysis of the qualitative data for this research. 'Capabilities' from the CA perspective are the political products of a combination of enabling conditions and opportunities in relation to decisions about one's life so as to be able to exercise freedom from avoidable economic, social, political and personal constraints (Andresen, Otto and Ziegler, 2006). The distinction between capability and

functionings can also be seen as that between freedom to achieve and actual achievement (Agarwal and Panda, 2007, p.361). The concept of agency is integral to 'the valued state of being or doing' and the resources possessed by the agent need to be taken into consideration when determining whether they fulfil their valued state of being and doing. Hence, the broader perception of agency inheres the individual's *effective power* as well as *procedural control* in the process of achieving their desired functionings. The concepts of *effective choice* and *valuable beings and doings* are significant for my research as they can help explain the constraints on school choice for lower-middle-class parents in the context of the availability of a range of schools and types of education in Islamabad. Constraints on parents' capability to achieve *valuable beings and doings* regarding their children's education may thwart their wellbeing, since this is dependent on the functionings achieved by the person (Sen, 1992, p.39). In other words, these constraints can hinder being and doing well as well as being free to choose the life one values (Leßmann, 2009, p.451).

Parents' capability set regarding children's education comprises two broad subsets: first, the capabilities to formulate aspirations and achievable goals based on aspirations, and the opportunities to fulfil these in terms of admission to their preferred school. The second subset of capability is about pursuing their chosen trajectory towards their aspired future by providing practical support for their children's education at home and school. Parental agency about children's education is primarily other-regarding and hinges on their perception of their capability to achieve their desired functioning. The valued functioning vectors in this context are their children's admission to their preferred school and doing well in their education so as ultimately to achieve their parents' aspired status for them in their future.

This discussion brings two points to the fore: first, people may have varying degrees of agency regarding their valued functionings due to diversity in their initial set of capabilities; and second, capabilities can be expanded through social arrangements or/and effective utilisation of resources by the

agent. CA distinguishes between the means and ends of well-being, whereby only the ends have intrinsic importance and the means are merely instrumental tools for reaching the desired goals (Robeyns, 2005, p.95). Thus, resources or means have an instrumental value in achieving the intrinsically valued ends or goals, from a CA perspective. Whilst CA does not attach direct importance to the *means* of living or *means* of freedom like income, wealth etc., it does consider these important for their indirect effect on individuals' freedoms and capabilities (Sen, 2008, p.273). Thus, "being well-off" is not same as "being well" (Sen, 1985, p.196). The importance of income in parents' capability regarding their children's education, thus, should be considered in relation to the extent that it facilitates their choice of school. For example, a rural girl may attend school only if one is present in her village and also provides girls' education facilities. Likewise, discriminating gender norms or the threat of terrorist attacks on female schools make economic resources less relevant to girls' schooling in tribal areas in Pakistan. Sen's CA not only points to the unequal distribution of the means of freedom, but also the inequalities in the real opportunities of judging the kind of life that an individual would like to lead (Andresen, Otto and Ziegler, 2006). Hence, the financial resources are not fundamental requirements for all capabilities; political practices and institutions, social and cultural practices, social structures, social institutions, social norms, traditions and habits, and public goods are the various types of inputs required to expand people's capabilities in a general sense. In sum, CA stresses the economic as well as social, political and cultural dimensions of life (Robeyns, 2005, p.96).

From the CA perspective, parents' agency and freedom to choose schooling as a valued goal and to convert their aspirations into valued achievements, or in other words their capabilities, should form the basis for interpersonal comparisons regarding the quality of life (Unterhalter, 2003, p.667). The discussion in this section has explained the concepts of capability and functionings in the context of freedom to establish valued goals, freedom to achieve and freedom to choose from among multiple

options. It has also highlighted the reliance of this kind of freedom on favourable social structures and social processes, social policy and social norms. Thus viewed, provision of such opportunities is a combined social responsibility and individuals' capabilities are generated or constrained socially. This discourse has also involved promoting the individual as an agent interacting with the social processes aimed at creating equitable opportunities for all; even if only indirectly in some situations.

The required capabilities, like the formulation of aspirations, intrinsic and instrumental value of education, understanding of the education system and freedom to take advantage of opportunities equitably, are complex processes that require more detailed probing for clearer comprehension of parents' perception of their real freedoms and constraints. Robeyns argues that capability approach will need the supplementation of additional social theories (2006, p.372) and I am using Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field in order to consider these processes more thoroughly. The following sections investigate the appropriateness of these concepts for my research.

2. Bourdieu and Structure-agency

The proposition of capability expansion through conversion of an initial set of resources needs an explanation of their significance in the context of their being converted in order to gain or maintain social advantage. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field are useful lenses for such discussion. Tony Bennett, (Bourdieu, 1986a, p. xviii) in his introduction to '*Distinction*' identifies these as the three related concepts, which Bourdieu used to pose questions concerning the relationship between social class and status.

i.   Habitus: A Practical Sense

Bourdieu's concept of habitus is apt for exploring the context of parents' aspirations and goals for their children. He initially referred to this as 'a collective practical sense of objective possibilities' (Lau, 2004, p.374),

subsequently using the notion to develop a 'dispositional theory of action' that views social agents as skilful creatures, who actively construct social reality (Wacquant, 2011, p.85). Bourdieu perceived habitus as 'an infinite capacity for generating products- thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions -whose limits are set by the historically and socially situated conditions of its production' (Bourdieu, 1990, p.55). As such, habitus is a social construct that inculcates a sense of socially rewarding thoughts, expressions and actions in individuals and groups, or a practical sense for appropriate behaviour in a given situation. The latter refers to an acquired system of preferences and principles of vision and division; these scheme of actions direct appropriate response according to the situation (Bourdieu, 1998, p.25). The *practical sense*, developed in early socialisation, together with the set of capital possessed, determines individuals' relative advantage in a given situation, whereby those with more relevant practical sense fare better in such situations. The notion of *practical sense* is relevant to my study, because parents' decisions regarding the education of their children are guided by their preferences, which are generated through their understanding of the intrinsic and instrumental value of education and their familiarity with the education system and its requirements. Thus habitus is not only a 'structuring structure', but also a 'structured structure' (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.120). Bourdieu used habitus to explain individuals' social advantage or their relative positioning in particular field, with this advantage being secured due to particular thoughts, actions and attitudes valued in these fields. In the case of parents' educational choices for their children, their own education and its impact on their present circumstances (e.g. their job), the general social value of education in their present environment as well as their place of origin (which can impact on the value placed on girls' education), generate a habitus where they attempt to make what seems to them to be appropriate decisions regarding their children's education. For example, a tribal father's choice of no school for his girls could well reflect low or negative value of female education in such social and geographical areas.

a. Disposition: Spontaneity without Consciousness

Habitus refers to a process of socialisation that inculcates an understanding of doable and not-doable; 'a spontaneity without consciousness or will' (Bourdieu, 1990, p.56). Accordingly, practical sense and spontaneity are the two aspects of *habitus* that comprise the notion of *disposition*. The notion of habitus as *disposition* has an inherent supposition of it being cultivated through socialisation and adjustment of preferences to the perceived opportunities, hence providing applicability for analysing individual perceptions regarding the freedom of choice. Bourdieu uses the phrase 'making a virtue of necessity', arguing:

> In reality, the dispositions durably inculcated by the possibilities and impossibilities, freedoms and necessities, opportunities and prohibitions inscribed in the objective conditions [...] generate dispositions objectively compatible with these conditions and in a sense pre-adapted to their demands. The most improbable practices are therefore excluded, as unthinkable, by a kind of immediate submission to order that inclines agents to make a virtue of necessity, that is, to refuse what is anyway denied and to will the inevitable (1990, p.54).

To put it simply, repeated experiences of daily life inculcate a practical sense that informs individuals of what is doable in a given situation and within their set of resources; this practical sense of their constraints and freedoms is so ingrained that it becomes spontaneous practice for the individual. For example, a lower-middle-class parent who expresses a preference for public school for his or her children, may be responding to his or her inability to pay the high tuition fees of private schools. This adjustment of preferences in accordance with the resources and opportunities available shares some similarities with Sen's concept of 'preference adaptation', which he explains: 'our desires and pleasure-taking abilities adjust to circumstances, especially to make life bearable in adverse situations' (Sen, 1999a, p.62). Bourdieu's 'Pre-adapting' to the demands of conditions and 'making a virtue of necessity' sound similar to Sen's 'adjusting to make life bearable in adverse situations' in that under both

perspectives there is the acknowledgement of necessity in shaping desires and preferences. However, Bourdieu's concept of disposition is broader in the sense that it '...denotes a manner of being, a habitual state (especially of the body), and, in particular, a predisposition, tendency, propensity or inclination' (Bourdieu, 1977, p.214). This 'manner of being' or 'predisposition' is actually a perpetuation of the existing order of dominance and dominated through unconscious learning of social norms and values, including inequalities. Bourdieu contended:

> [Habitus]...ensures the active presence of the past experiences, which deposited in each organism in the form of schemes of perception, thought and action, tend to guarantee the 'correctness' of practices and their constancy over time, more reliably than all formal rules and explicit norms. This system of dispositions - a present past that tends to perpetuate itself into the future by reactivation in similarly structured practices, an internal law through which the law of external necessities, irreducible to immediate constraints, is constantly exerted - is the principal of continuity and regularity... (Bourdieu, 1990, p.54).

This concept of dispositions seems to lack agency in that individuals somewhat mechanically re-enact their past experiences and perpetuate the existing system of inequality of opportunity. Sen expresses similar views with more emphasis on the inherent injustice:

> 'Social influences can stifle the understanding of inequity and muffle the voice of protest' (Sen, 2002, p.81).

The fine difference between the two is that Sen discusses the 'negative' outcomes of such acceptance of the existing order more clearly and directly as compared to Bourdieu. Sen, with his economist's perspective, emphasises the role of social policy in reproducing inequality of opportunity, whereas Bourdieu, from his sociological perspective, explored the social processes recreating these inequalities, hence a combination of the two theories provide a broader perspective for my research.

Adaptation and adjustment, thus, are integral to the notion of habitus and disposition; modification of objective conditions that generate dispositions,

for example due to collective social action like targeted social policy to provide equitable education to rural areas or focused individual efforts like migration from rural to urban locale, result in the modification of dispositions to make them compatible with these conditions. Reay (2004, p.441) purports that, '…while habitus reflects the social position in which it was constructed, it also carries within it the genesis of new creative responses that are capable of transcending the social conditions in which it was produced'. Change in the set of resources or forms of capital possessed by the agent may be a strong motivator for adaptation of disposition. For example, in the context of the current research, rural to urban migration may motivate parents from conservative backgrounds to educate their girls, because female education is valued in their new social environment.

ii.   Capital: A Species of Power

Bourdieu perceived resources as various forms of capital, and defined capital as accumulated labour in its materialised form or 'incorporated,' embodied form. He identified multiple characteristics of capital including the time required to accumulate, potential capacity to produce profits and the ability to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form (Bourdieu, 1986b, p.46). By inclusion of 'forms' in capital, Bourdieu transcended the traditional concept of economic capital; his expanded notion of capital suggests that individuals and groups have access to various forms of capital, some of which can be, in particular fields utilised to sustain or gain advantage or can be converted into other desired forms of profit. The value of these forms of capital is socially acknowledged; for example, higher education qualifications can be converted into social and economic capital and has a social as well as an economic value. This concept of capital encompasses all tangible or intangible resources that can be converted from one to another valued form, according to the preference and/or need of the possessor. The combination of capital possessed by the individual is crucial in their relative position in various situations and circumstances; thus perceived, capital is a species of power (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu identified three main forms of capital: economic, cultural and

social. Economic capital is immediately and directly convertible into money or property, whilst cultural capital can exist in an embodied state, objectified or institutionalised state. The embodied state of cultural capital is presented in the form of long lasting dispositions of the mind and body, whilst the objectified state is evident in the form of cultural goods like books, paintings, machines, instruments etc. and the institutionalised state refers to the objectification of educational qualifications. Finally, social capital is made up of durable networks of relationships and social obligations (Bourdieu, 1986b).

iii.   Field: Particular Social Worlds

Bourdieu considered forms of capital as specific forms of power in various fields of forces and struggles (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 265). He defined field as '...the specific structure of these quite peculiar social worlds where the universal is engendered' (Bourdieu, 1998, p.138). This definition suggests a social arena, such as an education system, where actors understand the structures and engage in reciprocal action. The *universal* does not necessarily mean similarities in characteristics of all occupants or players; it is more like a common understanding of the requirements for entry to a field by the 'players' (Bourdieu used the metaphor of a game for social activity in a field) as well as aspirants and outsiders. For example, admission to a well-reputed educational institution may be restricted not only by the tough entry test, but also by high tuition fees. Thus, either of the two resources (academic (cultural) and economic) may determine the relative position of the players within the field, i.e. the chances of success for particular families when competing for places at elite educational institutions. Bourdieu elaborated upon the concept of relative positions within the field thus:

> These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situations *(situs)* in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as their

objective relation to other positions (domination, subordination, homology, etc.) (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.97).

Hence, the relative position within a field is conditional on the structure of the species of power possessed by the occupants. The concept of capital as various forms and species of power presents an opportunity for individuals to activate their resources to wield maximum power by its effective utilisation. However, this is only possible for those who are aware of the potential value of their resources in relation to the field. Possession of a certain form of capital does not automatically entails its activation (Lareau and Weininger, 2003, p.593). For example, parents with less education and more economic resources can arrange private tuition for their children to prepare them to compete for admission to more reputed schools where academic competence is valued most; thus they convert economic capital (being able to pay) into a form of cultural capital (high academic achievement in tests) that is valued in the field of selective education. By talking about the relative positions of the occupants of a field in terms of power, Bourdieu signified the possession of the 'right' form of resources/capital in establishing advantage in the field which he explained as:

> A capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field. It confers a power over the field, over the materialized or embodied instruments of production or reproduction whose distribution constitutes the very structure of the field, and over the regularities and the rules which define the ordinary functioning of the field, and thereby over the profits engendered in it (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.101).

Acquired cultural capital (academic qualifications), for example, has high value in the field of employment. Likewise, the level of parents' education influences their advantage in the choice of, and acceptance by a well-reputed school for their children. As the positions of the occupants are conditional on the combination and amount of resources possessed, those with dominant positions within the field have to struggle and compete continuously to maintain their advantage. Bourdieu compares the field to a

game, where the occupants are players who compete for mutually coveted stakes. This competition means the stakes have universal value, with there being a shared understanding and acceptance of the rules of the game by all. The players invest their resources in anticipation of preserving or increasing them, some even having trump cards regarding the most valued resources in the field with the potential of guaranteed success in achieving and/or maintaining their position of power (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.98). The rules of the game, however, are not consciously learnt and practised, as the metaphor suggests, but rather inculcated through the habitus, as discussed earlier, regarding which Bourdieu purported:

> The habitus is the kind of practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation- what is called in sport a "feel" of the game, that is, the art of anticipating the future of the game which is inscribed in the present state of play (Bourdieu, 1998, p.25).

Agents can anticipate the future or the outcome of their efforts only if they have a reasonable understanding of the rules and their own relative position within the game. Despite the constrictive nature of the normative practices engendered by the habitus, it generates opportunities for individuals to play the game within their chosen field with an advantage for those who know their 'colours' and the value of the 'trump card'. Bourdieu's notion of field combined with habitus and capital describes the scope for agency for the individual in the matter of choices. The strategic use of the capital most valued in any one field (even if possessed in a relatively small quantity), can increase the probability of entry for an aspiring outsider. Such practice necessitates initial possession of the relevant form of capital, if only in a small quantity. For example, cultural and economic resources have high value in the field of education and as a consequence, elite schools maintain their collective power exclusivity by restricting admission to ensure the advantage of the existing occupants. The aspiring educated lower-middle class parents with less economic capital may use their own educational capital to equip their children with the requisite academic capital to get them admitted into their desired school. Similarly, parents' social capital

(networks) created through, for example, their public employment, may render them a relative advantage in getting their children admitted to the school of their choice. Taking advantage of such opportunities involves the capability to activate the form of capital available and convert into the form required to play the game within a field; an ability possessed unequally by individuals. Lareau and Horvat (1999, p.38) emphasise three important points in the context of the reproduction of inequality, that sum up my argument:

> First, the value of capital depends heavily on the social setting (or field). Second, there is an important difference between the possession and activation of capital or resources. That is, people who have social and cultural capital may choose to activate capital or not, and they vary in the skill with which they activate it. Third, these two points come together to suggest that rather than being an overly deterministic continual process, reproduction is jagged and uneven and is continually negotiated by social actors.

Lareau and Horvat bring to fore the heterogeneity of agents, not only in their possession of capital, but also, in regards to their capability to activate the available forms to enhance their advantage in a given field. Due to their varied capability, individuals with similar sets of resources may adopt varying strategies to surmount their disadvantage.

iv.   Doxa: The Relations of Order

Individuals or groups' acceptance of the existing conditions of inequality as divine order or fatalism, may be because they lack comprehension of the value of the forms of capital available to them, and also do not have the capability to activate the available forms into required ones. The inhabitants of a village with no school, for example, may not be aware of their relative power as a group of voters in the field of politics and may accept the absence of a school in their village as the fate of their children. Bourdieu called this 'adherence to the relations of order', the way in which the social world appears to be self-evidently the way it is, and referred to it as *doxa*, purporting that:

> One of the most important effects of the correspondence between real divisions and practical principles of division, between social structures and mental structures, is undoubtedly the fact that primary experience of the social world is that of doxa, an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.473).

Almost all people, dominant as well as dominated, adhere to the social order to some degree; the dominant to protect their advantage and the subordinate either to enhance their position or to reproduce it. Hypothetically and legally, all public institutions are open to admission for all eligible children in Islamabad; however, most public institutions in Pakistan indicate a class division through subscription to either predominantly middle or working-class children. This class-based division of public institutions is not challenged by many working-class parents by seeking admission for their children to a middle-class school. These parents' choice of school is illustrative of their acceptance of their relative disadvantage in the existing order in spite of the possibility of expanding their school options through considering and aspiring for schools other than those they believe are meant for them. The concept of doxa reinforces preference adaptation to the perception of the available opportunities as compared to the 'real' ones. The concept of activation and conversion of capital is quite significant and relevant to my research; agents' adherence to doxa also influences their agency as well as capability to convert the forms of capital in their possession to the requisite forms to gain or maintain advantage in a given field.

v. Bourdieusian Concepts and Educational Opportunities

Bourdieusian concepts of habitus, capital and field have been used to research various aspects of educational opportunities. One aspect of enhancing advantage through education is the concern about lower-middle and working-class children's capability to benefit from entry into middle-class and elite schools. A significant aspect of my research is the way

social-cultural differences in most participants' past and present environment influence their educational decisions. The opportunities presented by their current circumstances may clash with the constraints embedded in parents' origin; for example, the gender norms in rural and tribal areas may still influence some parents' educational decisions for their children. Whilst habitus is shaped through early childhood experiences, it is continually modified by individuals' encounters with the outside world (DiMaggio, 1979), experiences add layers to it (Reay, 2004, p.1105) and the process of educational socialisation has been proved specifically effective in its modification (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009). Hence, parents with rural tribal origins may send their daughters to school in response to the schooling opportunities available in the present urban environment, in spite of low or negative value of female education learnt through early socialisation.

According to Bourdieu, the prevailing education system favours middle-class children through validating the forms of culture acquired in middle-class homes (Bennett and Silva, 2006, p.3). This inherent discrimination in the education system deprives working and lower-middle class children of an equitable opportunity to compete for places in good schools. For example, lower-middle and working class children or those from ethnic or rural background may lack required competence in Urdu and English languages to qualify for admission to such schools in Islamabad. Bourdieu's concepts can be useful in uncovering these kind of un-researched constraints on families' capability to provide good education for their children.

3. Aspiration Formulation and Family Capabilities

The concept of aspirations as the vectors of families' capability to achieve their desired goals is an important concept in the context of my research; because, parents' choice of school is linked to various aspects of their

capability including not only what material resources they have but also what they aspire for the future of their children and the values that motivate their aspirations and preferences for a certain type of education or school. Regardless of whether they are 'enduring, realistic or achievable', aspirations are important in understanding people's life orientations and their desired trajectories (Crivello, 2009, p.2). It is necessary thus, to understand these conceptual aspects of parents' capability in order to be able to understand and contextualise their schooling decisions. Appadurai defines aspirations as 'wants, preferences, choices, and calculations'; wants and preferences are influenced by values, and choices and calculations are based on the perceptions of the real options or resources available. Appadurai perceives aspirations as forming part of wider ethical and metaphysical ideas derived from larger cultural norms (2004, p.67). Thus as part of wider ethical and metaphysical ideas, with the notion of aspirations inheres a moral connotation and a relevance to the notion of value too. *Values* are viewed as things that are considered 'good' in themselves, like truth, beauty, loyalty (and education) (Halstead, 1996, p.13); or the standards and principles against which we measure our decisions (Passy, 2003) e.g. parents' decision of no school for girls in rural and tribal areas of Pakistan due to adverse gender norms that undermine the value of female education as detrimental to the social structures. Khalid's research in Mianwali, Pakistan, found that generally mothers were concerned about the negative effects of education on their daughters' behaviour and attitude, and fathers were concerned about not being able to find an appropriate marital match for their educated daughters within their *bradri* (tribe) or caste (Khalid, 1996). These values may not be upheld in urban areas or may have changed over the years even in the place where this research was conducted. Although values are socially shared concept of good, they are not permanent or universal. Thus the values upheld and practiced may not necessarily be ones with which everyone would agree.

Hart (2016, p.326) contends that aspirations are future oriented and indicative of individual's and group's commitments towards a particular

trajectory or end point. Willingness to commit available resources to achieve a desired end, is integral to any such commitment and thus resources are equally important in aspiration formulation. Appadurai contends that although the conception of the good life is formed socially, the capacity to aspire is varied for individuals. They might set their aspirations to what they believe they can achieve or more ambitiously (Hart, 2016, p.326). Thus in many cases, lower aspirations would indicate lesser capacity to attain rather than to want. People with more resources have a more developed capacity to aspire because they have more complex experience of relations between ends and means and wider experience of aspirations and related outcomes. More resourced people also have more realisable opportunities available to them and more resources to achieve their aspirations and goals (Appadurai, 2004, p.68). Linking of capacity to aspire with resources suggests aspirations are formed within resources or what people think is attainable. Sen also accepts that real opportunities impact desires; he contends, 'Considerations of 'feasibility' and of 'practical possibility' enter into what we dare to desire' (Sen, 1987a, p.15). Bourdieu purports that correlation between objective probabilities and subjective aspirations is due to conditioning of agents to the conditions of their life – a 'virtue of necessity' - and unconscious pre-adjustment of their dispositions to the probabilities attached to their group or class thus making their dispositions compatible with their conditions and excluding improbable practices as unthinkable (Bourdieu, 1990, p.54). Bourdieu's view recognizes the significance of social class in aspiration formulation and suggests confinement of aspiration formulation within socially constructed parameters. A working-class parent thus may not even think about an executive job for his son or marriage above her social class for his daughter in a socially stratified society.

The significance of cultural and social resources in the formation of preferences has been acknowledged widely (Ball and Vincent, 1998; Bell, 2009; Bovens, 1992; Elster, 1983; Giovanola, 2005; Khader, 2009; Mander, 1987; Tooley, 1997; Vincent et al., 2011). This aspect of aspiration building

is specifically relevant to my research due to the culturally diverse background of my respondents. Most participants of this research have migrated to Islamabad from all over Pakistan, including rural as well as urban areas. These families are influenced by two overlapping sets of norms and values in the shaping of their dispositions; one set of values keeps them attached with and linked to their place of origin and the other set of values is required for adapting with their new social environment and modify their dispositions accordingly. Parents' aspirations are influenced by the social norms and values from their two distinct social environments and associated sets of values and norms. Thus, in spite of being in the same location with same schooling options, participating parents have varied capability to achieve their aspired functioning regarding their children's education. Hart (2016, p.329) argues, 'The functioning of aspiring arguably sits between the freedom to aspire and the capability to achieve the particular aspiration'. Thus, the families with ambitious aspirations strive to expand their capability to achieve their ambitious goals. Their preferences are thus shaped by their unique feasibility set, which comprises of family capabilities and enabling conditions. By *family capabilities*, I mean the shared capabilities of individual family members combined to achieve a common goal, e.g. to make good education possible for children, parents as well as children combine their capabilities to achieve family's valued goal. *Enabling conditions*, on the other hand, 'enable individuals to take decisions based on what they have reason to value' (Walker and Unterhalte, 2007, p.3) for example, availability of good public schools for families to choose the one they prefer, or inclusive schools for special needs children or non-formal schools for out of school children. Family capabilities thus, are generated within the family, while enabling conditions are created at the level of community or society. The distinction does not imply that the two concepts are mutually exclusive; on the contrary these are highly interactive.

4. A Combination of Sen and Bourdieu

Theory provides us with the frameworks to make sense of complex phenomena (Bowman, 2010, p.3). In this section, I explain the affinity of the CA and Bourdieu and how I combine the concepts from these two theoretical approaches to analyse the qualitative data of my research. Sen's CA sports an inherent adaptability to other theories, and has a theoretical affinity with Bourdieu as well (Bowman, 2010; Hart, 2013, p.49); both these approaches focus on explaining inequality. Sen's concepts of functioning, capability and agency as well as Bourdieu's capital, habitus and field, are relevant and applicable theoretical concepts for this research. I contend that the theoretical concepts of CA provide a profound outline for the theoretical framework for this research, while Bourdieu's concepts are useful tools to fill in specific details in this framework and broaden its perspective.

Caroline Hart' s work is an example of operationalising CA in education under conditions of enormous inequality (Unterhalter, 2014). Hart' (2013) synthesises the theoretical perspectives of CA and Bourdieu to gain insight into the aspirational patterns and educational decisions of young students in UK. Her work bears a special significance for my research because she also explores the aspirations in relation to educational decision making (Unterhalter, 2014, p.133). Hart draws on Bourdieusian concept of forms of capital to supplement and expand Sen's notion of resources that condition capabilities (Unterhalter, 2014, p.134). Ladwig (2014, p.138) finds Hart's combining of Sen with Bourdieu intriguing due to Sen's philosophical commitment to agency and freedom, which the critics of Bourdieu find missing in his theory. Hart's model theorises formation of aspirations and their 'conversion' into capabilities and functions (Ladwig, 2014, p.138). She provides a logical analysis of the relationship among various forms of aspirations and their realization (ibid, p.140). However, Ladwig was not convinced by Hart's theoretical argument because he finds that Hart's theoretical model is contradicted by her empirical findings, as she concluded that individuals gave up, put off or adapted their aspirations to the overall impact of constraints rather than as a consequence of any one

factor (ibid, p.139). Craig Jeffrey also had reservations regarding Hart's framework for understanding educational inequalities and aspirations (2014, p.142). He found that Hart's work overlooked the question of class, an important tenant of Bourdieu's work (ibid, p.143). Jeffrey sees a contradiction in Sen and Bourdieu's stance on education; he argues that Sen sees school as new opportunities for the poor while Bourdieu views education system as site for reproduction of class and other inequalities. He argues that the beauty of Sen and Bourdieu combined together is the potential explanatory powers of theories that suggest different outcomes (Op cit).

Robeyns contends that CA provides concepts and a framework that can help to conceptualize and evaluate the phenomena of poverty, inequality and well-being (2006, p.353). Inequality however, is not merely an issue of distributive injustice; inequality of opportunity to make valuable choices may also adversely impact on the quality of life by causing a sense of deprivation in individuals and groups. CA can 'appreciate *all* changes in a person's quality of life: from knowledge to relationships to employment opportunities and inner peace, to self-confidence' (Alkire, 2005b, p.119). The listed aspects are all relevant for example to the parents who need knowledge of the education system to perform their parental role and make confident educational choices to safeguard their children's future prospects, which ultimately can affect their relationship with their family members. There has been, however, little research on these aspects of an individual's life. The concepts of capability, functioning and agency are useful lenses to consider those aspects of the quality of life that are not covered by quantitative measures of the quality of life, like income and years of schooling, but which are still valuable to the individual. For example, parents' agency regarding their children's education cannot be fully comprehended by merely children's school attendance; parents' agency regarding children's schooling can be assessed only in relation to their preferences and goals for the education of their children. One of the practical benefits of CA, according to Alkire, is its analytical clarity about the ends and means; its

ability to raise issues regarding value judgments (Alkire, 2005b, p.119). Robeyns contends (2006, p.353) that CA comes in a variety of forms, partly because of the wide scope of the approach and also because it is radically underspecified and thus may require supplementation of other social theories (ibid, p.372) according to the nature of inquiry to broaden the theoretical perspective on specific research problems. I have chosen Bourdieu's work on cultural reproduction through the education system to complement CA for comprehensive understanding of inequality in the field of education caused through social structures. Bourdieu's sociology is 'critical of established patterns of power and privilege as well as of the politics that supports them' (Wacquant, 2007, p.264) and thus inhere the scope for complementing CA in considering the inequality of opportunity caused by social and political structures.

Since the main focus of this research is parents' sense of agency, an understanding of their capabilities as well as functionings is imperative. Parents' capability to achieve their valued functionings can be understood only by their own account of their desired functionings and the constraints to achieving them. Amartya Sen's concept of valued functioning captures the notion of value and thus a process of valuation is attached to the formulation of desired goals and aspirations individuals seek to achieve in their lives. Individuals' freedom to achieve their valued functioning is conditional on their capability, which in turn, is shaped by the resources in their possession as well as the presence of the enabling conditions created through favourable social structures and policy. Individuals' agency is illustrated by their capability to form valued goals and aspirations and the opportunity to achieve what they value.

Functionings are valuable by definition; both objectively as well as to the person concerned (Alkire, 2008a, p.5). Formulation of valued functioning or aspirations and goals is strongly influenced by the context of conceptualisation. Parents' educational aspirations and why they desire these goals for their children are influenced immensely by the enabling conditions as well as their social and cultural context. Bowman argues that

CA can be useful in identifying change needed to enable such freedom of choice, but it does not adequately address the social and cultural nature of choice (Bowman, 2010, p.9). Bourdieu's concept of habitus is, arguably, a useful social and cultural lens for looking at the process of aspiration formulation. His perception of habitus is as, '…an infinite capacity for generating products- thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions - whose limits are set by historically, socially situated conditions of its production' (1990, p.55). It can be argued thus, the dimensions and value of desired functionings are shaped within the space of individuals' habitus. However, Bourdieu's perception of habitus is not fatalistic, for he saw it as a dynamic and open system of dispositions that constantly either reinforces or modifies its structures in response to the ongoing experiences of a person's life (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.133). Assimilation of new structures into a well-developed habitus due to change in social structures or social spaces is by no means a smooth process. Whilst habitus is perceived as operating at the unconscious level, events in the present social fields of the individual may conflict with their habitus, and cause self-questioning and thus result in operating of habitus at the conscious level (Reay, 2004, p.437). For example, parents originally from rural or tribal areas may find gender norms against female education clashing with their present urban social norms of education for all and thus, revisit their values in favour of their daughters' schooling. However, they may find it hard to modify their habitus to the extent to agree to un-chaperoned commuting to distant schools or to co-education for their daughters. In sum, theoretical perspective of habitus can be useful for looking at differences in the aspirations and valued functionings of the participants due to diversity in their origin.

Clarity about the concept of *capability* is crucial as a core concept of CA as well as for the synthesis of the theoretical framework for this study. Functioning outcomes can sometimes be used to assess people's capability (Robeyns, 2006, p.354). Information about parents' choice of school thus, may indicate their capability when viewed in the context of their

preference for school. Robeyns argues that two groups with varied functionings in spite of same capability set may have varied capabilities in the first place (ibid). Parents' diverse school choices in the presence of the same schooling options thus, may be due to differences in their initial capabilities. For example, some parents may be constrained in their capability regarding choice of school due to gender bias, whilst others may prefer to stay with 'their own kind' and still others may be constrained by the disability of their child. Alkire defines capabilities as, 'the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for [a person] to achieve' (2005a). Formulations of capability, according to her, comprise two parts: valuable beings and doings (functionings), and freedom (Alkire, 2005b, p.118). Sen perceives capability as the freedom to lead different types of life (2008, p.273), whereby his concept of freedom encompasses: '*deciding on how to value* the alternatives' and: 'of choosing not among alternatives but among valuations and preferences' (Sen, 2006d, p.95). Thus, the capability of a person regarding the education of her children would include the freedom to choose the school *she prefers* and *considers best* from among alternatives. Valuation of alternatives is a reflective exercise with an understanding of the value of each preference (Halstead, 1996, p.14). Thus, the capability of an individual comprises the availability of multiple alternatives, capability of reflective evaluation to assign a value to each alternative, and finally, the ability to achieve the most valued alternative. Thus capability is a person's power or 'positive freedom' (Qizilbash, 2006, p.21).

To achieve this kind of capability or power, the individual needs access to economic, cultural and social means or resources. Bourdieu's concept of capital encompasses this kind of power (see p.86), whereby he saw capital as a structurally-based resource and part of the fundamental system of inequality in society as a result of the social reproduction of power and privilege (Abel and Frohlich, 2012, p.237). The three fundamental forms of capital, namely, economic, social and cultural, are the source of social advantage and class differentiation (Silva and Edwards, 2004 p.2).

Bourdieu strongly linked the choices individuals have with the various forms and volumes of capital possessed by them and their class specific habitus (Abel and Frohlich, 2012, p.237). Possession of capital, however, is not sufficient for the possessor in gaining advantage; its form must have a value in the given field, (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) (see p.87). Moreover, the agent must have the capability to activate the form in their possession (Lareau and Horvat, 1999) to compete effectively in the specific field, e.g. education. The valued forms of capital in the given field allow the actor access to desired opportunities. In the specific field of education, this may also mean that parents can choose between several available and desirable opportunities to access education at a particular site. In other words, the right forms of capital expand the capability set representing a person's freedom to achieve various functioning combinations (Sen, 2006a, p.48). Sen perceives advantage as a reflection of a person's capability to function (Sen, 1987b, p.15). Regarding which, possession of embodied and institutionalised cultural capital enhances parents' capability regarding educational choices for their children. Reay (1996) found in her research in London, UK, that middle-class parents engage in a more sophisticated process of school choice than working-class ones. She argues the difference in the way these parents make choices is not just about the amount of knowledge possessed by the two groups about the local education market; working class disadvantage comes from issues such as lack of confidence or doubt about what is in children's best interest (ibid, p.590). Moreover, she found that working-class parents did not have the power to make sophisticated choices due to the poor 'fit' between the forms of capital in their possession and the dominant order of the field of education. Their working-class habitus constrains their capability to form high aspirations for their daughters; they lack the experiences relevant to what according to Appadurai (2004) is the 'fully developed capacity to aspire' of rich and powerful. He contends:

> Because the better off, by definition, have a more complex experience of the relation between a wide range of ends and means, because they have a bigger stock of available experiences of the relationship of aspirations

and outcomes, because they are in a better position to explore and harvest diverse experiences of exploration and trial, because of their many opportunities to link material goods and immediate opportunities to more general and generic possibilities and options (ibid, p.68).

This explanation is similar to what Bourdieu termed inculcated disposition (p.84) created through continuing experiences of advantage and highlights significance of the ends as well as means in determining a person's capability of valuation and preference formation, illustrating the role of *means* or forms of capital in the formulation of the capability. I argue that capability is not as deterministic as Appadurai's description of the advantage of the better off would suggest, for it provides opportunities to expand power for the agent by activating the capital in his or her possession and converting it into the required form, thereby reducing the disadvantage they are experiencing or enhancing their current advantage. This kind of capability includes effective power and procedural control, or agency (p.80), albeit partial. Sen's perception of agency is complemented by Bourdieu's concept of field (p.87), thus creating scope for conceptualising individuals making efforts to expand their agency, through effective utilisation of varied combinations of resources to gain or maintain power within a given field.

The theoretical concepts of Sen and Bourdieu have a natural affinity and they complement each other beautifully for a broader, more comprehensive perspective on social issues. Their combination is specifically relevant to my research that seeks to uncover discriminatory social structures that cause inequitable opportunities and options for individuals and families.

Methodology

To gain a thorough understanding of parents' views regarding the education and future of their children in Pakistan, I needed a research design with the potential to probe deeper than numbers and to uncover the qualitative aspects of parents' decisions and experiences regarding their children's education and schooling; insights that are possible only through individuals' own account of these processes. Consequently, I decided to use semi-structured interviews to capture the subjective narration of lived experiences of a select group of parents in Islamabad. A small group of 22 families of diverse origin and similar schooling options were interviewed. The key respondents were government employees in Islamabad, working in the health and education department; their spouses and other family members, where available, were also interviewed. Most respondents were working in non-gazetted salaried jobs (Appendix-13) and the majority lived in one official residential locality with hypothetically similar schooling options.

Methodology, according to Hesse-Biber and Leavy is, '…the bridge that brings theory and method, perspective and tools together' (2006, p.21). The focus of my study is parents' views regarding their children's education and future in Pakistan. I have discussed CA and Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital and field in chapter-3 to establish the theoretical context of the constraints on parents' preferences and choices regarding the education of their children and how these constraints may interfere with individuals' freedom to choose what they value.

This chapter looks at the design for this research starting with key questions in the first section, followed by a section on site and sample selection for this study. This section provides an overview of the available schooling facilities at the main site for data collection and the demographics of the participating families. The section on data collection covers the semi-

structured interviews, the researcher's role in qualitative research and power relations in the context of the researcher and the researched, with a particular focus on the difference in the language and culture between the two. The next section focuses on matters related to qualitative data analysis including validity and coding of the data, followed by a section on ethical concerns of relevance to this study. The last section concludes this chapter.

1. Key Questions

For an understanding of parents' perceptions of their choices regarding schooling of their children in Pakistan, we need to explore various aspects of this phenomenon. The following are the key questions for this study:

1. What are the aspirations and goals of LSMC and HSMC government employees for the future of their male and female children?
2. How do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations, school choices and engagement in their children's education?
3. How do families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities regarding their children's schooling and education?

2. Research Design

Research questions provide a focus for developing a research plan and strategy for gathering data to address the research issue. A strategy for gathering data can be developed only if one knows the kind of data required for the research (Gibson and Brown, 2009, p.53). To probe parents' views about their aspirations for the future and education of their children, understanding all the endogenous and exogenous influences on the formulation of their capability set is imperative. This kind of information cannot be elicited through structured interviews requiring answers through the posing of specific questions, for parents' narration of their own unique experiences and contexts is necessary if a thorough understanding of the issues as perceived by them is to be acquired. Parents' views on these

issues have scarcely been researched so far in Pakistan (Ahmed et al., 2013, p.2). Qualitative methods are effective for exploring little known areas and excluded and silenced groups, enabling their voices to be heard in public debates about the matters which affect them (Alderson, 1999, p.5).

Qualitative social research mainly focuses on uncovering the meanings individuals ascribe to their lives and experiences. Since my research engages with the subjective views of parents, I draw on a social constructionist perspective. This perspective is concerned with the social world as constructed through the thoughts and ideas of people (Jackson and Sørensen, 2007; Macioni, 2012), and focuses on an individual's learning that takes place, because of their interaction in a group. Social constructionists believe that individuals' understanding of the world is product of a historical process of interaction and negotiation between groups of people. Under this approach, it is asserted that goal of the research is to open up an appreciation of what is possible rather than to produce knowledge that is fixed and universally valid (Galbin, 2014, p.83). The constructionist approach to data collection best suits this study, because I seek to uncover participants' experiences as perceived by them within their unique contexts. Subjective data is imperative to comprehend fully the extent of the economic, social, cultural and historical impact, on parents' capability to provide schooling for their children and only parents can provide such data through narration of their practices and views. To this end, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather qualitative data about their views and perceptions regarding their children's future and education. To analyse and to construct meanings from this qualitative data, theoretical concepts from Amartya Sen's capability approach and Pierre Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of capital, habitus and field, are drawn upon as described above.

i.   Site and Sample Selection

As discussed in the literature review, there has been very little research in Pakistan on this topic. Pakistan is a hugely diverse nation, in terms of

culture, geography, religious sects and SES. A study aimed at eliciting parental views on education across the nation would only be able to scrape the surface in superficial ways. In order to shed insight onto the processes through which parents negotiate the complex sets of resources and enabling conditions that influence their perspectives and practices, I decided to work with a sub-group who share some similarities in relation to social and economic conditions and lifestyles. In sum, analysing the perspectives of a relatively homogeneous group enables one to uncover quite subtle nuances in their decision-making processes.

a. National Institute of Health: The Universe of this Research

I chose the NIH residential colony as the main site for data collection for my research, because the residents here are all government employees from all over Pakistan. The residents are from diverse regional backgrounds working and living in the same environment and having, hypothetically, similar schooling choices for their children. NIH is a public sector health organisation, situated on the outskirts of Islamabad in an area called Chak Shahzad and is included in the rural ICT[8] (Appendix-8).

Image-4.1: Accommodation for Lower Grade Employees, NIH

The housing colony for the employees is built on the premises of the institute. This federal organisation employs personnel from all over the

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[8] Islamabad Capital Territory

country, thereby ensuring representation of all regions. This afforded a diverse sample along with mandatory control for a number of factors, like parents' government employment, similar housing facilities, similar transport facilities and most importantly similar schooling facilities for the inhabitants of this colony. The NIH colony comprises 332 houses, out of which about 100 are officers' accommodations, with the remainder being for lower grade employees (Appendix-8).

b. Schooling Facilities

NIH colony is a well planned residential facility with the provision of three federal government schools on the premises. FG Model School (FGJMS) has been upgraded from primary to middle and recently to secondary level, with coeducation in primary, but girls only from the sixth grade onwards and is an English medium school. FG Girls Secondary School No12 (FGGS#12), is an Urdu medium school, offering coeducation up until the fifth grade and only for girls from there onwards. FG Boys Higher Secondary School No15 (FGBS#15), is an English medium school for boys from the sixth grade to higher secondary level and is situated just outside the NIH colony. After passing primary level from FGJMS and FGGS#12, many boys take admission to this school. NIH also provides transport facilities for its employees' children to other schools in Islamabad, thereby expanding families' access to well-reputed FG Model Schools in the city. The details of the schools chosen by parents in and outside the NIH colony are presented in Appendix-6.

Image-4.2: FG Model School (FGJMS)& (FGGS#12)

Image-4.4: FG Boys Higher Secondary School No.15 (FGBS#15)

Schools in Islamabad can be broadly categorised into three types: public, private and religious schools (Appendix-5). The public schools have three further categories. Islamabad College for Girls (ICG) and Islamabad College for Boys (ICB) are considered the two best public sector institutions in the city. These institutions offer schooling from pre-school to post-graduate levels. They have the best infrastructure, most qualified staff and deliver good results in the central exams. Islamabad Model Colleges for Girls (IMCGs) and Islamabad Model Colleges for Boys (IMCBs) are the second type of public institution, also with a high reputation. Most model colleges have similar quality indicators as ICG and ICB, but out of 422, only 20 FG institutions have this status (FDE, 2013). These institutions are preferred by most middle and lower middle-class salaried families in the capital. Admission to these institutions is highly competitive and not always fair, for it is generally understood that along with doing well in admission test, parents need some influential intervention to get their child admitted into one of these institutions. Federal Government Schools (FG Schools) are the lowest category public schools in ICT. These were established for the children of working class and low grade government employees in the capital. Whilst most of these schools have good buildings, they lack staff and other facilities, like furniture etc. These schools tend to be the last choice of the parents who are better informed about the educational facilities in the capital. NIH families have predominantly chosen government

schools for their children. Table-4.1 presents a summary of the various types of school chosen by the sample of this research.

Table-4.1: Schools Attended by Children of Participating Families

Types of Schools	Boys	Girls
FG Schools	11	8
FG Model Schools	16	18
Private Schools	5	2
Madrassah	-	1
Technical Institute	2	-
College	-	1
University	-	3
Boarding (Pvt.)	1	-
No School/dropped out of school	2	1
Total	37	34

There are multiple types of private schools in Islamabad; exclusive as well as LCP schools are available to cater for the needs of various social classes. The LSMC parents, who are unable to get admission to the FG Model Colleges, tend to choose LCP schools for perceived better quality education for their children rather than FG Schools. Shafqat School, a LCP school in Chak Shahzad, is quite popular amongst NIH families (Appendix-5 & 6).

Image-4.5: Mosque, NIH

Madrassahs or religious schools are also private institutions with varied fee structure ranging from free to very expensive; Madrassahs for boys and girls are present in Islamabad. There are two mosque schools in the NIH

colony, where many children go for part-time Quran classes after the regular school.

The aforementioned 422 federally administered schools in Islamabad and a 97.8 percent enrolment rate (ASER, 2015), are convincing evidence of the demand for education in the capital. The inequitable distribution of resources amongst these schools has ascribed a social status and value to each. The name of the institution attended by respondents' children not only indicates the quality of education they are receiving; it also ascribes a social status to the family as well.

c.   Sampling

The first proposal for my research was a comparative survey of working and middle-class parents in rural/urban areas of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), to uncover their views regarding their children's right to education. However, a number of factors contributed to the modification and change of the design as well as the focus of the research. Initially, the deteriorating law and order situation in KP raised security concerns and it was decided to conduct qualitative research and limit it to Punjab only. The data collected through semi-structured interviews in a pilot study of working-class and middle-class parents in Rawalpindi, uncovered extensively diverse perceptions of parents narrating their constraints, and brought out their perceptions of their limitations in providing education for their children as an overarching theme. The research design was modified further narrowing down the focus on qualitative elicitation of parents' views on this subject.

Recruiting participants for research is a concrete interactive process. The decision who to recruit is informed by the probability of the individual agreeing to participate in the study and the likelihood of their meeting the eligibility criteria (Thomas, Bloor and Frankland, 2007, pp.430-433). The researcher may have to follow many trails for recruitment. For example, they may initially rely on friends and colleagues and later, on initial interviewees to provide further contacts. Consideration of a range of views

on the topic being researched is important in the selection of the sample (Rapley, 2004, p.17). I adopted a purposive sampling method to insure a diversity of respondents for a broader perspective on the problems, issues and conveniences experienced by parents regarding the schooling and education of their children.

My basic criteria for the selection of the sample included at least one parent being in government employment and at least one child being of school age, i.e. between 6 and 16 years at the time of the interview. Parents working in BPS 7-16 were included in the sample. A purposive sampling approach was used for the selection of the sample, which was driven by 'a series of strategic choices about with whom, where, and how' (Palys, 2008, p.697). Initially, I approached people I knew in the field of education, because being in the same field it was easier to identify potential respondents and also to win their cooperation. The process was very slow; it took me days to arrange one meeting with a prospective respondent in their own home. In the meantime, I requested an acquaintance to introduce me to some families in NIH for my research. After a few interviews in this locality I realised a door had been opened to me, providing the opportunity to conduct my fieldwork in this bounded environment that hypothetically offered its inhabitants similar opportunities. It was easy for me to contact parents who fulfilled the criteria in this residential facility and a number of factors were controlled for naturally, because these respondents had been working and living in the same vicinity as well as having similar structural conveniences regarding the schooling of their children. Moreover, coming from all over the Pakistan, these families offered a broad spectrum of social cultural variants to ensure the diversity in my sample. I could not have found a more ideal situation for collecting qualitative data for my research. Whilst there were some broad similarities in the current employment and class positioning of my participants, they had very varied histories, allowing me to trace in a nuanced way their varying capability sets and the different pathways through which a group of middle-class government employees have deployed different forms of capital to influence their children's current

schooling. A purposive sample of 22 families from diverse backgrounds, according to the basic criteria mentioned above, form the core group of this research. I spoke to mothers in all the families and to mothers and fathers in 19 of the total 22 families. Moreover, diversity of regional background was sought in the core sample and Table-4.2 presents a summary of those of the participating families. As can be seen, this sample includes participants from all over the country and rural as well as urban regions.

Table-4.2: Parents' Origin (province & Rural/urban)

Total		Punjab	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	Sindh	Capital	Rural	Urban
19	Fathers	9	7	2	2	14	5
22	Mothers	11	7	4	1	14	6
41		20	14	6	3	28	11

Due to lower levels of education in rural areas, more respondents in this lower middle-class sample originated from them. The majority of the sample was from Punjab and KP and there was no representation of Balochsitan in this sample. Generally, very low levels of education in Balochistan explain their lack of representation in organisations requiring higher education or technical/vocational qualifications for employment (Figure-2.4). Three parents out of the 22 families worked in the education department in Islamabad. Since, majority of the population in Islamabad are originally from other parts of the country, diversity of origin was achievable in the selection of the sample. Many of the participating families had migrated from rural areas at various times, ranging from two years to over twenty years, thus allowing for a scope for consideration of the impact of varying cultural traditions, and the influence of migration on parents' capability to educate their children.

ii. Participating Families

The sample of this study comprises lower-middle and middle-class government employees between BPS 7-16 and their spouses in Islamabad (Appendix-13). Their income from salaries varied between 10,000.00 to 20,000.00 rupees, including overtime remuneration. Many of the male

participants supplemented their income with part-time jobs and small side businesses. Due to their low level of literacy (Table-4.3), lower-middle-class mothers have little opportunity of respectable employment outside the home other than menial jobs, which might not meet with social approval. However, three of the NIH mothers did tailoring to supplement family income and the extra cash earned thus, reduced the gap in parents' income in the sample. The few families that were living only on the income from their salaries were doing so due to the irregular hours of the father's job, which made part-time jobs impossible for them.

Parents' levels of education varied significantly. The requisite education for employment at grade-7 is matriculation (high school certificate), while graduation is required for jobs of grade-16. Many of the research participants had postgraduate degrees, some of them having improved their qualification with distance education alongside the job. On average, mothers in the sample had lower education than fathers, and there is greater variation in mothers' education levels, ranging from no schooling to science graduation.

Table-4.3: Parents' Years of Schooling

	Years of Schooling	0	<5	5	<10	10	10-12	12+	14	14+
22	Mothers	3	1	3	4	2	7	0	2	0
19	Fathers	-	-	-	-	4	4	2	4	5

It is hard to assign any single class category to this group due to acute diversity across it. They can be described as varying between Low-Scoring-Families and High-Scoring-Families lower middle and middle-class on the basis of their education, income, job and origin. Moreover, this group of parents exhibited a diverse combination of SES traits and thus, were hard to categorise. For example, a family with an illiterate wife and science graduate husband employed in grade-16 or one with a graduate wife and husband who worked at the lowest grade in the sample as a gas welder were hard to be categorised as LSMC or HSMC families. This necessitated designing of a score card to categorise families' SES according their unique set of traits (Appendix-4). This score card comprises four components:

education, occupation, income and origin. Each parent was scored on this card and the sum of both parents' score was taken as that for the family. I decided that families with a total score in a single digit were categorised as LSMC, while those with a score in double digit were considered HSMC families. Under this arrangement, 14 families were categorised as HSMC and eight as LSMC for this sample.

The NIH families had access to various types of social and cultural capital. Government employment generates social capital in the form of social networks and thus, expands participants' resources favourably. The employees of the NIH colony also have the advantage of privileged accommodation in a well-planned and well provided residential area with facilities like FG institutions on the premises, official transport to schools in Islamabad for children, safe play grounds and health facilities for the family. The colony generates valuable cultural capital of an educated community, sharing an understanding of the common interests of employees of the same organisation.

The sample of this research was quite diverse despite being small in size. The two single parent families in the sample comprised one widowed mother of two, living with her brother's family, and one working mother living with her two children in Islamabad, while her husband was working abroad. Two families had disabled children and two had opted for *hifz-e-Quran*[9] for one of their children, both boys, having resumed attendance at mainstream schools after completing their hifz. The two working women in the sample worked in education and being the primary respondents, were not part of the NIH community.

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[9] learning Quran by heart

3. Data Collection

i.   Semi-Structured Interviews

The social constructionist approach has the aim of making sense of the meanings people have about the world. Subjective meanings are formed through social interaction and through historical and cultural norms that operate in individuals' lives. Open-ended interview questions allow the participants to construct the meaning of a situation, as forged in their interaction with other people (Creswell, 2007, pp.20-21). The data that emerges from the interview talk is the product of the interaction of the speakers. Thus, interviews are social encounters, where speakers through retrospective or prospective accounts, elaborate their past or future actions, experiences, feelings and thoughts. The interviewer must pay attention to the biographical, contextual, historical, and institutional elements brought to the interview (Rapley, 2004). Due to the specific requirement of the data to answer research questions, the types of questions asked in an interview are influenced by the research questions. Perceptive questioning in in-depth conversations provides insight into one's lived experiences. An interviewee's narrative allows the researcher to approach their experiential and structured world in a comprehensive way (Flick, 2006). Thus, in-depth interviews are useful in studying power structures and decision processes. Moreover, interviews are useful in understanding an individual's agency within their social and material environment (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2006).

I seek to uncover the ways participants perceived the realities that motivate and shape their decisions about the schooling of their children. I therefore needed an approach to investigate *participants' interpretation* of their experiences in this context. Parents' account of their personal experiences in relation to their children's schooling in semi-structured interviews provided a revealing lens to address my research problem. This method of data generation was effective in uncovering the often neglected unique and subjective set of freedoms and constraints experienced by individual

families. I selected this method of data collection after careful consideration of its advantages and limitations. Semi-structured interviews were deemed suitable for my research, because they offered the respondents the opportunity to construct their subjective experiences in their own space. Restrained intervention during their conversation fostered a sense of control on the part of the interviewees and thus, encouraged them to disclose their thoughts and emotions about the decision-making regarding their children's education. This method effectively brought out the freedoms or constraints on parents' choices and their agency, without them having to struggle to find the 'right answers' in response to more structured questions. Spending 'unstructured' time with the respondents in their own homes created an opportunity to observe their unique family dynamics as well as the social and cultural contexts of their expressed views. I believe that richer and more authentic data have been generated through this approach which also involved the casual participation of other family members in conversation. Data deriving from this participation allowed a degree of triangulation of the data. Being in their own space reduced the pressure that the respondents may have felt in a more formal environment to say what was expected of them. In general, semi-structured interviews proved an efficient method to uncover the extent of contextual and structural influences, including social, cultural, political, religious, economic and regional elements, on the process of parents' schooling decisions.

Separate in-depth interviews were arranged with each parent. The generative questions for the interview routine were grouped in three categories: (1) questions about self, family and spouse; (2) questions about parents' schooling decisions; and (3) parents' experiences regarding the school choice as well the education and schooling of their children (Appendix-1). The responses to the first category of questions provided the backdrop or the context for constructing the reality of each respondent's life, as they themselves perceived it. Initial questions were asked concerning the participants' personal details, familial contexts, their education, occupation, origin, composition of their family, children,

schooling status of their children along with their regional traditions and customs. The second group of questions pertained to their views on education, their expectations and aspirations for their children's future and how they thought education could be instrumental in fulfilling their aspirations. They were also asked what sort of opportunities they were seeking for their children and what constraints or freedoms they had experienced in this regard. The third category of questions focused on parents' perception of the accomplishment of their aspired goals for their children, their sense of agency regarding their children's education and future as well as the constraints experienced by them. One of the important theme was how parents perceived their role in the lives of their children and how much agency they felt in making choices for them.

The openness of this method posed some limitations too, e.g. in some instances it became difficult to keep the respondents focused on the topic of interest without intervention. Additionally, listening to the personal narratives of constraints and limitations was an emotionally moving experience for me. Weiss (1994, p.125) talks about various reactions he felt during qualitative interviewing, including emotional engagement with the narrative of the respondents. Occasionally, an interview is engaging enough to leave one not only to feel in tune with the other person's rhythm of speaking and thought, but also beginning to see the world through the other person's eyes. At such times, I felt myself to be split, with one part of me functioning professionally, asking questions and monitoring responses, while another part identified with the respondent. Seeing the world through another's eyes is surely what the constructivist methodology seeks to achieve. As some parents' hopeful aspirations were quite contagious, sharing their feelings was often an intense experience for me as the respondents' narrated their distress with regard to their constraints as parents and their recognition that these constraints were restricting their children's future opportunities. Most respondents were able to express their views and feelings with a candidness that drew me into their world effortlessly. Not losing contact with myself as an interviewer required

constant fortitude on my part on such occasions, as disengaging from these respondents' feelings was not as easy as walking out of their homes. Weiss (1994, p.126) also admits such feelings:

> I may […] feel bad about walking away from someone whose life is so difficult.

Consequently, I brought away a genuine understanding of my respondents' feelings about their constraints and freedoms along with rich qualitative data. Having the privilege of listening to someone's life experiences and not feeling their emotions, I believe, would not generate insightful data. Qualitative interviewing, thus, is about listening, observing and absorbing respondents' words as well as feelings, gestures and expressions while they talk. Hence, specific precise questions are not required like in quantitative research to elicit valuable data.

The questions in a semi-structured interview should nudge the respondents in the desired direction with ample space for them to construct and depict their life experiences as they perceive them. To glean such subjective data from my respondents, I needed more than one generative question. I asked one main question about respondents' own life story for a broader perspective on the actual socio-cultural, political and economic influences on their present life scenario, other more specific questions about the context of their schooling choices for their children. Less sociable respondents required more questioning and constant nudging to elicit pertinent information. Although straying from the topic and being less communicative were problems for me as researcher in the interview process, they also highlighted the diversity of individuals and their subjective construction of their lives and experiences.

A brief checklist at the end of the interview was used to collect specific data about the respondents and their families to make sure no vital information was missed (Appendix-2).

ii.   The Role of the Researcher

Buch and Staller (2007, p.187) quote Ortner (1995), who states that ethnography is '...the attempt to understand another life world using the self- as much of it as possible- as the instrument of knowing'. The researcher is the main tool of data collection in the interview. The role of interviewer is crucial in the collection of qualitative data due to the sensitive nature of the data to be collected in direct interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. Interviewees' perception of the interviewer impacts on their response to the researcher and the extent to which they divulge their personal emotions and views to a stranger. An interviewer's image is perceived in the socio-cultural context of the interviewees in relation to the researcher's gender, class, education and physical appearance etc. Due to universally practised norms of gender segregation in Pakistan, my first and foremost concern in this regard was to be accepted as a respectable woman, who would be allowed entry in the family space and trusted enough by the respondents to share their personal and familial concerns, feelings and views regarding the topic being researched. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p.245) elucidate the problems female researchers face in traditional settings in the form of expectations of appropriate feminine behaviour from women. In such settings, the female researcher has to present a 'nonthreatening' image to gain access to such settings. They contend that exhibiting more 'feminine attributes' or taking on specific roles like that of 'daughter' may increase the probability to gain access and information in traditional male-dominated settings. Bhopal (2001, pp.283-4) contends that same origin, language and dress helped her mingle in with her respondents in her qualitative research with South-Asian women in London. She divulges that her physical identity created a sense of empathy and belonging with her respondents.

a. The Researcher

I am a government employee in a female institution of higher education in Islamabad. Originally, I am from Lahore and moved to Islamabad in 1988

to take up a lectureship in this institution. Lahore is the capital of Punjab and the second largest city of Pakistan and is known for its educational institutions and distinct cultural milieu. Whilst my middle-class family is originally from a rural background, education is highly valued and most of the females in my family have university education; however, very few are in paid employment. Even though my father fully supported me, my decision to join government employment away from home was generally disapproved of by the extended family. I have been fortunate enough to inherit a love for narrative and language from my parents and grandparents. I remember a lot of family history and folk-tales told by my maternal and paternal grandmothers in the beautifully rich Punjabi language, using Sufi poetry and Punjabi idioms; both my grandmothers were literate. My paternal grandmother taught the young girls in her village to read and write in the early 20th century. My parents lived in Lahore most of their lives and both shared a love for literature and books; my father had studied Urdu, Persian and English literature, while my mother was a student of Arabic and Urdu literature. They left us a legacy of thousands of books of literature, history and philosophy and a love of reading and learning. My family background and values have kept me well-grounded in my roots in-spite of the very broad and rich cultural and social experiences gained through my university education, well-respected job, independent living during the early years of my job in Islamabad and international travel. My life experiences have prepared me well for this qualitative research by inculcating such skills and traits that made me comfortable in the diverse cultural background of my respondents and they, in turn, accepted me as being considerate and compassionate to their unique family circumstances.

To win the trust of my respondents, I practised strict dress and behaviour codes and behaved in a deferential manner during the interviews, particularly with male respondents from northern areas. The universal respect granted to 'respectable' (modest) women in Pakistan, favoured me during my fieldwork. Generally, people are more welcoming and respectful to women in all parts of the country and show their respect for a woman by

calling her sister or daughter. I reciprocated such gesture by showing respect to them as older or younger family member, which quickened the process of trust building with my respondents. Taking on the role of daughter or sister helped me gain access to their trust and their homes. The cultural tradition of respect for these roles in the family was honoured by the male as well as female participants of this research. I also had the advantages of the genuine regard for education by the middle-class in Pakistan, affinity with my respondents as government employee as well as the religious and cultural norm of respecting and honouring a guest. Moreover, in respecting me, my respondents also showed their respect for the person who introduced me to the head of the family, who initially was my contact in NIH, whilst later, some respondents introduced me to their colleagues and neighbours. In each case in the NIH community, I was first introduced to the head of the family, who decided whether to accept my request to interview their family in their house. My respondents from the field of education regarded me as one of their own, with a shared understanding of this field.

b. Power Relations

In spite of all my efforts to interact with my respondents in the most congenial manner, the relation between the researcher and the researched are rarely balanced in social research. The power relations between the researcher and participants, is a matter of methodological as well as ethical concern (Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach, 2009, p.280). Ramazanoglu and Holland (2005, pp.107-9) discuss the idea of 'otherness' as socially constituted and subordinate to the 'normal self'. The idea of otherness, according to them is constituted to differentiate between 'self' and 'other' and as representation of this differentiation; and also that the idea of 'otherness' does not represent natural differentiation. The notion of 'otherness' in the context of social research has several implications. The researcher is in a powerful position to specify what differences exist in the relation of researcher and the researched, whether they matter and how they should be reported in the research findings (ibid).

'Otherness' has complex relevance to my research and multiple points of significance: the 'otherness' of the researched in relation to the researcher; the 'otherness' of the researcher as a woman in the context of traditional patriarchal norms of the researched; and regarding the production of knowledge of the East for the West. While I am from the same country as my research participants, I differ from many in terms of class position. A substantial part of my fieldwork was conducted with the LSMC families of diverse origin. In this situation, I could have been viewed as an outsider; a privileged, educated woman who wanted to intervene and probe into their personal and family domain. My being single and childless may engender a perception of having no understanding of parents' problems related to child rearing. A single, independent woman of my age may be perceived as a 'feminist' with no regard for traditional gender norms. The traditional gender relations complicated my otherness even more, due to the 'given' subordinate position of the woman in combination with the educated, independent intruder, who wanted to question the patriarch of the household. I feared latent hostility or restraint in case I failed to bridge this gap with my respondents. This situation could have led the participants, especially men, to be reserved in expressing their views. Creating a nonthreatening environment during personal collection of data is facilitated by an 'unstructured, informal, anti-authoritative, and nonhierarchical atmosphere' (Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach, 2009, p.280).

I addressed this issue, firstly, by accentuating my commonalities with the participants of my research. Modest dressing, a genuine respect, interest and attention as well as participation in their daily routines, like having a cup of tea with them, helped overcome some barriers of otherness. The reflexive process of adjusting my behaviour and expression in consequence of my field experience also helped in this regard. So far as I was able to perceive, there were no instances of hostility or unease during the data collection. In part, this was due to the strategies I adopted, presenting a modest self, showing respect, giving attention and acceptance of their hospitality with genuine humility. Fortunately, I did not face any

negative experiences. The reasons for this acceptance might have been the shared identity of my government employment with the researched; the respondents being part of an educated environment of the community of government employees; and/or my efforts to present a modest self and genuine interest in their narratives as well as respect for their integrity. Women generally seemed to be more ready to trust and share their feelings and emotions. Surprisingly, I experienced a more covert process of 'othering' with more educated respondents, employed in the field of education, like Rahman and Samina. Whilst being polite and attentive, they initially seemed to be more reserved in terms of the expression of their views. I believe being in the same occupation field might have been the cause of reserve in the case of these respondents. Weiss (1994, pp.138-9) recognises that there can be a difficulty when interviewing people from similar professional fields and socioeconomic background, where issues of occupational competition and confidentiality might influence the research dynamics.

I have an advantage over the western researcher, researching the lived experiences in an eastern country, in the sense that I share not just nationality, but also many contexts with my participants and can understand their experiences more easily with reference to and within their unique contexts. Even if some are not my personal experiences and contexts, I have a lifelong indirect exposure and observation of many of these phenomena due to living and working in very diverse communities. Hearing about their local customs and norms in a shared language from my colleagues, friends and neighbours and observing their attitudes towards all aspects of everyday life gives me a slightly privileged position in comprehending regional diversities and commonalities. The issue of 'difference' is of serious concern in qualitative research. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2006, p.141) recommend 'reflexivity' as a tool to address this issue, because through this process a researcher recognises, examines and understands the influence of her own social background and assumptions on the research process.

c. Language, Culture and Power

Ribbens and Edwards (1998, pp.1-2) express a concern for '...how to gain access to, interpret, analyse, and theorize research participants' experiences and accounts'. They present the concepts of 'public' and 'private' in this regard. Researchers, they contend, examine 'private' and 'personal' social worlds, which they make 'public' for academic and professional audiences. These projects have a 'liminal' position in relation to 'dominant social and symbolic classification systems of public knowledge and less visible and vocal understandings found in the more personalized setting of everyday living' (ibid, p.2). They attribute liminal position to researchers as well, due to their marginal status in qualitative research. They express the fear that the voices of particular groups or particular forms of knowledge may be drowned out or systematically silenced or misunderstood in researcher's engagement with dominant academic and public concerns and discourses. Ambiguity arises when the researcher simultaneously seeks to serve an academic audience and remain faithful to forms of knowledge gained in domestic, personal and intimate settings. Hence, Ribbens and Edwards recommend building more on what the researcher and the researched share at the personal level than on disciplinary concepts and to be sensitive to differences. The topic I researched is quite 'private' as it delves into the private realm of the family, although I tried not to ask intrusive questions. Divulging their personal and financial constraints was an emotive experience for many of the parents. Interpreting their views without compromising their dignity and staying true to their expression was a hard task, which I hope to have achieved in my analysis.

Another important concern was that the original data is in more than one language, none of which is English. If we look at analysis as finding meaning within the text, the significance of this matter becomes evidence due to integration of translation (and the translator) into the process of research. Temple and Young (2004, pp.162-3) have identified two factors regarding the issue of translation in multi-lingual research, i.e. researcher's

epistemological position and conditions pertaining to specific languages, including language power and hierarchy. As an objective instrument of research, the researcher's main concern is the elimination of bias. From the constructivist perspective, individuals' location within the social world influences the way they see it. Thus, the translator also forms part of the process of knowledge production (ibid, p.164) and hence, the elimination of bias in interpretation of data in such cases becomes a real challenge for the researcher. Temple and Young (2004, p.164) argue:

> …methodological and epistemological challenges arise from the recognition that people using different languages may construct different ways of seeing social life. The relationships between languages and researchers, translators and the people they seek to represent are as crucial as issues of which word is best in a sentence in a language.

In relation to the language power and hierarchy, Temple and Young remark that researchers working with people who speak other languages, seldom address the issue of their relative position within language hierarchies (2004, p.164). They also point out the epistemological and methodological concern that people speaking different languages may construct social life differently. In the context of this research, there were multiple issues in relation to the language power and hierarchy, the relative location of the language of the respondent on the language hierarchy in multicultural Islamabad and the position of other languages (and its speakers) in the language of the respondent.

English has the highest place in the table of the language hierarchies in Pakistan, being the official language understood by the well-educated, elite, upper and middle-class. Urdu is the national language and thus, the most widely understood and the dominant language in most parts of the country. A person fluent in English or Urdu enjoys a higher social location in Islamabad due to the perception of being well-educated. Despite the population of Islamabad comprising people from all over Pakistan, this multi-cultural city is dominated by the English and Urdu languages. However, Punjabi is the language of the largest population group and

commonly spoken and understood in Islamabad. Urdu is the language of instruction in most public schools in Punjab; however, in KP and rural Sindh, Pashto and Sindhi are the medium of instruction in public schools, respectively. Comparatively recent migrant families from rural KP and Sindh face the problem of unfamiliarity with English and Urdu, the medium of instruction in almost all schools in Islamabad, and Punjabi the most widely understood regional language in the capital. This linguistic disadvantage constrains their ability to get admission to the better public and private schools. In fact, language is a significant component of the socio-cultural divide in Islamabad.

The language of original data thus best depicts the social positioning of the individual as perceived by them, through the system of language hierarchy. Temple and Young (2004, p.167) purport:

> …it is not only words that may be value-laden, but languages also. The perspective of one language-using community on another is rarely neutral and the perceived status of languages rarely equivalent. Such differences in power between languages also influence the translation of meaning. The way researchers represent people who speak other languages is influenced by the way they see their social world.

A Sindhi or Pashto speaking person, even though well-educated in his native language, may not be regarded as being well-educated and cultured in Islamabad due to his or her accented expression in Urdu or English. On the other hand, Sindhi and Pashto speaking people proudly practise their native cultures and speak their language as a mark of honour in all social situations and denigrate those people who are not true to their roots.

The relative position of the researcher and the researched was thus somewhat influenced by the complex conditions pertaining to the language power and hierarchy in the multi-linguistic, multi-cultural social scenario of Islamabad. Another dimension of 'otherness' of the researcher was presented, in the context of language, specifically with Pashto speaking respondents. I can communicate in Urdu and Punjabi; however, three female respondents from KP did not speak or understand either of the

126

languages, thus necessitating an interpreter in these instances. Interviewing Pashto speaking participants were not only constrained by communication barriers, for there was also a feeling of restraint on the part of these respondents, due to their inability to communicate in Urdu. To alleviate the unspoken but very perceptible restraint on the part of the respondents during introductory conversation, I humbly admitted my inability to communicate in their language at the beginning of the interview. My deference was accepted by all three respondents with good grace and boosted their confidence and trust in me as someone who did not look down upon them because they did not speak Urdu or Punjabi. The presence of a translator necessitated the effort to control the direction and tempo of the interview in such cases. The translators tended to mix their own views with those of the respondents, while interpreting, in their effort to explain their views more clearly. I faced here the issue of the 'ownership of data' (Bhopal, 2001, p.281) in a slightly different way. I had to be really attentive to differentiate between the respondents and the interpreter's views as well as maintaining control over the conversation without affecting its flow and direction. Because I had anticipated this problem, I paid close attention to the respondents' expressions and tried to pick the Persian words used in Urdu as well as Pashto to get a general comprehension of the responses, I indicated to the translator as well as interviewee with appropriate responses that I am not totally excluded from their conversation. I needed to be really attentive to discern any interventions by the translators and dealt with these events tactfully to avoid embarrassing them as well as letting them know that I could differentiate their own views from those of the interviewees. There was also the danger of misinterpretation by the translators due to their lack of proficiency in either language. However, in all three cases, the whole family sat through the interview and helped with interpreting the interviewee's responses. This allowed for the translation process to be satisfactorily reliable.

The participants of this research came from very diverse regional backgrounds, ranging from the tribal areas on the Afghan border in the

North to cosmopolitan Karachi in the extreme south of Pakistan, which meant that there were vast differences in the cultural norms across the respondents. Bhopal argues that difference is *first* a site of diversity and then power relations (2001, p.282). I addressed the difference in the culture of my respondents as diversity and then tried to focus on the similarities to reduce the impact of power imbalance and to bring out the essence of these diversities. A general adherence to the norm of patriarchy helped align the relationship between the researcher and the researched from the beginning, which was dealt with during the interview to the advantage of the research topic, without challenging the status of the host. For example, I conceded to one male respondent from the tribal area who asked to hold the voice recorder in his hand during the conversation. This small gesture made him feel in control of the situation, putting him at ease and this interview generated a very rich qualitative data. The process of handling individual respondents was mostly instinctive and varied from person to person. Doing most of the fieldwork in one community and going to the houses of participants for the interviews, subtly addressed the issue of power relations and different construction of social life by sensitising me to these issues through better comprehension of this community's social dynamics.

My access to this community was made possible through an acquaintance who works in NIH and lives in the NIH Colony and who I asked to introduce me to some people there. My informal and formal talks with the gatekeeper to the site of the research were a great source of insight into the dynamics of the enabling factors operating in the community. Meetings for interviews were arranged through this gatekeeper, initially; but later on some respondents were very helpful and introduced me to their acquaintances. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with each parent, although mostly both sat through both the interviews, helping each other with their answers. Despite my initial reservations about husbands influencing wives' opinions, this arrangement proved to be generally good,

as it provided a window into the power dynamics within the household and verification of their expressed views.

About 35 hours of recorded interview data were collected in the interviews involving 22 families. Due to the necessity of translation as well as transcribing, initial processing of the data proved to be an extensive task. My efforts to use professional help for transcribing did not work owing to the lack of a proficient translator in both languages who was willing to translate and transcribe. Consequently, I found translating and transcribing on my own was more efficient because the proofreading and editing of transcribers' work was tedious and time-consuming

4. Data Analysis

'Otherness' is also an important concern in the analysis and presentation of the data for this research, basically due to the cultural differences between the eastern respondents and western audience. Edward Said's conception of 'Orientalism' (1978) exposes the power of the West to produce knowledge of the East as subordinated 'other' to the West. Said sees human failure to see human experience in the power relations that constitute *Orientalism*. Mohanty (1997) warns against the tendency of a binary power structure between the powerful and the powerless when studying power relations, especially in the third world. She contends that women are not a homogenous group nor are they necessarily oppressed in all cases. She locates the colonial move in the assumption of 'women as an oppressed group' in the third world in Western feminist writing. She points out that legal, economic, familial and religious structures are judged by Western standards as 'underdeveloped' or 'developing' and placement of women within these structures creates the image of the average 'third world woman'- the image of an oppressed woman- generated through an exclusive focus on gender differences. When looking at a social setting outside the Western world, Western audiences may judge social and familial structures through Western standards and interpret the differences as signs of underdevelopment, rather than the product of different legal, religious, political, economic and familial processes. Can you expand on

this? Is it possible to present your research in a way that challenges western assumptions about 'under developed' countries?

Writing for a Western audience is an otherness issue for me, due to my eastern origin and perspective. A Western researcher faces the problem of presenting foreign research for a Western academic audience in their own language, without losing the meaning of these experiences for them. My narration may be truer to the meanings of my participants, due to the shared expressions, frames of references and idioms but may not be easily accessible to my Western academic audiences due to the elements of colonialism and otherness from their perspective. My narration may not be accessible, because of my Western academic audience's lack of familiarity with the expressions I am quite familiar with and thus, may not be comprehensible for my Western reader. My task is further complicated by my location in a Western university, with supervisors from the UK themselves. The same factor has worked for me, however, as my supervisors' feedback has helped me identify all such lapses of communication in my text. To overcome such barriers, I learned and used Western theoretical ideas, like the work of Bourdieu and Amartya Sen to present the knowledge constructed through analysing my Eastern respondents' views for a global audience. The research training provided at IOE helped me learn research and writing skills that made it possible for me to move between these different forms of knowledge. The following sections cover some practical considerations dealt with during the analysis of the qualitative data for this research.

i.   Coding

There are two traditions of data analysis in qualitative research: the linguistic (text as an object of analysis itself) and sociological (text as a window into human experience) (Ryan and Bernard, 2000, p.769). The sociological tradition of data analysis is more appropriate for my research due to its focus on individual experiences in their unique contexts. The analysis of ethnographic data is an iterative part of the process of data

collection and starts immediately. In its basic form, ethnographic analysis involves coding, looking for patterns or themes, comparing and contrasting as well as placing incidents and experiences into a broader social and political context (Buch and Staller, 2007, p.213). Buch and Staller explain *coding* as a process by which the researcher attaches a code to 'something that she sees happening in the data'. *Patterns* refer to identifying recurring or similar processes in the data. Looking for similarities and differences between different actors in the field is *comparing and contrasting, and* contextualising links, the ways, incidents and experiences in the field, to broader social and political trends in the nation or the world (ibid).

The general aims of thematic analysis are examining commonality, examining differences and examining relationships. Examining commonalities involves categorising common themes across the data set, for further subdivision and analysis. While examining differences, peculiarities and contrasts within the given data set reveals their 'potential relevance for the specific issue being explored' (Gibson and Brown, 2009, pp.128-9). Examining the relationships means looking at various code categories to identify how individual characteristics and differences relate to general themes of the research. My research involved seeking parents' views on three main topics: their aspirations for the future of their children, their choice of school and their engagement in their children's education. To investigate these topics three key theme areas were identified: (1) respondent's *self, spouse and family* to establish the social-cultural context for their views; (2) *Schooling decisions*, including parents' aspirations, school preferences and school choice; (3) *Freedoms and constraints*, looking into parents' agency regarding their children's schooling and education, including their engagement in the children's education at school and in the home. Further probing of the data led to more categories of recurring or contrasting themes being identified, like gender, fatalism and migration. More detail about the codes used for the data analysis is presented in Appendix-3.

ii. Validity of Data

Validity is a significant concern when presenting qualitative data and refers to the effectiveness by which the research measures what it is supposed to measure (Baumgartner and Strong, 1998, p.91). However, the notion of measurement is problematic in qualitative research, as it suggests research as being 'necessarily objective, quantitative and statistically relevant' (Golafshani, 2003, p.598). According to Baumgartner and Strong (1998, pp.114-115), *internal validity* in experimental research pertains to how valid the findings are within the study, while *external validity* is the degree to which the findings can be generalised to other population or settings. They endorse the concept of *trustworthiness* presented by Lincoln and Guba (1985) for the evaluation of qualitative research, because the features of trustworthiness parallel the terminology of quantitative data, i.e. internal validity (credibility), external validity (transferability), reliability (dependability) and objectivity (confirmability) (ibid, p.185). Trustworthiness is a widely accepted approach to validity in qualitative research (Anney, 2014; Cho and Trent, 2006; Gibson and Brown, 2009; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) (e.g. Anney, 2014; Cho and Trent, 2006;). Gibson and Brown, (2009, p.59) elaborate the concept thus:

> In contrast to validity, trustworthiness focuses on the context of data rather than on its inherent 'truthfulness'. This helps researchers to reflect in detail on how data is generated and on the relevance of that for the character of data.

Cho and Trent (2006, p.321) state that validity in qualitative research refers to the degree to which the researcher's claim to knowledge corresponds to the participants' construct of reality. The primary source of data collection in this research was through the participants' accounts of their perspectives, experiences and behaviour in relation to their children's schooling and education. The multiplicity of possible interpretations not only adds to the richness of such qualitative data, for it also makes the 'truthfulness' of the subjective interpretations elusive. The nature of this study required much diversity as well as similarity in the selection of participants in order to

gather rich, varied and 'trustworthy' data on their conceptions of capabilities and refined functionings in relation to their schooling choices for their children. The diversity of the participants, and the spatial and temporal nature of their interpretations, rendered the application of traditional measures of validity inappropriate. In sum, trustworthiness in the constructivist approach is the appropriate measure of validity for this research, i.e. contextual trustworthiness of the methods was used for this aspect, as explained below.

Most of my respondents were couples to whom I asked same generative questions and their responses to these questions provided an inbuilt mechanism to ensure validity. Both parents' response to same questions validated each other or else drew out the variances not only in their perceptions and views, but also in the information provided by each of them. Interviewing both parents, and at times other family members, proved to be another means of checking the trustworthiness of my data through triangulation. Most of the respondents being from the same residential locality, and children of many going to the same schools, provided an additional mechanism for triangulating information regarding the schools and the teachers. The multiple sources of information on the same topic provided a broader analytical perspective to comprehend the respondents' construction of reality within their unique contexts. Another strategy that I used was to reword questions that elicited vague responses or appeared to contradict an earlier statement, later in the interview in order to get clarity about the respondents' stance. In a few incidences, I called the respondents to recheck some information; however, all these queries were about missing information, rather their views.

5. Ethical Concerns

Protecting the interests of research participants has become a growing ethical concern of social research. Despite established codes of ethics and institutional control, 'researchers face ethica1 issues in every stage of the research process as a sort of dilemma' (Flick, 2006, p.45). This is especially pertinent as some unanticipated issues and situations may arise in the field,

or the research approach may need to change during the field work. Codes of ethics aim to regulate the relations of researcher to participants and fields they study. 'Principles of research ethics ask that researchers avoid harming participants involved in the process by respecting and taking into account their needs and interests' (ibid). A continuous reflective process and 'examining and re-examining' the reasons for conducting the research and how it influences participants and community throughout the research process reduces the risks and increases the benefits of the study for all (Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach, 2009, p.287). Gibson and Brown (2009, p.60) have listed informed consent, confidentiality, avoiding harm, integrity and professionalism as 'general issues that need to be thought through'. This research follows the BSA (The British Sociological Association) code of ethics (BSA, 2002) and clearance from IOE Faculty Ethics Committee was received for this research. Along with the general code of ethics outlined by BSA, I established few guiding strategies in response to specific ethical concerns of this research.

Due to the social norm of Purdah, the interviewer could not be alone with an unrelated male respondent; it is culturally offensive. So, wives sat with their husbands through the interview to maintain respectability of these meetings. Except for a few instances, where wives were interviewed alone, husband and wife sat through the interviews together. Arrival of an unexpected guest during the interview compromised privacy in some instances. According to the cultural norm, the host invited them politely to join the already present guest (the interviewer); in such situations, the sensitive questions were avoided and only general questions were asked, in the presence of the other guest to make them feel 'welcome'. These interviews took longer, as the interviewer had to wait for the guest to leave before asking more probing questions, and in one case had to make another appointment with the interviewee to cover the missed topics. Formal consent by all respondents was documented on the consent forms translated into Urdu to facilitate the comprehension of the respondents. The educated parents signed, while the others gave verbal consent. Any

questions regarding the research were answered and their queries satisfied.

Confidentiality was expected to suffer due to the barrier of language between the interviewer and interviewees in instances where a translator was required. I requested their family to translate for me in such instances to avoid presence of an outsider to safeguard the respondents and their families' privacy and confidentiality. Regarding data presentation, confidentiality was assured by replacing the interviewees' names with pseudonyms to disguise their identity. The data were stored safely and nobody other than me had access to the recordings and transcripts of the interviews.

The topic - the schooling of children - was distressing for some parents due to the constraints they are facing in this regard. The difference of opinion between the husband and wife was also embarrassing for some couples; these situations required tact, compassion and sensitivity towards respondents' feelings. The approach adopted was to follow the lead of the interviewee under such circumstances. Where the respondent indicated their reluctance by not giving an answer or talking about something else, the topic was discontinued and approached later in a different manner.

In all cases, no formal remunerations were made to the respondents. An offer of payment would be offensive and might be considered as denigration of the hospitality of these LSMC and HSMC families. I went to the respondents' houses for the interview as a mark of my respect for them and to show my gratitude for allowing me to interview them, instead of calling them for interviews. Interviewing parents in their home-setting gave my respondents confidence and increased the richness of the collected data.

6. Conclusion

This research project emerged and developed as a continuous reflective process informed by a growing understanding of participants' expressed views and the need to present the findings of this research without

compromising its reliability and trustworthiness. I sought to uncover three aspects of parental capability regarding their children's school and education: parents' capacity to aspire and formulate goals; capability to choose the school which they believe can be instrumental in realising their aspirations and their capability to be involved in their children's school and their out-of-school education (Key questions-p.104). Parental capability in each of these aspects of children's education is a capability unique to every family and depends on the enabling conditions or structural provisions for education, the combination of the resources in the parents' possession and their ability to activate or convert their resources into the forms required for the achievement of their desired goals (Ch-3, p.88). This chapter has explained the design of this research with due consideration of these aspects.

To acquire an understanding of the real opportunities of schooling as understood by parents, I used semi-structured interviews for in-depth exploration of their views regarding their children's education and future. These interviews were conducted in their homes, in many cases, in the presence of their spouses and other family members. This approach to data collection provided an inbuilt mechanism for checking the reliability and validity of the data, because being in their own homes, respondents felt more in control and expressed their views candidly, whilst the presence and participation of other family members pointed out anomalies in their responses. Secondly, multiple responses on any one topic, for example, a specific school not only provided a range of perspectives, but also, checked the reliability of the information provided by the respondents. The power dynamic between the researcher, the researched and the audience has been contemplated thoroughly in relation to the significance of factors like difference in language, culture and gender.

Influence of Parents' Values on Educational Preferences and Aspiration Formulation

This chapter seeks to probe the conceptual aspects of parents' schooling decisions for the future of their children. I shall look for the answers to two questions in this chapter: What are the aspirations and goals of participating parents for the future of their male and female children? And how do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations? In the first section, I shall present an overview of the aspirations of the whole sample; the next section introduces the two families selected for detailed analysis in this chapter and the way they perceive the value of education. The third section explores similarities and differences in participating parents' views regarding their children's education and future; fourth section explores how they adapt their aspiration according to their capability set. The last section draws some conclusions from the finding of the qualitative data presented in this chapter.

1. Parents' Values and Aspirations for the Future of their Children

As noted above, Appadurai (2004, p.68) contends the capacity to aspire is a metacapacity and is linked to the resources possessed by the agent and thus not distributed evenly in the society. The participating parents have varied capacity to aspire, along with varied cultural and economic resources. The following table presents a summary of participating parents' expressed desires for their various children's education and future.

Table-5.1: Education and Career Aspirations for Children

S. No	Aspiration	Middle-class				Lower-middle-class				Total
		Fathers		Mothers		Fathers		Mothers		
		Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
	Specific Aspirations									
1	Doctor	2	1	3	4	4	1	4	3	22
2	Engineer	2		1		4		1		8
3	Army/Air force/Navy	1		1		2		3		7
4	Professional Education	1	1			1				3
5	Teaching	1	1		3		2	1	1	9
6	Bureaucrat		1							1
7	Lawyer							1		1
8	aeronaut	1								1
9	microbiologist	1								1
10	Technical education/career	2		1		2				5
11	Bank						1			1
12	Alim (religious scholar)					2		2		4
13	Tailor master					1				1
14	Commerce	1				1				2
15	Marriage		3		2		1		1	7
	Total	**12**	**7**	**6**	**9**	**17**	**5**	**12**	**5**	**73**
	Vague Aspirations									
1	Paid job				1	2	1			4
2	Respectable /good/ stable job			2	1			2		5
3	Become independent		1		1			1		3
4	No paid job		1		2				1	4
5	No career Aspirations		1		2		2		1	6
6	Whatever is their Fate							1		1
7	Haven't thought about it		1	1	2			1		5
8	Whatever the child desires			3	1			1		5
	Total	**0**	**4**	**6**	**10**	**2**	**3**	**6**	**2**	**33**

Source: Prepared from the data for this research

The majority of parents expressed desire for professional careers for their children; medical career is the most popular aspiration among HSMC as well as LSMC fathers and mothers. Engineering, armed forces and teaching were some other popular career aspirations among this group of parents. A gender difference is evident in parents' aspirations for their children. For example, teaching was overwhelmingly aspired for the girls; a career in armed forces was aspired only for the boys; religious career was only desired for boys. Desire for no working career or marriage was expressed only for girls. A few class differences are also indicated; career in armed forces is desired mostly by LSMC parents probably because this option is

more achievable for these families as compared to the careers which require expensive higher education. This table also indicates that generally fathers have more specific career aspirations for their children. Only parents from KP, expressed a desire for religious career for their sons; relatively higher enrolment in Madrassahs in KP and FATA indicate high social value for religious education and career in these areas (Table-2.6). The Table-5.1 also shows generally more specific career aspirations for the boys as compared to the girls.

Table-5.2: Cultural and Social Aspirations

Aspiration	Middle-class				Lower-middle-class			
	Fathers		Mothers		Fathers		Mothers	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
stand first in the class/ ahead of all/ go high			3	2				
good~ human being			2		1			
good* citizen			2	1	1		2	
Very, very good Muslims			1	1	1			
he should be tough	1							
Considered cultured people		1						
think of moving ahead/progress			1	1			1	
Go farther than their parents					1			
reach some good place/good status/become something			2				1	
bring honours to the name of their father/family/have good name			2	1				
don't have the deficiencies I have/ not be like me					3			3
Become good parents		2		1	2	2		1
Capable to take care of parents in old age	2				1			

Source: Prepared from the data for this research

Table-5.2 illustrates parents' expressed desires for accumulation of cultural and social resources for the future of their children through education. Upward mobility for their children was desired by many parents; 'going ahead', 'be better than us' and 'be the best' are some of the aspirations expressed by the participants for their children. More educated middle-class parents seemed to desire competitive dispositions for their children and wanted them to be better than their peers; for example, Raheela a HSMC mother wants her son to always take first place in his class. These parents have used phrases like 'ahead of all of them' and 'go higher than

high' while expressing their aspirations for the future of their children. The LSMC parents desired their children to do better than their parents; they did not want them to be constrained like them and hoped for them to 'go a little farther than their parents'. Some LSMC mothers like Shaista and Shaheen specifically have expressed a desire for their daughters 'not to be like us' and 'become independent' and that they 'are not left behind'. Many parents have expressed desire for inculcation of intrinsic values in their children through education. Parents like Samina, Wazir and Farida want their children to become 'good human beings', 'very, very good Muslims' and 'good citizens'. Diverse social benefits of education for their children in their future roles are also envisaged by these parents. They want their children to 'bring honour to their parents and family', become 'good citizens', be 'good parents for their children' and 'look after their parents in their old age'. Fathers like Mahtab and Khan have specifically emphasized the need to educate women because they have to become mothers and raise children in their future roles.

2. Two Case Studies

I shall focus on two participating families for discussion in this chapter because they expressed very clear aspirations for the future of their children and provide contrasting inter-family and intra-family perspectives on the topic under discussion in this chapter. My analysis of Ejaz family's aspirations indicate their freedoms while Wazir family's aspirations illustrate their constraints. These cases raise a number of important issues concerning the effects of forms of modernisation, migration from rural to urban areas, of gender norms and relations, and of religious beliefs on parental aspirations.

i. The Wazir Family

Nabeela and Wazir are first cousins originally from tribal Waziristan, and belong to a closely knit large patriarchal Pathan family. Wazir is a science graduate and works in BPS-16 as assistant director and as the hostel

warden at NIH College of Medical Technology. The Wazir family categorises as LSMC on the SES scale (Appendix-4). Nabeela is an unschooled housewife, although her three brothers are educated and on good salaried posts. Nabeela has a confident demeanour, speaks only Pashto and does not understand Urdu at all; Kokab, her elder daughter, translated for us during the interview. Like her other siblings, Kokab is also not very fluent in Urdu. Nabeela accepts her husband's prerogative to make family decisions but is not shy of expressing her own preferences in the matters regarding children's future and education. They have seven children, three girls and four boys. Till a couple of years back, Nabeela lived in rural Waziristan with their children, while Wazir worked in Islamabad. Wazir's father and their extended family cared for Nabeela and children during that period. Nabeela tilled the family lands with the help of their older son Raheem, who was 10 years old at the time of their migration to Islamabad. Wazir being the only male of a family of five children, the responsibility for the family fell totally on the shoulders of their extended family after the death of Wazir's father. Nabeela and children had to migrate to Islamabad due to absence of an adult *Mahram*[10] in the household.

Till then their two elder daughters Kokab and Sumaira, who are 18 and 16 years now, had not attended school; only Raheem went to an 'English medium' private school in the next village. Wazir told proudly that the boy made the decision to enrol on his own; being a male in a tribal, patriarchal culture, his decision was accepted as a symbol of his independence. Presently, Kokab (girl-18) is enrolled in a Madrassah in Islamabad; Sumaira (girl-16) is still out of school. Raheem (boy-13) is attending FGBS#15 in NIH and the two younger children, (girl-10 and boy-7) are attending FGGS#12. Two other boys aged 4 and 1 ½ years are too young for school. Their family values are religious as well as traditional. Their family traditions do not support female education. Wazir mentions proudly a strong tradition of

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[10] In Islamic sharia legal terminology, a **mahram** is an unmarriageable kin with whom sexual intercourse would be considered incestuous, a punishable taboo.

religious education in their family. He had been financially supporting his cousins' religious education and wants his children to continue the tradition. Wazir goes for 2-3 days to remote areas to preach religion to illiterate people regularly. Although Wazir is entitled to better accommodation, the family lives simply with the bare minimum in official accommodation for lower grade employees (Appendix 9: Plan B) due to non-availability of entitled accommodation. Wazir told that he rented an accommodation outside the Colony when the family first came to Islamabad, but the expenditure and the undesired peer influence on his children, made him accept the lower-grade accommodation in the colony. Wazir divulged that because they rented accommodation in a poor neighbourhood, his children socialised with out-of-school, naughty children in their neighbourhood and started showing undesired behaviour. After school, younger children tend the goats which he keeps to fulfil the dietary needs of his large family.

a. Value of Education

Wazir and his family are still struggling with multiple 'frames of reference' (Crivello, 2009, p.17) to adjust to their new urban-secular environment because it immensely differs from their former tribal-rural-religious environment and thus challenges the dispositions inculcated there. Wazir's aspirations for his children have emerged from this wide spectrum of 'structuring structures' (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.120) and his modified habitus. Wazir has emphasised the intrinsic value of education. He wants his son to have the strength of character to be truthful and honest.

> Wazir: Even if he is in his own home or anywhere*/ he doesn't shy from saying the truth/

He also wants his daughters to have the similar fortitude he wants for his sons.

> Wazir: for example, my girl-/if there is a Madrassah where all the expenditures are from your (my) own pocket/ she'll be able to hold me accountable tomorrow/ and shall be a better source of guidance for the society/

142

Wazir believes such disposition cannot be inculcated in a person living off charity. Kokab is enrolled in a girls' residential Madrassah in Islamabad, which charges nominal fees from their students; all their expenses including food are paid by philanthropists. His proud tribal disposition makes the option of charitable education for his daughter undesirable for Wazir. However, his girl's previously unschooled status leaves no other option than Madrassah for her. Wazir believes that someone who lives on charity cannot have the strength of character to either challenge authority or be a role model for others. Having the fortitude to hold her father accountable and be a spiritual guide for others, is indeed very high aspiration of a tribal father for his daughter. Wazir seems quite determined to hold on to the former aspects of his tribal self and visualises his social world from the structuring structures he acquired in his place of origin. However, he is also struggling to help his children modify their dispositions to be able to fit their new urban environment while preserving the basic values of their former tribal habitus (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009, p.1111). His desire to inculcate intrinsic values in his children seems to grow out from his devotion to religion.

> Wazir: I had it in my mind to make him [Raheem] an *Alim*[11] In-sha-Allah[12]/[...] the two younger children-/ I intend to get them admitted [in school] next year/ In-sha-Allah/ in the future/ the intention is-/ that after matric..../if children have good fate-/ In-sha-Allah/ my intention is that they become *Alims*/In-sha-Allah/ All four of them [boys]/

Wazir hopes for the will of Allah and his children's good fate to be on his side to make his aspirations come true for them. His faith creates a scope for hope for the future of his children in spite of their constraints. Wazir's desire is driven by the honour given to an Alim; in the Pushton social order, *Alim* has place of eminence along with *jirga*[13] and the Malik[14] and has

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[11] Islamic Scholar; also called Mullah
[12] If Allah wills
[13] Jirga consists of a public meeting of the notables of the community.
[14] kind of executive authority, whose function is to interact with the state on behalf of the community

authority for settling disputes according to *Sharia*[15] (Ginsburg, 2011, p.99). His devotion to religion does not make him oblivious to children's 'worldly' needs though:

> Wazir: It is that if these children~ umn~ .../ their talent shines along the way-/ then I hope that in the profession of medicine or the profession of engineering/ wherever they go/ that he has the imprint of the religion on him/at least... doesn't become a nuisance for others or for people/ this* is the intention// be useful for others-/take the religion and the world together/

His holistic view of the value of education in this quote covers spiritual as well as worldly needs of his children's life. He is also aware of the significance of his children's abilities in achieving these goals. He does not totally rely on fate for his children's future; their future achievements depend on their talent or ability to study well and to qualify for professional education. He asserts that even an educated person without moral and religious values can become 'nuisance' for society. He believes that the material benefits shall follow children's religious knowledge:

> if *In-sha-Allah* they acquire religious knowledge.../then~ due to religious knowledge-/ Allah shall honour them in both worlds/ otherwise even in worldly education-/ after doing BSc-/...I am doing this job here.../obviously~/...Allah has given me this (reward) because of religion that~/ in being straight forward and checking.../ I feel no fear/

He is rewarded with this job due to his religious knowledge and practice; he is straight forward and fearless due to his faith and is respected in his organisation for this. Wazir's own experience of combining science education with religious education and employment with preaching encourages him to aspire for a similar combination for his sons; he wants to combine two diverse sets of values for his children's optimal growth and development. He is struggling with the desire to preserve his ancestral norms and identity while preparing his children to grow in the modern society as well.

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[15] Islamic Law

On the other hand, his desire for religious education for his children can be viewed as back-up plan or adaptive preference considering the initial disadvantage they have suffered due to lack of requisite cultural capital to be successful in the competitive urban education system. This can be inferred on the basis of the fact that he has chosen regular school for three of his children who were eligible for regular school; the only child who is attending the Madrassah is his eldest daughter, who went to school for the first time at the age of 17. She did not have the option of regular school. Crivello found in her research in Peru that although poor young people and their caregivers had high aspirations for professional careers, they planned dual strategies and some young people were being socialised in back-up trajectories through expectations for increased participation in household, family farms and care of livestock from an early age (2009, pp.21-22). Wazir's expressed desire for dual careers might be explained as an adaptive behaviour that Elster (1983, p.120) calls *prior change of attribute weights.* This behaviour takes place before the actual choice to avoid later disappointment; the individual attributes weight to alternate choices within the framework that makes the achievable option more desirable for them. Thus, Wazir's expressed preference for religious education might be an effort to reduce the perceived dissonance between Wazir's aspirations and his real opportunities by validating within the framework of religion, what he anticipates might be the only choice for him. His capability is constrained hugely by his children's lack of requisite cultural capital to adjust in a competitive educational system they never experienced before.

Apart from Raheem, none of his children have prior school experience and they are also not conversant in either Urdu or English, the two languages of instruction and the languages of the educated middle-class in the capital. Wazir explained his choice of Urdu medium school for his children.

> Wazir: the problem with my children was that when they came from the village-/then Urdu-/ here Urdu and Punjabi is spoken [and they don't speak either language]/ because of this/thought it appropriate that they go to Urdu medium first-/ Urdu*~ too/ and also English by self-studying/

145

Wazir has chosen Urdu medium school as a strategy for his children to acquire useful form of cultural capital in their new environment. Their rural lifestyle practices like tending goats also do not blend with their present environment.

Wazir is only too aware of his constraints and wants to keep his own and his family's aspirations within what he believes to be achievable.

> Wazir: the wife [uses the word *Gharwali* for wife, which literally means the 'home owner'] said that~ > English medium would have been better</ but my personal~ experience was >that in Urdu medium further-/ umn my wife is uneducated/...umn because of that~/in my mind it was like~/ these children/ Urdu and English two-/ sudden burden would make the foundation weak/ because of which there will be problem in future/ >the foundation in Urdu should be strong then in future-[they will fare better]/

He understands well that his wife's own lack of school experience constrains her capacity to aspire realistically for their children. His plans for his children indicate a pragmatic approach considering their cultural constraints and real opportunities. The possibility of the success of his aspirations depends on how well his children modify their habitus to adjust with their new environment; in case their 'talent does not shine' by the time they finish their high school, he has the alternate route of religious career planned for them. Wazir does not have adequate economic resources and his children do not have appropriate cultural capital to reduce the dissonance between his own and his family's aspirations, but he has the capability of practical reason and a practical sense (Bourdieu, 1998, p.25) acquired through his own education and long stay in the capital to be able to understand his family's constraints and freedoms and persuade his family to adapt their aspirations within parameters he feels are realistic.

Wazir family's regional mobility has influenced their opportunities as well as their perception of their opportunities immensely. Nabeela's aspirations for her children are not same as her husband. She aspires for professional careers for their children,

> Nabeela: I want Raheem (eldest son) to become a doctor/ but their 'abbu' (father) wants him to be an *alim /*so I also want the same//...(She points to the younger girl and boy) I want them to become doctors too/ heh heh/

Nabeela is not hesitant to express her difference of opinion with her husband regarding the future of their children, but submits to her husband's wishes, conforming to his prerogative to make decisions for the family. Wazir's aspirations are more grounded in the reality of their circumstances, whereas Nabeela's aspirations are less realistic considering her family's cultural constraints so far and are influenced by the popular parental aspiration of medical profession in Pakistan, like 21 other parents in this sample. Her capability to perceive their real opportunities is constrained by her limited experience of economic and cultural field. Nabeela's aspirations reflect her perception of availability of all types of educational institutions in Islamabad and no social constraints like rigid *purdah* in their native village means her children have access to all these schools.

b. Family Capability

The Wazir family has an unusual combination of resources. Mr Wazir is a science graduate, the highest qualification in the sub-group of parents analysed in this chapter; whereas his wife Nabeela is illiterate. Wazir family faces an unusual setback in their cultural resources with an illiterate mother and two unschooled teenage daughters, Kokab and Sumaira. The family's recent migration from Waziristan to Islamabad has enhanced their relative cultural disadvantage in their new environment. Wazir's rationale for leaving his family in the village all these years illustrates his desire to protect his children from undesirable social influences.

> Wazir: children were in the village/....because there was a little bit of danger from the environment here [Islamabad]/ in the environment here~ rural people slip easily.../in comparison to urban children/

His rationale seems like a desire to protect his children from 'slipping' from the right path into the undesirable urban manners and behaviour. It also indicates a desire to protect them from unwholesome influences like

inappropriate company and behaviour and potentially deviating from the desired behaviour. He even decided to accept an official residence below his entitlement for the same purpose as mentioned previously. Wazir's decision to keep his family in the village however has constrained children's capability to be admitted into and adjust to the urban school environment. Wazir is aware that he cannot fully protect his children from undesirable influences and that they may choose 'worldly' ways ultimately. What he considered was a safety for his children, has become a cultural disadvantage for them in their new environment due to their lack of school experience and unfamiliarity with urban culture. His flexible plans for the future of his children indicate his understanding of the gap between his desires and the probability to achieve his goals. For the children, it indicates a potential freedom, from high parental expectations and the pressure to conform to them. This tribal father wants his children, especially his sons to make choices for themselves and does not want to force his choices upon them. Although he did not extend this freedom to his daughters, he respected his elder son's choice to enrol in school in their village, while none of his other children went to school till they came to Islamabad. Although he has specific preferences, he does not want to force his children into religious education; like his second daughter refuses to study in Madrassah despite having virtually no other options because the food and boarding arrangement there were not to her liking. He conceded that forcing children into religious education was not a wise practice.

> Wazir: In reality children~ should not be forced~/ wherever is their aptitude/ if we can take them in certain direction by persuasion then it is alright/ otherwise he will become a cancer for the society/A person who does not want to acquire *ilm*/ and he is forced to do that/ then~ he defame the religion as well as he also becomes a thief/ robber-/ he becomes a cancer for the society/becomes a headache for others/ ↑family-/ causes humiliation for the family and also becomes a headache for people/that is why I am not in this favor/ ↑yes/ if it can be done by persuasion-/ if *In-sha-Allah* they acquire religious knowledge.../then~ due to religious knowledge-/ Allah shall honour them in both worlds/

Wazir seems to anticipate that his children may refuse to pursue religious education once they knew other options existed for them in the city; if they can be persuaded to acquire *Ilm*[16], they can also be persuaded otherwise. Wazir accepts that dispositions can be negotiated and the role of environment in inculcating values and dispositions; he understands the urban environment can possibly impact on their children's preferences by presenting alternate options and freedoms. He hopes to inculcate a preference for religious education rather than forcing it upon his children. His rationale is that they can benefit from their education only if they willingly choose their career. Despite this practical and realistic consideration for their preferences, Wazir wants his children to follow their family and region's traditional cultural norms and desires to protect them from other influences. In allowing his children more freedom, Wazir is constraining his own agency regarding his children's education.

Wazir wants to make the best of the opportunities presented due to their migration to Islamabad; his focus seems to be on the development of appropriate cultural capital for his children. Choosing Urdu medium schools so that they can learn the widely understood language for example, and acquisition of modern knowledge can be instrumental in their careers as *Alims.*

> Wazir: take the religion and the world together/ so that the religion-/ because today if you don't have worldly education even religion cannot be presented to others-/ even that too sometimes only/ sincerity is there-/ but sometimes they slip there/ so the intention is that he excels in both educations and shall become the source of guidance/ *In-sha-Allah/*

His own experience of both fields makes him understand that religion and world need not be exclusive; he aspires for his children to find that balance between the two fields. Wazir uses the term 'slip' again to express his fear for his children to lose their balance. His rationality makes him understand sincerity is not in itself sufficient to be a preacher; one needs knowledge as

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[16] Literally *Ilm* means knowledge but generally used for religious knowledge

well as communication skills to be effective preacher with urban and educated people. He wants to use worldly education as an instrument to achieve his desires; acquiring and spreading *Ilm* is at the top of his aspirations for his children. Hence, one of the reasons for sending his younger children to an Urdu medium school is to enhance their capability to present *Ilm* to wider audience.

> Wazir: further-/ >because the intention is-</ that they go towards religious education/ ↑for that Urdu medium I thought~ [is] more appropriate so that the child's base becomes stronger/

His capability of practical reasoning, his judgment of value and his religious disposition have impacted his value judgement. Language is a vessel for communicating *Ilm*; Urdu being more widely understood can strengthen their careers as *Alims*. His children's setback in getting admission to schools in Islamabad due to their inability to communicate in Urdu or English has made the significance of appropriate cultural capital too clear to Wazir. Thus he is planning to choose educational trajectory where children can acquire more valued cultural capital for their future careers, whether it be the *Ilm* or the science. Although he seems to adapt his educational preferences for his children, he is striving to expand their capability within their real opportunities.

Although their migration has somewhat expanded their real schooling opportunities, the unschooled status of his two elder daughters has limited their schooling options to either Madrassah or no school. Their previously unschooled status renders them ineligible for admission to any type of regular school. Wazir shares the younger girl Sumaira's dilemma in these words,

> Wazir: she is very eager to go to school here (in Islamabad) / but* we have no option/ at this age/ where?/ I am also keen for Islamic Madrassah/ but she is not going there/[...] [she says] there are too many restrictions/

Their father's preference for religious education and her own lack of academic resources has constrained Sumaira's options. Sumaira is not too

keen for Madrassah education though, because she did not like the strictly regimented routine in the Madrassah she joined with her elder sister Kokab. Sumaira wants to go to regular school but this option is restricted by her lack of any school experience and non-availability of schools for over-age children in Islamabad; she does not want to avail the option of Madrassah like Kokab. These circumstances virtually mean no choice of school or deprivation of capability. Since all the younger children are going to regular school in spite of Wazir's expressed desire for religious education, his preference for Madrassah for his two elder daughters can be viewed as adaptive preference due to lack of other schooling options for these two girls; they can only go to Madrassah because of their lack of prior education.

The most valuable social resources available to this group of parents is their membership of a public sector organization that ensures better schooling opportunities for their children, than most other salaried people in similar jobs. For example, three public schools are available in their neighbourhood within walking distance from their homes. Their organization provides safe, reliable, affordable transport to Islamabad for their children, expanding their capability by including Islamabad schools too in their feasibility set. The social network of their colleagues also expands their capability. Wazir acknowledged the availability of social resources due to his job:

> Wazir: At present/ I haven't faced any problem yet/ *Alhamdulillah*/ aaan/ here-/ because I haven't caused any hurdles for anyone/so wherever I went*-/even this boy and girl-/ for their admission-/ there is a teacher here-/ her father is vice principal in our college (College of Medical Technology)/ this older girl went to visit him with me/so he got the admission done by himself/ he himself got the medical and birth certificates made/he* did it all/I didn't even get the birth certificate made/

Wazir talks about his girl who is older among the two children going to FGGS#12. His good relations with his colleagues were reciprocated through help in his children's admission in NIH schools. His senior colleague whose daughter teaches in FGGS#12 helped get his children admitted in the school and got even their birth certificates made to fulfil the

requirement for admission in the school. Children's birth was not registered before they came to Islamabad. His social capital made it possible for Wazir to get his two younger children admitted to the school. Social capital had been an important component of Wazir family's resources even while they lived in the village; their extended family had played a significant role in their life while Wazir was away from home for work. Wazir acknowledged their support for his family by accepting their decision to deny his daughters formal school. His extended family's support made it possible for him to continue his job without worrying for the safety of his family, even though at the cost of his daughters' freedom to go to school. His social resources in Islamabad proved instrumental in arranging his children's admission.

ii.   The Ejaz Family

Mr Ejaz and Rafia are also first cousins and originally from a farming family from rural Punjab. Ejaz did a diploma in mechanical engineering after matriculation and is working in NIH as a scientific officer in BPS-16. Ejaz family's score on SES Scale places them in the category of HSMC. Rafia admitted to a 'little more than primary' which means she had completed primary but dropped-out before reaching high school. Her two brothers are government employees. Although a confident and vocal woman Rafia did not know specific details about the education and jobs of her father and brothers; Ejaz provided the details. Ejaz's family owned a small landholding in central Punjab and he is the only one of three male siblings who is in salaried job. His two brothers are still farming in his home village; Ejaz's share in the land is one third of their father's small property. Ejaz gets staple yields only for his family's needs and leaves the small income from his land to his old parents and brothers who till his land. Social status in rural Punjab is determined by caste, landownership and access to economic opportunities (Mohmand and Gazdar, 2007, p.12). Ejaz's present social status is basically shaped by his employment in a government organisation. Ejaz lived with his uncle (his wife's father) for his education during his growing years. His uncle was an instructor in a polytechnic institute and inspired Ejaz to choose the same line. Ejaz and Rafia have been living in

Islamabad from the time they got married. The Ejaz family are living in three-room official accommodation for 15-16 grade employees (Appendix 9: Plan A).

Ejaz and Rafia have five children: three daughters and two sons. The girls are 14, 12 and 9 years, and boys are 5 and 2 years old. Four children are attending school presently. The girls were admitted to FG Junior Model School (FGJMS); the son and older girl go to a LCP school in Chak Shahzad (Appendix-6). According to Ejaz they admitted the girl to this school because they wanted science education for their daughter and FGJMS does not offer this subject choice for matriculation. Rafia is a confident and expressive woman; although she agrees with her husband's expressed preferences, she has independent opinion about their children's education and future. Since the children are born and raised in Islamabad, they are well-versed in both Urdu and their native language Punjabi, which is widely understood in the capital.

a. Value of Education

Ejaz attributed more instrumental value to education of his children as compared to Wazir. The basic objective of education is to prepare boys to take care of their parents in their old age.

> Ejaz: the purpose (of education) should be that the child is obedient/ like parents are serving the child now/ in (parents') old age the child should serve them/

He indicates three values here: obedient boys mean minimum trouble raising them, take care of parents' in old age and more subtly returns to their investment in children's education. Jamal, another middle-class father in the sample expressed similar aspirations in more literary manner.

> Jamal: the tree which is grown/ one thinks of its fruit/ but the small one [tree]-/ one prays for its growth/ it is difficult-/

Jamal highlighted the effort required by parents to grow their planted tree to the stage where it starts bearing fruit for them. Value of education as an

153

investment for old age has also been confirmed by research in Pakistan and internationally (Aslam, 2007a; Aslam and Kingdon, 2008). Economic value of education or employability is significant for the capability to provide for self and family. Ejaz expects economic returns from his daughters' as well as his sons' education.

> Ejaz: for girls/ education [teaching]/we'll try for that/ for son technical education/[...] obviously/this is our desire/ if the government does not* have jobs/ then the person can at least do own** work/can provide for self~ and for [own] children~/ so I had this view when I said that~/that if the child~ acquires technical education-/didn't find government job/ then he'll go in the private [sector]/ or~/↓start own work [self-employment]/

Ejaz's detailed plan for his daughters and son indicates his capability of 'practical reason', which Nussbaum explains as 'Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life (2003, p.41); while he envisages the instrumental value of education ensuring economic security for his children and their capability to provide for self and family including parents. Government jobs are valued highly for job security in Pakistan, especially for boys (CREB, 2012) but are harder to get due to scarcity as well as corruption in employment, especially in lower level jobs. His capability of practical reasoning rationalises the value of his preferred educational path by highlighting the potential of alternate earning options of private job and self-employment in case of non-availability of government job. Ejaz' habitus has evolved from his LSMC, rural Punjab origin into his present salaried urban HSMC location, where economic security is the foremost value of education. As discussed earlier (p.89), Bourdieu describes habitus as, a 'feel of the game' and 'the art of anticipating the future of the game' (Bourdieu, 1998, p.25).

Ejaz is well-settled in his secure government job with many perks, living in official accommodation in an exclusive residential colony and all his children are going to the schools he has chosen for them. His own experience of getting a secure government job on the basis of his technical qualification

provides him adequate experience to develop the 'feel' of the game. He is aware of the scope of his choice for his son. Ejaz wants to 'play' in the employment *field* he is familiar with (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.98). Aspiring for a career he knows nothing about, would be like gambling rather than investing in his children's education. He does not want to risk the future of his children in untested waters. Ejaz' desire can be explained as making 'a virtue of necessity', and refusing 'what is anyway denied and to will the inevitable'; on the basis of his own experience, he can realistically anticipate the outcome of his choices for his children.

Rafia's views included upward mobility and a social and familial responsibility aspect that focussed on her male and female children's capability to become good parents:

> Rafia: the parent would think/ that if my child is educated/ then his circumstances would improve/he shall study~/get some education~/further to [their] children*/ the biggest thing is that further to [their] children/ shall be able to give good upbringing (to them)/

Ejaz aspired for old age care for himself, whereas Rafia desires for improved circumstances for her children and for her daughters to become good parents. This desire was also expressed by other parents like Mr and Mrs Mahtab who hoped that education would prepare their children to become better parents. Coleman conceptualised this type of mutual reliance of family members as a form of social capital. Edwards et al, discuss Coleman's concept of social capital generated within the families. They expound,

> [Coleman] identifies social capital as a resource within 'the family' that inheres in the structure of intergenerational relationships, especially between parents and children. Parents invest in their children, as the next generation of the family who will in turn support them in later life (Edwards, Franklin and Holland, 2003, p.4).

Ejaz and Rafia both talk about intergenerational social capital and its long term benefits for the family of origin and family of procreation Ejaz has specific plans for the future of his daughters as well as sons:

> Ejaz: our desire is that our girls go to education (teaching)/ ...and~/for the child (son)/ we'll try* that he goes towards technical side/

Education is the most favoured profession for middle-class girls; hence Ejaz plans university education for his daughters to qualify for teaching. For his sons, he wants technical education; his reasons are quite pragmatic for this preference. The technical education offers many choices of earning and thus financial security for a man and his dependents. Ejaz's desires for his son's future are influenced by his disposition; he has technical education himself and works in technical field, his cultural resources not only help him anticipate the future outcome of his preference but also place him in a position of advantage to guide his son. His desires are formed by what he perceives to be feasible; the future of the son cannot be left to chance. His preferences are organised in response to his understanding of realisable options (Bruckner, 2009, p.307); with no experience of university education and professional work, Ejaz cannot envisage the chances of success in professional fields like medicine. He probably wills what is most achievable within his family's capability and has excluded from his preferences as unthinkable, what he believes is not achievable (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 54). His habitus limits his practical sense, or his capability to 'anticipate the future' beyond his experience of the technical field (Bourdieu, 1998, p.25).

Regarding her aspirations for her children, Rafia's cultural resources are contoured by her rural habitus, limited schooling and absence of work experience. Her desires for the future of her son illustrate her capacity to aspire high for him but also a lack of ability to realize their limitations in achieving her aspirations.

> Rafia: the desire of my heart is that/ my son/ *Masahallah*[17]/[...]/ goes ahead in his education~ too/ and serve people in future/ whether doctor/ after becoming a doctor/ or in whichever field/this is not the purpose that/ Oh my child will become a doctor/ he'll earn a lot of money for me/no*/ if he becomes a doctor even then/ people-/ someone shall be benefited/ *In-sha-*

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[17] With the will of Allah

> *Allah*/[...] Where his interest is/desires-/ mother/ you know/ you are *Mashallah-*/then females have too many desires/ males have to think too/

Rafia has established that she has no financial interest in the earning of her son. She has made it clear that she does not want medical profession for her son because doctors earn more and she will benefit from her son's earning; her motive is that other people shall benefit from his education if he becomes a doctor. Rafia's views are illustrative of what Sen describes as 'non-availability of the notion of personal welfare' in rural women in traditional societies (Sen, 1987c, p.7). Although she freely expresses her aspirations for her son, she accepts too that her desires are not achievable because these are aspirations of a female; females have too many desires while males 'have to think' too. Rafia thinks her aspirations for her sons are a mother's irrational fantasies as compared to her husband's more practical plans. It is interesting to note that she identifies desire and thinking as two separate and exclusive behaviours, suggesting that desires are not rational. Rafia has graded her own desires lower than her husband's more pragmatic goals. Her desires are not constrained by their economic resources or enabling conditions; they are undermined due to her being a 'female'. Her rural-female habitus has conditioned her to accept her lower capability and agency than her husband as 'the order of things' (Bourdieu, 2001, p.8) without any resentment. Although Rafia is a confident woman, her views highlight the rural-culture of Punjab where, as a woman, she accepts her lower position in the decision making regarding her children; she accepts her lower status as the parent of daughters and as wife in this context. Her habitus modified by her urban experience has only partially transformed the disposition inculcated through her early life experiences and norms.

This gender division of rational and affective is also evident in Ejaz's views; he stresses the economic value of education more:

> Ejaz: if your child acquires education/ then first of all/ I think what people used to say that this is about service [to society]/now this is not about service/ he has to find a living for himself/ if he has/ some Degree/ he'll

157

> further apply [for jobs] according to that/so I think/ their first desire is that/ they find their own** means of living/ after that*/↓service to society/

As a father his first concern is that his son finds a secure means of livelihood; because only after that can one afford loftier aims in life. His views not only illustrate his pragmatic approach to life but also his cultural limitations by prioritising economic security above everything else. Appadurai (2004, p.68) contends that better off people in society have more opportunities to link material goods and opportunities to general possibilities and options due to their expanded ability 'to produce justifications, narratives, metaphors, and pathways' to link material goods and services to wider social scenes and contexts. Ejaz' LSMC, rural Punjabi background may have contributed towards ascribing economic security a priority above everything else. It can also be viewed as an adherence to gender norms that ascribe to males the role of the provider of the family; developing a capability to provide for his family is a functioning Ejaz desires for his son and aims to help him develop this capability.

3. Similarities and Differences between the Two Families

The two families included in this chapter are large, originally from rural background; both mothers are housewives and both families practice norms of patriarchy. Ejaz and his wife have lived in Islamabad a long time and their dispositions have adjusted to develop an understanding of the dominant culture of their new urban environment; their children are born and raised in Islamabad and started school here from the very beginning. Mr Wazir's wife and children have moved to Islamabad only 2 ½ years ago and are still in the process of adjustment to their new social space and social structures; children have no experience of formal schooling except for one child. Wazir himself is going through the process of school choice for his children rather late; this delay increases his constraints many fold. These circumstances have reduced his children's schooling options and have constrained their capability to interact with the culture of urban

education system in their new social environment. Wazir still lacks the unifying principles (Bourdieu, 1998, p.8) with the urban social space he had been a part for so many years in some aspects. Thus the difference in the aspirations of Ejaz and Wazir families, among other things, could be attributed to their varied origin and varied dispositions (Bourdieu, 1977, p.85; Bourdieu, 1986a).

Wazir and Ejaz aspire pragmatically for the future of their sons within their individual value sets. Wazir believes that economic capital is to be generated within the guidance of the religion; while Ejaz thinks that economic capital is required to fulfil the religious obligation of taking care of family. Although their expressed desires for their daughters are quite varied due to their perception of the real opportunities, both desire for the expansion of their daughters' capabilities through education. Ejaz wants economic independence for his daughters whereas Wazir hopes for fortitude, to stand for what is right, in his daughters.

Ejaz and Wazir differ in the social value underlying their educational aspirations for their children, although both want their sons to become responsible individuals. Ejaz focuses on bonding social capital and indicates a desire for his children to have the capability to take care of their family including parents and children; Wazir emphasises on inculcating altruistic dispositions in his children so they can be *useful to others, to the nation.* He wants his children to develop language skills to be able to communicate with non-Pashto speaking people and thus focus on developing skills to create bridging social capital with larger community. Appadurai argues, 'aspirations to the good life are part of some sort of system of ideas which locates them in a larger map of local ideas and beliefs' (2004, p.67). Wazir's perception of the intrinsic value of education is more influenced by his tribal habitus which upholds collective interest over individual interest and sees individual well-being as a continuation of group well-being. He purports:

> Wazir: it is that-/ if the man cannot* achieve big*things for the nation and the country-/…Whatever can be done-/ one should do something for the nation and the country//

Ejaz's perception of social value of education is embedded in the well-being of his family. He argues that self comes before others. These parents differ in the way they perceive the *value* of education or *value judgment,* that is preferences or a list of valued objects; and *judgement of value* of education that is, reflective, evaluative exercise with an understanding of the value of each preference in this list (Halstead, 1996, p.14). *Judgement of value* is considered crucial in CA in determining a person's advantage in life; advantage referring to the available opportunities from which a person chooses one (Sen, 1987a, p.38). The motivating structure underlying their judgement of values here can be explained as varied *doxa.* Bourdieu presents the concept of *doxa* as 'an adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident' (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.473). These parents adhere to the structure of the values and norms that have been inculcated in them. Their *doxa* have validated their desires as the most appropriate goals for the future of their children; their *judgement of value* of education is shaped by their disposition. For example, children's education is valued as an investment for old age because caring for parents in their old age is a widely practiced norm in Pakistan and the considered duty of the children towards their elderly parents and the right of the parents; Ejaz's preference to secure his own as well as his son's future is influenced by these values. Likewise, the religious values of upholding truth and accountability motivate Wazir's aspiration to empower his children to be able to stand for truth, and question things that seem wrong, in the interest of society. His tribal disposition prioritises collective good over individual good as a strategy to secure highly valued form of social capital in tribal system, i.e. being a valued member of the group.

A significant aspect of Rafia and Nabeela's aspiration is the dissonance between their capability to aspire and capability to achieve. Appadurai contends,

> the capacity to aspire, like any complex cultural capacity, thrives and survives on practice, repetition, exploration, conjecture, and refutation. Where the opportunities for such conjecture and refutation in regard to the future are limited [...], it follows that the capacity itself remains relatively less developed (2004, p.69).

Thus perceived capacity to form achievable aspirations is linked to the opportunities available to the individual to be involved meaningfully in various processes of aspiration formulation. These mothers, and many others in the sample, have less developed capacity to aspire due to limited opportunity to practice these skills. Both women are full-time mothers with no personal economic resources and little social experience beyond their immediate neighbourhood and family, and either no school or very little small town school experience; they have few resources which they can command. These circumstances have impacted not only their perceptions and aspirations, but their agency regarding their children's education too. They lack what Sen describes as *effective power* (freedom to achieve) and *procedural control* (the freedom to be part of decision-making) (Sen, 1985, p.209). Their disadvantage is greater and their freedom lesser than their husbands due to lack of opportunities to formulate or achieve goals. Sen acknowledges the inequalities between men and women in terms of functioning (Sen, 2006a, p.450). Their personal aspirations are not realisable due to their constrained capability set or meagre set of capital in their possession.

The change in the living conditions of the two families has impacted upon their dispositions (Reay, 2004, p.435); the dispositions acquired from their place of origin are overlaid by dispositions acquired from their current setting. Some families have succeeded into combining their diverse set of values into their evolving habitus with features from both sets and minimum conflict of values; some other families have not been very successful in

achieving harmony between their diverse value sets, and thus their preferences and choices for their children are impacted by the conflict in their values and realisable options.

Patriarchy is the specific context of these families' habitus. Nabeela and Rafia accept subordinate position in relation to their husbands. Ejaz and Wazir make all important decisions for their families and their wives good heartedly accept their prerogative. Rafia eloquently described the gender difference in terms of affective and rational thinking; she suggests that women have a lesser capacity to make rational decisions due to their emotionality. In fact, patriarchal norms caused Nabeela and children's migration, because they could not live without an adult male in the house after the death of Wazir's father.

The honour of family is closely linked to the reputation of women members and thus women are strictly protected through implementation of the norm of *purdah* or segregation of sex; social space is divided into public domain for men and private domain for women. Varied degrees of the norm is practiced across the country ranging from modest dressing to full covering of the body from head to toe with large shroud of cloth. The norm of *purdah* is a significant factor in parents' decisions regarding their aspirations for the education and future of their daughters. *Purdah* is rigidly enforced in tribal areas (Ginsburg, 2011, p.100) and due to threat of violation of family's honour by the rival groups women are restricted within their homes or their immediate community (Mohmand and Gazdar, 2007, p.37). Wazir's decision not to enrol his daughters in the school which Raheem attended in the next village is a manifestation of the norm of *purdah*. Although their social context has changed with their spatial mobility, the value is still cherished by him. Nabeela and Kokab came home covered from head to toe, after my arrival there. Although Wazir is not happy with the living arrangements at the Madrassah Kokab is attending presently, he expressed satisfaction with the arrangement of *purdah* there. He has no career plans for his daughters. Nabeela perceives their changed environment as offering more freedom for her children and aspires for a

medical career for her youngest daughter. *Purdah* is a bit relaxed in Ejaz family's transformed habitus. Their daughters are attending regular schools and they have aspirations for professional careers for them too. However, the profession aspired by them for their daughters, is the one which is generally favoured for middle-class females due to scope of a career in segregated environment.

4. Preference Adaptation

The previous section illustrates how mothers' high aspirations and fathers' more pragmatic goals for their children indicate a complex interaction of values and resources on aspiration formulation. Thus, aspirations are not influenced only by what is socially valued but are also formed with consideration to resources or what people think is attainable for them. Resources in this context include material as well as human and social resources which enhance individual's ability to exercise choice (Kabeer, 1999, p.437). Bourdieu has presented the expanded concept of *capital* in the forms of economic, social and cultural capital as means of gaining advantage in social settings (e.g.Bourdieu, 1986b), while Sen forwarded the notion of *capability* as freedom to achieve what one values. All three terms i.e. *resources, capital* and *capability* are used in this analysis in the contexts of inequality of opportunities to achieve desired goals. Individual or family never have all the resources they need or want to achieve their goals and thus have to adapt their desires and preferences to match their resources. The necessity to adjust desires to match resources had been a subject of interest in various social sciences, (e.g. economics and sociology) in relation to individual well-being, and is called *adaptive preferences*; a significant behaviour in the context of this research. Adaptive preferences are 'regimented in response to an agent's set of feasible options' (Bruckner, 2009, p.25). Robeyns (2001, p.15) contends that, 'A person has adaptive preference when she is contented with a low level of objective well-being, as she is taught to enjoy small mercies'. Adaptive preferences however, do not always result in being content with whatever

one has; it has been indicated by the participants of this research as a dynamic process comprising of modifying, improvising and adapting with the resource set possessed by the agent.

The Wazir family are simultaneously activating, expanding and adapting to deal with lack of economic and cultural resources. Lack of economic resources significantly constrains Wazir's capability set. He has not only deliberately adapted his own aspirations to his resources but also wishes to train his children to live within their means. Wazir wants to inculcate a taste for simple life in his children and to train them to share with others:

> Wazir: I have given them a simple life so that* they don't become a burden on society tomorrow/in the life of simplicity-/ Islam wants simplicity-/ and in the life of simplicity/ instead of being a burden on society/ giving to others-/ they are* being trained that you give to others/ Allah shall give more to you/so living a life of simplicity-/

Two values are discernible in this quote: simplicity and sharing. His religious, tribal habitus has inculcated these two values in Wazir, which he wants to pass on to his children. He is transmitting his ancestral values of hospitality and the honourable uses of material goods to his children (Barth, 1969, p.120). Wazir contends that a taste for simple life shall keep his children from becoming a burden on society. A simple life makes a person content with what they have and motivates them to share with others, instead of striving to get what they want at any cost. He is talking about the Islamic value of sharing and giving with the belief that what you give shall be returned manifold by Allah; he is activating his religious capital here. The tribal culture also encourages sharing. Barth describes the basic premises of Pathan life thus:

> …that wealth is not for amassing, but for use and is basically without importance, that only the weak man is attached to property and makes himself dependent on it, that the strong man bases his position on qualities within himself and people's recognition of these qualities, and not on control of people by the control of objects (1969, p.121).

164

This quote sheds light on Wazir's aspirations of character building rather than means of earning for the future of his children; it is the character that brings recognition in tribal habitus and not the wealth. On the other hand, his views might be interpreted as he is not only training his children to share in the hope of Allah's benevolence but also to want only within their resources.

Ejaz and Rafia's cultural resources are different from Wazir and Nabeela. Ejaz did a diploma course in mechanical engineering after high school, and Rafia did not finish high school. They have adjusted their normative cultural resources to match their changed cultural environment; recent statistics indicate 30% females as compared to 27% males are enrolled at tertiary level in Punjab (Fig-2.4). They are planning to educate their daughters till university and then find employment, contrary to their family norms in which men are expected to provide economically while women care for children and the home.

> Rafia: No/ jobs-/ yes/ should be able* to be employed/ not that I'll make them do paid jobs/my aim is that make the child employable/further~/ it is their fate/it depends on their fate whether the next ones [the in-laws] approve of it or not/our home [family] environment is such that we educate the girl/ but we don't make decisions by ourselves/
>
> Ejaz: In our family no one [females] does [paid] job/ women don't do it/ now we are going to make them do it/ but presently no girl in our family works/

Their family culture restricts female employment but living in Islamabad has expanded their capability in this matter, and Ejaz wants to make the best of this opportunity. Rafia still adheres to the rural norms that disapprove of parents who benefit from the earning of their daughters. The girl is considered to be the asset of her future in-laws and husband and as a trust with the parents, who raise her to be valuable asset and hand them over to their real 'owner' when the time comes (Aslam and Kingdon, 2008). Parents who make their daughters do paid job are perceived in rural cultures as greedy and honourless, 'who lives off his daughter's earning' and not interested in getting their daughters settled in their 'own homes'. Rafia has

tried to clarify her position on this account by stating that she has no intention of taking financial benefit from her daughters, and knows that it is the prerogative of their in-laws. Ejaz, on the other hand, has thought a little further, by perceiving that an educated and earning female can be a more valuable asset for an urban middle-class family and thus likely has better marriage prospects with a possibility of lesser expectations for dowry. There is a custom of dowry for girls in Punjab; Ejaz cannot accumulate enough dowries for three daughters with his meagre financial resources and little hope for any assistance from his ancestral land. His daughters are older than the boys and thus he cannot even rely on his sons sharing the responsibility of girls' marriage with him.

This family's narrative of their values and aspirations indicate references to social resources in the form of appreciation of social structures, social networks and enabling conditions. Ejaz and Rafia appreciated the nominal fees and free books provided in government schools and the quality of education in public schools. They are one of the very few parents who appreciated the public schooling facilities.

> Ejaz: we start crying and complaining without reason/ that we have problems/I think / there are no problems till matric/
> Rafia: The syllabus [text books] is provided by the government presently/
> Ejaz: they have reduced fees all over Pakistan/ now 30/ or 20 rupees is not even* fees/in comparison to that/ if you go to the private [school]/ they'll charge you 700 (rupees)/[...] best quality of education [is provided]/ in the government (schools)/

Rafia appreciated Junior Model School and teachers in that school.

> *Mashallah* it is quite* good/ *Mashallah* the school is very good/teachers also teach very well/because children's base is formed here/ then they'll go ahead/education in this school is better/ is very good/

Ejaz and Rafia have formed aspirations within their feasibility set; thus there is little gap between their desires and their resources. They are appreciative of the conditions that enable them to educate their children. They have relatively 'smaller number of aspirational nodes' on their navigational map

(Appadurai, 2004). Ejaz and Raffia do not show a desire to access a site of education that is more highly valued within the field. Although Rafia has high aspirations for her sons, she herself does not consider them a highly viable career path for her children. Their appreciation of the facilities provided by the government can be viewed as adaptive preferences of the type Elster calls 'character planning' or deliberate adaptation (1983, p.25). They consciously appreciate and praise the facilities available for their children's education.

5. Conclusion

This chapter aimed to probe the answers to two key questions (p.137): What are the aspirations and goals of participating parents for the future of their male and female children? And how do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations? The analysis presented in this chapter has highlighted multiple aspects of aspiration formulation: firstly, the capacity to aspire is unequal even within the same family due to varied capability sets of individual parents; secondly, parents' habitus has significant influence on their aspirations for their children; and thirdly, parents adapt their aspirations to their perceived opportunities in the context of the resources available to them.

Inter-family and intra-family differences in parents' capability set are indicated even in this small group of parents. The varied combination of the forms of economic, cultural and social capital defines the capability of individual parents and shapes their capacity to form realisable aspirations for their children. Fathers have advantage with access and control over more economic, cultural and social resources; both mothers have no personal income, little or no education and limited social contacts. All four parents indicated recognition of the constraints on their personal and family capability. Although mothers have independent aspirations for their children's future and education, they endorse and accept their husbands' decisions as their own and thus the families have no conflict in the ultimate functionings they aspire for their children. The timing of family migration

also impacted Wazir family's capability due to differential in the requisite and possessed academic capital by the children. The lack of proficiency in the dominant language of their new social environment considerably constrained this family's opportunities and thus desired functionings.

In spite of both being from rural background, these families have quite diverse habitus. Both the tribal and the rural Punjab habitus are based on Islamic ideology. Islam is a social religion and instructs its followers to relate to individuals and groups in their environment. The Muslim is part of, and loyal to the *ummah*, the community, which gives him identity. Ideally, the Muslim is part of his immediate group as well as *ummah* (Ahmed, 1986, p.57). Instructions about relations to the immediate group and larger community are important tenets of Islamic social ideals. It does not however imply that all Muslim societies live by the same norms and customs. Ahmed purports, 'There is only one Islam, and there can only be one Islam, but there are many Muslim societies' (ibid, p. 58). Diversity in social norms and customs in various regions of Pakistan illustrate this quote very well. Ejaz and Wazir families come from different regions and the specific regional norms and customs and their specific family circumstances have shaped their values variedly. For example, Islam encourages its followers to share with and take care of dependents, family and poor community members; varied emphasis laid by Ejaz and Wazir on who should benefit more from the education of their children indicates the difference in their social and family norms and circumstances. Ejaz emphasises instrumental value while Wazir stresses intrinsic value of education; Ejaz wants his children to achieve financial stability whereas Wazir desires for strength of character in his children, and aspires for what Barth explains as, '…the ease with which he assumes responsibility, and implies authority and assurance- basic male Pathan virtues' (Barth, 1969, p.121). One common feature of the tribal and rural Punjab societies is the segmentation within the community based on the caste, tribe, clan or family and a rivalry with opposing groups (Barth, 1969; Mohmand and Gazdar, 2007); this

segmentation fixes expectations of loyalty and devotion for individuals according to their unique social contexts.

Another constraint not identified by parents but evident in their views was the future gender roles perceived by parents for their children shaped by the gender norms inculcated in their dispositions as the 'natural' order or the *doxa*. The perceived future of girls as part of another family after marriage constrained parents' capability to aspire and plan for their education and professional career; boys' future was linked with the fate of the family and thus aspirations for their education and career were like aspirations for the future of the parents and the family. Parents' own gender defined their capability among other things, through their distinctive experience in the separate fields of 'public domain' and 'private domain'. Based on their traditional gender roles, fathers used their knowledge of actual resources in their possession and the requisite species of capital in the competitive field of employment, in planning an achievable career path for their children. Mothers on the other hand, had more detailed knowledge and experience of the field of family and thus had a clearer understanding of the value of specific gender norms and relevant behaviours and skills in determining the relative position of their children, specifically their daughters, in their future familial roles and well-being.

Religious and spiritual capital expanded these parents' capability to aspire by reducing dissonance between their aspiration and their capability to achieve their desired functionings. Religious capital influenced the capability to aspire in multiple ways. Firstly, religious values have emerged as significant motivations underlying all four parents' aspirations; for example, they have indicated values like fortitude, being useful to others and filial piety as important considerations in the plans for the future of their children. Secondly, as a schooling option, religious education expanded choice menu for Wazir family who are constrained in their capability to educate their children in the mainstream schools due to lack of educational capital. Thirdly, accomplishments in religious education like becoming *Alim* may expand family's symbolic capital by enhancing their relative social

position in their tribal social context. All four parents seek divine support in achieving their goals by accepting Allah's power in realising their plans with phrases like *In-sha-Allah, Mashallah* and *Alhamdulillah,* and hopes for their children's fate to favour them. Contrary to the general perceptions about fatalism as a pessimistic adaptive behaviour, Islamic belief in fate adds optimism to these parents' aspirations for the future of their children. On the one hand these parents grounded their aspirations in their real capability and on the other hand added wings of fate to their tentative aspirations for the future of their children to escape the limitations of their constraints.

The families discussed in this chapter have adjusted their desires to what they perceive is achievable within their resource set. All four parents have indicated a realisation of their constraints; both fathers have adapted their goals to what they perceive is achievable and both mothers have foregone their right to decide for their children in favour of their husbands, knowing their own lack of capability to achieve their high aspirations for their children. Aspirations are parents' desired states of being or functionings for the future of their children. Parents' capability for aspiration formulation is indicated by how closely their resource set matches their desired goals; the gap between their desires and their capability to achieve them also depicts parents' agency in this matter. Dissonance between what parents desire, and what they believe is achievable for the future of their children indicates constraints on their agency in this matter. Cultural capital has emerged as a strong impact on these families' agency regarding their children's education. For example, Wazir family's academic resources are constrained due to their comparatively recent migration and thus their capability to educate their children according to their preferences is constrained. This family is facing the challenge to adjust their dispositions by harmonising the two diverse sets of value from their tribal origin and their present urban environment. Transformation from rural agricultural to urban salaried status meant upward mobility for Ejaz family due to their longer stay in the capital and their children's education in Islamabad school from the very beginning. The Wazir family is going through a phase of downward

mobility due to their disadvantaged social position in comparison to their present community. They lack forms of cultural capital valued in their new environment. This family is struggling hard to acquire valued competencies and transform their dispositions without losing their link to their place of origin. These circumstances have simultaneously expanded and constrained their cultural resources and consequently their capability to aspire in multiple ways.

School Choice and Parents' Capability

This chapter is looking at parents' choice behaviour in the context of their children's schooling and education. Choice of school can be understood as an indicator of parents' capability to 'live the life they value', in the context of their children's education. The choice of school is one of the first formal milestones of parents' roadmap to the aspired future for their children, and depicts their agency as well as their commitment to good schooling for their children. Choice however is not a homogenous concept and means different things in different contexts (Reay, 1996, p.588). School choice is more complex in Pakistan than in those countries where basic education is compulsory. Parents in my sample chose the school which matches closely to their preferences for what they understand as being 'good' in a school (Collins and Snell, 2000, p.807), or match their preferences to their chosen schools (Schneider et al., 1998, p.788). A choice of school closely fitting with parental preference illustrates their *agency* (Sen, 1987d), and advantage (Sen, 1987a, p.38), and those parents who match their preferences to the options available, adjust their behaviour like in *adaptive preference* (Bruckner, 2009), or *deliberate character planning* (Elster, 1983, p.117) as discussed in the Ch-5. This diversity of choice behaviour indicates diversity of habitus as well as capability; both with inherent connotations concerning the agency of the chooser.

The participants of this study have more school choice than the majority of parents in Pakistan. People who do not have appropriate cultural capital however, are not able to take advantage of the choice available to them (Tooley, 1997, p.106) Hypothetically these parents have access to multiple types of public and private schools in Islamabad (Appendix-5 & 6). Parents' choice of school is influenced by their unique capability set (Sen, 2006a) comprising of human, economic, social and cultural resources possessed

by them, as well as enabling conditions created by the society. A larger menu of resources and enabling conditions means parents' expanded capability to choose their preferred school for their children. In this chapter I shall explore parents' degree of advantage, relating this to their preferences and capabilities to activate the resources in their possession (Lareau and Horvat, 1999, p.38).

In the first section of this chapter the concept of the choice will be discussed, first in the context of capability approach and then as perceived by Bourdieu; the second section describes the school choices available in Islamabad. The next section discusses briefly the school choices among my full sample followed by the discussion of the families focussed in this chapter. The last section concludes the discussion in this chapter.

1. The Concept of Choice

The notion of choice in the context of this study needs some clarity at this point. *Choice* as perceived by both Sen and Bourdieu provides a theoretical structure which covers the external as well as internal elements that shape choice through inculcating norms and values that make certain options more valued and desirable. Choice has been perceived in Capability Approach (CA) as 'freedom to achieve' (Sen, 1992, p.33); freedom to achieve includes not only '...the ability to achieve what we value, but the idea of freedom respects our being free to determine what we want, what we value and what we decide to achieve' (Sen, 2009, p.232). The freedom to determine what we want is not possible without real opportunity to achieve what we value; thus Sen's notion of choice depends heavily on social provision of real opportunities, making such freedom a collective responsibility.

Choice as freedom to choose involves the concept of freedom in the process rather than the outcome of the choice act. Sen (2009, pp. 228-230) distinguishes between 'opportunity aspect' and the 'process aspect' of freedom. He argues that freedom is valuable first, because it gives us more *opportunity* to pursue our objectives; second, because the *process* of choice itself may have importance for us. Take the example of a parent in tribal region,

who wants religious education for his child. In scenario *A* with a number of schools to choose from, he enrols his child in the local Madrassah. In scenario *B*, due to the fear of extremist influence, he decides not to send his child to Madrassah. In scenario *C*, there is no school other than Madrassah in his community. The scenario *A* means that he is free to choose any type of education for his child. The scenario *B* constrains his freedom to choose the type of education he prefers for his children. Scenario *C* means that he cannot choose any type other than religious education for his child. The opportunity aspect of his freedom is similar in scenario *A* and *C*, but the process aspect of his freedom is affected in situation *C*. He has no alternative but to send his child to Madrassah. Though it is the same choice he would have made, had he been given the option, but in this scenario, he does not have any other significant alternatives that he could have chosen if he wanted. The *process of choice* itself is important here to make sure that one is not being forced into an outcome due to exogenous constraints. The process aspect indicates a person's agency. Mr Wazir discussed in the previous chapter, for example, has expressed a preference for religious education for all his children, but the only child who attends Madrassah is his previously unschooled teenage daughter Kokab, who has no other schooling option; three other children are going to regular school. Wazir has not chosen religious education for which he has expressed a preference for the children who had other schooling options. Although these children are not attending the type of school for which he has stated a preference, he has exercised his freedom to choose in this decision because he could send them either to secular or religious school; whereas in the case of Kokab, he had no opportunity to exercise this freedom.

Bourdieu perceives choice as agency or a *practical sense,* which he explains thus:

> In fact, "subjects" are active and knowing agents endowed with a practical sense, that is, an acquired system of preferences, of principles of visions and division (what is actually called taste), and also a system of durable cognitive structures (which are essentially the product of the internalization of objective structures) and of schemes of action which orient the perception of the situation and the appropriate response (1990, p. 24).

174

This *practical sense* constitutes to the habitus (p.89). Despite the presence of objective structures in the process of acquiring practical sense, choice is also 'a system of durable cognitive structures' according to Bourdieu. Thus Sen and Bourdieu, both consider internal and external factors significant in facilitating the process of choice. Parents' choice of school may be viewed as the product of their *habitus,* as classifying schemes, as the distinctions between good and bad, right and wrong and distinguished and vulgar (Bourdieu, 1990, p.8). Thus perceived, choice involves judgement of the value of the object of choice. Vincent and Martin (2002, p.112) following Bourdieu have argued, that the social positioning of the parents in their research, arising from the dimensions of class, gender and ethnicity, shape the habitus; that is that practices of social positions are shaped by *habits* that 'condition taste, orientation and expectations towards education' (ibid). This brings to mind Bourdieu's formula: [(habitus) (capital)] + field = practice (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.95). Thus the choice of the preference (shaped by the habitus) and the available resources (economic and cultural capital), and the value of this combination of habitus and capital in the context of admission to the preferred school (field). *Habitus* in the context of school choice may be viewed as the 'practical sense for what is to be done in a given situation' (Bourdieu, 1998, p.25) i.e. familiarity with the requirements of the education system; *capital* as a 'potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form' (Bourdieu, 1986b, p.46), in this case, social resources which conduct information about schooling options, cultural resources required to qualify for admission to the preferred school and economic resources to pay for the desired school. The *field* is 'the specific structure of peculiar social worlds' (Bourdieu, 1998, p.138), here the school system; and finally *practice* is 'choice of school'. The unique combination of parents' diverse habitus and varied resources would have differential value in the field of education, resulting in their unique choices indicating what they value and what they can achieve. Here I would like to mention Gewirtz et al's typology of parental school-choosing comprising of *skilled/privileged, semi-skilled,* and *disconnected* choosers (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996). The skilled/privileged parents have high

inclination towards and capacity for choice, the semi-skilled have high inclination but low capacity and the disconnected have low skill and low capacity for the choice of school. This typology is concordant with the theoretical framework for this research due to its emphasis on parents' capacity to choose the school. Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz (1996) found that majority of the skilled/privileged choosers are professional middle-class parents with some kind of 'inside' knowledge of education system. They list four characteristics of the skilled/privileged parents; first, they have an inclination to choice; and second they possess and can activate economic, social and cultural capitals valuable in the field, to engage with and utilize the possibilities of choice. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of various schools, they often make compromise decisions; and finally, their impression and feel of the atmosphere of the school plays an important role in their choice of school (ibid, pp.93-94). The families represented by the *semi-skilled* type showed characteristics of both skilled and *disconnected* choosers. These families' life experiences provide them with limited appropriate cultural and social capital and they have little insiders' knowledge of the education system (ibid, p.102). The *disconnected* type is represented by working class families. Usually they left school early and lack confidence in their ability to understand school system. Their social and cultural capital has limited relevance to the field of education (ibid, p.106).

This chapter looks at parents' choice of school in the context of their aspirations and preferences with a focus on their capability to activate resources in their possession to achieve their desired functionings, i.e. admission to their preferred school. Some aspects of two of the three key questions are relevant to this chapter (p.104). I will seek answers to three sub-questions specified for this chapter:

1. How does school choice reflect family goals and aspirations?
2. How do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their school choices?
3. And how do families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities?

I have chosen five families for detailed analysis in this chapter based on their school choice behaviour. These families have shown varied capacity for school choice and differential capability to activate available resources to negotiate difference between their aspirations and their resources. Following Bourdieu Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz (1996, p.92) consider processes of choice of and competition for access to school taking place within a 'social field', because the idea of field allows one to think relationally of human action. The next section adopts this idea to look at the choice of schools available to the participants in this study and an overview of school choices by full sample.

2. Available School Choices in Islamabad

Levin (2001, p.7) purports:

> In a free and democratic society, parents have the right to rear their children in the manner that they see fit, philosophically, religiously, politically, and in lifestyle. Since education is a central component of childrearing, this right is consistent with freedom of educational choice. This requirement suggests that parents should be able to choose the type of school that best supports their childrearing preferences.

Middle-class parents in Pakistan probably have more *freedom* of educational choice and to raise their children in the manner they see fit than most developed countries, hypothetically. The absence of the implementation of compulsory education law and presence of multiple types of schools and education systems may be presented as a wider menu of choice, including 'no school', as well as specific type of school parents may prefer for their children. Thus, the particular context of *freedom of educational choice* and how it is shaped by the capability set of HSMC and LSMC parents in Pakistan is important. Sen argues,

> If we are interested in the freedom of choice, then we have to look at the choices that a person does in fact have, and we must not assume that the same results would be obtained by looking at the resources that he or she commands (Sen, 1992, p.38).

The presence of school in the vicinity of the respondents' homes does not necessarily mean a real opportunity of education for all children. To understand the extent of their freedom in this regard, it is imperative to understand the gap between parents' preferences and the opportunities available to them. Thus the first aspect to understand about parents' choice of school is what type of school they *prefer* for their children. Parents' preferences have been discussed in chapter-5 in more detail; I present an overview of the participating parents' preferences for and choice of school (Appendix-5) for their children in Table-6.1.

Table-6.1: Parents' School Preferences and School Choice

Type of school/education	School Preference	School Choice		
		Total	Boys	Girls
Private	46% (25)	9% (5)	16% (4)	3.5% (1)
Public	20% (11)	51% (27)	44% (11)	57% (16)
Model	9% (5)	36% (19)	40% (10)	32% (9)
Religious/Madrassah	13% (7)	1.8% (1)	0% (0)	3.5% (1)
English Medium*	11% (6)	45% (24)	56% (14)	36% (10)
Not in School		3.7% (2)	4% (1) (Disabled)	3.5% (1)
NIH Schools		58.4% (31)	48% (12)	68% (19)
Out-of-Premises		41.5% (22)	52% (13)	32% (9)
Total	54 (responses)	53	25	28

*Private and FG Model schools are English medium schools

Some parents have shown diverse preferences for their various children, hence the total responses are more than the respondents i.e. 41 (Table-4.2); for example, Mr and Mrs Ejaz want private school for their son, but think public school is good for their daughters, because the private school teaches Quran as part of their syllabus and he wants his son to learn the religious value of taking care of parents in their old age and, 'Unless you give him religious education, he cannot even think like that'. Private school is the most desired type of school by these parents, followed by public, then religious and then Model schools. Six parents have expressed an explicit preference for English medium school for their children. NIH Parents' actual

choices of school are also recorded in Table-6.1 and depict a quite different school profile from their expressed preferences.

This overview shows a marked dissonance between parents' expressed preferences and their actual choice of school for their children. There are some noteworthy indications in this table pointing to the possible underlying causes for this gap. For example, this table indicates a noticeable gender tilt; more boys are studying in private and model schools than girls and more boys are attending out-of-premises schools. Research indicates mixed impact of gender on private school enrolment. For example, a pro-female bias in private school enrolment in Punjab was indicated especially at higher levels of (Ahmed et al., 2013; CREB, 2012; Saeed and Zia, 2012); however recent statistics indicate a pro-male bias all over Pakistan (AEPAM, 2018). A pro-male bias in private school enrolment due to expectations of higher returns is also confirmed by earlier research (Aslam and Kingdon, 2008). Although gender gap is narrowing in Pakistan, boys aged 6-16 are more likely to go too government as well as private schools as compared to girls (Aslam, 2017, p.12). Aslam (2007b, p.9) found that conditional on enrolment, girls are as likely to be enrolled in fee charging private schools as boys in most regions of Pakistan. A likely reason for choice of private schools for girls is parents' increasingly higher aspirations for their daughters (ibid, p.8). Access has also been confirmed by research as an important consideration in the enrolment and choice of school for girls in developing countries (Aslam, 2007b; Aslam, 2017; Bashir and Sadiq, 2006; Durrania and Halai, 2018; PSLM, 2015; Sawada and Lokshin, 2001; Woldehanna et al., 2005). Responses of participating parents indicate ease of access is the top reason for parents' choice of school. A larger number of children attending NIH schools (schools on the premises) indicate ease of access might be an important consideration in the choice of school.

The only Madrassah-going child in this sample is Kokab, the eldest Wazir girl; although Mr Wazir has expressed a preference for religious education for his sons, boys are attending regular school, a phenomenon worth investigation. Wazir expressed multiple goals for his sons including

professional and religious career (p. 144). The choice of Madrassah for Kokab was more due to lack of alternative choices rather than preference (p.150). A noticeable percentage of out-of-school children even in this small sample seek explanation; one of the two out-of-school children is disabled, indicating constraints on schooling opportunities for special children. Appendix-6 provides detail about the specific schools attended by the participating families' children. Parents' expressed reasons for the choice of school are varied, as indicated in Table-6.2 below.

Table-6.2: Parents' Reasons for School Choice

Response	Frequency	Response		Frequency
Access	20	Social class of peers (?)		3
School reputation	13	Decision of Spouse		2
Affordability	11	Teaching methodology		2
Child's Lack of ability	8	Social values		2
Trained teachers/Good teachers	7	English Medium		2
Good education	7	Didn't get the admission in preferred school		2
School environment	6	law and order		1
School timing	4	Preschool		1
Religious education	3	Coeducation		1
Discipline	3	Physical facilities		0
		Total Responses		98

It is important to note here that the purpose of this table is not to establish an order of significance, but to present the range of reasons given by parents for the choice of school for their children. This table shows that parents' choice is based on both practical considerations, including proximity and affordability, and the perceived quality of education. Next, I will look at the various types of school choices made by the chosen case studies for this chapter.

3. The Case Studies

To discuss in this chapter, I have selected five families with varied capability to activate their resources. The Abid family has most favourable combination of capital in their possession and minimum gap between their preferences and their choices of school. The Rahman family lack in economic capital but has shown capability to activate their resources to reduce their disadvantage in the choice of school for their children. Faheem family's goals have been formulated according to what they believe is achievable for them. Mr Shareef is bitter because he does not have the resources to realise his aspirations for his children; and Abbas family does not have access to special education to suit their disabled son's needs. All five families have exhibited varied sense of agency regarding the education of their children.

i.   The Abid Family

Samina and Abid both are science graduates; Abid comes from Kashmir while Samina has lived and studied in Islamabad. Abid is a retired army man working security manager in UAE while Samina works as primary school teacher in BPS-16. Samina lives in a rented house in Islamabad with her two children, 8 and 6 years old. This family categorises as HSMC on the SES scale for this research (Appendix-4) and presents characteristics of the skilled/privileged choosers. Samina and the children lived in UAE earlier; they moved to Islamabad a couple of years ago, because Samina was not happy with the schooling options in UAE. Samina is virtually a single mother, raising their two children without practical support of her husband, whose presence is missed by her and children; however, her husband seems to be part of important family decisions. This is the only family in the sample, who can afford the school of their choice and are

sending their children to an expensive semi-government[18] school established for the children of overseas Pakistanis in Islamabad. Samina and Abid seem to have little contact with their families; Samina recounted that Abid's family lives in Kashmir and they visit them infrequently and her parents lived with her when she came back from UAE three years ago. After the death of her father, her mother is living with her sister and she lives independently with her children. Although, she asserts that her husband is involved in all matters and decisions, Samina feels stressed by being a single mother and having to take care of everything by herself and tells that the children also miss their father's presence in their life.

a. Private School-a real opportunity

Two sets of factors have been found to reduce disadvantage regarding school choice: material factors and cultural capital; parents' lack of either or both causes the transmission of disadvantage to the next generation (Tooley, 1997, p.106). More educated parents make better use of their cultural resources by objective weighing of their options and choosing the one closest to their preference (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996). Presence of three different types of schools (private, public and religious) in Pakistan makes the choice of school complex for parents. This diversity, created in response to market forces, has resulted in increased social and academic divisions (Tomlinson, 2001, p.1) Research indicates that the perception of low quality education in public schools is a significant reason for parents' preference for private school in Pakistan (Alderman, Orazem and Paterno, 2001; Andrabi, Das and Khwaja, 2002; ASER, 2017; Jamil, 2017). Private school is not only the most preferred type of school in this sample but the most popular choice of school in Islamabad too. The rate of private enrolment in Islamabad is 45.3% as compared to 53% public enrolment (ASER, 2017), (Table-2.8). These statistics indicate not only opportunities but parents' preferences too. High prevalence of private school enrolment

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[18] This school is established by and is attached to the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis, but works as an autonomous organisation. The admission and employment rules are not same as other government institutions.

in Islamabad in spite of the presence of very good public schools in the capital may explain the reason for the preference for private schools for their children of considerable number of respondents; 46 percent parents in this sample have expressed this preference. However, only 9 percent children in the NIH sample are going to private schools (Table-6.1), in spite of availability of LCP schools for families with less economic resources. LCP schools fill the gap created by lack of public schools in rural areas; however, presence of good public schools in Islamabad provides choice of affordable quality schooling for LSMC families.

Samina and Abid have chosen their children's school after much information gathering and deliberation. Samina met me at her work unlike other respondents who invited me to their home. She took me to her classroom, where she talked to me at length about how she chose school for her children. Hart (2016, p.327) argues that whilst many individuals aspire to futures that differ from the present, some aspire for stability and for a continuation of how things are in the present. Such as, the more advantaged people strive to maintain privilege for their children in preparation for a competitive global economy (Tomlinson, 2015). Samina's views illustrated her desire to maintain the middle-class advantage for her children. Reay found evidence of middle-class mothers directing large amount of time, thought and energy to choosing right primary school for their children (1996, p.586). Ball and Vincent argue that middle-class parents in their sample made considerable effort to maximise their market information before choice of school (1998, p.382). Samina considered several options before choosing the school. Samina's narrative shows her middle-class habitus and her 'inside knowledge of education system' as an educationalist (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996). She expressed a desire for a school that teaches religious education, practical life skills, discipline, and also inculcates competitiveness to ensure the continuation of her children's middle-class advantage. Samina and Abid visited many schools before choosing OPF Girls College for their children. OPFGC offers co-education till 5th grade, after which there is a separate OPF Boys College for those

who want to continue in the same school system. Samina shares her impression of a well-reputed expensive private school offering religious as well as modern education.

> Samina: I had this little bit that children's Islamic education should go side by side/ ...then my mind was quite made up that I'll send them to AIMS/ because of 'Islamic education wise'/ I said Ok/ children would get those things side by side/ they will learn 'Islamic values' as well/ great education-/ but when I saw them-/ the girls' set-up was not too bad but in the boys section there was just Maulvi (a derogatory title for religious scholar) system/ like that/ I said they'll 'wash the mind' of the.../ then I rejected that one/

Samina's middle-class habitus has structured her preferences for the best of both worlds, Islamic values and Western education. She can afford this expensive school too. However, the available choice did not meet her criteria. The conservative environment in boys' section of this school made her think of the unintended consequences of such education for her son in the form of 'brain washing' perhaps from an extremist viewpoint. She wants her children to have good Islamic values but do not want them to be too religious. The specific school she talks about has same curriculum for boys' and girls' sections. Samina did not like the bearded and conservatively dressed male teachers in boys' section. The school she rejected follows a conservative religious dress code for girls as well as boys. Girls are supposed to wear *hijab* (head scarf) from early on. It is interesting that she did not mind *hijab* for her daughter, but did not like male teachers' conservative dressing although boys' uniform is western.

Samina criticised the lack of discipline in another elite private school she visited.

> Samina: this Beacon House System/ ...I felt that they pampered children a lot*/ for them it-/ that everything-/that the child is a landlord's child/ this way <when he'll leave after studies>/ he'll be left behind/>obviously our society is not like that</ our society is-/...our society expects other things/ that you

do your own work/ all right?/ In Beacon House they don't have this system/ they keep them (children) quite pampered/

The relaxed discipline and 'pampering' in this upper-middle-class school conflicts with Samina's particular middle-class values. She believes school should prepare children for real life and train and discipline them to become self-reliant; school should prepare children to live a responsible and competitive life. A school which spoils children and does not teach them hard work does not satisfy this middle-class mother despite its popularity. Her assertion that 'too much pampering' is for the children of 'landlords', is the expression of her belief that her children need to learn competitive traits to succeed in life. Samina and her husband are virtually separated and working hard to secure a middle-class advantage for their children. Her husband's job in Gulf as security manager and her own primary teacher's job place them at the peripheral position in the middle-class. Her husband's income in foreign currency has created an opportunity for them to consider an expensive private education for their children. However, their children must not be spoilt and must learn the virtue of hard work.

Samina does not want an education for her children where they are surrounded by upper-class peers, but neither does she want an education where they are surrounded by working-class and poor children. When asked why she did not choose FG school for her children where she herself teaches, she divulged:

> Samina: basically the problem is-/ I don't have a problem with the school/my problem is that the~* children who come here/ I have a problem with them/ look at these children sitting here/ obviously 'birds of the same feather flock together'/ or one child-/ one melon gets the colour from another melon (a local idiom)/ when you~ take one child-/ here mostly come those* children who~ -/ whose parents don't teach them at all/ whose* parents are those who work in other people's homes/ those mothers don't pay any attention to their children/ these children leave here and then do what?/ 'They play in streets'/ they don't do any homework/ what they do is* that they~ play in the 'streets'/ all right?→/ whatever we teach here is 'on the basis of the teacher'/ we teach them here/ make them

learn here- here*/ if (my) child comes here/ 'suppose'/ he will say '*Amman* (mother) why are you teaching me so much'/ OK/ and then I have seen that standard wise-/ obviously-/ now my son-/ 'he is in-/ six years old in class one'/ so in comparison to class three here-/ if you make a 'comparison' of both, then he* is equal to class three here/ '<the standard of education is not good>'/ we cannot raise the standard 'due to the reason' that children's parents cannot teach them at all**/All these things-/because of this too many* 'problems are created'/

Samina's elaborate response illustrates her desire to maintain her children's middle-class advantage. Middle-class parents in UK also have similar considerations while choosing school for their children (Ball and Vincent, 1998; Vowden, 2012). They do not want their children to attend schools 'with those bearing the hallmarks of exclusion' (Tomlinson, 2001, p.3). Vowden found in his research in London, that middle-class parents did not want their children to go to schools where their classmates were noticeably richer or poorer than them. Despite being a part of the school herself, Samina blames the working-class parents for not being able to support their children's education according to the expectations of the school. FG schools were initially established for working class children in Islamabad; Samina does not want her children to be in the 'flock' of working-class children and be subjected to the objective conditions of their working-class habitus. Ball contends, 'For some consumers the point about choice is that they 'require' exclusivity and/or performance advantage'. These consumers he argues, value the schooling that is difficult to get into and produce superior performance outcomes (Ball, 1993, p. 12). Samina has ensured these two qualities in the school she has chosen for her children. Her parameters of performance include inculcation of middle-class disposition in her children. As much as she wants to protect her children from the upper-class 'pampering' she wants to protect them from the lower-class indifference and lack of competitiveness. She has also confirmed lower standard of education at public schools.

She explains what ultimately made her choose OPF School for both of her children:

> I find that school better in this context that <parents are educated/ those children come->/ that your child is not 'misfit'/ its your** class/ it is children's class/ whatever they learn at home-/ whatever is their home environment/ the class environment is same/ that thing-//

Continuation and reinforcement of their middle-class environment at home and acculturation of her children into middle-class disposition is the motivating factor for their choice of this school. Samina wants her children to 'fit' with the other children in their class, have same behavioural norms and values. Similar concerns have been shown by middle-class parents in choice of school in London, UK (Vowden, 2012, p.734). Samina has the economic capital to pay the fees of the school of her choice, and to invest in the transmission of her preferred cultural capital to her children. She also has the required cultural capital in order to make a detailed analysis of all the schools she considered for her children. Samina has exhibited a highly developed informed thinking, an insiders' knowledge of the education system, enough awareness to think through the consequences of each choice; she knows the rules of the game, education is her *field.* This middle-class, educated and independent mother had considerable agency regarding the choice of school; she has opportunity as well as process freedom and can be viewed as skilled and privileged at choosing school (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996).

ii. The Rahman Family

Rahman and Raheela are a middle-class family originally from Islamabad. Rahman is graduate and works in the education department as Personal Assistant in BPS-16. Raheela has done F.Sc. and is a housewife. Rahman and his wife Raheela both went to school in Islamabad and have the experience of Federal education system. Rahman and Raheela's mothers were friends and they arranged the marriage of their children. Both their fathers were in government employment and they have always lived in Islamabad. This family lives in a family owned accommodation in Islamabad. They have two sons aged 8 and 4 years; the elder one is going

to school. Although they would prefer an expensive private school, they have chosen one of the best IMC for boys in Islamabad for their son.

a. IMC- The Second Best Choice

Like public schools, private schools also vary according to the type of families they serve; for example, high-income, middle-income and lower-income (CREB, 2012). Fifty-three percent enrolled children in Islamabad attend public sector educational institutions (ASER, 2017) (Table-2.8). Islamabad Model Colleges (IMCs) are considered the best FDE institutions (Appendix-5); these schools offer education from preschool to college level and enjoy good repute in Islamabad due to the best infrastructure and human resource facilities granted to these institutions. Admission to these institutions is very competitive. Only 20 institutions out of 422 Federal Government educational institutions have the status of IMC; 18 out of 20 IMCs are working in morning and evening shifts, thus doubling their capacity of student intake. According to recent educational census report by FDE, about 18 percent of total enrolment at primary level in all FDE institutions is in IMCs (FDE, 2013). Table 6.3 present statistics on enrolment in IMCs and is derived from the said survey.

Table-6.3: Enrolment in FDE Institutions

Type of School	Prep-V				Prep-X				M & F Prep-X	
	M	%	F	%	M	%	F	%	Total	%
Islamabad Model Colleges (IMC)	7908	17.8	8698	18.57	17564	21	18169	20	35733	20.7
Total Enrolment (all FDE schools)	44279		46826		83560		88706		172266	

Source: FDE. (2013), Educational Census Report 2012-13. Islamabad: Federal Directorate of Education.

This table shows a substantial percentage of enrolment in IMCs that make only about 5 percent of FDE institutions. Although only 9 percent parents in this sample specified their preference for Model schools, enrolment ratio indicates IMCs popularity. Tough competition for admission might be the reason why few parents in the sample consider it a real option. Generally,

IMCs are considered the second best option for most middle-class parents who cannot afford the fees of good private institutions.

Rahman and Raheela are a young couple who have admitted their son to IMC although they both expressed a preference for private school. Rahman has experience of the field of education due to his job in the education department and he has also worked at FDE. Rahman has used his social and cultural capital to choose the school and get their son admitted to one of the best public schools in Islamabad. Raheela wanted to send their son to Beacon House, an expensive private school, because her sister's children go there. Rahman also thinks that dividends of private education are much higher than public school education. However, they cannot afford their preferred school, so Rahman chose the IMC for his son. He made it clear that his son does not go to an ordinary FG school; this is 'pure' Model.

> Rahman: It is model college*/ it is not FG/ It is model*/ pure model-/

The distinction between the FG and FG Model signifies the class of the child, as Samina (pp.184-187) and Abbas (p.213) have elaborated in their interviews. Having worked in federal education system, Rahman knows the difference in the quality of the two types of institutions.

> Rahman: I think the FG set up-/ the teaching staff there-/ because obviously I have been dealing with them-/ they are not of that 'caliber'/ it is a little better in Model↑/ not that much but a little bit* better in model/ the-/ the college where he goes/ there the junior staff is very good/ teaching is-/ there are all trained teachers over there/ it is all about training*/

Working in education department has helped Rahman choose a good school for his son; based on the departmental information he knows that model schools have trained and better teachers; also confirmed by the *Educational Census Report 2012-13* (FDE, 2013). Rahman has linked quality of education with the quality of teachers repeatedly in his interview. His choice of school was determined by the quality of teachers and access. He told that his chosen school is not his first choice even amongst the IMCs, he preferred IMCB F-7/3, but he chose the present one for ease in access.

> Rahman: It is Islamabad Model College for Boys/ G-10/4/ because I live in G-11/ we have 'access'/ it is near home/ that is why I have made this decision/→ Otherwise*/ another college/ better than this one was also in my mind/ but it was too* far/ the child would have to travel a lot/

Rahman makes a rational choice by choosing IMCB G-10/4, in spite of knowing that IMCB F-7/3 has better human resource. Daily commuting to a school far from home is an extra burden Rahman does not want for his son; an important consideration for most of the parents in school choice. Being in education department was not sufficient to get his three years old son admitted into this very popular school. The stated admission policy of FDE restricts number of admissions from sectors other than the one in which the school is located (Appendix-11). This policy makes the admission to better reputed schools hard and opens channels for unfair means. His son failed to pass the entry test, which made Rahman activate his social capital and engage a more influential intervention on his behalf.

> Rahman: even in this one the admission*/believe me was so difficult/ only I* know/ I had to go through a lot of difficulties* for admission even in this college/ I made a special request to Dr. (...his boss) and then she asked the director (schools)-/with a lot* of difficulties-/ the child had appeared for the test/ his name was not in the (admission) list/ you know how our setup is-/ only I understand with how much* difficulties I have got him admitted here//

Rahman has used his social contacts to get his son admitted to the school he preferred and to achieve his valued functioning. Horvat, Weininger and Lareau (2003, p.344) found in their research in USA the middle-class parents draw on their social ties to individuals who can provide authority to influence school to follow their preferred course of action. Model schools provide affordable facilities and quality education and thus are much sought after schools amongst the salaried employees in Islamabad. Their popularity allows these schools to reject three-year-old children for not being able to pass the highly competitive entry test. Thus the school chooses students rather than parents choosing the school. Ball describes such perception of the quality of the schools thus, 'Here the 'best' schools

are not those which achieve most in terms of student learning but those which are able to sift and select their intake most rigorously (Ball, 1993, p. 9). Rahman compares the private schools with government schools and asserts that private schools are not better than government schools:

> Rahman: though I* believe that if you look at any private institution/ you wouldn't find any* position-holder[19] child there/ very few/ may be non-existent//(...) but I think these schools only have 'business mind'/ their first-... is 'business*'/ that 'we are giving time to this child how much we'll "gain" from him'/ they take much more from the child before they give him anything../ they 'check parents' more than the child/ that what is their profession.../ will they be able to pay us/(...) but I'll say...oom ommm/ the private schooling is good/ very good**/ but their 'mind' is that they think from the perspective of 'business'/ they spend time on the child and~/ the teaching staff is .../ 'modern techniques/ just modern techniques'/ they use to teach the child/

He has identified student achievement as an indicator of school quality, thus highlighting the point that public schools can provide affordable quality education for all children. Rahman points out the business interest of the private schools, which pay more attention to parents' capability to pay fees rather than the child's ability to learn. It is evident from this quote that lack of economic capital is significant in his choice of school. Rahman tries to undermine the elite status of some private schools by asserting that private schools only have the use of modern teaching techniques. He presented this argument in response to his sister-in-law who sat with us throughout the interview. His sister-in-law praised Beacon House School, where her children go, and elaborated their teaching techniques like A-V aids, hands on experiences etc. He argues that although private education is good, business minded private schools charge high price for this education. Private school also choose parents like IMCs do; the criterion is parents' economic capital rather than cultural capital required by IMCs. Rahman did not have requisite economic capital for getting his son admitted to his

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[19] holds top positions in the central exams

preferred private school, and could not make the best of his cultural capital, but he used his social capital to get him admitted to IMC. However, when asked what he thinks is better, modern or traditional teaching techniques, he responded thus:

> Rahman: Both/ we should 'admit modern' as well as 'traditional'/ both should be admitted/ if we keep both together then it'll be better//

He believes that modern teaching techniques and teachers' attention provided in private schools is good for a child's education but he cannot afford a good private school for his children. Thus he upgrades his choice and points out that infra-structure available to most government schools cannot be matched by private schools and are no less important than the good teaching techniques for the personality of a child.

> Rahman: school is-/ any school-/ if it is just the building-/ take the building of the school/ the influence of building on the child-/ everything* is- / grounds*/ schools should have grounds/ all right?/ and so/ the schools in 'private set-up' cannot provide grounds/ Yes*/ they are just one~/...house type schools/ I repeat again/ that their > 'main *' aim is 'business'/ OK</ the day their business is 'down' they'll close it//

He understands the significance of physical environment on a child's education and personality. He contends that many private schools, even expensive ones, established in residential buildings cannot provide play grounds. Since these schools are basically business establishments, they do not invest on infrastructure. He argues that these schools would close down their businesses the day they stopped making enough profit. Below are the pictures of the residential buildings of an expensive private school system and IMCB, G-10/4 to illustrate the difference between the infrastructures of government and private schools.

192

A popular elite private school established in a residential building in Islamabad

Purpose-built IMCB G-10/4

An Aerial view of the IMCB, G-10/4, showing large play grounds

Although this particular private school, like many others, have some purpose built branches, many of their junior branches are established in residential buildings across the town.

Although Rahman has divulged earlier that his wife wanted their son to go to Beacon House, Raheela accepted his prerogative to choose the school due to his knowledge and experience in the field of education.

> Raheela: What he says seems right to me/[…] his experience is also greater/ He is in the field of education*/ he knows more/ So whatever he says/ I say OK/ He knows more...<which college is good, which school is best>He said G-10/4 [school] is the very best in education/ I said Ok/get him admitted there-

Raheela admits her own lack of capability and Rahman's advantage in the matter of school choice. This couple also indicates intra-household difference in capability to choose. Rahman and Raheela seem to accept the public and private division of domains regarding their respective roles in the context of their children's education. Rahman shows characteristics of skilled chooser with a few disadvantages; he has 'strong inclination but limited capacity to engage with the market' (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996, p. 102; Ball and Vincent, 1998, p. 378) due to lack of economic capital. His resource set indicates low economic, but valuable cultural and social capital. He has has successfully activated his cultural and social cpaital to get his child admitted to the school of his choice. Rahman uses multi-layered strategy to cope with the dissonance between his preferences and his resources. He downgrades what he cannot achieve and upgrades his choice in his comparison of the private and public education system; he highlights the weaknesses of the one he cannot send his child to, and the strengths of the one he has chosen.

iii.   The Faheem Family

Faheem and Talat fall in the category of LSMC, are first cousins and originally from Mianwali. Faheem has done HSSC and works as Junior Operator in BPS-7 in NIH. Talat has completed 8 grades and had been

living in Islamabad since their marriage; their children started schooling in Islamabad. They have five children, two girls 20 and 6 years old and three boys, 18, 17 and 12 years old; two children are in college while three are in school. The elder daughter is studying for science degree while the second son is studying for a technical diploma after high school. Their elder son took 3 years break from regular school to learn Quran by heart and is in 10th grade (one year behind his younger brother) in FGBS#15 after completion of his *hifz*[20]. The youngest boy also goes to the same school, while the youngest girl attends FGJMS.

Faheem and Talat have worked hard for the education of their children; they have been doing private tuitions and small side businesses to supplement their income. They have trained their children to work hard too; the two older children are doing private tuitions along with their studies to pay for their education, as well as to contribute towards the family income. This family is living in the A type accommodation for low grade employees. Talat and Faheem's cousin lives with them in their house.

a. Alternating Regular with Religious School

The choice of religious education is influenced more by habitus than the resources in urban areas of Pakistan, due to parents' ideological inclinations as underlying motivation for this choice. Learning to read Quran and basic religious education is compulsory for all Muslims, thus most children acquire formal religious education in Pakistan. *Masjids* cater for this need by offering 1-2 hours early morning and late afternoon classes to teach Quran and prayers. The urban school going children can attend these part-time classes for compulsory religious education before or after their regular school. Thus, most Pakistani children attend religious school, whether or not they attend regular school. Generally, these schools enrol children all-round the year in a multi-grade class including the beginners as well as advance level students. Children are given individual lessons

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[20] Learning Quran by heart

according to their level of learning in these Quran classes. More affluent families, who do not want to send their children to the *masjid* schools, arrange private tuition to provide Quran education at home. This essential aspect of schooling is generally overlooked by researchers. Andrabi et al. (2005, p.4) have also mentioned absence of data on part-time Madrassah enrolment. They contend children who go to both, public school and Madrassah are recorded as enrolled in public school in national data sets. The significant aspect of parents' preference for religious education is not whether to have any religious education, but the degree and level of religious education they aspire for their children, and the role they perceive of religious education in the future of their children. Almost all children in this sample are studying Quran part-time, either in the local *masjid* or by private tutor. All parents have emphasised the significance of religious education.

However, the type of religious education preferred is varied among this sample and indicates a significant aspect of parents' habitus. A desire for full-time religious schooling for their children has been expressed by almost 13% parents in this sample (Table-6.1); but only one teenage girl, Kokab is attending full-time Madrassah. Madrassah is the highest degree of religious education, providing full-time extensive education with specialisation in all areas of religious scholarship. These schools offer various levels of education for different careers in religion. Another type of religious education is *hifz.* Apart from full-time Madrassahs, some of the *masjid* schools also offer *hifz* classes. Two families in this sample took two-three years break from regular school for one of their children, both boys, for *hifz.* Both the boys have returned to regular school after *hifz.* Faheem and Talat have used this strategy to achieve their aspiration of *Hifz-e-Quran* for their eldest son Irfan; the four other children, two boys and two girls are attending regular school. Many middle-class urban parents, who want *hifz* for their children, adopt this strategy. Generally, the schools take readmission of *hafiz* (one who has learnt Quran by heart) at their achievement level or where they left the school. Faheeem and Talat's decision was motivated by

the high social and religious respect granted to this achievement, and the promise of rewards in the next life for the *hafiz* and his family. Their religious dedication has been converted into symbolic capital for their family in the form of social appreciation for this achievement of their son.

> Talat: In the house of Allah/ they (hafiz) have an exalted status/secondly~/ for the people around them/ this is a kind of blessing/secondly/ I had this desire/since I got married/ I used to say this son of mine-/ I said I'll make this son of mine a Hafiz/I had this in my mind/

Irfan was admitted after primary, to the local *masjid* school a walking distance from their home; he attended three one-to-one sessions every day with a teacher to learn Quran by heart. The three years' break from regular school posed a risk of failure to adjust with studies, different routine and younger class-mates in regular school. There was also a risk of no career choice other than a religious teacher for the boy. Presently, Irfan is in tenth grade in FGBS#15 and plans to study commerce after high school and also giving private Quran tuitions to children in the neighbourhood. Faheem and Talat's decision of few years' interruption for *hifz* has worked for their son so far.

Faheem and Talat chose NIH school for all their children in the first place due to the proximity; Faheem explains his rationale at some length:

> Faheem: the thing is that/ I am an employee of 'laboratory'/in this what happens is that~/ we have 'production'/what happens in production is that/ you went in the morning/ and if your machine is out of order/ until the 'fault' of the machine is 'removed'/ because we~/ do 'virus filling'/ of virus-/ there is virus in the vaccine/(...) then ours is that/ I go to office/ 'wife' is alone/ then we don't have our own conveyance/do have (bi)cycle/ that the wife cannot use/in the beginning/there wasn't that much 'gathering' (population) here/ there were fewer people/so~ there was not even conveyance (available)/ only the Suzukis ran (small Suzuki loaders are converted into public transport. They provide cheap transport in backward areas where no proper transport facilities are available)/ even those went to Faizabad (Rawalpindi) first and then went to Islamabad/ I thought/ suppose our

official conveyance is missed (by the child)/ is out of order/the conveyance does not go (to pick children)/children have a problem on their return (from school)/and* if I am in the 'production'/inside*/ where the 'filling' is done/how would children 'contact' me/let us say/ that principal/ or the school people/ in the office do it (contact me)/ then the problem would be the commuting/and even the (financial) circumstance are not that good/ at that time the salaries were not that good/ so after considering everything/I said/ buddy this one is close by/here the child can come and go by himself/ and if he does not come/ then/ even the wife can go to Junior Model to bring him back/ so~ because of this* we said that/ it is better/

Waseem's narrative not only identifies access as his reason of school choice, but also indicates their constraints. In case of emergency, he was not contactable during working hours; there were inadequate affordable public transport facilities to Islamabad and they lacked financial resources for private transport and his wife could not commute to Islamabad alone due to cultural constraints. The FGJMS was at walking distance from their home, children could easily go to school by themselves; and if needed, their mother will have no problem to go to children's school. Local schools suited them better than Islamabad schools. The option of Islamabad schools for their children was constrained by the combination of their resources and their lack of capability to activate them to their advantage. Talat's constraints are similar to that of the Shareef boys discussed in the following section. Reay found similar constraints for working class mothers in UK who 'rarely had the option of either moving home or travelling any distance in order to attend primary schools with good reputations' (1996, p.587). Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz (1996, p.106) explained the characteristic behaviour of parents who make such school choices and termed them 'disconnected choosers'. They elaborate their choice thus,

> These would be schools in close physical proximity to their home and part of the social community. They were often only vaguely aware of other schools. Spatial horizons and the practicalities of travel imposed definite limits upon the 'realities' of choosing.

In spite of being based on convenience, school choices made by Faheem and Talat have worked well for them. Their eldest daughter is doing graduation, their elder son has completed his *hifz* and resumed regular school, and the second son has passed his high school and is studying for technical diploma. The two younger children are still in school, the boy is in the FGBS#15, and the younger girl is in the FGGS#12. Their strategy for the education of their children is to adapt their desires to what they perceived to be feasible for them, or deliberate character planning. Elster (1983, p.119) argues that this type of adaptation upgrades the accessible options. The difference between the deliberate character planning and adaptive preference is that in the former one may shape their wants to coincide with, or optimally differ from their possibilities, while the later lacks such fine tuning (ibid, p.118). Elster considers the ability to accept and embrace the inevitable, as a freedom. Faheem and Talat's strategy has given them a greater sense of control and agency regarding the education and schooling of their children, because they had formed achievable desires for the future, and for the education of their children, who are doing well in their parents' chosen trajectories for them.

Talat and Faheem have effectively activated and manipulated the resources available to them (Lareau and Horvat, 1999). Their capability to work in harmony as a group for their family goal has proved most valued capital, or trump card for Faheem family. This family has exhibited a shared sense of direction and purpose and has worked for it by combining their individual resources to achieve their desired functioning. The Faheem family is one of the few participating families who have exhibited such high sense of agency regarding the future of their children.

> Talat: my children themselves*/ work hard/(...)/ mother has an important role in educating the child/I have worked very* hard/I said/ OK/ my children should get education/doesn't matter/ our time have passed/(...)/ see/ mother can do anything only if the father supports her/he is the one who is to bring the money/ father has to bring the money/only then the mother can run children's 'system'/(...) so~ there were* problems/there were* financial

> problems too/ but thanks to Allah/ the children have succeeded now/ so now don't feel it much/

Talat has a simple recipe for success; children work hard, mother establishes a system and father brings in the money. If everyone fulfils their respective roles, they can overcome problems and achieve their valued goals. Faheem and Talat have manipulated their resources affectively and have generated a shared resource, which I call family capital, and they have been able to convert this capital into family capability to achieve the relative success of children's education. This family has focussed on the goal of the type of education for their children rather than a specific type of school. For example, they chose *hifz* for one of their sons and technical education for the other.

iv.   The Shareef Family

Shareef family are the next case study in this chapter and are chosen due to their lack of agency and utter dissatisfaction with the schooling options available for their children. Razia and Shareef are originally from rural central Punjab; the family falls in the category of LSMC. Shareef joined NIH after high school and later improved his qualification to FSc[21] with the support of his department. He works as lab-technician in BPS-9 in NIH. Shareef's father died at young age and his parents' families supported him in completing his school. They live in the official accommodation (Appendix-9, Type-B) on the premises. Razia is literate but has not completed primary level because the *Chaudreies*[22] disapproved of female education in her village; she is self-employed and she runs a small shop and also does tailoring to supplement their family income. Shareef runs a part-time business; he purchases rice from rural Punjab and sells it in Islamabad. They have four sons aged 15, 13, 9 and 7 years old. The two older boys are attending FGBS#15 while the younger boys go to FGGS#12 on the premises of NIH (Appendix-6). Razia and the boys had been living in the

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[21] Faculty in Science (Equivalent to Higher Secondary School Certificate or HSSC)
[22] Landlords; Landowners

village till five years ago when they moved to Islamabad for the sake of better educational opportunities for the boys. Although the boys had been going to a LCP school in their village, they could not pass the entry test here for admission to Islamabad schools due to the low quality of education in their earlier school. Shareef is dissatisfied with these circumstances; however, Razia is happy with their education. Shareef and Razia have supported their relatives' education too by offering them free accommodation in Islamabad.

a. FG School- the last option

Samina's views about the FG schools in Islamabad earlier in this chapter illustrate the lower reputation of FG schools and perceived causes for this ill-repute. These institutions have less a human and non-human resources when compared to Islamabad Model Schools and Colleges (Appendix-5), and are generally known as working-class schools. These institutions offer little promise to parents aspiring for upward mobility for their children through education. This perception of difference in the quality of FG and IMC institutions is confirmed by the *Educational Census Report 2012-13.* The report admits the teaching faculty in FG schools is much less qualified, with teachers as low as high school qualification, in comparison to the IMCs faculty with minimum qualification of graduation with B.Ed. (FDE, 2013, p.9). The same document also indicates a larger class size (40.8) in FG schools in comparison to the smaller average class (33) in IMCs. The rural IMSs[23] are even more disadvantaged in their resources; 244 teaching posts are vacant in rural areas in comparison to 65 vacant teachers post in urban IMSs (ibid, p. 13) and a shortage of 12462 student seating capacity in these institutions (FDE, p.15). Since the NIH is located in the rural ICT, FG schools also suffer the rural disadvantage.

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[23] The nomenclature of FG Schools has been changed to Islamabad Model Schools (IMS) to dispel the impression of difference. However, no practical measures have been taken to reduce the difference between the two straits of federal government institutions.

The FG schools depict 'the reproduction of the cultural arbitrary of the dominant' (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011, p.5); the federal government is supporting reproduction of class divide through establishing multiple types of public schools with varying levels of resources. Hence, only 20 percent participating parents has expressed a preference for FG schools; however, 51 percent children from this sample are attending FG schools. This huge difference between preference and choice indicates a wide chasm between parents' valued functioning and capability to achieve their desires. According to PSLM 2014-15, 21% of internal migrants are children who moved with their parents and 13% are females who moved with their husbands (PSLM, 2016). Three participating families in this research have adopted a pattern of two-stage migration; first the husband came to Islamabad for employment while the wife stayed back in the place of origin with the children and eventually the wife and children also followed the husband. Wazir, Raza and Shareef families have migrated to Islamabad less than five years ago and their children have an initial experience of rural school. Wazir family migrated to Islamabad after the death of Wazir's father (p.141), while Raza told that he shared accommodation with his two older brothers who are also working in NIH had been living with their families in one A type accommodation allotted to one of them. His family could not be accommodated in these small houses and frequent travel to meet with his family was not very convenient; so as soon as he got official accommodation he brought his wife and daughters to Islamabad. Shareef and Razia identified better education for their children as the sole reason for their migration to Islamabad. Although this spatial mobility has opened up new schooling opportunities for all three families hypothetically, their relative disadvantage is enhanced due to varied curriculum and low standard of education in rural schools. The academic capital their children acquired through rural schooling has little value for entry to well respected public schools in Islamabad. The Shareef family is facing economic as well as cultural constraints regarding the choice of and admission to urban schools due to their sons' less valued rural social and academic experience.

202

Shareef has shown an acute perceptiveness of class differences in schooling opportunities, like Samina. He has identified lack of cultural as well as economic capital as major constraints on his capability to achieve his desired functioning of good schools for his children. Shareef also criticised the discriminating policy of varied curricula and unequal distribution of resources across the country; he argues that these policies are designed by the dominant to support the cultural arbitrary and generate advantage for some and disadvantage for others. Shareef and Razia are aware of the constraints caused by their children's rural dispositions. They gave diverse and contradicting reasons for the choice of present school for their children. Access is the common reason for their choice of NIH schools.

> Shareef: the problem was that-/ these (schools) are close by/ I am doing 'job'/so I don't have tension all the time/ meaning/ where the children are-/ meaning they walk to and from school/ and about the buses-/ they may miss the bus- (if they went to Islamabad schools)/

He doubts his sons' ability to commute independently to Islamabad, even in the official transport. Razia even *mistrusts* boys' ability to catch the right school bus due to their children's rural dispositions.

> Razia: we haven't sent children out (of NIH)/ we didn't trust them (children)/ we were new here-/ If you send children out-/ then commuting by buses/ (...)meaning children-/ they are not very smart/if they miss the bus they would be left there (at school)/ crying/

Their thoughts first seemed over-protective because other NIH parents are using official transport for even preschool children. Razia's concern indicates her apprehensions regarding their children's rural dispositions and unfamiliarity with the novel turf of their urban locality. They have moved from the apparent relative advantage of LCP school in their village to the relative disadvantage of worst public schools in their present neighbourhood due to their inadequate cultural capital. Their spatial mobility has caused a regression in their position in the field of urban education.

Nussbaum has included in her list of central capabilities, the capability of 'senses, imagination and thought' and explains this as '...a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education' (Nussbaum, 2006, p.41). These children lack this capability due to their earlier inadequate and poor quality educational experience; the low quality rural schooling did not cultivate 'senses, imagination and thought' for an urban lifestyle and schooling. This disadvantage has tainted Shareef and Razia's perception of their children's capability to commute independently to a school farther than walking distance, and also their academic competence or cultural capital necessary to qualify for admission to better schools. Shareef disclosed that their children failed to qualify for admission to ICB (Appendix-5).

> Shareef: ICB or any other-/ secondly/ they (children) are from rural background/they started off/ in Urdu medium/ meaning or other course (curriculum)/they couldn't get admission/

He has identified here his children's lack of required academic capital for admission to good model school in Islamabad. At another place, Shareef blames his constraints mainly to lack of economic resources.

> Shareef: other than that/ the Beacon House/ the Educator/or Islamabad ICB /cannot pay their fees/

Beacon House and Educator are expensive private schools, while ICB is a well-reputed public school. Shareef also identified lack of economic capital as a constraint on his capability to choose his preferred school and repeatedly regretted his lack of economic resources.

> I say/ if I had resources/ I had a car/ I myself would drive them to school/ get them admitted to Beacon House/to Educator/get them good education/

Shareef blames his inability to afford 'good education' for his children. His children are excluded from good public schools due to lack of cultural resources and from private schools due to lack of economic resources. Razia thinks more positively and shows less concern. She is supplementing her husband's income by doing tailoring and running a small shop from her house to pay for extra expenditures on boys' education.

Interviewer: Do you ever think that if I had such and such resources, I would get my children this type of education?

Razia: NO/ I never think like this/ what I felt lacking-/ I myself am working now/ whatever is missing for children/ I provide it myself/

Interviewer: How do you do that?

Razia: I do tailoring/

Interviewer: OK/ You felt that financial resources were lacking=

Razia: If there is anything lacking it is for financial reasons/ otherwise there is nothing like that in them/

Although she has expressed doubts about her sons' *smartness* in the context of their new urban environment previously, she has faith in their capability to do well in their studies. Shareef's frustration indicates his perception of his constraints and lack of agency, while Razia shows more sense of agency because she is working on the strategy to generate additional economic capital to pay for private tuition for their sons to reduce their academic and cultural disadvantage. Working-class students have been found to do well in their studies through 'work on and of the self' in UK (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009, p. 1105). Razia's sense of agency might be due to her confidence in her own efforts and her sons' ability to work hard to alleviate their disadvantage; conversely, she might lack the appropriate cultural capital to fully comprehend their disadvantage. Shareef on the other hand is too aware of his own and his boys' economic as well as cultural constraints and boys' ensuing lack of capability to adjust with the unfamiliar field of urban education system resulting in insecurity, uncertainty and ambivalence of demeanour (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009, p.1105).

Boys' lack of interest in studies is another cause of concern for Shareef, which he tries to justify by blaming their deficient environment.

Shareef: the reason is that/they had similar disadvantage like us/children's environment also matters/ if children don't take 'interest'/ are more inclined towards sports-/ cricket is ruining everything/ bat/ balls/all the time/children pay more attention to play-/ we send [them] for tuition/ [but they] go there by compulsion/

205

He again highlights the cultural disadvantage and denounces the sporting environment in their neighbourhood for distracting the boys from their studies. Shareef has also mentioned his own unfavourable environment and has implied intergenerational transmission of the cultural handicap caused due to rural environment; he seems to regret his own inability to awaken interest for education in his children.

> Shareef: who would inform?/ who is there to advise in the villages?/no one has enough education/ and the one ↑who does not have education/ what would he tell others/

He repeatedly mentioned absence of guidance regarding his own education in his youth because most of his close family were unschooled; Shareef's dilemma is a disjuncture caused by an 'out of field' or 'out-of-habitus' experience, both for him and his boys (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009). Shareef and his sons are not familiar with the field of urban education and although Shareef is aware of the 'rules of the game' he lacks the capability to play due to constraints on his set of capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). Shareef identifies absence of academic guidance was his biggest disadvantage; there simply was no one with enough education to inform and guide him regarding his own education. He feels he has transmitted his disadvantage to his children by not being able to make good decisions and has failed to guide them in the similar fashion. His discontent may have been caused by his inability to get their two younger children admitted to better schools; the boys started school in Islamabad and are admitted to the FG Schools on the premises of NIH. He also disapproves his sons' interest in cricket like many other participating parents who think extra-curricular activities are waste of time.

Shareef has faced real hardship and deprivation due to untimely death of his father; being the eldest of the three siblings, he helped his mother in farming and tending cattle. After finishing primary school, he got admission to the nearest middle-school that was about an hour's bicycle ride to and from school. High school was too far to commute daily, and so he stayed with his aunt (father's sister) for two years during his matriculation. His uncle

(mother's brother) paid for his education. Although he lacked economic and cultural capital, his family proved valuable social capital by supporting his studies. His children's disadvantage is not absolute like he had faced in his early life; their disadvantage is relative in the context of their new urban environment because they lack the forms of capital valued in the field of urban education. They also seem to lack the motivation to join efforts with their parents to reduce their academic disadvantage; they disregard the efforts of their parents by playing cricket during the time their parents have arranged private tuition for them. The boys do not seem to have benefitted much from the private school, albeit a APS, their father had been paying for in the village.

Shareef also talked about various forms of the cultural arbitrary of the dominant (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011) through a stratified education system in the country that enhance the disadvantage of the underprivileged. He discussed the structural anomalies in the education system at some length in the quote below.

> Shareef: the courses [curriculum] should be same/ this is what I want/ that whether it is private or public [school]/it [curriculum] should be same/ no employee [who have to relocate should] have any problem/ the government is doing this [allowing this difference]/ in the English medium/ yes-/secondly/ different exams are held in Punjab [different academic calendars]/ exams are big problem/they should be held on the same dates/ same/in the whole Pakistan/there should be one law/ it is quite obvious/ suppose children move to Gujranwala from here/the books they study here/ they should study [same books] over there/my children studied there [in private school]/ when I sent them for tuition/ when they came here for holiday/ they [the tutor] said/ these are very easy books/ private [school] people have made this their business/ they say that~/ rote learn 4-5 words/ OK/ they have passed/they themselves are the ones to declare them pass/ other-/ the board exams/ those conducted by the government/it is only in one class/ not in every class/ if the government wants to open private schools/they [should] take [central exams] every* year/ yes~/board exams/ so that they know what the 'private' ones are doing/

Shareef has identified major structural and policy issues regarding class and regional divides in education; multiple curricula, varied educational calendar, low standard of education in LCP schools and lack of lack of checks and balance and accountability, as the causes of disadvantage for the underprivileged. These circumstances specifically place rural migrant, like Shareef boys, at a disadvantage in the field of highly competitive urban education. Shareef holds government responsible for bringing homogeneity, standardization and accountability in the diverse education systems in the country. Although his argument is convincing, the research evidence is contrary to Shareef's point of view about LCP schools (ASER, 2017); the Figure-6.1 shows marked advantage in the learning levels of 5th grade students of private school pupils in the rural areas of Pakistan.

Figure-6.1: National Rural Learning Levels
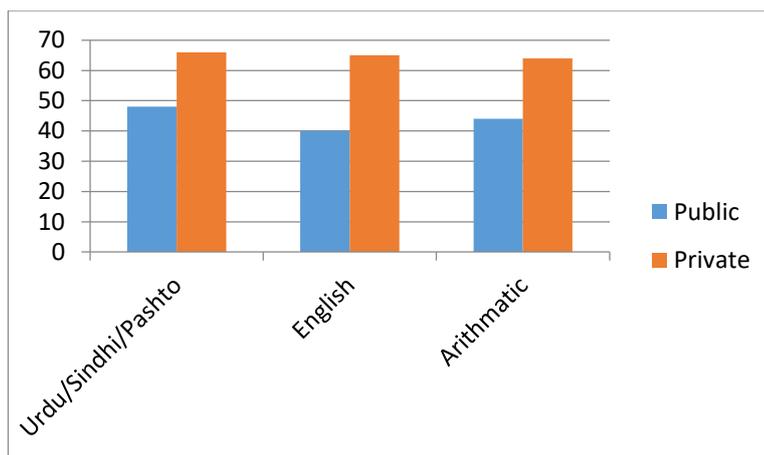
Source: ASER 2017

Shareef indicates a capability of logical thinking in summing up the disadvantage of his children. His understanding of his constraints means that his children are not as culturally disadvantaged as he was; however, he lacks the capability to reduce their relative disadvantage. He has expressed strong sentiments against status quo regarding stratified education system.

> Shareef: these big people have/ to maintain their 'difference' with other people/so that the poor remain poor*/ rich remain rich/ they have done it all by design/ these bastards/[...] what they do is all bastardly things/ the

208

big people-/these people do-/ this is what *Chaudries*[24] [landlords] did in the villages/ their [poor people's] children don't get education/ they remain our servants forever/ this is what they want/the child of a technician become a technician/don't become doctor or engineer/ because he does not have the resources for his education/that the children-/[...] so no one thinks about these people/ the poor/ they say/ suppress them even more*/they say kill the dead/ the government is absolutely/ corrupt/ beyond the limit/

Shareef's distress and bitterness indicates his lack of agency; a sense of deprivation and lack of freedom to do and have what he values. He understands the present divides in the education system as exclusion of the underprivileged from real opportunities to improve their circumstances. Bourdieu thinks of exclusion through selection in the education system as *symbolic violence* or reproduction of the cultural arbitrary (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011). He does not have cultural resources to manage his children's education by himself, nor the economic resources to choose good private schools to alleviate his children's educational handicap. He has no means to bridge the existing gap in the educational facilities for rich and poor, only government can change that but would not do it. He lacks the capability to control his environment favourably (Nussbaum, 2003, p.42). Shareef perceives this poverty of opportunity for his children as a form of structural violence (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001); a suffering caused through unequal access to social resources by institutionalized social processes (Swartz, Harding and Lannoy, 2012, p.30). Although his analysis of his constraints indicates a capability of practical reasoning, Shareef lacks the relevant form of capital to play the game and shows stress and anxiety in the process of adjusting to the unfamiliar field of urban education (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009, p.1113). Being amongst the best educational facilities and not having access to these for his children is distressing Shareef; his lack of agency in the matter of his children's education leaves him bitter and resentful. He thinks his lack of capability is caused by deliberate exclusion and a ploy to maintain the status quo by the

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[24] landlords

privileged because equitable access to educational opportunities would threaten the status of the privileged class; Shareef blames government for being an accomplice by allowing this to happen to the downtrodden. He argues that children from privileged class would not be held back by their lack of academic capability. Although he resents lack of enabling conditions, Shareef is not oblivious to constraints that might have been caused due to his children.

> Shareef: Children* are unwise/they* are studying/ whatever capacity they have/

He has identified two aspects of his children's academic disadvantage: firstly, they are 'unwise' and are not aware of the consequences of their irresponsible behaviour; for example, they waste their study time playing cricket. Secondly, they may not have the 'capacity' to do better; may be due to lack of appropriate cultural capital or lack of intelligence. Shareef however, thinks their social class is the cause of their biggest disadvantage. Shareef links poverty with deprivation of opportunity. He argues that children from upper-class have better educational opportunities, even if they are not doing well in studies or are not interested in studies.

> Shareef: see/ if the child-/ if he has the 'talent'*/[and] he stays behind because of money/ it causes pain/ whether it [the child] is mine/ or someone else's/[...] it is not that [all] those who live in bungalows [are bright]-/ they have passed [exams] while sitting at home/they'll get the degree [regardless]/

His boys are carefree and waste time playing cricket; but this is what the children of more resourced parents do as well. Less able children of privileged parents have access to the best education and institutions, and the more able children of the poor are deprived of even the minimum schooling opportunities. Shareef has repeatedly identified lack of economic resources as his major disadvantage; which he believes would be instrumental in expanded his children's schooling options. He is aware of all the constraints on his family's capability to achieve the desired schooling for his children: the combination of their economic, cultural and social

capital is not favourable for admission to the better public or private schools in Islamabad. Shareef is cognizant of the fact that their disadvantage is enhanced due to systematic exclusion from good school through discriminating social structures. He does not accept these circumstances as inevitable or fate and considers it the responsibility of the state to provide equitable educational opportunities for all children through creating enabling conditions. Shareef is a semi-skilled chooser with high inclination and low capacity for choosing school for his children (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996; Ball and Vincent, 1998); he has not *chosen* FG school for his children; he had no other *option*.

v. The Abbas Family

Abbas and Shaheen are a LSMC couple, first cousins and originally from Rawalpindi. Abbas is a high school graduate and works as Lab. assistant in BPS-5 in NIH. Shaheen is a housewife with primary education. Abbas' father was barely literate and worked as a packer in NIH. Shaheen and Abbaas' family has little education and they mostly work in low-paid salaried jobs. They have constraints on their economic as well as cultural resources. Abbas family is living in B-Type official residence on the premises. They have three children: boy age 14, girl age 12 and boy age 10. Their elder son is disabled and has dropped out of FGGS#12, while the younger two are attending the same school. Abbas family is in a no-school situation for their elder son because he feels insecure in an inclusive setting and parents have not considered the option of special education.

a. Dropped Out of School

No-school has been an option for this family, in the capital of Pakistan with best schooling opportunities. According to the latest statistics national survival rates to grade 5 are 66%, survival rate is 100 percent in Islamabad Capital Territory (AEPAM, 2018, p.28). In spite of multiple schooling options, two children in this sample have dropped out of school, one is Hassan, the elder son of Zahid family (p.262), and the other is Arshad, the elder son of Shaheen and Abbas. Arshad felt insecure due to his physical

disability and decided to leave school (p.215). Abbas and Shaheen's concern for the safety and well-being of their son indicates another dimension of constraints on parents' school choice.

With access and affordability as their main concern, all three children of Abbas family were admitted to FGGS#12, only a couple of minutes' walk from their house. Although he appreciated the present school of his children, Abbas expressed a regret for not being able to send his elder son to ICB.

> Interviewer: If you had no financial or any other constraints, then which school would you send your children to?
> Abbas: then our desire would be that our child also study/ and go to ICB*/
> I: You think ICB is very good?
> Abbas: yes/ that school/ I have heard is [best]/ in Islamabad/of a very high 'standar[d]'/ there are [many] people studying there-/ even in the evening shift too/and in the morning shift too/ so you can imagine/ how well they teach/ and accordingly/ their fees are also very high/

Abbas has moderate aspirations; his children are going to the type of public school perceived to be of the lowest quality and he wants the best public school in Islamabad for his children; he has adapted his aspirations to his resources. However, he is doubtful of the affordability of this public school. Shaheen however, prefers private school like most other parents.

> Shaheen: I want them to study in Islamabad/
> Interviewer: Ok, which school, public or in private?
> Shaheen: in private/ I say/ but cannot send them there/ heh heh/

Shaheen is also aware, like Nabeela and Rafia, that her desire is not achievable within their family resources. Shaheen and Abbas aspire for better schools for their children and consider lack of financial resources as their main constraint. Shaheen divulges it is hard to live on 'one salary'. Lack of enabling conditions enhances constraints on this family's capability regarding their children's education. Abbas identifies exclusion in public education system on the basis of class divide thus:

Abbas: the children who go to Islamabad/ their~ parents~/ are mostly~/ officers/they are the officers here/

Unlike Shareef, Abbas accepts, without resentment, the exclusion of his children from good public schools in Islamabad by admitting that these schools are for the children of officers while the children of lower-grade employees go to FG schools on the premises. Abbas' acceptance of the established order illustrates the reproduction of the cultural arbitrary of the dominant (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011, p.5). Although government has a stated policy of free education for all (GoP, 2012), the FDE allows its institution to charge fee according their 'fund structure'.

viii. Fee/ Fund will be charged as per Uniform Fee and Fund Structure for Educational Institutions working under FDE (Appendix-12).

The 'fund structure' of FDE institutions may allow them to charge fees like PTA Fund (Parent Teacher Association), Student Identity Card, Report/Result Card, In-House Examination Fee etc. (Appendix-12); institutions may charge various amounts against such funds according to the human and non-human resources available to them. I have learned from a Model college teacher that their institution charges more in PTA Fund to pay the locally hired teachers to make-up for the shortage of staff in their institution. Institutions may also charge for the specific uniform items provided by them, like school badge etc. However, the more reputed schools get higher resources and may not charge more than a few hundred rupees annually.

Abbas' LSMC habitus has inculcated a scheme of perceptions that accepts this stratification in education system and does not consider Islamabad schools as real option for his children. Bourdieu calls such behaviour 'an act of miscognition, implying the most absolute form of recognition of the social order'. He elaborates the phenomenon thus:

Dominated agents, who assess the value of their position and their characteristics by applying a system of schemes of perception and appreciation which is the embodiment of the objective laws whereby their

value is objectively constituted, tend to attribute to themselves what the distribution attributes to them, refusing what they are refused ('That's not for the likes of us'), adjusting their expectations to their chances, defining themselves as the established order defines them, reproducing in their verdict on themselves the verdict the economy pronounces on them, in a word, condemning themselves to what is in any case their lot (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.473).

The real inhibition for Abbas is venturing into social space of the class above himself; his simple words state clearly that Islamabad schools are 'not for the like of us'. These parents accept that due to the class and income constraints, lowest quality state school is the only real option for their children.

Arshad's disability, due to a hereditary condition, is another challenge Abbas family faces regarding the choice of school for their son. Arshad was admitted to FGGS#12, like his siblings, but has dropped-out because he felt insecure due to teasing of other children. According to the 'National Policy for Persons with Disabilities' (GoP, 2002, p.3) more than 23 percent children between the ages of 5-14 require some form of special education in Pakistan. However, educational facilities for these children are not adequate and they face difficulties and barriers in education, skill development and daily life' (JICA, 2002, p.5). Government has established 46 special education schools; most are in urban areas. There are only a few inclusive schools mostly in urban areas and run by private sector (Caceres et al., 2010; UNICEF, 2003). The implication of inclusive education has been recognised in principle at federal level but is not fully incorporated on the ground and in practice (UNICEF, 2003, p. iv). FDE selected 20 institutions for pilot implementation of inclusive education project in 2014 (Malik et al., 2014, p.58) not much has been done to implement this decision.

Abbas has identified intermarriages in their family as the cause of Arshad' congenital deformity and explains his problem thus,

> Abbas: his~ is a little bit/ 'chest problem'/ a little bit/of his joints-/ there are two or three other children like that in our family/ we have this thing in our family/ it is hereditary/[...] we have done 'close' [inter] marriages/ because of that*/

This description indicates a skeletal deformity, due to which Arshad's movement and balance is affected. Arshad dropped out because he was stigmatised by other children in his school; he got scared and left school.

> Shaheen: [he] went to the same school-/ the children~/ teased him a lot/he got scared/ he falls/ cannot walk much/ then he left/ he got scared/[...] he wasn't even willing to get admission/ he was scared/of the other children/ he said/ children push me/then he falls down like that/

Shaheen has mentioned three times in this short narration that the boy was scared; her concern for the emotional as well as physical well-being of her son is quite evident. A report by UNICEF purported that parents are concerned to send their challenged children to school for fear of stigmatisation in Pakistan (UNICEF, 2003). According to Shaheen, the decision to drop-out was made by Arshad himself and the parents have accepted, although they got him admitted to the school in spite of his reluctance. Abbas's desire to send his son to ICB also indicates that they aspired education for Arshad like their two other children.

Abbas and Shaheen's decision of inclusive education has not worked for them because of the insensitive treatment of their son's school mates. JICA (2002) in their *Country Profile on Disability* contend persons with disability face 'social, economic, physical and political handicaps, hampering their freedom of movement in society', in Pakistan. They argue that persons with disabilities are the most marginalised group in Pakistan. Research, however, has contrary evidence indicating that generally people have positive attitude towards people with disabilities (UNICEF, 2003, p.iii) and classmates of children with special needs also have positive attitude towards them in general classrooms in Pakistan (Farooq, 2012, p.23). The UNICEF report argues that lack of knowledge about the capability of disabled people and lack of educational facilities enhance their problems.

Arshad's health problem, his fear, the family's financial constraints and lack of enabling conditions have diminished his parents' capability to provide school education for him.

Abbas and Shaheen have accepted and supported Arshad's decision and have arranged for home education for him.

> Abbas: in the home/we are doing it [teaching him]/ then in the evening/ tuition etc./ I have a niece who does it/

Abbas's elder brother also works in NIH and lives nearby; Abbas' college-going niece is helping with Arshad's education at home. The social capital generated with their relatives has compensated to some extent for the lack of economic capital, cultural capital and enabling conditions in their efforts to educate their son with special needs. They have not even considered approaching school to seek a solution for their son's problem. Horvat et al. (2003) found in the USA, that working class families' primary source of social ties and thus social capital was kinship. Their research confirms, frequent and multiple type of support by extended family among the working class. Miles (2004, p.8) explains the social system of care and support as a religious ideology in Pakistan.

> Pakistan is a profoundly religious country, in the sense that, ultimately, law and right and meaning in life are widely believed to derive from Allah. Children are considered to be born as parts of an extended family network within a wider community of mutual duty and obligation, rather than as little individuals with personal rights. The duty and entitlement of support and care is traditional and religious, rather than being laid down by the State. There is a theoretical 'equality' of persons before Allah; but that is quite different from the idea of constructing a society where individuals are 'equal before the law'.

Miles' perception of the social-religious ideology has also been supported by the qualitative evidence of this research (e.g. Ejaz, P.153). Although Abbas and Shaheen lack a sense of entitlement for public education for their physically challenged child, they have engaged the support of their

extended family; they don't want school education at the cost their son's well-being and safety.

In spite of constrained economic as well as cultural capital, the presence of FGGS#12 in close vicinity expands the capability of Abbas family regarding the schooling of their children. This option however, does not alleviate their constraints regarding the schooling of their disabled son. Arshad has exercised more agency than his parents; he has chosen physical and emotional well-being and safety over school education. Abbas family's perception of no real choice for Arshad's schooling is due to the lack of cultural capital, little knowledge about the field of education, lack of economic capital, lack of enabling conditions and acceptance of the discriminating social order that makes their son's disability their family concern rather than a social responsibility.

To protect his 'bodily integrity' (Nussbaum, 2003, p.41) and safety from the threat of violence, Arshad has compromised his educational opportunities. Arshad's disability does not necessarily impede his learning; however, Abbas and Shaheen know no other options to resolve this issue and allowed their son to remain out of school to save him from physical harm and emotional distress. Consultation and coordination with the teachers could have been instrumental in resolving the problem but their conversation has indicated two issues that constrained this option: Shaheen's inhibition in contacting children's school and frequent transfers of the teachers.

> Interviewer: Are the teachers good? Do you go to children's school?
> Shaheen: no/ they are good/ they have been changed now/ I never went there/ only once/ recently/
> Interviewer: Did they meet with you nicely?
> Shaheen: Yes/nicely/when they are in [good] mood/ they talk nicely/ otherwise don't/

Although, she did not say it directly, her sole experience of a visit to children's school does not seem to be encouraging. Abbas also pointed out frequent transfers of teachers, although he said he keeps in regular contact

with the school. A single teacher may have understood Arshad's problem and helped him and his class-mates adjust with his disability; frequent change of teachers may result in lack of concern and commitment on the part of the teachers and lack of trust on the part of the pupils and their family. Other parents, for example, Tahir, Sajjad and Asifa also mentioned frequent transfers of teachers as an issue regarding the quality of education at NIH schools. Abbas and Shaheen lack the appropriate cultural capital required to reduce their own and their child's concerns about his safety and avail the schooling opportunity to their child's benefit, and to achieve their desire like Sajjad (p.244) and Asifa (pp.243) are trying to do for their children.

Shaeen and Abbas's capability to educate their three children is unequal. They have adapted their aspiration for their disabled son to what they believe is achievable. Shaheen and Abbas both expressed a desire to support their daughter's and younger son's ambition for professional careers to become doctor and engineer respectively. They are thinking of a working class career of tailoring for Arshad, though.

> Abbas: we are trying to send him to a 'field' where~/if God forbid/ he loses the shelter of his parents tomorrow [in future]/then he is not a burden to anyone/ that is why we have thought this/ so he doesn't have any problem/ and he keeps going/he learn some skill/ we are trying that he becomes a 'tailor master'/ or something like that/some work he can do while sitting/comfortably/

Abbas wants self-reliance for Arshad as well as his other two children; however, Arshad's dropping out of school has reduced his options to learning of a skill that may facilitate to achieve their desired functioning of self-reliance for him. Their perception of the constraints on the schooling of Arshad has reduced Abbas and Shaheen's capability to nil. These parents are disconnected chooser with low inclination to look for other options available for their son and low capacity to benefit from the ones available (Ball and Vincent, 1998, p. 378). This family has contained their desires

218

within their perceived opportunities, and show little discontent despite numerous challenges in achieving even these modest aspirations.

4. Conclusion

Parents' choice of school is the first actual step towards achieving their desired functioning regarding their children's education and future. Their advantage in this context is judged in relation to the dissonance between their preferences and their achieved functioning. Thus the parents who have expressed a preference for one type of school but have chosen another one for their children due to lack of resources, actually suffer a disadvantage due to not being able to achieve their desired school. All the parents in this sample have expressed a preference for private school for their children directly or indirectly, because private schools are perceived as offering a better quality of education, though the evidence is that there are a wide range of private schools of varying quality. However, only two families have achieved this most desired functioning; lack of economic resources being the most significant constraint on parents' capability to choose private school. The degree of advantage open to this group of parents is indicated by their capability to choose the best schooling option on their menu of choice. Most parents in this research exhibited a capability of practical reasoning, regardless of their SES, in identifying the markers of quality in a 'good' school by relating teachers' professional competence as the most significant aspect of school quality; adequate staff, vigilant teaching routine, effective systems of communication and physical infrastructure are the other qualities of a 'good' school as identified by these parents. Due to presence of multiple types of public as well as private schools, choice of school for Pakistani parents is not simply a binary decision of choosing between public and private school, however. This highly complex decision requires families to possess a favourable combination of resources to support optimum choice from a varied menu, but also to qualify for admission to the school they consider their best option. Parents' relative advantage in this process of choice and admission

to their preferred school is enhanced by their capability to activate the forms of capital in their possession.

i.   Activation of Capital

The first three families discussed in this chapter have a relative advantage as indicated by the varied degree of agency expressed by them while relating how they tackled the problems faced during the process of school choice and admission. **Economic capital** is the most obvious form of capital required for admission to private schools, lack of which forms the first constraint on their capability to choose their preferred school. Disadvantage caused by lack of economic capital can be reduced by public provision of equitable schooling opportunities as illustrated by the Rahman family's choice of well-reputed IMCB for their son, instead of their preferred private school. Rahman has activated and utilised his cultural and social capital to achieve the best on the menu of his real options. Mr Shareef has highlighted the instrumental value of economic capital in the field of education in reducing the constraining effect of the lack of required academic capital by purchasing services like private tuition.

The second species of capital in gaining relative advantage in school choice is various forms of **cultural capital**. Cultural capital is the most valued species of power in the field of education due to its significance for entry to the desired field and also because it is the valued outcome in the form of educational and academic capital (Bourdieu, 1986a, pp. 13,15) acquired through the process of schooling. Parents' have a capability to activate and convert cultural capital into academic capital, then that expands their capability of school choice in multiple ways. Firstly, the case studies presented in this chapter have highlighted the significance of parents' educational qualification as a significant form of cultural capital in gaining advantage in the field of education. Higher education enhances parents' symbolic capital and thus their relative position in the competition for admission into their preferred schools. Secondly, parents' own educational experience shape their disposition and inculcates a practical sense about

the field of education and what they require to engender or secure advantage, for their children in this field. Rahman and Samina have used their inside knowledge of the field of education to choose the school that is closest to their preferences. Thirdly, highly educated parents socialize their children according to the requirements for admission into good schools to maintain their advantage and to achieve their desired functioning. For example, Adeela is a graduate, LSMC mother who did not like her children to go to NIH schools with children from less educated family background. She prepared her children for admission to ICB and ICG (Appendix-5, 6) by teaching them at home; she also sent them to a private nursery with a good record of admission of their ex-students to Model Schools in Islamabad. Although her husband Mahtab, has the lowest BPS in the sample, Adeela's cultural capital expanded their capability for admission to best reputed public schools.

Participants of this research have exhibited embodied forms of cultural capital through creative combining of other forms of family resources into generating the requisite forms to reduce their disadvantage. This capability is specifically valuable for families with incongruence in the required and possessed forms of capital. For example, Rahman activated his social capital when his son could not qualify for admission in his preferred school. Rahman was proud of his achievement and social contacts which gained him the undue advantage in getting admission to his preferred school. His insider knowledge informed him about the weaknesses in the system which he exploited to his advantage by bypassing the selection processes through the intervention. This specific example, also illustrates the symbolic value of the social capital especially as a source of illegitimate power to gain and maintain advantage in the services based community of Islamabad, where the capacity to bypass the legal channels to create and maintain advantage is an accepted and valued form of social capital. Mr Wazir also activated his social capital to get his younger children admitted to NIH schools. The Faheem family generated **social capital** within their family by sharing a

common goal and combining their individual resources to achieve their shared goal of education for their children.

The analysis also illustrates the significant aspect of parents' preference for religious education is not whether any religious education, but the degree and level of religious education they aspire for for their children, and the role they perceive of religious education in the future of their children. Faheem and Talat have chosen *hifz,* a highly demanding type of religious education for their son, with a three years' gap from the regular school; however, they do not perceive religion as sole career for him and are planning commerce education for him. More parents have expressed a preference for religious education (Table-6.1) than religious career (Table-5.1) for their children. This preference is illustrative of LSMC parents' desire to gain advantage through accumulating **symbolic capital** and winning social acclaim due to their dedicated efforts for their children's religious education.

More established middle-class parents in the sample have exhibited a desire to preserve class advantage for their children through the choice of school, Samina for example, is one of the parents who tried hard to preserve middle-class advantage for her children (p.184-187). The embodied cultural capital, and the capability to use it creatively to expand and to generate valued forms, is possessed unequally by this group of parents. I argue that capability to generate new forms by combining existing forms of capital is broader than what Lareau and Horvat (1999) call activation of capital. I base my argument on the evidence generated by this research which has uncovered a collective capability in some families who combine their individual capabilities to generate a shared capability; I term this creative behaviour **family capability**. The Sajjad family, Samina and Rahman families exhibit a productive use of family capability to reduce dissonance between their preferences and their options towards their aspired functioning for the education of their children. Social capital outside the family has also been proved a useful form of capital in families' exercise

of securing advantage in the choice of school through generating family capability.

ii.   Gender and School Choice

This analysis has uncovered three different ways gender impacts parents' choice of school: gendered division of parents' space into public and private domains; difference in the capabilities of mothers and fathers due to varied combination of capital in their possession; and different aspirations and concerns for male and female children. The distinction of public and private domain in family decision-making is more evident in LSMC families, with the father shouldering the responsibility of making important family decisions like the choice of school. It does not imply however, that middle-class mothers are equal participants in family decision-making; for example, whereas, Samina and Talat both have been actively engaged in the process of decisions-making regarding their children's education, Raheela has admitted her lack of capability in this matter. Her capability is undermined not merely because of gender norms, but also due to relative lack of appropriate cultural capital in comparison to her husband. Thus, mothers' role in school choice lies at the intersection of gender norms and cultural capital; their life experiences and gender norms shape mothers' habitus that informs their knowledge and their capacity to use this knowledge. Child's sex is the third aspect of gender influence on school choice; more boys are studying in private and model schools than girls and more boys are going to out-of-premises schools; the larger number of girls in NIH schools indicates ease of access and safety are important considerations in choice of school for girls (Table-6.2) (see also Table-2.4). Varied aspirations for male and female children are another influence on the choice of school for them (Table-5.1).

iii.   Varied Parental Capability

The parents in this study have shown varied skill in the choice of school for their children. With her university education, professional career, a

favourable balance of economic, cultural and social capital, and inside knowledge of education system, Samina present all the characteristics of a skilled/privileged chooser. Rahman also showed high *inclination to* and *capacity for* choice' like Samina; however, his lack of economic capital somewhat constrained his capacity to choose. Nevertheless, he activated his social capital to reduce his economic disadvantage and got his son admitted to one of the best public schools. Faheem and Talat show characteristics of semi-skilled as well as disconnected choosers. Talat have chosen the *hifz* for her elder son with *high inclination* and made real effort to make her choice work for their son and their family. However, the choice of regular school for their children is based on convenience, affordability and ease of access, which puts them in the category of disconnected choosers.

The Shareef and Abbas families present characteristics of semi-skilled and disconnected choosers respectively. Shareef has *high inclination* and *low capacity* to choose; his disadvantages include illiterate rural family background, rural school experience and lower pay scale. His awareness of his rural habitus has inculcated a sense of inferior social positioning relative to his neighbours in the context of their present urban environment. He eloquently describes his children's disadvantage as intergenerational transmission and as the ploy of the dominant to maintain their advantage by depriving the dominated of equitable opportunity to prosper. His children's disadvantage, relative to their next door neighbours makes Shareef bitter about their circumstances. Razia however, thinks of her present circumstances in comparison to their situation in the village and is content with the improvement in her children's schooling opportunities from rural to urban school. Her belief in the better future of their children is 'a kind of 'wait and see' fatalism about the outcomes of education and their child's future' (Ball, Bowe and Gewirtz, 1996, p.105). Abbas and Shaeen are disconnected choosers with *low inclination* as well as *low capacity.* The set of their economic, cultural and social capital has low value in the field of education and thus constrains their capability to identify real schooling

opportunities available for their children, like Adeela has been able to. They don't have a sense of entitlement for the better education for their children like Shareef and thus their adherence to the doxa saves them from discontentment and unhappiness that affects him.

Family Engagement in Education

In the international literature, parents' involvement in their children's schooling has been viewed as a range of activities from helping with homework, communicating with the school and volunteering, to collaborating with community. Involvement in schools' decision-making is most influential, but a rare opportunity for parents (Levine-Rasky, 2009, p.51). Desforges and Abouchaar include constructive social and educational values and aspirations, contacting teachers, visiting school, participation in school events, working to support the teachers and taking part in school management and governance as 'good' pre-school parenting (2003, p.18). These forms of involvement necessitate access to certain kinds of cultural and social resources generated through parents' own education experience and social networks. Such specifications also create benchmarks of 'good' parenting, essentially highlighting some? parents' disadvantage as falling short of the standards of good parents. Barton et al. (2004, p.3) find constructing an account of parental involvement like '... a laundry list of things that good parents do for their children's education'. They present the concept of *parental engagement*, '...as a dynamic, interactive process in which parents draw on multiple experiences and resources to define their interactions with schools and among school actors'. Whether parents 'involve' or 'engage', specific forms of cultural and social capital like their own education, knowledge of education system, social networks and favourable enabling conditions for parental involvement created by the school and parents' favourable dispositions, are required to expand their capability.

In this chapter, I explore the nature of parental involvement as practised by my sample of parents and examine the capabilities influencing patterns of engagement in education, in and out of school. I seek to address three questions: Which parental capabilities impact on their engagement in their children's education? How do parents utilise their resources to expand their

capabilities regarding their engagement in their children's education? And how do they endeavour to bridge any perceived gap between the resources possessed and those required for a satisfying involvement in their children's education? These questions are derived from the second and third key questions (p.104), to probe parental engagement within the exploratory lens for this research. The relevant key questions are (2) how do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations, school choices and engagement in their children's education? And (3) how do families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities regarding their children's schooling and education?

This chapter starts with a brief review of literature on parental participation, followed by an overview of the participating behaviour of the whole sample. The focus is on the influence of diverse resource sets on parents' perceptions and behaviours regarding engagement with their children's education, in and out of school. The next two sections comprise two case-studies of families with varied resources and parents' diverse behaviour regarding participation in their children's school as well as their engagement in their out of school education.

1. Parental Involvement in the Literature

Parents' involvement in their children's education not only reflects their values and educational aspirations (Desforges and Abouchaar, 2003, p.85), but also the reach of their capabilities. Vincent and Martin (2002, p.112) investigated parents' 'voice' and level of intervention in relation to schools in the UK. They argue that it is possible to be involved in the children's education, without intervening in their school life, by, for example employing a tutor. Families have diverse sets of resources or freedoms at their disposal to achieve their desired goal of good education for their children. A family's resource set indicates their freedom or capability to achieve what they desire. Lareau and Horvat (1999, p.42) specify various types of resources required for parents' effective interaction with school:

...parents' cultural and social resources become forms of capital when they facilitate parents' compliance with dominant standards in school interactions. In particular, cultural capital includes parents' large vocabularies, sense of entitlement to interact with teachers as equals, time, transportation, and child care arrangements to attend school events during the school day. Social capital includes social networks with other parents in the school community who provide informal information about the teachers.

Not all parents possess this extensive list of resources and many do not want to engage with the school at the level described by Lareau and Horvat. Parents' resource set not only influences their capability to engage in school, but also impacts the form of this engagement. Bastiani (Cited in Passy, 2003, pp. 48-49) sees home school relations in the UK as a non-linear series of ideologies. Passy sums up Bastiani's, perhaps optimistic views. in these words:

home-school relations... have moved from compensation (the belief that deficiencies within children's backgrounds can be offset by the efforts of the school) through communication (which suggests that home-school relationship problems are caused primarily through failures of communication) to accountability (which encourages the concept of parent as consumer) to participation (in which parents and teachers work together in a non-hierarchical relationship with shared goals and complementary roles).

Each one of these four ideologies i.e. compensation, communication, accountability and partnership, depict the menu of parental capabilities for productive home-school relations, highlighting the less resourced parents' constraints in forming such relations with school. These ideologies indicate the *range* of home-school relations, according to parents' capabilities and also indicate varied levels of parental agency in such relations. Families perceived by themselves or the school as needing a compensatory relation are at one end and those who hold school accountable are at the other end of the scale of agency. 'Compensation' for instance, implies the assumption of a family's cultural disadvantage and thus a negative bias in their relations

with school. The level, extent and quality of parents' involvement are significant in the creation and reproduction of educational advantages for children. Parents' lack of capability may lead to reproduction of disadvantage for their children through the relative exclusion of their children from certain advantages of education. Children's capabilities are partially affected by parents' capability set and achieved functioning, indicating intergenerational transfer of capabilities (Biggeri et al., 2006, p.63) as well as disadvantages. Childhood experiences play a significant role in the accumulation of capabilities enjoyed by individuals in their adult life (Sen, 1999b). Lareau (2000, pp.170-171) purports that class attributes, like education, occupational status, income and the characteristics of parental employment, 'provide parents with unequal *resources* and dispositions', which affect parental involvement in their children's schooling. Lareau contends, 'Class position influences critical aspects of family life: time use, language use, and kin ties' (2003, p.237). These aspects of family life have shown significance in the context of this study and are looked at more closely in the following sections. The international literature presented here brings out three significant aspects of parental participation: parental participation in 'school' as a parenting behaviour, as an indicator of parents' advantage, and the significance of cultural resources in parental capability to be involved in their children's education. The degree of participation can indicate parents' cultural resources and class, and emphasises their social positioning and highlights the different social value ascribed to this parental behaviour by various social groups. Hence, parents' participation in their children's school is a social as well as a cultural capability.

Parents' capability to engage in their children's education through participation in school and through involvement in their studies at home takes diverse forms in Pakistan too. There is hardly any research with a focus on parents' involvement in their children's education. The research presented here focuses on the influence of parental participation on children's school performance. Moreover, this research identifies those aspects of parental capability that are more relevant to Pakistan, for

example, parents' who cannot help with homework, engage with private tuition for their children (Ejaz, 2009; Rafiq et al., 2013). Rafiq et al. (2013) found in their study in Lahore, Pakistan, that parents of male and female 9th grade children, studying in public and private schools consulted with teachers, helped with children's homework, told children to do their homework, and/or arranged tuition, monitored children's regular attendance, inquired from child about teaching methods and encouraged them in their studies. The varied forms of parental involvement uncovered by Rafiq et al. (2013) indicate diversity of parental involvement as well as parental capability. Middle-class parents have been found to participate more in their children's schools in Pakistan (Inayat, 2004; Shah, 1993). Atta et al. (2014) conducted a study of rural and urban public high school male students in Dera Ismail Khan, Pakistan. They compared the academic performance of pupils who were supervised by their parents in their studies and those who used private tuitions. Their rather simplistic analysis argues that due to their emotional attachment with their children, parents pay more attention to them and are able to resolve their issues better than the tutors. Like Atta and his colleagues (2014), Ejaz (2009) also stresses the significance of parents' emotional attachment, but considers their emotional support to their children as a type of engagement behaviour and a form of capital converted to motivation for the parents as well as their children to achieve their goals regarding the latter's education. In qualitative research in Karachi, Pakistan, Ejaz explored the ways in which illiterate, poor parents of private schools are involved in their children's education. According to him, these parents have a high sense of responsibility towards their children's education. They vigilantly watch over their children to protect them from undesired company and behaviour; work hard to pay for their school expenses and tuition, make efforts to inculcate moral and social values in their children and consult with their teachers regularly. However, these unschooled low-income fathers reported less favourable attitude of school during parent-teacher meetings.

Public school children face the disadvantage of teachers' negative bias. Chohan and Qadir (2013) found a negative perception about working class

parents' interest in their children's education in qualitative research with public primary school teachers in Rawalpindi. Their participants linked low academic performance of working class children with poverty, domestic violence, fathers' harsh attitude due to joblessness or drug addiction, the joint family system, large family size and parents' lack of attention to their children's education. Public school teachers' perception that only poor and illiterate parents send their children to public schools, may adversely influence their attitude towards their pupils; for example, Samina, an FG school teacher, has expressed insensitive views about the constraints of her pupils (pp.185-186). Chohan and Qadir (2013) found that a substantial amount of public school enrolment comprised internal migrants, which meant additional cultural disadvantage for these children from rural backgrounds. The research presented in this section stresses parental characteristics as indicators of the children's likely academic achievement, a perspective that somewhat undermines the school's role in this context. The emotional aspect of parental involvement in children's education as a form of capital is also highlighted in the extant literature. Although none of these studies engage with CA, their analyses suggest that parents with limitations to their economic and cultural capital may expand their capability through effective utilisation of their emotional resources and family social capital. The prior work also suggests that the choice of a private school is viewed as an indicator of parents' dedication to the education of their children. Certain family characteristics associated with poverty have been identified as strong factors in determining children's educational 'disadvantage'.

Private tuition is common in Pakistan across the social strata. More affluent families register their children in prestigious academies to ensure high grades in school. About 33 per-cent government school children and 43 percent of those in private schools, from grades 1-10, in Islamabad, take paid private tuition (ASER, 2017, p.146). The incidence of paid tuition is much higher in private schools (27%) as compared to public schools (7%) in rural areas of Pakistan (ASER, 2017, p.70). These statistics may not

illustrate the whole picture, as the ASER sample is rural. The reasons for private tuition include parents and students' desire to ensure good grades in exams and large class sizes (Chuadhry and Javed, 2012). However, not all parents look at private tuition with these perspectives, for generally, parents (42%) think there should not be any need for outside assistance for students for good performance (Chuadhry and Javed, 2012).

Large class sizes and teachers' neglect in the public schools are believed by parents (e.g. Qamar, p.253) to be the cause of the lower quality of education. Government teachers are perceived as encouraging students to take up private tuition. Aslam and Atherton (2012) also support the view that parents turn to the 'shadow' education sector to substitute for the poor quality of government schools. Khan and Shaikh (2013), however, have different evidence quoted from LEAPS that indicates considerably more teachers in private (39%) rather than public schools (12%) give private tuition to their students. The majority of public school children receive tuition from their relatives (29%) or neighbours (26%), according to LEAPS and even 32% of private school children have tuition from relatives and neighbours.

My current research also supports their finding; 15 NIH families had arranged paid private tuition for their children, whilst the majority of the children in this research took tuition from neighbours or relatives. Mr Shakeel reported that his children take tuition from his niece, who is studying for BSc and also lives in NIH. Shaheen and Abbas have withdrawn their physically challenged son from school; the boy is being tutored by their niece privately (p.216). Parents feel that tuition is a necessary evil they have to pay for. Abbas divulges:

> Abbas: yes/ indeed/ one~/ tuitions~/ you are right that tuition~/is a burden on parents/ have to pay fees there as well/and have to pay a little bit in the school too/it is a government school/in that the child becomes a little 'thick' [sound]/

Tuition makes the public school students a little more 'thick'[25] (sound) by helping them learn what they miss in overcrowded classes at the public school. Most mothers in this sample are unable to coach their children at home due to their low level of education. ASER data indicate that 36 percent mothers in rural ICT have not completed even primary level of education (ASER, 2017, p. 146) and 50 percent of the mothers (11/22) in this sample have less than 10 years of education. Parents stated three reasons for engaging private tuition for their children: teachers' don't teach properly due to large class size, mothers cannot help with homework due to low level of education and there is tough competition at high school level.

2. An Overview of Parental Engagement by the Participating Families

The participants of my research have shown varying degrees and forms of participation in their children's school ranging from the most influential, i.e. involvement in decision-making (Levine-Rasky, 2009, p. 51) to mild concern. Favourable policy for parental participation in school decision-making creates enabling conditions for highest form of parental participation. Recently, the *Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2012* has incorporated parental participation into School Management Committees (SMCs) (p.31). The system of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) was established by the FDE in Islamabad Capital Territory in 2002; out of 406 federal institutions, 230 confirmed the presence of an active PTA in their schools (Iqbal, Ahmad and Rauf, 2013, p.259). Iqbal and his colleagues describe the objectives of PTA in federal institutions as:

> The objectives of the association are to work for the welfare of every student; enhance awareness and understanding of parents about their role in quality education; encourage active involvement of parents; create awareness about educational facilities being offered by the government; motivate the parents especially in the rural areas to send their children to

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[25] Abbas used the English word 'thick', by which he means sound.

school; consider ways and means to decrease dropout ratio and teachers absenteeism; develop a friendly and pleasant relationship between parents and teachers and to mobilize community resources for improvement of the institution and benefit of the students (2013, p.259).

The accomplishment of these comprehensive objectives is a hard target. The participating presidents of PTAs in the study by Iqbal and his colleagues (ibid) acknowledged open channels of communication between schools and parents; they were however, concerned about the multiple types of federal schools, teaching methodologies and curriculum.

Only one parent in the sample of my study was actively involved in PTA and not all viewed them favourably. One participant in my research implicated that there was financial corruption in the workings of PTAs in some schools.

> Faheem: their [PTA] elections were held on Monday/if I had been there/ I would tell them/ buddy/ you just end this/ I* don't think it is of any good/
> I: Why do you think so?
> Faheem: the reason is-/like your child sat in a test/ and has failed one subject/after that/ they use the name of PTA/ and strip that man naked/ the school teachers*/ I have seen this/ I have been there myself/ two children were failed/ in the test/it was sixth class test/ then he [teacher] told them/man you know what/ you deposit 3000 rupees for each [child] in the PTA [funds]/ they use such tactics/if it is a Parent Teacher Association/ it should have fair 'dealing'/it shouldn't use such tactics/

The FGBS#15 might be involved in financial corruption under the cover of PTA, as Faheem seemed to imply; or they may be using this forum to generate funds for their school, like many other under provisioned federal institutions. Additional funds are required mainly to pay temporary teachers in under staffed institutions.

It was mentioned by most parents that NIH as well as Islamabad schools frequently initiate contact with parents. Regular parent-teacher meetings (PTMs) are organised by the schools. Most parents' interaction with school is limited to infrequent visits to receive the end of the term or the yearly

progress reports of their children or to address a problem. Shabana, a HSMC working mother, told me that Friday has been marked as the PTM day at her daughter's school; she can also visit the school at other times too. Shabana shared her reasons for visiting her daughter's school:

> Shabana: if the girl is careless then the teacher tells me to give attention to the child/she has become 'careless'/ if she has not 'prepared a test' well/[…] often she does not get her [class work] 'copy checked'/ […] I go for that [too]/[…] if something is 'missing'[lost]/I went for that too/ there used to be a girl with her in the 'one class' /she used to cause 'disturbance'/ a bit/ used to steal my daughter's things-/

Shabana's visits to her daughter's school are characterised by open communication with the school. However, some parents in the sample disapproved of unnecessary visits to school. Mr Shakeel, a HSMC father, is one such parent:

> Shakeel: I don't think well of it/ that even if the child is doing well/ you still go to teachers for no reason/ or-/ they may think/ don't know why they have come/ maybe they have come to intervene/ meaning this/ the result Alhamdulillah[26] is all right/

His reluctance may be due to the misperception that parents visit school because their child is not doing well at school. Farida is an illiterate mother from rural background; she is happy with her children's studies, because she has never heard any complaints from their school.

> Farida: they [teachers] have never scolded them/ never hit them/ never made a complaint/of children/ if it [complaint] would come/ then we would say/ our child is not doing well/ but never~ sent any complaint/

This mother believes that no news is good news. It also indicates their success as parents, because their children are not causing embarrassment for them by exhibiting complaint worthy behaviour. Not all parents from a rural background are averse to visiting school though. Raza and Seema are

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[26] Praise be to Allah (for his benevolence)

also from rural background, with postgraduate and higher secondary level education, respectively; they visit their children's school regularly. Parent-school interaction initiated by parents is generally motivated by a desire to improve the schooling experience for children. Khan, a LSMC father, made extensive efforts to save his daughter from the abusive behaviour of a teacher at FGJMS. He involved the PTA, made written complaints to the FDE and Ministry of Education and submitted a petition to the Human Rights Commission to address the issue. Parents mentioned participating in PTAs, attending PTMs, communication through school diaries and circulars and telephone communications with their children's teachers. Within my sample, parents with higher academic capital and urban schooling experience were proactively involved in their children's school.

A notable influence of social factors on school participation has also been indicated by the participants of this research. The norm of *Purdah,* for example, has significant influence. Seema and her three daughters moved from NWFP only two years ago, to join her husband Raza in Islamabad. Her children were admitted to FGGS#12 in lower grades than expected for their age. She divulges that her freedom to be involved in her children's education has expanded in Islamabad due to *Purdah* relaxation.

> Seema: I can teach them/ meet with their teacher/in the village/ we couldn't meet with their teacher/nor could go to their school/
> I: why is that?
> Seema: there are restrictions in the village/ have to observe *Purdah* too/in the environment there/

Their regional mobility has expanded not only their children's schooling opportunities, but also her capability to interact with their school too. Whilst she still observes *Purdah*, she can go out and even meet with the teachers of her children. The norm of *Purdah* variously influences most parents' involvement in school. Generally, mothers visit the FGJMS and FGGS#12, where most teachers are female, while fathers visit FGBS#15, where they are male teachers? and schools in Islamabad, because it is inconvenient

for mothers to go there alone. Talat, a middle-class mother reported that she does not go to her sons' school anymore now that they are older.

> Talat: till*-/ not to boys' school/he [husband] goes* [there]/till they were here in English medium school/ school#12/ until then I* went to sons' school [too]/

Hamda, another middle-class mother, explained her husband's involvement in their children's education thus:

> I: Who is more involved in the children's education, you or their father?
> Hamda: No/ he too-/the outside affairs obviously he attends/I don't go/ he* goes/getting admissions done/ to get something done/whatever is to be done/ he himself does it/

Thus, the public/private and male/female domains can be perceptibly observed in parents' interaction with the school. According to gender divide of private and public, children's education at home falls within mothers' domain. Fathers and mothers generally believe that children's studies at home the latter's responsibility.

> Rafia: All this is *mother's duty*/ I think/ especially presently everyone says that this is *mother's duty*/

Mothers make sure children do their homework; they make them 'sit for their studies', help them with their homework, make sure they go to tuition regularly and learn their Quran and keep an eye on all their activities. Hamda is from Karachi, the largest city in Pakistan, she has four children, two boys (14 and 13 years old) and two daughters (11 and 1½ years old). Whilst Shareef and Razia a couple from rural Punjab, felt that their growing sons need their father's supervision, Hamda perceives a more active role for herself in raising her teenage sons.

> Hamda: mother's* responsibility is more/because mother should know where her child is at the moment/is he playing with someone?/ has he gone for tuition or not/or has he gone to >study *sipara* [Quran] or not</ it is more* mother's [responsibility]/ because father leaves in the morning and returns at night/he does not know what is happening in the house/ where the

> children are going/whom they are keeping company with/so it is more mother's responsibility/hehe/ and I am very 'sensitive' in this matter/I keep worrying/ <who they are playing with/ where did they go/why they were standing there>/

She is also involved in her children's out of school activities, including their tuition and Quran classes. Her husband Salamt, a lab technician, acknowledges his wife's contribution in the children's studies.

> Salamat: Mother does more/ because I am not at home/doing jobs at two/ three places/ that is why-/

Fathers generally accepted they cannot attend to their children's homework due to the requirements of their jobs. However, across the sample, they are more involved in their older children's and maths and science homework.

Providing a supportive environment at home is also considered an important parental responsibility regarding children's education. Rafia explains her views:

> Rafia: it is mostly mother in it/ mostly mother's effort is that~/ my child~/ if he is getting good education at school/ getting good training at school/ mother's effort is that/ I should also keep pace with that/ so that nobody can say that/ home environment is not good/she is all right in school/ she 'picks' this environment at home/

Parents also consider provision of educational requirements, like computers being necessary for their children. Due to their lower levels of education, generally, mothers have limitations on their capability to supervise children's studies; maths and science subjects and high school courses are beyond the capability of most of the female respondents. Parents address this problem either by greater involvement of the fathers or by arranging tuition; 15 out of the 23 families have engaged full or part-time tuition for their children in this sample. The reasons for the tuition for primary children are different to those for older students who need additional academic help to secure good marks for admission to better higher education institution. The LSMC parents of primary school children

238

engage tuition to help with homework, due to mothers' inability to do so. Large class sizes in public schools make it difficult for the teachers to pay individual attention and thus, necessitates additional help at home. As noted above, parents have stated three reasons for engaging private tuition for their children: teachers don't teach properly due to large class sizes, mothers cannot help with homework due to low level of education and tough competition at high school level.

3. Participation in the School

I focus mainly on two families with diverse resource sets, to address the questions posed in the introduction to this chapter in the context of parents' involvement in the schools of their children. Both families have chosen NIH schools; both are constrained by their children's health/disability issues, among other things. However, their approaches towards their children's school are quite diverse: the Sajjad family are interacting with the school as active agents and as partners as well as utilising their cultural and social capital to reduce the disadvantage of a low quality public school. In contrast, the Qamar family seeks compensatory interaction with their children's school and utilise their spiritual capital to adjust in light of the constraints they face.

i. The Sajjad Family

Asifa and Sajjad are a couple of mixed origin and diverse background. Sajjad is from a small town in interior Sindh, while Asifa belongs to an affluent Pathan family from Karachi, the largest cosmopolitan city of Pakistan. Sajjad is highly educated, with a BSc., B.Ed. and Masters in Economics; given his level of education, he is employed at a lower level than would be expected, as a Technical Assistant in BPS 16 on the basis of his bachelor degree. This family falls in the category of middle-class (Appendix-4). Sajjad's father was a shopkeeper and only one other, out his eleven siblings went to university; the rest of them barely finished high school. Mr Sajjad has experienced upward social mobility and he is actively

involved in his children's school as the president of the PTA. Asifa Sajjad is a housewife with education up to FA. She belongs to a highly-educated family of government employees in high positions. Asifa went to private school and college in Karachi. Like her husband, she too is quite involved in her daughters' school and visits there regularly. Asifa and Sajjad's two daughters, 11 and 14 years old, are going to the FGJMS on the premises of the NIH Colony. The girls are studying in the 6th and 8th grades. Both the children are doing well in their studies and have won merit scholarships in central exams. Previously, both girls went to a private school in Rawalpindi and later, to IMCG in Islamabad. The Sajjads had to transfer the girls to FGJMS due to ease of access, because their elder daughter could not bear the stress of daily commuting to Islamabad due to her poor health.

Sajjad and Asifa have quite high aspirations for their daughters; Sajjad wants them to compete for civil service and Asifa desires that they become doctors. Considering their earlier choices, FGJMS is not what they want for their children. It falls short of their expectations on many counts. Sajjad has identified untrained teachers, shortage of teachers, large class sizes, shortage of classrooms, working-class children and poor management as his special concerns. Asifa is more concerned about incompetent teachers, teachers' inappropriate and harsh attitude towards pupils, crowded classrooms and the presence of working-class children. They cannot afford expensive private schools for their children and IMCG is not a convenient distance for their girls, so they have decided to become involved in order to improve their chosen school. In fact, they have shown a high level of engagement with and intervention in their children's school (Vincent and Martin, 2002, p.112); Sajjad is involved in the PTA and Asifa stays in regular contact with the teachers of her daughters. Sajjad perceives his role as partner with school (Vincent, 2007). He described the purpose of the PTA as supporting the institution in matters beyond the jurisdiction of school management.

> Sajjad: the principal tells you that this is the 'deficiency' here/if you try-/ [all] parents together/what I cannot do being~/ a government officer/ you* can do that/

The principal of FGJMS is making effective use of the PTA to avoid bureaucratic hurdles in following official processes and routines, employing it as a pressure group to get things done at higher levels of bureaucracy, where she cannot assert herself due to her occupational discipline. The influence of the PTA with the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) and the Ministry of Education (MoE), however, is limited to matters like the scheduling of exams or summer holidays. Sajjad contended that mostly parents' initiative and interest makes the PTA successful and a forum that can be used to enhance the quality of the school and its education.

Sajjad discusses his concerns regarding the predominantly working-class enrolment in FGJMS and criticises NIH employees' lack of investment in local schools. He argues that NIH schools would have been better if NIH officers' children also went to these schools, instead of being sent to Islamabad. Sajjad's premise is confirmed by Ball (1993, p.12), who contends that working-class families and communities are disadvantaged by the strategic process of school choice which encourages parents to choose schools on the basis of similar peers. The working-class schools (FG Schools) in Islamabad face similar disadvantages through less resource allocation. Sajjad argues:

> Sajjad: now the purpose for which school is established on this 'campus'/ that the employees here/ that their children would study here/ now these employees-/ three* full buses leave here in the morning for schools in Islamabad /for Islamabad schools and colleges/ if*/ here aa/ if the 'education quality' was good here/why would these people send [their children] there/

I: Do you think it is because of the quality of education or because of what you said earlier about not wanting their children to attend school with drivers or peons'[27] children?

Sajjad: see.../ ….people from outside (the premises)/ those who come [to these schools] are not educated at all/from rural areas/meaning/ those doing menial jobs/ the majority is/ of these people [working-class] here/when the majority is of this type-/ then there is no one to question the teachers/teachers are 'moulded' in the same manner/ that nobody questions us/we are 'all in all'/whether we teach or not~/ beat/ or break-/ in schools in Islamabad-/ [NIH] these teachers/ [are] being violent-/beatings-/ abusive language/[...] in Islamabad/ ICG or other schools or colleges this cannot be done/ but it happens here/because of that [educated] people say that/ instead of solving these problems/ why not solve our own problem and get our children admitted there[to Islamabad schools]//

Sajjad contends that the reason for the low quality of education in FGJMS is the lack of teacher accountability to working-class parents and thus, the school and teachers are free to treat children as they wish.

In his research Vowden (2012, p.734) also argues that middle-class parents in his sample considered working-class parents not holding schools to account to have a detrimental effect upon the quality of school. The cultural disadvantage of less educated parents constrains their capability to hold the FGJMS teachers accountable for their unbecoming behaviour; Sajjad here perceives parents' as consumers with the right to hold the school accountable (Bastiani, 1987, p.90). Less educated parents' reluctance to contact school has also been confirmed by research in Norway (Bæck, 2010). Sajjad posits that the more educated parents' choice of better reputed schools outside their catchment area, recreates disadvantage for pupils at schools with poorer reputations; thus, reinforcing the class divide, as mentioned by Samina earlier (pp.185-186). Teachers' inappropriate and abusive behaviour is not tolerated in Islamabad schools, Sajjad argues, because they cater for more educated middle-class families.

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[27] A person who does menial or repetitive tasks and has a low rank in an organisation

Asifa expresses similar concerns around 'social fit' (Reay, Crozier and Clayton, 2009, p. 1111; Vowden, 2012, p.734), while talking about the students' background in her daughters' school.

> Asifa: Obviously/ families-/ children who are from good families-/families-/ families have great influence on children/their mannerism*-/that child learns from school in a way/isn't it?/ it does* make a difference/

She covertly voices her concern about peer influence on her daughters' manners and more openly speaks about the teachers' less than appropriate behaviour. In his research in London, UK, Vowden also found that parents linked undesirable habits, like 'fighting, shouting, swearing, smoking and eating 'junk food' with working-class children' (Vowden, 2012, p.740). Asifa is sceptical about teachers' family background too.

> Asifa: meaning/ the reason for worrying is that teachers are not that good/don't give much attention to children/ and~/ girls too/ it is just/ that students are also not that good/not that much-/meaning-/they are not from good-[background]/behaviour is not good/you understand that/ teachers-/ teachers behavior too is not good here/mostly*/ there are very few teachers-[who are good to students]/ but thanks to Allah a million times/ they are all nice to my girls/ all teachers respect very much/ love very much/ every* teacher/ they have never 'misbehaved' with them/ but with other children they do/ feel bad about that too/obviously they are also students/

Asifa hesitated to utter the word 'background', while talking about the 'not good behaviour' of the teachers of her children; after a small pause, she shifted her narration to their unbecoming behaviour. Both Asifa and Sajjad have talked about teachers' abusive behaviour in their children's school and have attributed this behaviour to working-class parents' lack of capability to hold the school accountable due to their cultural disadvantage. However, there are slight differences between their perspectives; Sajjad seems to be a little more empathetic with these parents and children than Asifa. He does not talk about children's 'not good' behaviour like Asifa, who is concerned about the effect of such behaviour on her own children; Samina also expressed the same concern (pp. 185-186). Whilst Asifa points out

teachers' abusive behaviour, she does admit that all teachers treat her daughters very nicely, with respect and love. She does not think this is enough though; all children should be treated in the same manner.

Sajjad and Asifa do not settle for inadequate schooling for their daughters; they both proactively engage in their daughter's school and have established a good productive relationship with it. Sajjad divulged that their persistent efforts helped to foster a sense of mutual trust between the school and the PTA. As the president of PTA at FGJMS, Sajjad describes his role thus:

> I am also a member of the PTA/ Parent-Teacher Association/ Because being a member of the PTA/ I have to attend the meetings frequently/ in the school-/to 'correct'/ their conditions/ and this-/ in any case/ I try my best-/in that/ many times we fail/and sometimes succeed too/

Working near his children's school, allows Sajjad an ease in access which makes such participation in school activities possible for him. He perceives his job as being to 'correct' the school's conditions, but admits the limitations of the PTA too. He describes his achievements thus:

> Sajjad: the facilities are minimum in the school/but we are working to improve this/[...] for 'teacher deficiency' I have to visit the directorate frequently/have to go to the ministry-/
> Interviewer: Do you benefit from these efforts?
> Sajjad: yes/I have benefited/ they have sent three teachers there/ [I] have called people from the directorate-/we got hold of an MNA[28]/ the one who is the local member of the assembly/I brought him here [to visit the school]/ to him-/ for water-/ sorry/ there was a problem of drinking water for the children in the school/meaning/ there was no 'cooler shooler'/he [MNA]has promised-/ I went on leave-/ it has to be 'pursued' with him/ and he has also spoken /about the construction of classrooms/ I'll get them constructed/ have made many other promises/in any case/ we have tried//

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[28] Member of the National Assembly

Sajjad is exploring all possible avenues; he is contacting education officials as well as politicians. He has succeeded in getting some teachers for the school and has obtained promises from a politician to provide a water cooler for the school and the construction of new classrooms; he plans to chase the politician to fulfil his promises. Sajjad is activating his social capital and uses his status of president of the PTA to access the FDE, ministry and politicians. His university education and a job that requires dealing with the public, has equipped him with valuable cultural capital that can be utilised to expand the resources of his children's school and thus, enhance their educational experience.

Sajjad is making all these efforts to provide quality education for his daughters near home, by capitalising on his cultural resources, which generates community resources too. That is, other families are also benefiting from the efforts he is making to improve facilities at the FGJMS. When asked what personal attributes helped him achieve all this, he divulged:

> Sajjad: I think/ the* 'sincerity counts'/[even if] you have education/ you cannot do anything/ until you are 'sincere' to that objective/for your* children/ and for the 'local area*' children/until you work with 'sincerity'/ even if you don't have education in that/but you go for them/ make an effort/

His views illustrate what Sen calls 'agency freedom' as 'what the person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals and values he or she regards as important, which need not be confined to the person's own welfare' (Sen, 2006d, p.91). His behaviour illustrates the cognitive dimension of his social capital (Harpham et al., 2006, p.6), whereby he is willing to work in the interest of the whole community, rather than just his own family. Sajjad is expanding not only social and cultural resources for his daughters, but also community resources and collective capability of quality education for the NIH community by trying to raise the standards of the local school. His degree in education has been instrumental in understanding the concept and significance of quality education and the role of parents in raising the standard of education and the school.

Asifa's interest is focussed more on her family and on the schooling of her own children perceiving an active role of parents in the education of their children at home and in the school.

> Asifa: then parents/ meaning they should 'check' it at home/ see to it-/everything about the child-/ should ask-[children]/ what do they understand/ what they don't/and if they don't understand something/ then they should go to the teachers/they should* tell them/ this is the wrong here in our colony/nobody goes- [to school]/
>
> Interviewer: Do you go to their school often?
>
> Asifa: Yes I go regularly/and the inhabitants of colony have objections to that too/ hehheh/ meaning/ here/what should I say?/ that people are not very educated/ they are not that educated from their background/ I don't understand the problem/I go to ask about my daughters/ how they are doing/ what is it?/ children's-/ see [my] children are getting first position in the class/whatever-/one cannot do anything in the board exams/they think I have friendships [with the teachers]/ that is why my daughters are getting first position/ Now/ there is nothing like that in board exams/ I said/ see/ board exams were held/that is-/ this is the rumour in the colony/heh heh/ for my daughters I-/ this is my habit from the beginning/ this is not a new thing for me/ not only in this school/ when there-/ my children/when my daughters were in the play group/ I asked even then/

Asifa does not identify with the 'not that educated' parents of her children's schoolmates. Other parents disapprove of her school visits, seeing them as an attempt to win favours for her children by befriending their teachers. Asifa lacks bridging social capital with the members of her community; however, she is generating it with her children's teachers. Asifa has generated valuable social capital for her daughters through establishing good relations with their teachers. Despite her not having undertaken higher education, Asifa's educated family background and urban private school experience give her the cultural resources and the confidence to interact with teachers as equals and *partners*. Hence, she is able to position herself as a *responsible parent*, who is overseeing the academic career of her children (Vincent, 2007, p.45). Her regular contact with school saves her daughters from teachers' harsh treatment and gains the latter's attention

246

too. Her efforts have paid off in the form of her daughters' good educational performance. Her neighbours' disapproval of her involvement in her children's school, however, displeases her owing to the innuendo that her children are getting good grades due to her good relations with their teachers. Asifa believes that it is the parents' job to watch over children's studies and contact the school to make sure any shortcomings are addressed.

Bourdieu argues, 'Academic capital is in fact the guaranteed product of the combined effects of cultural transmission by the family and cultural transmission by the school (the efficiency of which depends on the amount of cultural capital directly inherited from the family)' (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.15). Although their children are not going to the 'best' school, Sajjad and Asifa are trying very hard to generate valuable academic capital for their children through their concerted efforts. Their capability to provide good schooling for their children is constrained due to their lack of economic capital and their daughter's poor health, whilst unsatisfactory standards of the public schools situated in NIH enhances their disadvantage. Sajjad's family has activated the valuable cultural capital in their possession very effectively for generating social capital, which they are using to enhance cultural capital for their daughters. Horvat et al. (2003, p.346) contend, 'Parental interventions in schooling represent, in effect, an assertion of power in an institutional arena where parents are formally endowed with only a restricted authority'. Sajjad and Asifa have devised a strategy to intervene in their children's school to reduce the potential disadvantage for their daughters caused by their having to attend a working-class school.

ii. The Qamar Family

Mr Qamar and his wife Aqeela are from a modest background. They are first cousins and both originally from rural Abottabad, in the Hazara region of KP. After completing his high school, Qamar came to Islamabad, where his elder brother was already working in NIH; he learnt typing and joined the organisation. He undertook his HSSC at Allama Iqbal Open University,

simultaneously. His wife completed primary school, unlike his sisters, who are illiterate. Qamar works as a clerk in BPS-9, in NIH and lives in B-type official accommodation for the lower grade employees. The Qamar family falls in the category of LSMC on the social class score card (Appendix-4). Qamar and Aqeela have four children; three sons and a daughter. Their 10-year-old daughter is suffering from some form of learning disability. The two elder boys, 17 and 13 years, are going to FGBS#15, while the girl is attending FGGS#12, a few minutes' walk from their house. Their youngest is only 2½ years old. Qamar's mother also lives with them. The Qamar family's combination of economic, social and cultural capital does not favour their capability regarding the education of their daughter with the learning disability. Two of their children are behind their age level in school; their elder son should have been in higher secondary by now, but he is in 8th grade, while their daughter is in grade two. The elder boy is learning chapters of the Quran by heart, whilst he does not do full-time *hifz*, he has memorised some long chapters in his evening class in the *masjid*. Qamar praises FGBS#15 and reports that graduates of this school have reached 'high posts', which is his aspiration for his children.

The Qamar family are dealing with two sets of disadvantages: their LSMC comprising economic, social and cultural constraints and the lack of appropriate provision for their daughter who has a learning disability. The Qamar family's relative position in the interaction with their children's schools is that of disadvantage. They assume a subordinate position in relation to the teachers, who are the professionals and know what is best for their children (Dale, 1996, p.300). As a parent, Qamar trusts teachers' judgement regarding his children's behaviour and studies, expressing his acquiescence with their superior position on this matter.

> Qamar: the studies are good here too/ Mashallah/ I~/ I have met with the teachers twice/ went to collect results/ he [teacher] told that education [officials] have become very strict/not to punish children/I am telling you that I'll punish children/ all parents are listening/if we don't punish children/ they don't study/I said/ absolutely right/ you have our permission/ If the

child makes mischief/ doesn't do homework/ you must* punish them/ you try that they do their best/ we send them [to school] in the morning/you are* their parents-/teachers are spiritual parents-/ you give education to our children/ you are absolutely-/ if they don't study/don't do their homework/ punish them/make them good human beings/

It is evident that Qamar's two visits to school were prompted by the school and were such that this enhanced his position of disadvantage. He was called to collect the results of his son(s) in 7th and 8th grade, which is not a normal practice after primary school, unless there are issues regarding the child. Qamar expresses his confidence in the teachers' capability as professionals to address the issue in whatever manner they see appropriate, even corporal punishment, which is against the law. In a way, he has admitted his own lack of capability to address the issue on his own and has assumed a subordinate role in his relations with the school. He accepts, not only the teacher as 'professional' and expert (Crozier and Davies, 2007, p.300), but also, trusts their sincerity as 'spiritual parents' of their pupils to do what is best for his children. His acceptance of corporal punishment indicates his rural habitus; his views illustrate his belief in authoritative parenting and strict disciplinary techniques. Bourdieu considers use of corporal punishment as a form of imposing arbitrary power through PA (pedagogic action) in traditional cultures.

> whereas in certain societies recourse to techniques of coercion (smacking or even giving 'lines') is sufficient to disqualify the teaching agent, corporal punishments (the English public school's cat-o'-nine-tails[29], the schoolmaster's cane or the Koran school teacher's *falaqa*[30]) appear simply as attributes of teacherly legitimacy in a traditional culture where there is no danger of their betraying the objective truth of a PA of which this is the legitimate mode of imposition (Bourdieu and Passeron, 2011, p.16).

Thus, Qamar not only accepts the dominating position and symbolic power of the teachers in inculcating the cultural arbitrary or the established social

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[29] A type of multi-tailed whip that originated as an implement for severe physical punishment
[30] Beating the soles of the feet

order in his children, he also acts as an accomplice in the process of strengthening the symbolic power of the dominating class, i.e. educated in this case. His acquiescing to corporal punishment for his children attributes legitimacy to the illegal actions of the teacher (GoP, 2013).

It also indicates that FGBS#15 takes initiatives to keep parents informed about issues regarding their children's education and calls those who themselves are reluctant to approach the school. Qamar's stance on this matter is indicative of his perception of his own disadvantaged position in the overall structures of the field of education. Bodovski (2010, p.143) contends that parents' involvement is deeply imbedded in cultural patterns, arguing that parents' expectations for their children's educational attainments are reflective of their own cultural orientation and world view and represent their perception of their own place in social structures and what opportunities should be available to their children. Qamar shows an understanding of his own constraints in the matter of his children's education and relies on teachers to *compensate* for his lack of capability in this regard (Bastiani, 1987, p.91). A gap between policy and practice, even in schools in Islamabad, is also highlighted in this quote. Despite the law against corporal punishment and stern disciplinary action against teachers who breach it, the practice of corporal punishment is common and even approved of, by many parents.

Alternately, Qamar's views regarding discipline could be an expression of his perception of his own responsibility as a parent; he needs teachers' cooperation to bring-up his children as good human beings. Crozier and Davies (2007, p.303) found in their research in the UK that, as the head of the family, it is Bangladeshi fathers' responsibility to ensure their children are upstanding members of their community and wider society as a whole. Success in performing this responsibility secures family honour, maintenance of the family and ensures stability of the community. Qamar's authorisation to teachers to treat his children harshly is illustrative of his disposition in this regard.

Indirect evidence in their conversation, hints at Aqeela and Qamar's concerns about their children's school performance. These parents' lack of educational and cultural capability to engage in school as equals is caused by a number of contributing factors, namely, their rural and LSMC habitus, which has shaped their views about parenting, education, school and child's own role in the processes of education. Despite their elder son being at least three years behind his age level, there was no direct reference to any problem regarding this boy's education in their conversation; Qamar even expressed his satisfaction with his sons' performance.

> Interviewer: Are the boys good in studies?
>
> Qamar: Yes~/ sons are good/both are good/ Mashallah/ the older one is Mashallah bright/ the second-/ and they are also good kids/ they are not naughty/ there are [other] children who mess around/ they are not like that/

This quote confirms Crozier and Davies (2007) finding regarding fathers' concern about their children being upstanding members of the community. His sons are not involved in activities which can cause him embarrassment in his community; he is content with their behaviour and school performance. Well-mannered and upstanding children are a marker of family respectability and distinction, which are achievements for parents; a kind of highly valued symbolic capital that adds to a family's honour and respect in the community (also see Farida, p.235). This form of capital can be generated despite financial and educational constraints. Their elder son is learning the Quran by heart; another socially approved and valued functioning that generates symbolic capital for this family, as with the Faheem family (p. 197). The parallel goal of *hifz* appears attainable within their capability set and thus, saves them from frustration that could result from their son's low level educational achievement.

Their daughter suffers from a congenital health problem, and is below average in her development and learning; they talked about her problem at some length, but did not mention why their elder son is behind his age group in school. Qamar divulged that he tells his children how hard he has worked for his education and that they should appreciate the conveniences they

have and work hard in their studies. Aqeela fleetingly mentioned that efforts of parents and teachers can be effective only if the children are 'good'. When asked what she wanted for her children, she divulged:

> Aqeela: [I wish] they go to good school/ and also study well/study a lot/ and do hard work/ this is the desire/
>
> Interviewer: What do you think is a good school?
>
> Aqeela: good school~/ children themselves should be good/ they should study/ work hard/
>
> Interviewer: But the school is also important. Many parents think that teachers should be good, the building should be good -
>
> Aqeela: in my opinion/ it is only/ that the child should be good/ should be bright in studies/ don't do any such deeds [wrong]/
>
> Interviewer: Are your children good?
>
> Aqeela: Yes/ thanks [to Allah]/ Alhamdulillah/they are good/
>
> Interviewer: Do you send them for tuition?
>
> Aqeela: Yes/
>
> Interviewer: Don't you think teachers should pay enough attention in school?
>
> Aqeela: No/ they also make them work hard/ but even then/ obviously children~../they have* to do homework/

This could be interpreted as implying that her children are lacking in effort; not working hard enough and are therefore, not in age related cohorts. She also seems to accept teachers' superior position in the matter of children's school and education, acknowledging their efforts towards her children's education. It also suggests that this parent considers the child an active participant in the process of learning and that without his/her own efforts parents and teachers cannot achieve anything. This stance indicates how her habitus, shaped in a rural setting, positions the individual as a responsible family and community member from an early age. Mr Wazir shows similar attitude when he talks proudly about his 8 years old son's maturity.

> Wazir: Meaning (enrolled) by himself-/ the child of eight/ he was mature/ my parents had died/there were no brothers and sisters [of Wazir]/ so the

responsibility of the house was also on his shoulders/anything/ coming and going [social responsibility/interaction]/helping mother in farming as well as house work/

Assuming a responsibility for own behaviour and sharing familial and social responsibilities with parents, are a matter of satisfaction and pride for these parents. The relations between parents, teachers and children are influenced by family capability and also conversely, affect family's capability to achieve their desired goals regarding children's education. However, there has been relatively little focus on the whole triad; either parent-school or teacher-pupil relations have received much more attention from researchers (Vincent, 2007).

Unlike some others, these parents do not place the responsibility of their children's low performance on teachers. Qamar points out that due to large classes it is not possible for teachers to pay attention to individual students.

Qamar: the main reason is that actually here the number [of students] has increased/ population is increasing day by day/in my times/ there were only four boys in class five/ you imagine that [now] there are A and B and C 'classes'/ because of that/ the teachers-/ teachers are not at fault there/you say that teachers don't teach/teachers cannot* teach every single child/ how long is a period/ only 40-45 minutes/ in that [time] if they teach each child one by one*/I think she cannot teach even 4-5 children/

Qamar's understanding of teachers' constraints illustrates another aspect of parent-school interaction; he is diffident about his expectations of the teacher. He does not identify with teachers as equals due to their superior professional knowledge, but sympathises with and understands their constraints. He has adjusted to his constraints and accepts those of teachers too, instead of complaining about their negligence and hence, does not hold them accountable. This unquestioning acceptance of his circumstances has been generated through the unique combination of a disposition shaped in a rural setting along with his cultural capital and religious disposition.

Aqeela's disposition indicated a sense of parental responsibility with minimum expectations of support from teachers. Asked who she thinks is responsible for her children's education, she responded:

> Aqeela: it is ours/ parents'/ most of all/ after that it is the teachers'/

Aqeela and Qamar seem to have adapted to their constraints, in their expectations from and interaction with the school. Sen describes such adaptation thus:

> This deals with the possibility that a chronic underdog may become so used to her deprivation and so hopeless about it, that she may have an illusion of 'normality' about her state of deprivation and she may also respond by cutting down her desires and by learning to take some pleasure in very small mercies (which would have the effect of making the deprivations look less awful in the scale of utilities) (Sen, 2006d, pp.87-88).

They have formulated timid aspirations for their children and appreciate their good behaviour as a blessing. They are encouraged by teachers' concern about their children, even if it is expressed in terms of physical abuse, not indicating any negative feelings or thoughts about the teachers or school. Qamar's disposition is evident in his conversation in response to the questions about his aspirations for his children.

> Qamar: All parents want that our children go to the best 'posts'/ take good 'job*'/ they become doctor or engineer/ it depends on their *Taqdeer*[31]/
> Interviewr: Don't you have any specific desire?
> Qamar: No/ we don't-/ it is their *Taqdeer* /did our parents think that our children would grow up and work in the offices?/ they were farmers/ ours is the mountain area/ours is the backward area/ there education is not that [popular] / among my friends/ I am the only one who have done Matric from there/all my peers gave up/

His rationale is simple; he has come so far from his position of absolute disadvantage, because it was meant to be and his children will also receive whatever fate has in store for them. His spiritual capital helps him deal with

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[31] Fate

his constraints in a matter of fact way. People are only instruments to make happen what has to happen anyway. So, parents, teachers and children are all playing their roles in a given situation within their constraints, towards a predestined outcome. His belief in destiny has reduced any need to aspire or plan and so be disappointed with himself or others. His disposition differs from Sen's view quoted above in that he is not 'hopeless' neither does he find the deprivation normal. In fact, he perceives the possibility of unaccounted for opportunities for his children in the future, regardless of their present constraints. As a parent, he is doing his job by sending his children to school, whilst the latter are doing their job by attending school regularly and staying on the right path. Moreover, the teachers are playing their part by teaching and monitoring their children's educational performance; the rest is the job of the fate, over which no one has control.

This section has examined two families' diverse approaches towards their children's school: one family utilises their cultural and social capital to reduce their disadvantage and expand their capability, while the other is relying on their spiritual capital to deal with their constraints. Sajjad and Asifa have relevant academic capital and the knowledge as well as experience of the field of education. They are making extensive efforts to maintain a middle-class advantage with good schooling experience for their children in the public school accessible to them. They have activated and converted the forms of capital in their possession to generate such forms that can be utilised to reduce the disadvantage of low quality public school education and thus, enhance their daughters' schooling experience. They know what type of schooling experience they want for their children and are aware of their constraints to achieving this too. Sajjad and Asifa are involved in the education as well as the school of their daughters; they are going the extra mile to achieve their desired goal. They exhibit a high level of agency in expanding their family's as well as their community's educational capability. The combination of the types of capital possessed by Qamar and Aqeela has low value in the competitive field of the urban education system. Their children's disability is constraining their capability

255

to educate them even more. They are utilising their spiritual capital to deal with their constraints. Qamar and Aqeela are making all the efforts within their resources; they have faith in the *taqdeer* of their children, which has already been written. They are raising their children to be good family and community members along with expanding their spiritual and symbolic capital by making their elder son undertake part-time *hifz.* Qamar shows an unquestioning acceptance of his circumstances; Aqeela indicates some discontent about their children's school and their studies, but utilises her spiritual capital to deal with this. She perceives children as agents in the process of their education. In sum, both the focal families are expanding their capability, but in varying ways: one by reducing the constraints and the other by adjusting to them. The next section looks at the parental capability to engage in children's education at home.

4. Family Engagement in out of School Education

This aspect of parental involvement basically includes supervision of homework at home, providing a conducive environment for studies and counselling in case children find trouble in resolving their educational problems at school or home. In many countries, home is considered the domain of mother and all family activities including children's studies, are monitored and overseen by the mother (Cole, 2007; Lareau, 2003). The general perception of the sample of this research also confirms this view (pp.237-238). However, the generally low level of education of mothers in this sample, constrains their capability to help with homework. Even those who can teach their children have to seek the fathers' help for maths and science in most cases. Most of the families admitted the need for paid tuition for their children's studies at home (pp.232-233). The two families chosen for this section have shown very different levels and forms of engagement in the children's education at home.

i.   The Mahtab Family

Mahtab and Adeela are originally from Lahore. He works as Gas Welder in BPS-7 in NIH and the family lives in B-type official accommodation on the premises. They have two sons and a daughter. Their eldest son (18 years) is in higher secondary, the second one (14 years) is in the 9th grade and the daughter (9 years) is in class four. The children are going to the best government institutions in Islamabad, ICB and ICG. Adeela is a graduate and a housewife; her father was a government employee and her mother was a high school graduate. All her siblings, three sisters and a brother, are graduates. Mahtab's father works as a librarian in a private university since his retirement from a government job, whilst his mother died when he was very young and he has just one older sister. His father married again and had seven children from his second wife. He avoided talking about his half siblings; Adeela told me about them. All his half siblings are well-educated and the brothers are in good jobs. He confided that he did not want to study in spite of his father's efforts, because he wanted to go abroad like everyone else at that time. So, he undertook a technical diploma in gas welding after high school and went to Libya. He worked there for a few years and returned home knowing better the value of education. He tried to set up his own business but did not succeed, so instead took the job of welder at NIH and has been working in that role since. Mahtab and Adeela were very communicative, sharing their views and concerns freely with me.

This family has an unusual combination of cultural and economic resources; they have low economic capital and high cultural capital in the form of Adeela's graduation and Mahtab's educated family background and international work experience, even though he is in a menial job. They fall in the category of middle-class (Appendic-4) despite their low economic capital. Both are from urban and educated backgrounds. Adeela used her academic capital to prepare their children for the tough admission test to the best public institutions in town and saw to their studies at home up until the 6th grade; she feels incapable to assist her older children in their studies, due to changes in courses since she went to school. Solomon et al. (2002),

found similar inhibitions in parents in their research in the UK (p.204). Being out of touch with the curriculum is not the only constraint faced by Adeela:

> Adeela: I used to help them myself/ but now as they are growing up/ I am also finding it difficult/ because it has changed a lot since before/courses etc.-/ Matric has changed a lot/ I can't help them myself/I only want that let's get them help somewhere*~/meaning tuition etc./ or some tutor/but it is that we cannot* do this/that is why I feel a little upset/ then I say/ it is OK/ they are working hard by themselves/let them do it/ Allah shall be with them↓/

Adeela feels bad, because her educational and economic resources are inadequate to fulfil their children's needs now. She sees hard work and trust in Allah as the solution to this problem. Mahtab also regrets his lack of economic and educational capital to support his sons in their studies.

> Mahtab: the educated parents have a very** positive role/...those who themselves are weak/ in 'education'/ they have....similar effect/ my 'Mrs' teaches better than me/ I don't teach [coach] children/I can't give time 'properly'/ ↑yes* to the extent of reasoning.../I give more stress/ she is-/ she also teaches herself/ in fact they were coached by her until the 5th or 6th [grade]/after 6th in 7th and 8th /children used to say 'abbu [father] we wouldn't be taught by ammi [mother]/ ↓you* teach us/↑either you teach us or you arrange that~ -/of an academy/ tuition/ then I said/ I~.....tuition etc. or~ academy...I cannot afford and wouldn't tell* you-/ if you want to study there-/ the hard work you'll do there/ if you make that much effort [at home] then~/ I say with conviction that if you don't get 80%/ you'll surely get 70% marks/because*/ it will be because of the hard work-/ your* hard work-/ [do] more- [hard work]/

Mahtab divulged that the boys refused to be taught by their mother as they grew older and wanted him to teach them instead. Whilst he could not teach them due to his low educational capital, Mahtab did not step back from his parental responsibility and offered emotional support along with valuable advice to the boys to work harder at their studies so as to improve their grades. Solomon, Warin and Lewis (2002) found in Rochdale, UK, that teenage children's parents perceived their role as that of emotional support

and encouragement rather than helping with homework. Mahtab admitted to his sons that he cannot help them with their studies or arrange tuition for them, but he can advise them. He did not make any excuses for his inability to pay for private tuitions nor did he blame the boys for not doing well in their studies; he just offered a plausible solution within their resources: work harder. It is also important to note that although he indulged boys' refusal to be taught by their mother, he did acknowledge her contribution in their children's studies.

Adeela disclosed that her strictness made her teenage boys refuse to be taught by her.

> Adeela: they grew up/ they didn't want to study with me/ 'when you tell us off/ we don't like it'/and~/ in fact/ I also didn't like it/that now that they have grown up/ I scold them or beat them/

The issue identified here was the tension between the adolescents and their mother; the teenagers resisted her strict discipline. It also shows that these parents understood their need for more independence and respect and so, dealt with it positively. Adeela admitted that she beat them too and she did not like to scold or beat her teenage boys. On the other hand, Mahtab offered more practical solutions to their sons' problems.

> Mahtab: their teacher would give them a lesson/ and they would learn it properly after coming home/and would tell/ just in the same manner/ would go back and tell [to the teacher]/ in the same manner/ would reproduce in the [exams] 'papers'/ just like that/ progressed 'class by class'/ but~/ there was no 'concept' in their mind/ what are we doing?/ what are we studying?/ that what is the purpose of studying/ that* they didn't know/ only learning by rote/ writing/ and writing in [examination] 'paper'/that was their way/ but~/ when I~/ started asking them [about their studies]/ listening [to their lessons] from them/that/ why it is like this/ why it happened like that/ then~ it entered their minds/then* they themselves* started comprehending why they were studying/that~ like this/ even in the 'practical' too/ when he did the 'practical' [work] in the ninth [grade]/then he himself would come and tell me eagerly/ Abbu this is what happened today/ It happened like this/

then~/ even in the studies/ like that/ then he-/ then he* explained even to me/ that Abbu/ Bio[logy] is a very interesting subject/ there is this thing in it / but until* then it was just rote learning/till that time/ he had no* idea what I am doing/ he didn't know where actually are the human body systems/ Just learnt by rote/ and reproduced it/

Adeela: where it is/ they didn't know at all/would tell nevertheless/if asked/ OK/ tell what is this?/ they wouldn't have any idea/It was not explained to them / to the children/because our mother tongue is Urdu/ if you don't know this in Urdu/how would you explain it to someone/ then they found this solution in the ninth/ not* before that/ that along with the English books/ they bought Urdu books too/ especially of the science subjects/

Mahtab: would read in Urdu too/

Adeela: they would read and understand in Urdu first/then again read an English book after understanding it in Urdu/then you can ask them from anywhere [in the book]/ they knew everything/[...] so he [Mahtab] told the solution/ that too /he gave the guidance/that if you don't understand the teacher/ you do that/ You buy the Urdu Medium books of the same 'subjects' [courses]/ and learn from those* books.

Mahtab has highlighted the biggest drawback of the public education system, i.e. the rote learning. To get good grades, children reproduce what they have been taught in class without necessarily understanding what it is all about. Mahtab cannot teach them, but he could hear their lessons and show interest in what they learnt at school. He asked questions that made the boys think about what they had rote learnt. This process ultimately enhanced their comprehension of the subject matter. Being the product of the same education system, Adeela had been teaching her children in the same manner as the school did to get good marks in the exams; rote-learn and reproduce whatever teachers teach, in the class and in the exams. When the boys reached high school, rote learning was not enough for them to get good marks, because they needed to comprehend what was taught in the school to remember it. Despite Mahtab having a similar school experience, his capability is generated by his unique cultural capital accumulated through his work abroad and life experiences, which he used to devise a strategy to help the boys with their studies. His questioning

about their lessons made the boys understand the significance of comprehending the contents. Their newly generated interest in learning concepts also engaged their interest in their science projects. Mahtab guided them to higher levels of learning through helping them develop higher order thinking (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) and without actually being able to teach the content, he helped them improve their learning strategies. He also devised a novel solution to enhance their comprehension in English language; they buy the Urdu medium books of the same courses, understand the concepts in Urdu and then read the same topics in English. The boys' grades improved from 50-60 to 70% in a short time and they started enjoying their studies. Mahtab and Adeela have also provided a computer for children to get whatever help they need for their studies. For example, they download previous examination papers to practise for the central exams, a technique used by tuition academies to prepare children for exams.

The conversation with this family illustrated the positive aspects of their family dynamics; Mahtab appreciates his wife' efforts for children's education and Adeela acknowledges Mahtab's novel ideas for helping boys in their studies. These parents have generated valuable social capital within the family, for their children. Coleman purports, '...if the human capital possessed by parents is not complemented by social capital embodied in family relations, it is irrelevant to the child's educational growth that the parent has a great deal, or a small amount, of human capital' (1988, p. S110). Adeela and Mahtab have provided all the support within their resources to their children for their studies; they counsel them, buy them extra study material, have provided a computer and the internet. Perhaps most importantly, they sit with them while they are studying, listening their lessons and asking questions so as to enhance their comprehension of their courses. These parents have compensated for their lack of economic and educational resources by activating their cultural capital to generate social capital within their family and expand their children's capability to learn. Their comprehensive strategy has worked for their children so far; the boys

are studying by themselves and are trying to compete with their peers, who have the benefit of private tuition.

After doing their best, Mahtab and Adeela have left their children in the care of Allah. Adeela's spiritual capital is formulated a little differently to Qamar's; she has indicated remorse in her inability to provide private tuition for her sons. Adeela's faith takes over from the point where her resources are exhausted; Qamar's main resource is his faith. However, her faith does not seem to be as encompassing as his; unlike him, Adeela and Mahtab assume responsibility for their lack of capability regarding their children's education. Mahtab family have utilised their dissatisfaction as a motivation to convert their existing set of resources to generate new resources for their family so as to reduce the impact of their constraints. The Qamar and Mahtab families differ in their utilisation of spiritual capital in reducing the gap between their resources and their goals due to the diversity of their social origin. Mahtab family's strategy reveals the influences of their urban middle-class origins and the cultural capital they have acquired through education; Qamar family, on the other hand, is influenced by its rural lower-class origins and limited educational experience.

ii.   The Zahid Family

Zahid and his wife Farhat are second cousins and originally from agricultural rural Punjab. Zahid undertook a technical diploma after his bachelor degree to qualify for his present job of lab technician in BPS-9, in NIH and lives with his family in Type-B accommodation. Farhat is illiterate and suffers from arthritis; her father did not approve of female education, because he considered it against the religion. This family is categorised LSMC on the social class score card (Appendix-4). Farhat and Zahid have four children, two boys and two girls. Their elder son Hassan (21years) has dropped out of high school, the elder daughter (18 years) has left regular college to help with household chores due to Farhat's poor health; she is simultaneously studying for a degree from the Open University. The two younger children are going to NIH schools; the boy (15 years) is in 8th grade

in FGBS#15 and younger daughter (10 years) is in 5th grade in FGJMS. Mr Zahid's niece Sana had been living with them since the early days of their marriage, while her family lived in the village. After completing HSSC from Islamabad, she went back to Mandi Baha Udin and graduated from there. Sana came back to Islamabad after her father's death; presently she is studying for a masters with the Open University and is working in an administrative job in a private university in Islamabad. Sana stayed with her aunt throughout the interview and contributed with her remarks and explanations on behalf of her aunty now and then. Her interjections contributed towards a better understanding of the family dynamics in this case. Farhat neither knows the correct ages of her children, nor the names of their schools. Zahid on the other hand, told me the names, ages and schools of all his children precisely.

This family is facing their children's lack of interest in education and poor performance in school; their eldest son dropped out from high school, because he failed in maths and the younger one is at least two years behind his age group. In response to a question to Farhat whether she was satisfied with the education of her children, Sana responded quickly:

> Sana: No
> [Everyone laughs]
> Interviewer: what do you say Bhabhi[32] ?
> Farhat: children/ children just*/ don't listen/ they don't study properly/ from their heart/ I-/ the effort is- [stops here]//
> Interviewer: Why do you think they don't study?
> Farhat: Why? ....
> Sana: it is the school=
> Farhat: It is school/teachers are-/ they don't-/ meaning/ teach with interest/
> Interviewer: In the schools here?
> Farhat: yes~/ and children~ too/ are not studying with dedication/ so daily~/ they don't want to go to school/ stay at home/ don't study/
> Interviewer: Do they go for tuition?

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[32] title for brother's wife

Farhat: tuition-/ yes/ have arranged it-/ have arranged it now/

Interviewer: Who saw to their homework previously, you or your husband?

Farhat: just these children-/ this niece of ours-/ she is with us from the beginning/ she is my brother-in-law's daughter/

Sana: now I am doing a 'job' [paid work]

Farhat: she is doing a job now/ she used to oversee/ I told you I don't have education/ and their father-/ he does not have any time/ when he comes home in the evening/ he just asks whether they have studied or not/previously she [Sana] used to do-/ now she does not have time/now their elder sister [does]-/ she [Sana] is doing a job-/ then she-/ I have health problems/ so she [elder daughter] does the housework/ yes/ the girl does not have time/ from the housework/ she cannot do much/

Farhat avoided directly responding to who looks after the children's homework, but expressed her own confusion as if she herself is trying to figure out who should be responsible. This conversation highlights a number of issues regarding their two younger children's education. Firstly, their performance is below age related expectations; and secondly, a lack of parental authority in the family is apparent, signalled by their frequent self-granted absence from school. The causes identified by Farhat and Sana are teachers' negligence, father's lack of interest, mother's illiteracy and poor health, elder sister's household chores responsibility and Sana's occupation with her work and studies. Farhat seems to hope Sana will take over the responsibility for her two younger children's education again, which Sana firmly communicates she cannot do because of her job. This family seem to lack the capability to activate the capital possessed by their individual members for their children's educational benefit. There seems to be lack of regularity in children's homework and they are not interested in school. There is also a reluctance in accepting their familial roles or perhaps a lack of clarity regarding them. Sana was quick to suggest that the school was the reason why the children did not show any interest in their studies. Whilst Farhat accepted her response, she added that her children were also neglecting their studies. Farhat's uncertainty illustrated most of all her ambivalence about her 'sense of own place' regarding her children's

education (Reay, 1996, p. 586). Sana reported that she had helped when she lived in Islamabad previously:

> Sana: I did [help with studies] previously/ then afterwards there was a gap/ I went away [to Mandi Baha U Din]/

Farhat and Sana both pin the responsibility on Zahid, blaming him for not being sufficiently involved in the children's education. As Farhat mentioned above, he does nothing more than ask the children about their studies. I repeated my question after some time about whose responsibility it was to supervise children's homework, Farhat responded thus:

> Farhat: mostly it is mine/
> Interviewer: Do you tell them firmly to sit for their studies=
> Farhat: Yes*~/
> Interviewer: or you just tell them to do their homework?
> Farhat: No~/ I even give them thrashing/ I even admonish them/ a lot-/I am very* strict with them/but they don't listen [to me]/ they do their own will/ their father is outside-/ when he comes [home]/ I tell him/ you are not home/ you leave in the morning/sometimes return at night/ you don't admonish children/ you don't ask them/ whether they are studying or not/
> Interview: Right. So you chase them?
> Farhat: Yes/ I do/ but my health is not good now/

From this conversation, it becomes evident that Farhat and Zahid have differences regarding their roles and responsibilities about the children's education. Farhat does not seem to have any control over the situation or the children, despite her proclaimed strictness with them. Farhat seems to confront Zahid daily about his neglect in the matter of children's education and she reconfirms her own lack of capability due to her poor health. The quote above suggests a continuing dispute between the husband and wife, which may have been disturbing the congeniality of the home environment. This conversation also indicates Farhat's effort to communicate that she is doing *her part* of parenting as best she can with her given disadvantage of illiteracy and poor health.

Sana was more direct in blaming her uncle for the children's lack of interest.

Sana: Aaaa/ it is straight forward/ uncle does not give time/[his] interest is more with outsiders-/ with friends-/ then he wants that he gets good results in the home-/in that/ there is little bit [of involvement] with children-/ we think probably this is the reason/

Interviewer: You think father's strictness is missing?

Sana: no/ uncle is not [strict]=/

Farhat: No/he does not do that at all/

Sana: He is a little [strict] now/

Farhat: I am more [strict]/

Sana: there are fathers/ who scare children when they come home/ but there is no such 'system' here/tells them nicely-/ if you have asked for something now/you'll* get that in the evening/it was same with me-/if you tell that teacher has asked to bring this thing/I would take that thing next day [to school]/ It wasn't like that/ that he would 'refuse' anything/that I cannot get you that/ or something like this/

Farhat: provides all those things/ he is not like that/ to be strict with children over such matters/

Sana's criticism on Zahid seems a little inappropriate, because she is a guest in his house. Moreover, she lived in Zahid's house during her growing years and studied in FGGS#12 with his financial support. Sana blames Zahid for spending little time with his family and most of his free time out of the home, with his friends. Despite their complaints, both women admit that Zahid is kind to his children, is not neglectful of his role as the provider for the family and fulfils the children's educational requirements promptly. Sana criticises Zahid for expecting more and doing less from the education of his children. Sana and Farhat also criticise him for not playing the gendered role of the disciplinarian in the house; her views further indicate role confusion between the husband and wife.

Zahid confirms he spends much time away from home and admits his wife's greater role in their children's studies at home.

Interviewer: Children have homework; need to prepare for exams, who supervises children's studies at home, you or your wife?

Zahid: No/ their mother does-/mostly/

266

Interviewer: You think their mother has a greater role in that?

Zahid: Yes/ her role is greater/because she takes more interest and supervises too/ ↑I leave in the morning and return in the evening/simply speaking/that is why I cannot do much/

Spending more time on their children by cutting down on his social activities is clearly not an option he seems to even consider, despite all the issues with their education and the dispute with his wife. When asked directly whether he was satisfied with his own role in the education of his children, he admitted he was not.

Interviewer: Are you satisfied with your own role in your children's education?

Zahid: No*/ I am not satisfied/

Interviewer: What do you feel is lacking in your efforts?

Zahid: lack of attention/ you can say/

Interviewer: Your own?

Zahid: my own/

Interviewer: You feel that?

Zahid: I feel that/

Interviewer: You feel that because of this=

Zahid: my son's education suffered/

Interviewer: Are you trying to amend the matters towards the education of your younger children?

Zahid: Yes/ making an effort/ the tuition etc.-/ that they do well/

Interviewer: Do you also take more interest than before?

Zahid: Yes/ I told you/ that it is not that-/ interest is there*/ that children should* do [their part]/

Interviewer: Obviously. But checking with the child daily, solving their problems if any, checking whether they have done their homework or not?

Zahid: that I told you is their mother's=

Farhat: No/ he doesn't do that/

Zahid regrets his son's failed educational career and accepts his responsibility for not addressing the matter. However, he seems unwilling to take what he thinks is his wife's job, no matter how grave the situation. The roles of father and mother in children's education are quite clear for

him, the father has to provide and the mother has to nurture. Like Qamar family, Zahid also believes that children have a responsibility regarding their education. Notably, Zahid and Farhat both held their children responsible, to some extent, for their lack of interest in their studies. Whilst Zahid avoided any direct reference to his children's problems, he did allude to it in the following.

> Interviewer: How do you compare your teachers, school and education with that of your children?
>
> Zahid: Madam/ the thing is that/ our ~ 'environment'-/ it was 'purely' that you have* to do this-/ then personally whatever 'interest' you have/ and then we did* it/it is as simple as that/ now here-/ >and secondly/ there is a lot of difference in those times and these times/ these 'facilities' were not available to us/which these children have*/
>
> Interviewer: true.
>
> Zahid: ↑so I think/ take the child where ever-/ if you provide a 'facility' to the child/ then he is* 'involved' in that/ like you think computer [will interest them]/ you buy~ it [for them]/meaning his ↑'environment' [is enhanced]-/ and even what is not there/ not even capable of doing that [buying computer]/ and still get him that/ that also affects/ ↑we didn't even have these things/ ↑we didn't have these things/ we didn't get all these 'facilities' and things/ but in spite of that*/ we did* it [studied]/ within our personal-[capacity]/ but~/ here it is not like that/

During most of his interview it felt that Zahid restrained himself in his expression, unlike his wife and niece who talked freely. In response to the question about school and teachers, he compares the difference in the constraints he faced and what efforts he is making to provide facilities for his children even beyond his means. He seems to be trying to explain his position and that he is doing his best to provide a favourable environment for his children who are not taking advantage of these facilities. He reports that he completed his education because of his own interest and determination despite adverse circumstances and little encouragement, whilst his children lack such motivation. He expressed his desperation about his elder son's attitude thus:

Zahid is utterly at loss to how to deal this situation when the boy refuses even to appear in exams. Hamid and Siddiqui (2001) found that lack of interest in studies is a significant reason for boys dropping out of school in Pakistan. They also found more than 14 percent females left school, because they had to help with household work; the reason why Zahid and Farhat's elder daughter had to discontinue her regular studies (See also, Table-2.4 & 2.5). This shows a gender difference in the perception of the value of education for these parents. Their son's failed educational career is a matter of concern, because it affects his capability to provide for his future family and is also a social stigma for parents. Farhat or Zahid did not show any concern for their daughter, who had to discontinue her education due to Farhat's illness.

The Zahid family is contending with multiple constraints on their capability to support their children's education at home. Farhat is illiterate and thus, has no first-hand knowledge of education system to draw upon. This situation is exacerbated by the gender norms of her family of origin, which excluded females from education due to religious beliefs. Despite having been living in the capital from the early days of her marriage, her adaptation to her new urban environment has been minimal and she attributes the responsibility regarding the children's education to her husband. It shows her inability to modify her habitus to fulfil her parental role in her new environment. Other illiterate mothers in the sample have shown involvement in their children's education and related matters, whilst Farhat does not even know the names of her children's schools within the NIH colony. Perhaps she is mostly confined to indoors due to gender norms or might find it difficult to process all the relevant information due to her lack of experience in the educational field. In either case, Farhat lacks the capability to be involved in her children's studies meaningfully and productively. Her poor health has constrained her capability even further by reducing her physiological capital within which Fogel included 'physiological assets like age, mental and physical health, physique' (Fogel, 2003).

Farhat's resource set lacks cultural capital and physiological capital which, would be of value to her in the field of education (Bourdieu, 1986a; Bourdieu, 1986b; Fogel, 2003). Confusion about their respective parental roles is a bone of contention between the two parents. Farhat realises her constraints and lack of capability to engage with the children's studies; her doubts about her parental capability could have resulted in her parental authority being undermined by her children. She seems to be desperate for her husband or his niece to help to achieve a balance in the power dynamics within her household. Perhaps even more than her lack of education, it is her lack of authority within her household that has constrained her parental capability. There are instances in this sample, where mothers are successfully managing their children's studies by establishing their routines, without actually being able to help them with their homework etc. (e.g. Rafia, p.238).

Zahid expects his wife to supervise children's education at home and make sure they pay attention to their studies. Inayat (2004) found similar gender perceptions regarding children's education in her sample of Pakistani parents in Lahore. She purports that fathers in her sample did not want to be bothered by such 'trivialities' as homework, which they perceived to be mothers' job. Zahid fulfils what he believes to be his responsibilities and provides whatever is required for children's education, but does not extend the benefit of his education to them by helping them with their studies. Zahid and Farhat's lack of capability to generate *academic capital* (Bourdieu, 1986a, p.15) and *family social capital* in the form of good relations between the parents and children (1988, p.S110) has created disadvantages for their children in spite of availability of all kinds of schooling opportunities. Family's 'human capital', according to Coleman, comprises parents' education and a potential for a cognitive environment that facilitates children's learning (p.S109), which has to be complemented by the social capital imbeded in family relations for it to become relevant to child's educational growth (p.S110). The biggest disadvantage this family seems to have is the lack of capability to share their individual resources to

generate useful ones for delivering a conducive learning environment at home, which could enhance the children's educational experience in multiple ways. A child's capabilities are partially affected by the parents' capability set and achieved functioning, indicating intergenerational transfer of capabilities (Biggeri et al., 2006, p.63). Despite both strongly desiring good education for their children, Zahid and Farhat's discordant views about their respective parental obligations are in dissonance with their goals. Within the social structure they practise, they cannot choose what they value. Evans purports, 'In practice, my ability to choose the life I have reason to value often hangs on the possibility of my acting together with others who have reason to value similar things. Individual capabilities depend on collective capabilities' (Evans, 2002, p.56). This family has not succeeded in combining their individual capabilities to generate such collective capabilities, which could be instrumental in achieving their aspirations.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, an understanding of parents' views regarding three aspects of their involvement in the school and out of school education of their children was sought. These aspects include: 1) impact of parents' capabilities on their engagement in children's school; 2) utilisation of their resources to expand this capability; and 3) strategies to bridge the gap between the resources possessed and resources required for effective engagement with children's education.

The data presented in this chapter have confirmed the significance of parents' capability to engage in their children's education. Vincent and Martin (2002, pp.112-113) argue possession of capital determines the relative position of families in securing advantage in schooling for their children.

> ...the deep cognitive classification of middle class groups, for example, is to acquire schooling for their children which affords relative advantage in

271

the struggle to secure privileged positions in the labour market. The key social property that enables parents to secure this advantage is *capital.*

The two aspects of parents' engagement, participation in school and involvement with children's education at home are interconnected and yet, distinct. Education policy and schools encourage parents' participation in schools in Pakistan (p.233). Parents' capability to interact with their children's school is, however, unequal and depends on their perception of their own role in their children's education and their relative position in the field of education. This is about working the education system to the advantage of children, which requires cultural resources like an awareness of the education system and favourable disposition inculcated through own educational experience; both these cultural capacities favour educated middle-class parents. Through effective participation in their children's schools, such parents generate a very valuable form of social capital for their children. Parents, like Asifa and Sajjad, secure teachers' extra attention and support for their children's learning through collaborative interaction, which generates highly valued forms of academic capital for their children. These parents' concerted efforts are aimed at securing their children's middle-class advantage, thereby attaining top positions in class.

Parents' original class and the resulting habitus also matters in internalising their relative position in the field of education. '...choices are always made within the limits of what are seen as feasible' (Sen, 2006c, p.5). The LSMC parents' capability to interact with the teachers at their children's school is constrained in many ways in the sample, the most salient being lack of urban educational experience and educational capital. Qamar assumes a subordinate status regarding his children's teachers and accepts the superiority of their judgement in the matter of disciplining his children. Asifa, on the other hand, abhorred the use of strict disciplining techniques in the school of her children. Vincent and Martin (2002, p.113) argue 'The form of parents' social spaces shape their 'voice' which we define as 'communicative action''. They argue that the parental voice expresses purpose and feeling through a variety of actions including speaking, writing,

petitioning, protesting. In my research, parents' diverse social spaces have formulated their voices variously; the expression of their voices is different too. Qamar perceives teachers' declaration of the use of physical punishment as concern for the education of his son and thus, a favour for which he expresses gratitude and confidence in their judgement on this matter. Despite her daughters having never been punished by their teachers, Asifa is concerned about the potential threat of physical or verbal abuse by them. She expresses her concern through a preventive strategy of ongoing contact with the school and establishing positive relation with the teachers. The habitus of parents who have limited educational experiences themselves inculcates in parents an acceptance of teachers' dominant position as experts and professionals. This leads to unquestioning of their judgement regarding their children's education under the assumption that teachers have superior knowledge. The acceptance of their relatively inferior position in the field of education indicates parents' awareness of their disadvantage. The rural and religious norms grant teachers the high status of spiritual parents and guides, thus engendering in parents an instinctive trust in their sincerity in matters regarding their children's education. In sum, teachers' dominant position is the 'natural' order or *doxa* in the rural culture of Pakistan.

The gender distinction of private and public is upheld in this area of parental capability too. Interaction with school was considered the fathers' responsibility in the LSMC families, because most mothers lacked the capability not only to interact meaningfully with teachers due to lack of cultural resources, but also to move independently in the public domain and go to school by themselves to attend parent-teacher meetings or other events. The norm of *purdah* constrains mothers' capability to interact with school, especially for those who are originally from rural areas, such as Seema and Talat. *Purdah* is observed in this sample through a simple strategy: fathers meet with the male teachers and mothers visit female teachers of their children; Islamabad schools are also generally visited by fathers.

Parents' out of school involvement in children's education indicates their capability to generate academic capital for their children and is immensely influenced by the range and forms of cultural capital possessed by them. This parental capability also favours middle-class parents due to the educational capital possessed by them and knowledge of the field of education. Parents, like Sajjad and Asifa, can help their children with their homework and supervise their studies at home. Middle-class parents can also afford to pay for private tuition where they feel inadequate for helping children. The LSMC suffer a disadvantage owing to lack of appropriate cultural and economic resources to compensate for their cultural resources deficit. Some parents, like Mahtab and Adeela, have shown creativity in combining their resources to generate a collective family capability in this regard. The formula given by Talat is simple but effective; father brings the money, mother establishes a system and children work hard (p.199). In this formula, father and mother, play their gendered roles of the provider and the carer, respectively. Where the family members perform their respective roles successfully the family achieves their desired outcomes. However, in the case of role confusion or ineffective performance of respective roles by any member, like in the Zahid family, the capability of the family is constrained. Role definition and understanding the demands of respective roles is salient for LSMC salaried families, because many fathers work one or two part-time jobs after their regular employment to provide for their families and thus, spend most of their day away from home (e.g. Salamat, p.238). Mothers' role in the supervision of children's education becomes very important in such cases in spite of their lack of educational capital. Less educated and illiterate mothers, like Talat and Farida, play their role successfully by establishing a system for children's studies at home and through vigilant supervision; both these mothers and their husbands expressed satisfaction with the academic performance of their children. In spite of being traditionally gendered, these prescribed family roles complement each other in expanding family capability and creating a supportive environment for children's education at home.

However, gendered distinction of public and private does not work favourably for all LSMC families' capability as a way of providing support for children's education at home. A few families have been unable to generate the capability to work together on this due to their conflicting views regarding their respective roles. The mis-cognition of roles between fathers and mothers, results in an ineffective rendering of their respective parental roles that may be to the detriment of their children's studies. For example, Zahid thought that supervision of studies at home is the mother's responsibility and Farhat considered education the father's responsibility and in any case, out of her domain due to her illiteracy. So, they failed to generate a consistent and united approach, thereby failing to create a conducive home environment for their children's studies. These parents' disagreement on their own roles within a collective unit damages the family's social capital due to frequent disputes between parents about where their respective boundaries lie. Parents' disagreement also undermines their parental authority, resulting in a lack of their individual capability. Such situations hinder generation of family social capital and constrain the capability to formulate shared goals jointly put into effect to achieve their desired functioning regarding the education of their children. Where there are constraints on economic capital, cultural capital becomes the most valuable, most expandable and most convertible form of capital in this sub group of parents. The importance of social capital generated within the family in the form of relations between parents and parents and children has also been upheld as a valuable resource. Family ties strengthen family bonding and hence, its capability to form and achieve shared goals and functionings.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes my research that aimed to explore the views of middle-class salaried parents in Islamabad, Pakistan, about the problems and issues they face regarding the education of their children. This is the first study that has been undertaken that examines in depth the aspirations, schooling choices, and engagements of parents in and for their children's education in Pakistan. The participating parents face incessant constraints in providing sound education for their children, so they are able to compete with more privileged children for admission to professional and higher education institutions and eventually for good jobs. They constantly negotiate, adjust and adapt to gain whatever advantage they can muster for their children. Their challenge begins with adjustment of desires to match the real options and continues throughout their journey of education for their children; it includes choice of school, getting their children admitted to their chosen school and involvement in their education in and out-of-school. The process to deal with constraints on their desired educational opportunities is not a smooth ride for most families. Parents have unequal abilities to negotiate through the constraints on their desired goals for their children. They deal with their constraints variously; some devise strategies to alleviate their constraints, other try to expand their resources, while many need to lower their aspirations in line with what they believe is achievable for them and leave the future to their children's fate. These parental dilemmas are grossly neglected by policy and research; the unheard voices of these parents offer an immense scope for research to create knowledge for an understanding of parents' problems for the policy makers.

The analysis of the qualitative data of this research has uncovered interesting similarities and differences in three sets of parents' capabilities, that is, to form realizable aspirations, choose a school closest to their preference and engage meaningfully in the education and schooling of their children. Parents' values regarding education and their cognisance of the

significance of education for the future of their male and female children are the building blocks of this puzzle. Three key questions formed the framework for this qualitative research: (1) What are the aspirations and goals of middle-class government employees for the future of their male and female children? (2) How do parents' resources and enabling conditions impact on their aspirations, school choices and engagement in their children's education? (3) How do families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities regarding their children's schooling and education? Parents' capability to discern the real options is based on parents' understanding of the value of resources in their possession; this capability is crucial to their effective utilisation of these resources. The three analysis chapters have looked in to these questions in detail. The findings indicate that if parents' capability was such that they could activate and convert the forms of capital in their possession into forms more valued in the field of education then that clearly enhanced their capacity for optimum utilisation of their resources.

In this final chapter, I will discuss my research findings regarding these three areas of parental behaviour, highlighting more effective forms of capital in shaping parents' capability in each area. The diversity of the respondents of this research draws attention to heterogeneity of the urban middle-class in Pakistan who exhibit extensive variegation in their resource sets due to difference in their origin, educational experiences and income. Secure salaried government jobs, official accommodation, transport and health facilities for the family and a stated advantage for government employees in admission policy of FDE (Federal Directorate of Education) (Appendix-11) are some common advantages of the respondents of this research. However, due to the wide and diverse spectrum of resources characterising urban middle-class in Pakistan, parents have disparate capability to choose their preferred school for their children. Families with middle-class characteristics may still be constrained in their choice of school; for example, parents and children of migrant families lack the urban schooling experience and may not be able to fulfil the requirements for

tough admission tests in the more reputed schools (e.g. Shareef family, Ch-6), or children not well versed in Urdu or English languages, that are used in the public and private schools in Islamabad (Wazir family, Ch-5), or mother is illiterate or semi-literate and unable to support her children's education practically (Zahid family, Ch-7). Thus, one family may exhibit middle-class and working-class characteristics simultaneously and this makes social class categorization of the respondents of this research a complicated process; like the husband has a university degree, whereas the wife is illiterate (e.g. Wazir and Zahid Family). The diversity of the origin and habitus of the participating parents may complicate the interpretation of these families' characteristics normally labelled as working-class in the urban context; e.g. women's illiteracy. This may result from middle-class values in the tribal regions of KP due to the implications of strict observance of *purdah* which indicates respectability of a family and is still a highly regarded middle-class norm not only in tribal areas but across the country. Similarly, lack of proficiency in the languages of instruction in schools in Islamabad, does not necessarily indicate lack of cultural capital for the families from areas where regional languages are used for instruction in schools, e.g. rural Sindh and rural/tribal KP. These families suffer from a relative disadvantage in comparisons to their urban counterparts in matters regarding education of their children because they lack the relevant form of cultural capital in the context of urban schooling. The division into working-class and middle-class does not designate groups that can be defined clearly by the variations in the forms of capital they possess and more importantly their habitus (appendix-4; p.114).

In the following sections I will sum up the findings of this research on parents' capabilities regarding the three sets of capabilities mentioned above. In the first section, I will look at parents' capability to form realizable aspirations, second section discusses parents' choice of preferred type of school and third section will review parents' capability to involve in their children's education and schooling in and out of school. The last section of this chapter presents the concept of family capabilities as a new form of

capabilities generated by some participating families to reduce their disadvantage in achieving their desired functionings, through sharing of goals and combining of individual capabilities to expand family's collective capability as a unit.

1. Forming Realizable Aspirations

All parents formulate aspirations for the future of their children, however, not all their aspirations are realizable. The qualitative data of this research divulged inter-family and intra-family differences in the capacity to formulate achievable aspirations. Diversity of the combination of various forms of capital possessed by them and their varied dispositions have emerged as significant effects in shaping parents' capacity to aspire for their children. The following subsections look at various influences on parents' capability to aspire, as found by this research.

i.   Habitus

The habitus is a significant influence regarding individual differences in aspiration formulation and shapes the values of the aspiring parent. Reay views habitus as a deep rooted epicentre containing multiple matrices which demarcate the extent of choices available to individuals (Reay, 2004, p.435). One set of the matrices influencing aspirations is parents' understanding of the intrinsic and instrumental value of education for their children and themselves. The matrix of religion validates parents' integration of their own future with the aspired future for their children (Ejaz, p.153; Talat, p.197.). Parents perceive their role in the future of their male and female children differently through the lens of social norms that view sons as their own and daughters as 'others' after they get married (Rafia, p.165). Belief in *taqdeer* is another deep-rooted matrix that anticipates enormous possibilities and shares the responsibility for the future of children with providence. Parents' belief in fate or *Taqdeer,* surprisingly expands their capability to aspire by including the support of providence for

the achievement of such functionings which are beyond their means (Wazir, p.144; Qamar, p.254).

ii. Future Goals

Parents may have varied aspirations for their children depending upon their own values; however, the goal underlying all parents' aspirations for male and female children is a secure future, a future better than their present. They also want their children to bring good name to family and win social recognition through good deeds (Table-5.2). Thus, parents not only envisage economic security in their old age through secure future of their sons, they also seek accumulation of other forms of capital as well. For example, aspirations for religious education, like *hifz-e-Quran* generate symbolic capital for the family in the form of social recognition and approval and thus expand parents' resource set (Talat, p.197, Wazir, p.144).

The matrix of gender ascribes varied future roles to male and female children. The stereotyped gendered roles of provider for the male and carer for the female are endorsed generally by this group of respondents; parents generally aspire good marriages for their daughters and have no definite plans for working career for them; however, this pattern is defied by some parents (Table-5.1).

iii. Resource Set

The combination of the forms of capital possessed by the family is a major determinant of parents' capability to aspire because their resource set defines their capacity to formulate achievable aspirations. The inter-family and intra-family differences in the capacity to aspire are primarily influenced by parent's cognisance of the value of their resource set because this cognisance impacts their capability to achieve their aspired goals. The primary cause of intra-family variations in the capacity to aspire is that as compared to mothers, fathers have more access to the valued forms of capital in the field of education. For example, they have more education (Table-4.3), more economic resource (Appendix-14), and due to more

access to public spheres they have more opportunities to establish social contacts outside the family and within the education system (Rahman, p.190;). The influence of their advantage is evident in some men's more pragmatic and achievable aspirations for their children as compared to their wives (Wazir, p.146; Nabeela, p.147; Ejaz, pp.157-158; Rafia, 156). Fathers' preferences for the education and future of their children are adapted to what they perceive as real options within their resource set. In spite of access to comparatively fewer resources, mothers have shown the capacity to formulate independent and ambitious aspirations like professional education for their children (Table-5.1). However, they also demonstrate ungrudging adaptation of their aspirations by acceding that their aspirations are mere 'desires' and admitting that their husband's aspirations are more sensible and achievable (e.g. Rafia, p.156). Nevertheless, all parents aspire for better opportunities (Nabeela, p.147), reliable future prospects (Ejaz, p.154 and upward mobility for their children (Table-5.1). Parents' aspirations are not only influenced by their individual capability but also by the characteristics of their children; for example, children's disability (Shaheen, p.215) or their interests (Zahid, p.267; Wazir, pp.148) may also impact parents' aspirations for them.

iv.   Enabling Conditions

Enabling conditions enlarge real options and thus expand parents' capacity to aspire. Families with children who were born and raised in Islamabad, have more schooling options as compared to recent migrants, born and raised in rural areas. Rural to urban migration expands schooling opportunities for these families on one hand, and on the other, accentuates the disadvantages caused by low quality rural schooling or no schooling options at all. The families that migrated recently anticipating more educational opportunities in Islamabad, had to contend with a relative disadvantage due to the lack of required academic capital for admission to better schools in Islamabad (Shareef, p.204). These families' disadvantage is caused by parallel and disparate education systems across the country that support societal segmentations and regional disparities.

v. Strategies

Parents have exhibited various strategies to expand their capability to achieve their familial aspirations for the education and future of their children. Adapting and adjusting their aspirations to their real options of school is a commonly practiced strategy implemented among the participant of my research (Abbas, p.213; Mahtab, p.258; Wazir, p.145, 164; Ejaz, p.166, Samina, p.187; Rahman, p.191). Reducing intra-family differences in the aspiration formulation by adjusting and synchronizing their aspirations is a related and quite widely used strategy. Common aspirations facilitate convergence of family resources to the achievement of their shared goals. Mothers generally adjust with their lack of capability by relinquishing their right to decide for the future of their children, in the favour of their spouses. Their willing acceptance of their husbands' prerogative to decide for the family is reflective of their acceptance of gender norms and cognisance of their own lack of capability to change their circumstances due to inadequate resources (Table, 4.3; Raheela, p.194). Parents use the understanding gained through their ascribed gender roles to envisage the future familial role for their children and the capabilities required to perform those roles and formulate their aspirations accordingly (Ejaz, p.154; Rafia, p.155).

Pakistani parents extensively use their religious capital to seek divine support in achieving their goals by accepting Allah's power in realising their plans. To bridge the gap between their aspirations and real options parents demonstrate an unquestioning acceptance of the arbitrary and place their faith in *taqdeer* to favour their children (Qamar, p.254). Many parents with constraints on their capability rely on *taqdeer* to alleviate the impact of constraints on their capability to achieve their desired aspirations for their children. Their faith in better opportunities for their children's future, allows them to aspire beyond their present means (Wazir, p.144; Rafia, p.165; Qamar, p.254). Parents who are not able to adjust nor accept the arbitrary, show a bitterness at their lack of capability to provide their aspired education for their children (Shareef, pp.208-209).

2. Choosing the Preferred School

Parents' capability to choose their preferred school for their children is the second aspect of parental behaviour addressed by this research. I sought to uncover the impact of parents' resource set and enabling conditions on their school choices; I was also interested in discovering the ways families understand and negotiate any dissonance arising between their goals and opportunities regarding their school choices. I accessed Gewirtz, Ball and Bowe (1995) typology of parental school-choosing comprising of *skilled/privileged, semi-skilled,* and *disconnected* choosers, to analyse the data on school choice because due to its emphasis on parents' capacity to choose the school these concepts are concordant with the theoretical framework for my research and the participating parents have indicated characteristics behaviour of these groups.

i. Enabling Conditions

School provision is shaped by very different enabling conditions in Pakistan to those analysed in the Gewirtz study and other European research. The conditions that enable choice are not favourable due to unequal public provision of schooling opportunities in Pakistan. Rural and remote areas have fewer schools and many of those are not functional due to lack of human resources and infrastructure (Table-2.7); and the functioning schools are imparting low quality education in comparison to private schools (Figure-2.6). Schooling options for girls are even more constrained due to lack of girls' schools and female teachers in rural areas. In urban areas, the public education system strengthens class divide by establishing various types of schools for working and middle-class children (Appendix-5). Marked differences in enrolment rates and considerable gender gap in enrolment in various regions (Figure-2.4), poverty and labour force participation of school age children (Figure-2.3 and 2.5) and children's reasons for not attending school (Table-2.5) suggest diverse influences on school choice in Pakistan.

ii.   Public-Private Schools

The lacunas in the public education system created huge scope for private schools in Pakistan. Private schools, especially the low-cost ones, fill the gap in public provision of schooling opportunities in remote and rural areas as well as in urban areas in Pakistan (Table-2.6). Islamabad, the site of my research, boast the best public schools in Pakistan and a wide array of private schools ranging from non-profit and charitable NGO and religious schools to exclusive international schools charging fees in foreign currency. Presence of multiple types of public and private schools in Islamabad, signify various forms of economic, cultural and social capital for gaining access to these schools (e.g. Samina pp.184-187). These wide schooling choices augment class stratification through ascribing relative social position to the subscribers of each type of school. For example, children attending FG schools are thought of as working-class and poor children (e.g. Samina, pp.185-186), whereas Model school students are perceived as middle-class children (Abbas, p.213). The surge of private schools in Pakistan during recent years, has further highlighted the differentiations in the middle-class in Pakistan on the basis of the specific type of cultural and economic capital. In the overwhelmingly salaried community of Islamabad, more than 45% enrolment in private schools (Table-2.6) draws attention to this further segregation of urban middle-class in Pakistan. For example, the government employees in lower pay-scales and those from rural background are constrained in their school choices due to deficit of more valued forms of the academic capital in the field of urban education. Financially less-resourced middle-class subscribe to better reputed Model schools in Islamabad while more affluent and highly educated parents choose private schools for their children to maintain their middle-class advantage. Various chains of private schools or 'school systems' cater for various preferences of parents regarding the education of their children; some follow modern western education while others provide religious education; a few school systems are preferred for their strict discipline while others are chosen for their lenient approach to discipline (Samina, p.184)

284

or access (Rahman, p.190). The wide array of private school types depicts the wide array of preferences for education and schooling in Pakistan.

iii.   Habitus

The enrolment data (Ch-2, Figure-2.5, Table-2.3) also highlight the fact that school choice in Pakistan is not only about which school; for many parents it starts with the basic question of whether or not any school at all. The deep rooted matrices (Reay, 2004) for school choice are similar to those for aspirations formulation.

a. Gender

Although gender is one of the matrices of habitus, it is discussed separately here to signify its impact on school choice. Male and female children are kept from attending school for various reasons. For example, the higher rate of male children's participation in labour force is a significant cause for their non-attendance (Figure-2.3); whereas, female children are required to mind household chores instead of attending school (Table-2.5). Gender norms are a significant matrix that constrain the schooling options for girls in tribal and rural areas (Wazir girls, Ch-5; Farhat, Ch-7). Rural parents' concern for finding appropriate marital matches for educated girls can also constrain girls' schooling opportunities (Khalid, 1996). Schooling choices for girls are further impacted by the issues regarding access and security concerns (pp.46-47). Gender influence on the choice of school for male and female children is evident even in this small sample; more boys as compared to girls, are attending private schools and Islamabad schools in this sample (Table-6.1).

iv.   Agency

Parents' capability to choose the best option on their menu of school choice is indicative of their advantage. Their agency or the sense of "the power to" (Kabeer, 2003 p.4) choose their aspired school for their children can be assessed in the context of dissonance between their aspired school and

the school their children are attending. For example, almost all participating parents expressed a preference for private school for their children directly or indirectly, but only 9 % children of the total sample are attending private school (Table-6.1). Parents' perception of their capability is varied; those who are able to reduce the gap between their desires and actual choices feel more control and sense of agency regarding their children's education (Samina, Ch-6; Rahman, Ch-6).

v.   Capitals

The struggle to gain or maintain advantage is incessant and requires regular inputs from the competitors for limited coveted positions in their preferred schools. Coming to terms with a position of disadvantage in a given field may be easier for those who aspire to social mobility through entry into higher strata, but coping with a regression in the relative position is hard to adjust to and causes discontent and resentment. For example, recent migrant families experience a relative disadvantage in urban education system, whereas they may have had relative advantage in their earlier rural and small town social and educational fields due to their head of family being in government job in Islamabad. Wazir and Shareef families enjoyed relative social advantage in their places of origin due to different forms of capital valued there. However, in Islamabad, their children are admitted to FG Schools and are below their age cohort due to lack of appropriate academic capital; the children are presently positioned at a disadvantage among their school mates and neighbours because they lack the type of academic and cultural capital valued in their new urban environment. Thus the parents who start from a position of absolute disadvantage have an edge over these families because even if very little, the change in their position is generally progressive whereas the second group of families are experiencing regressive change in their relative social positioning due to their migration to a community which values other forms of cultural capital than the ones they possess and higher standards of academic achievement. For example, Wazir children not only lack schooling experience but they are also unfamiliar with Urdu and English,

the languages of instruction in Islamabad, and Punjabi the most widely spoken language in Islamabad (Wazir, P.145). To adjust and secure a place in a different education system than their native village, these children need to work on their languages as well as literacy skills for admission to the schools in Islamabad.

vi.   Strategies

Parents endeavor to expand their capability to choose the best possible school for their children. Optimum utilisation of the forms of capital in parents' possession is the most effective strategy to reduce disadvantage in school choice. As discussed previously, academic capital has more relevance and is valued highly in the field of education, and the parents who possess this form of cultural capital are better equipped to secure advantage, gain advantage or reduce disadvantage in their choice of school (e.g. Samina & Rahman, Ch-6). Parents activate available and accessible forms of capital to get their children admitted to the best school on their choice menu; for example, Rahman (p.190) activated his social capital, Samina her cultural capital (p.184-187) and Adeela her academic capital (p.258) to avail the best possible school options for their children. Religious capital created a schooling option for the two previously unschooled teenage Wazir girls through Madrassah education. Religious and spiritual capital is used variedly by the participants to expand their school choice capabilities. Educating their children to become *Alim* expands the family's symbolic capital by enhancing their relative social position in their tribal social context (Wazir, p.144) and children accomplishing *Hifz-e-Quran* increases parents' symbolic capital and social status (Talat-p.197).

Migrant families are struggling hard to acquire valued cultural competencies in the field of urban education; migrants from tribal area, for example, strive to teach Urdu language to their children to facilitate their adjustment in urban schools and transform their dispositions without losing their link to their place of origin.

3. Engaging Meaningfully

School education is the process that generates academic capital for children, i.e. the combined effect of cultural transmission by the family and cultural transmission by the school (Bourdieu, 1986, p.15). Parents' meaningful engagement in their children's education in and out-of-school could be an effective strategy to enhance and augment their children's academic capital. Parents' capability to involve themselves in school ranges from direct and formal involvement like in PTA, to indirect and informal like forming expectations and level of satisfaction with their children's school education; children's out-of-school education is perceived mainly as their studies at home. Parents' capability to involve in school and engage at home is primarily a cultural capacity generated through activation of parents' own academic capital and favours more educated middle-class parents. This parental capability is shaped by an understanding of the education system, enabling conditions and the combination of the forms of capital possessed by parents. Parents' capability to involve themselves in out-of-school education is also primarily impacted by parents' academic capital (e.g. Mahtab, p.258). However, the dynamics of parents' involvement in children's education at home are distinct from their participation in school. The basic distinction is that of private and public space; home is a private space and the underlying dynamics in play here differ from the school which is a public space. Parents have a dominating position at home and a 'strong agency', which includes personal responsibility (Ballet, Dubois and Mahieu, 2007, p.187) and collective agency where family members join to achieve their shared goals (ibid, p. 199). Parents have more control over situations in the private space of home as compared to the public space of school.

i.   Habitus

Parents' understanding of their role in the context of their children's education is formed primarily by their habitus which is shaped by the dimensions of class, gender and ethnicity (Vincent and Martin, 2002, p.

112). Although ethnicity is not an issue with this sample, however the diversity of cultural origin of these parents works as the dimension of ethnicity in my research. The participating HSMC and LSMC parents exhibit diversity of behaviour regrading this parental capability. More educated HSMC parents like Sajjad (p.241) interact with school as equal partners and less-educated LSMC parents like Qamar assume a subordinate position to the teachers; they perceive school in a compensatory role and attribute the eminent status of spiritual parents to teachers (p.248-249). Shakeel a LSMC father from a small town in KP, fears that unnecessary visits to children's school would be perceived by teachers as interference in their work (p.235) and considers school as an impermissible space for parents and unnecessary school visits as dubious. By restraining from school, Shakeel is accepting not only a status lower to teachers but also envisages no role for parents in school. Farida (LSMC), an illiterate mother from KP is content that they have never heard from their children's school which she views as a testament that her children are doing fine in their studies (p.235); she believes any communication with school indicates trouble with children's studies or behaviour. These parents' approaches vary because their diverse habitus influences the way they perceive the field of education and their own role in it. However, Khan another LSMC father, fought assertively with the system to protect his daughter from her teacher's abusive behaviour (p.236). These diverse parental approaches have evolved from diverse academic and cultural matrices of these parents.

Parents' understanding of the education system and their own role in it is imperative for their meaningful participation and a sense of entitlement for inclusions. Their expectations regarding the school reveal their cognisance of school's responsibility and accountability for the education of their children; this comprehension ascribes the relative position to parents in the field of education generally and in relation to the school specifically. The HSMC more educated parents formulate higher expectations of the school than LSMC parents; generally, the respondents of this research expect school to ensure quality education, traditional values (Samina, p.187; Asifa,

p.243) like integrity, compassion (Asifa, p.243), discipline (Samina, p.184; Qamar, pp.248-249), hard work (Mahtab, p.2578; Samina, pp.184-185, Aqeela, p.252), religious and moral training (Wazir, p.144, Samina, p.184) and good infrastructure (Sajjad, p.244). Although the LSMC parents' expectations are similar, they lack the same sense of entitlement and are more considerate of schools' constraints e.g. Qamar acceded that large class size makes it difficult for the teacher to pay individual attention to children (p.253).

Habitus influences parents' engagement in and out-of-school education primarily through the implementation of the gender division of public and private domains; thus, mothers perform these parental responsibilities within the private space of home which they do by exercising their parental authority in establishing a routine for children's studies at home. Mothers' assumption of this parental role is impacted by their varied habitus. For example, Farhat (LSMC) lacks capability to assert her authority over her children; she divulged that her father strongly disapproved of female education, while her brothers were educated. This indicates that her embodied habitus understands women to be deprived of authority as well as education. Zahid, her husband is highly educated but views their respective parental roles from the perspective of generally practiced norms in their present environment, that the father's responsibility is to provide for the family while mother should oversee children's education (Zahid & Farhat, pp.267). Farhat is struggling with a conflict between her habitus and the demands of her current family field which requires a different disposition and input from her than that embodied by her habitus. Zahid and Farhat's varied habitus have generated diverse dispositions and this situation has resulted in confusion regarding their parental roles and parental authority. This family's case indicates that diversity of habitus may cause differences even within a family regarding their respective familial roles. These parents' disagreement has also constrained generation of social capital embodied in family relations (Coleman, 1988, p.S110) thus enhancing their

disadvantage regarding their capability to support their children's out of school education.

ii.   Migration

Rural to urban migration of the participants is one matrix of their habitus with profound impact on their capability to engage in their children's education. Very few participants of this research are born and raised in Islamabad. The majority of male participants are first generation internal migrants who came to Islamabad for work; some wives joined their husbands in Islamabad soon after their marriage, while many were left back at home for family reasons (Wazir) or non-availability of official accommodation (Raza). Some of these families followed head of the family many years and several children later (Wazir, Raza, Shareef). Parents as well as children of these families are first generation migrants; children face more challenges than their parents because all the fathers came to join secure government jobs which meant a leap of upward mobility for those from rural origin, whereas the children suffered an immediate disadvantage on their arrival in their new urban environment. These children lack appropriate educational and academic capital due to disparate schooling opportunities in various regions of the country. In such cases the parents are essentially at a position of disadvantage in relation to school. However, migration works favourably for mothers' capability to be involved in their children's school, as the mothers from rural/tribal areas who were not able to visit their children's school due to strict norm of Purdah, have the opportunity in their new urban environment to exercise this option (Seema, p.236). Migration also expanded schooling opportunities for older children who never attended school in their villages (e.g. elder Wazir girls).

iii.   Resource Set

Participating parents' concerted efforts towards their children's education are aimed at gaining or maintaining middle-class advantage for their children. Parents' set of resources is a significant element in determining

their capability to involve effectively in education. The combination of resources possessed by parents, their cognisance of the value of these resources in the field of education and an ability to make optimal use of these resources, expands their capability to involve effectively in their children's education. This parental capability is facilitated by parents' understanding of the education system which comes through their educational and academic capital or their own school experience. Academic capital act variously in shaping individual parents' capability to interact with school. Firstly, level of education influences parents' perception of their place in the field of education vis-à-vis teachers and school. Secondly, lack of appropriate academic capital constrains parents' ability to play an effective role in their children's education (Shareef, p.205). Thirdly, parents' academic capital influences their capability to judge quality of education (Andrabi et al., 2005, p. 5).

Rural parents with little or no school experience believe that the LCP schools can compensate for their children's academic disadvantage. These parents' lack of knowledge about education and schooling is exploited by private schools and they are easily misled into believing that their children are doing well because they are studying foreign curriculum and winning prizes at school. Their own lack of awareness and knowledge about the education system inhibits their capability to discern flaws in the education of their children. Lack of checks and balance and accountability for private schools contribute in enhancing parents' disadvantage vis-à-vis school (Shareef, p.207). Urban parents also view expensive private schools and well-reputed tuition academies as instrumental in reducing academic disadvantage and this perception signifies the role of economic resources in gaining and maintaining middle-class advantage for children through good education. Parents with low academic capital, generally blame their disadvantage on lack of economic capital and believe that if they could afford to pay for expensive private schools or tuition academies their children would fare better in their studies (Shareef, p.204; Mahtab, p.258). Economic capital however, is scantily available to majority of participating

families as academic disadvantage is frequently caused and accompanied by the lack of economic capital. Parents with such views regret their lack of agency and are discontented regarding their children's education (Shareef, pp.208-209; Adeela, p.258; Mahtab, p.258). Attendance in government school indicates a position of economic disadvantage and also a weak position in the field of education and lacks such entitlement (Sajjad, pp.241). It is important to note that academic disadvantage affects less privileged urban parents' capability to assess the quality of education or to hold public schools accountable for any deficiencies in the education of their children (Sajjad, pp.242).

Along with the gender dynamics, the role of parents' academic capital cannot be underestimated in providing assistance to children in their studies at home. The HSMC participants of this research are generally better resourced to help their children with their homework and supervise their studies at home because usually they possess more relevant academic capital in the form of urban schooling experience and higher education. Their academic capital also assists in identifying their lack of capability and devising alternate strategies to reduce the impact of their disadvantage for their children. The case study of Mahtab and Adeela (Ch-7) highlights how relevant academic capital can be effective in devising workable strategies to reduce family disadvantage; whereas the case of Zahid family (Ch-7) brings out the disadvantage caused by parents' disjuncture regarding their respective roles in transmitting and generating academic capital for their children.

The economic capital where available, can be instrumental in compensating academic disadvantage by paying for additional assistance for children's out-of-school education and thus expanding their academic capital. Thus, parents who are unable to support their children's studies at home can pay for private tuitions or tuition academies for their children (Ejaz, 2009; Rafiq et al., 2013). This option is not available to, or exercised equally by all, because the majority of the sample are facing constraints on

their economic resources and are unable to use economic capital to reduce their disadvantage.

iv.   Enabling Conditions

Schools' approach vis-a-vis parents' role in school is significant and creates enabling conditions for parental involvement in school. It is directed by the government policy; school practices in Islamabad generally favour parents' involvement in school (Right to Free and Compulsory Education, GoP, 2012) (see also p.233). Nonetheless, various schools follow this policy differently based on how they position the parents of their pupils in the field of education. This research indicates that school policy and practices are significantly influenced by parents' SES. For example, FG schools generally cater for children of less educated/illiterate working-class parents and in my sample and have less encouraging attitude to parental involvement as compared to the Model colleges where mostly children of more educated middle-class are enrolled. The less privileged parents are considered less capable of making a worthwhile contribution to their children's education (Samina, p.185-186; Sajjad, p.242), and face less welcoming attitude of the school (e.g. Sajjad, p.242; Asifa, p.243). Helping children with the heavy load of homework is a challenge for less educated parents who are unable to assist them academically and thus are constrained in their capability to support their children's studies at home.

v.   Gender

Gender is another matrix or dimension of parents' disposition that contributes in shaping their capability to involve in their children's education as earlier discussed in the section on habitus. The qualitative data of this research confirms a clear demarcation of fathers and mothers' domains by gendered division of public and private spaces. Mothers interact with the female teachers and visit schools on the premises of NIH while fathers meet with male teachers and visit Islamabad schools (Talat, p.237; Hamda, p.237). Children's studies at home take place in the domain of mother

(Rafia, p.237; Hamda, p.237; Salamat, p.238). Although fathers are more educated as compared to mothers in this sample, they are less involved practically in the education of their children due to their long working hours and due to gender division of family responsibilities (Hamda, p.237; Salamat, p.238). Fathers show their involvement through interest in children's progress or occasional assistance with science, maths or English homework when children are not able to manage on their own. As noted above, mothers generally have much lower educational qualifications than father; whereas no father in this sample has less than high school education and 9/19 have 14 years or more education, half of the mothers (11/22) in this sample have less than 10 years of schooling while 3 are totally unschooled (Table-4.3). Nevertheless, their disadvantage does not deter most mothers from supervising their children's studies at home generally; they perform their gender ascribed parental responsibilities with dedication and devotion (Rafia, p.237; Salamat, p.238; Hamda, p.237). The less educated mothers rely on activation of their in-family social capital in the form of parental authority for establishing and maintaining a routine for children's studies. However, not all families are able to generate favourable intra-family dynamics; some mothers are unable to establish their authority and this lack of ability augments their academic disadvantage contributing to poor academic performance of children (Farhat, p. 265).

vi. Strategies

Engaging with their schools and supporting children's studies at home is considered a significant parental behaviour that contributes in achieving their desired future goals for their children. From among this sample, very few parents were able to establish a strategic interaction with their children's school through activation of their cultural capital. My analysis indicates that a resource set lacking in economic as well as academic capital has more adverse impact on parents' capability than if their disadvantage was in either form of capital. Parents expand their capabilities as well as generate new ones through activation and effective use of available forms of capital. Through effective involvement in school, parents

generate valuable social capital for their children by securing teachers' extra attention and support for their children's learning through collaborative interaction, which consequently generates highly valued forms of academic capital for their children (Asifa, p.243). Since this parental capability is more prevalent in HSMC parents due to the favourable combination of their resource set, it is indicated through parents' concerted efforts aimed at securing middle-class advantage for their children (Sajjad, p.244). LSMC parents generally trust and rely upon teachers' professional competencies regarding the education of their children.

Providing assistance in children's studies at home is mother's responsibility according to gendered division of parental role and somewhat problematic for illiterate LSMC mothers in this sample. The data indicates that these parents generate a within-family social capital by establishing the parental authority of the mother and using it effectively for implementing a strict studies regime for their children; mother's authoritative status in the family is backed by father. Fathers provide occasional guidance to their children in doing homework or preparing for tests when required. Some parents in my sample use low-charging neighbourhood tutors for assistance in their children's homework, while others use short-term private tuitions in science, maths and English subjects near the exams. The Mahtab family, who cannot afford private tuition academy for their high school sons, devised a system of learning their lessons first from Urdu textbooks and once understood thoroughly studying the same in English. Both parents keep company with their sons during their studies to provide emotional support to them.

Inculcating the value of hard work in their children is emphasised by many participants (e.g. Aqeela, p.252; Adeela, p.258). After doing their best, parents leave their children's future in the hands of their fate. Parents' belief in *taqdeer* is a significant matrix of their habitus that impacts their perception of their parental roles and responsibilities regarding the education of their children; participating parents generally perceive their role as facilitators. Integral to their belief in *taqdeer* are their hopes for the future of their

296

children in spite of their limitations. Qamar, a LSMC father, relies on *Taqdeer* along with trust in teachers and his children's hard work (Qamar, p.254); he believes that his role as parents is to support teachers and his children's efforts towards this goal.

4. Family Capabilities

In this section, I will explore the generation of family capabilities as the overarching strategy adopted by families to overcome their constraints in the context of the three main sets of capabilities that is, aspiration formulation, school choice, and involvement in children's education in and out of school. My research looks at parenting practices in relation to children's schooling in the context of capability approach in combination with Bourdieusian concepts of capital, habitus and field. According to the capability approach, the capability of a person is indicated by the different combinations of 'beings and doings' she can achieve; it reflects a person's freedom to choose between alternatives, while functioning is the achievement of a person- what she is able to *do* or *be*, or a part of the state of that person (Sen, 2006a, p.440). Thus, essential to the concept of capability is the 'choices' which comprise the alternative functionings or goals to choose from and the concept of the 'choice' inheres the agency of the person, i.e. *the ability to define and act upon one's goals*. Agency may take such form of observable individual or collective action as decision-making, bargaining, negotiation, protest, resistance, struggle, repression and so on (Kabeer, 2003 p.4). This concept of agency inheres freedom-freedom to define, choose, and act upon one's goals. However, such comprehensive freedom may not be available to agents; agents may have to adapt their preferences and goals to the set of resources available and accessible to them, to make them achievable. By adapting their preferences and regimentation of their desires, agents compromise some *beings* and *doings* to achieve others in consideration to the combination and amount of various forms of capital available to them or their perception of thereof. Thus, as a deliberate act, adaptation insinuates freedom and constraints

simultaneously; freedom to choose and prioritise from among the available options and adaptation to reduce the constraint on their most desired options. Whereas, agency is facilitated by the combination and relevance of the available forms of capital to the choice in question and favours those who possess more relevant forms of capital in the context of the field in question. Any disadvantage in the combination and relevance of the available forms of capital necessitates adaptation and regimentation of preferences for optimum *being* and *doing* in spite of given disadvantage.

The deliberate adjustment of goals and preferences with accessible and available resources is a constant feature of choice-making among all social strata; however, choices made with adequate and inadequate resources are not same; choices made with adequate resources aim to secure and enhance advantage, while those made with inadequate resources aim to reduce disadvantage and gain advantage in a given field. The level of agency for both types of decision-making is different although both aim to expand capability. It is also important to note here that most choices, even individual ones, have a collective context; for example, collective choices like social policy regarding education determine individuals' capability or their options to secure or gain advantage or to reduce their disadvantage. Moreover, dispositions are acquired in social context and demarcate the extent of choices available to individuals through an internalized framework that makes some possibilities inconceivable, others improbable and a limited range acceptable (Reay, 2004).Thus, a discriminatory education system facilitates the privileged and excludes underprivileged from such options which expand individual's capability and enhance their position in the field of education through exclusionary structures like tough admission criteria favours higher academic capital of parents and generally higher academic capital accompanies higher economic capital. Exclusion of underprivileged is also effected through individual's dispositions which accept the arbitrary as the divine order and their embedded dispositions consider only those school options for their children which are 'meant' for them.

298

Choice making regarding the education of children is a continuing process for parents and numerous factors impact upon their capability to make such choices. Firstly, the enabling conditions within the field of interest in the form of conducive institutional structures for equitable access to schooling options for all; succinctly, availability of public schools with good infrastructures, good teachers and favourable admission policy. A rural school without a building or teachers, or an urban one with strict admission policy curtail the capability of school choices for many parents. The impact of such constraints is worse for those with limitations on their resources- the second significant impact on capability formulation. Resources constitute preconditions for the real choice (Kabeer, 2003 p.4); whereas public resources create enabling conditions to expand individual's capability to choose, volume and structure of individuals' capital further augment this capability. Thus access to, and control over various forms of capital and their relevance to the field of power, is significant for the capability to choose and individuals and groups develop and use various mechanisms for effective utilisation of resources to expand this capability. The group action to expand capabilities collectively have been theorised by many and impact of collective action on the capability set of individuals has been probed as an effective social mechanism for capability expansion. Various terms have been used by scholars to designate collective human capabilities; i.e. group capabilities (Stewart, 2005); collective capabilities (Ballet, Dubois and Mahieu, 2007; Evans, 2002; Ibrahim, 2013; Kabeer, 2003) and external capabilities (Foster and Handy, 2008). Generally, the concept of collective capabilities is envisaged as organized support groups for the underprivileged.

These concepts of organized structures to generate collective capabilities however, do not take into account the dynamics of power fields like education, which support the arbitrary and maintain the privilege of the dominant through exclusionary structures as discussed earlier. For example, the education policy in Pakistan prohibits any *screening* for admission into government schools, however, policy is not implemented

even in the government schools in Islamabad (P.31). Moreover, establishment of separate schools for working-class children enhances their disadvantage through predictable exclusion from competition for better provisioned public schools for middle-class. This disjuncture of policy and practice leaves the challenge to the family, to reduce their disadvantage and gain access to better schooling opportunities for their children.

The analysis of my qualitative data suggested a family strategy of combining of individual family members' resources and capital to generate collective capabilities to achieve their shared functionings. It has been found by my research that where families share aspirations and goals, they combine their resources to achieve their desired functionings and to face the hard conditions of life together. I found that parents seek their well-being in the achievements of their children and exercise their agency-freedom (Sen, 2006b, p.91) by making choices for their children. Thus, even many LSMC parents found a semblance of agency as well as well-being through the perception that their functioning vectors point to their desired trajectory for the education of their children. Semerci (2004; 2007) uncovered similar attitudes amongst the rural migrant women living in squatter settlements of Istanbul-Turkey; she found that these women did not see themselves as separate individuals from their families (Uyan-Semerci, 2007, p.210).

Participants of my research also showed this kind of expanded notion of self that integrated their family into their 'being and doing'. Their aspirations for the future of their children are indicative of their cognisance of their capability to 'do' and to realize what they aspire to 'be', along with their families in the future. To achieve their desired 'beings', parents activate and combine the forms of capital possessed by each, to generate a collective capability within the family to achieve their shared functionings. I present the capability thus generated as collective capability of the family or *family capability*. I perceive family capabilities as joint capabilities generated through combined efforts of family members to achieve shared as well as individual goals and functionings. This concept of family capability is different from the concepts of collective capabilities presented above in that

this capability is generated within the family by voluntarily combining individuals' resources. Although enabling conditions facilitate and augment this capability, these are not essential like in the socially established formal support groups; in fact, family capability is generated due to and in spite of absence or lack of such social support. This shared capability is generated through interaction between individuals directly related to each other, however, it is not a derived capability like external capabilities (Foster and Handy, 2008) where one of the participants benefit from the capability of the other, for example, children benefit from the capability of parents. Family capability has a broader connotation, with family members combining their individual capabilities to generate a set of new shared capabilities for the whole group; for example, even children contribute as active agents in generating family capability by working hard for their studies The family is a group of agents with a shared habitus and a network of objective relations with common interests and plays to increase their shared capital for enhancing their position in the fields they choose to play, e.g. education Let's take the example of a LSMC family that aspires for good education for their children but are constrained by low financial as well as academic capital due to mother's illiteracy. This mother activates her parental authority, to generate the capability to provide a conducive study environment at home by establishing a routine for her children; her husband facilitates this capability by supporting her authority with children. Likewise, father is doing part-time jobs after regular work to increase their economic capital and mother supports him by taking on routine domestic chores and responsibilities. Parents' combined actions facilitate children's education through generating social capital in the family, communicating a sense of purpose and establishing a stable routine for studies. These parents are extending the benefits of their joint capability to children and supporting each other in generating new forms of capital and new capabilities for the whole family and children are augmenting parents' capability to provide best possible education for them by making effective use of their extended capabilities. Thus, this collectively generated family capability works by reducing disadvantage and to gain advantage. The combined efforts of the

family members are expanding capabilities of the individual members as well as the capability of the whole family as a unit (e.g. Fameem Family, Ch-6; Salamat family, Ch-7).

Due to the intimate and compact nature of the family group, the realization of family's shared functionings requires some degree of commitment from all members; the nature of family makes it a group of agents with shared habitus. I situate the concept of *family capabilities* in between the collective and individual capabilities. Ibrahim elaborates individual and collective capabilities thus:

> ...individual capabilities, resulting from the individual's freedom to choose the life he/she has reason to value, and collective capabilities generated through the individual's engagement in a collective action. The expansion of collective capabilities not only requires the use of agency freedom (i.e. individuals pursuing goals other than their own), but also involves the participation in a collectivity. The main differences between individual and collective capabilities are therefore the *process* through which these capabilities come about and their potential of benefiting the *collectivity* at large (Ibrahim, 2006, p.404).

Viewed in the light of the above quote and earlier discussion, family capabilities expand individual's capability through expansion of the collective capability of the family and conversely individuals contribute towards expansion of the collective capability of the family. Enabling conditions created by favourable social structures, norms and institutional arrangements facilitate family capabilities which enhance the relative advantage of family as well as the individuals. The effectiveness of family capability as a strategy to face and overcome adversities is influenced by individual family members' *voluntary self-constraint* (Ballet, Bhukuth and Radja, 2006, p.185) and dedication to the shared goals of the family. The concept of family capability also inheres 'dual sets of freedoms and of responsibilities' (Ballet, Bhukuth and Radja, 2006, p.187) for individual family members, and collective agency as shared 'meanings, motivations and purpose' (Kabeer, 2003 p.4). The shared perception of *good* acquired

302

through their habitus directs concerted efforts of family members for the realization of their desired goals. Family capabilities are instrumental in their character and individual capabilities impact not only on individuals' but family's capability sets as well, e.g. fathers' capability to earn a livelihood or mothers' capability of being healthy influence the opportunities available to the other family members including children. Thus, individual's capability to choose the life they value, depends on the possibility of their working together with other family members (Evans, 2002, p.56). To engage the support of the family to achieve personal goals, individuals need to align their goals with the family habitus or their unified principles of choice. For example, a father who aspires for religious education for his son cannot achieve this goal if his son is not interested in religious career. Children's schooling is a family goal which requires collective as well as individual input for its realization. In the same manner, when the family is able to achieve their preferred type of schooling for their children, it benefits children as individuals by expanding their opportunities to live valued lives, and also benefits the family by enhancing their opportunities to achieve what they value as a group. To achieve their shared goals the family uses their unifying habitus to devise strategies to challenge the societal structures of reproduction of arbitrary of the dominant through education system, to enhance their relative positioning first in the field of education and later in the field of economics; their success also generates symbolic capital for the family. Thus, family capabilities are set of individual and collective capabilities, purposely generated to achieve individual and collective functionings. I contend that family's inability to join efforts to generate family capabilities by effective utilisation of their capital enhances disadvantages for the family as well as the individual, for example a LSMC child's educational opportunities may be constrained due to lack of parental capability to reduce their disadvantage or enhance their advantage.

The contribution of my study is to deepen understanding about the complex ways a group of middle-class parents in Pakistan aspire, choose and engage with their children's education. It draws out ways in which gender,

cultural and economic resources influence these engagements, and adds a theoretical contribution with the notion of family capabilities. The concept of family capabilities as a strategy to enhance family's relative position in the field of education, is particularly important in the context of Pakistani society, where the lower income families face many constraints due to a discriminatory education system that reproduces the cultural arbitrary of the dominant and restricts the access of the less privileged to equitable educational opportunities. Family capabilities indicate a resilience to the discriminatory education system among urban parents with low academic and economic capital. My research highlights the need for an effective education policy in the culturally diverse society of Pakistan to bond the cultural diversity with unifying values and bridging social strata with fair opportunities for those who aspire for better life opportunities for their children.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Generative Questions

Themes	Questions	Topics
Self, spouse and family	Tell me about yourself; where are you from, about your schooling and your job. Now tell me about your spouse, their schooling and their job. What type of family do you have? How many children do you have and what other family members share this accommodation with you?	**self and spouse; children; size and type of family; headship; literacy/education; regional affiliations; family history; gender dynamics within the household**
Schooling decisions	What aspirations do you have for your children? Where do your children go to school? Do your children go to the school you preferred for them? Why you chose this school for them?	**Aspirations; preferences; type of schooling; gender differences; issues related with schooling (familial, regional, religious, economic, political and social);**
Freedoms and constraints	What problems and constraints do you face regarding the schooling of your children? What do you think is needed to provide good schooling for your children? Are you happy with the schooling of your children? Do you visit your children's school? Do you help your children with their homework?	**Parents' capabilities, agency, freedoms and constraints**

Appendix 2: Checklist

1. Name: _____

2. Age: _____

3. Gender: _____

4. Family status: _____

5. Qualification: _____

6. Job: _____

7. Department: _____

8. Basic pay scale: _____

9. Salary: _____

10. Family income: _____

11. Place of origin: _____

12. Age, grade and school of children:

Age	Gender	Grade	School

Other family members living in the household:

Appendix 3: Codes

	Code	Description
1	**Family**	**Family History** **Origin**
2	**Individual**	**Parents' own education and occupation** **Perceptions about self as parent**
3	**Children**	**Number, gender and age of children** **Parents' perceptions regarding their children** **Children's characteristics (gender, disability, disposition)**
4	**School Choice**	**Reasons for school choice** **Process of school choice** **The school chosen**
5	**Aspirations**	**Intrinsic value of education** **Instrumental value of education**
	School Preference	**Type of school (private/public/Madrassah)** **Type of education (Secular/religious)**
6	**Capability & Agency**	**Perceptions about freedoms regarding children's education (personal, economic, social, structural)** **Perceptions about constraints regarding children's education (personal, economic, social, structural)**
7	**Engagement in education**	**Views about own role in children's education** **Participation in school** **Involvement in out of school education** **Views regarding own and school's (teachers') role in children's education**
8	**Gender**	**Parents gender** **Child's gender**
9	**Fatalism**	
10	**Migration**	

Appendix 4: Family Social Class Score Card*

Education	
illiterate	0
Less than 5yrs	1
Up to 10yrs	2
Up to 12yrs	3
Bachelors/ technical education	4
Post graduate	5
Income	
No personal income	0
Rs 12,000.00 or less (£86.00 @ Rs. 140.00)	1
Up to Rs 20,000.00 (£143.00)	2
Up to 25,000.00 (£179.00)	3
More than 25,000.00	4
Occupation	
No paid job	0
Self-employed/Business	1
Salaried job	2
Origin	
Rural	0
urban	1

*Both parents are valuated on this score card separately, and their scores are combined to workout family score. Families with two-digit score are categorized as High-Scoring-Middle-Class (HSMC) while those with single digit score are grouped as Low-Scoring-Middle-Class (LSMC).

Appendix 5: Various Types of School in Islamabad

1-Public

Federal Govt Schools

F. G. Schools (IMSs)

Urdu medium schools, established for lower level govt employees' children, generally understaffed and inadequate facilities. These institutions are called IMS or Islamabad Model Schools prsently.

F G Model Colleges (IMCs)

English medium schools for upper level govt employees; highly educated and trained staff, latest facilities

Islamabad School for Girls/Boys

Best public sector institutions providing high quality education from preschool to post graduate levels.

Other Govt organisations

For example, Armed forces, Capital Development Authority; originally established for the employees of these organisations, now offer enrolment to general public as well. Fees are quite high for non-employees' children.

2-Private Schools

General Private Schools

Established in small residential buildings; offer affordable English medium education for middle & lower class families.

Elitist Private School

School Systems or Chains

These systems have their branches all over the country. Mostly follow British education system and their students sit for O and A level exams.

International/ exclusive Schools

Follow different systems and generally charge fees in foreign currency.

NGO Schools

Established by NGOs and provide formal and non-formal subsidized or free education to underprivileged children, for example schools for out of school children and home schools.

3- Religious Schools

Modern Islamic Schools

Offer a combination of modern and religious education and are privately run at commercial basis.

Madrassah

Madrassah are run by donations and charity, free boarding lodging are provided to students along with their educational expenses.

Advanced levels of religious education is provided, infrastructures are competitive.

Small establishments with scarce resources and not very well educated staff.

Christian Missionary Schools

Commercially managed schools, charge high fees from students.

One charity school for the children of low income Christian population of Islamabad. These children are not allowed transfers or admission to other Christian schools.

Appendix 6: List of Schools Attended by Participants' Children

|			
1	FG Model School, NIH, (previously Junior Model School)	Govt	Girls high school, co-ed till 5th grade. Has been upgraded from primary to middle and recently to matriculation
2	FG Boys Higher Secondary School #15, Chak Shahzad. Islamabad.	Govt	English medium public school just outside the NIH colony
3	FG Girls Secondary School #12 NIH, Islamabad	Govt	Urdu medium public school on the premises
4	Islamabad School, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad	Pvt	Low-cost private (LCP) school
5	Shafqat Memorial School, Chak Shahzad, Islamabad	Pvt	Low-cost private (LCP) school
6	IMCB, Islamabad Model College for Boys, G-10/4, Islamabad.	Govt	well-reputed English Medium higher secondary institution
7	IMCB, Islamabad Model College for Boys, F-7/3, Islamabad.	Govt	well-reputed English Medium higher secondary institution
8	IMCG, Islamabad Model College for Girls, F-7/4, Islamabad	Govt	well-reputed English Medium institution from grade one to graduate level; morning and evening shifts
9	IMCG, Islamabad Model College for Girls, F-6/2, Islamabad	Govt	well-reputed English Medium higher secondary institution; morning and evening shifts
10	ICB, Islamabad College for Boys, G-6/3, Islamabad	Govt	from class one to the post-graduate level; morning and evening shifts
11	ICG, Islamabad College for Girls, F-6/2, Islamabad	Govt	from class one to the post-graduate level
12	OPF, Overseas Pakistani Foundation Schools, Islamabad	Pvt	Expensive private school
13	Jamia Fatima Tu Zahra, Islamabad	Pvt	Madrassah for girls
14	CD Observation lab. FGFW, FG College for Women, F-7/2, Islamabad	Govt	A preschool facility at a postgraduate institution in the Child Development Observation Lab
15	FG Margalla College for Women, F-7/4, Islamabad	Govt	Higher secondary and degree
16	RIT, Rawalpindi Institute of Technology, Rawalpindi		
17	Iqra Centre for Technical Education, Islamic University, Islamabad	Govt	
18	University of Arid Agriculture, Rawalpindi	Govt	
19	Allama Iqbal Open university, Islamabad	Govt	
20	Modern age Public School, Abbottabad.	Pvt	A private residential school in Abbottabad, a hill station in KPKP.

Appendix 7: Key to Transcription

| Symbol	Significance
..	Pause for less than .5 of a second
...	Pause for more than .5 of a second (unless precisely timed)
=	Overlap
( )	Back ground occurrences and interviewee's gestures/actions
[ ]	Interviewer's explanations
//	Final fall
/	Slight fall (indicating more could be said)
?	stronger 'questioning' intonation, irrespective of grammar.
-	truncation
~	Fluctuation over one word
*	Accent; normal prominence
↑↓	notable changes in pitch
↑↑	Very high pitch
heh heh	Voiced laughter
> <	speeded-up talk
< >	Slower talk
	Back channel talk (someone who is not being transcribed)
'text'	Original quotation
[...]	Omission from the quote

# Appendix 8: NIH Colony

An Aerial View of NIH Colony
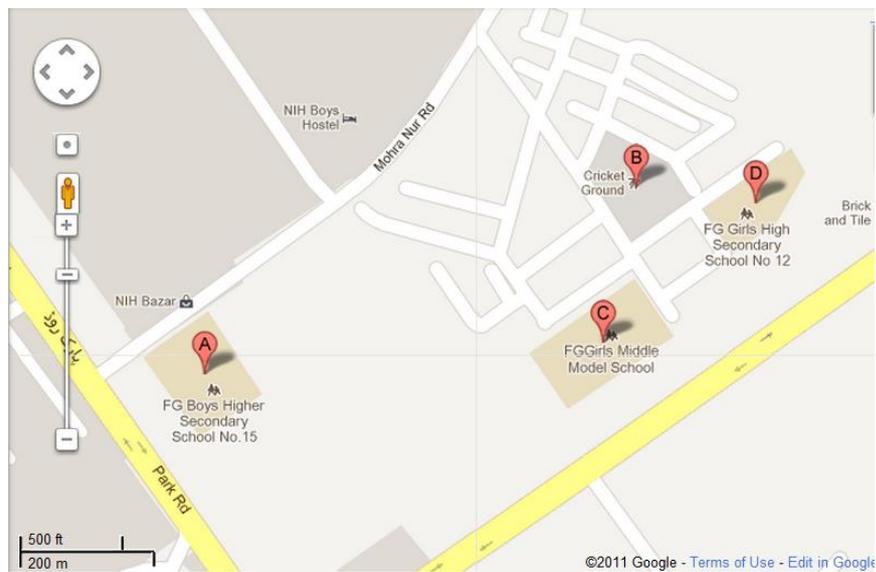
*Location of Public Schools in NIH Colony*

Appendix 9: NIH Accommodation for Low-Grade Employees

House Plan

Backyard
Kitchen
Bath
Verand
Bed room
Bed room
Drawing room
Front yard

House Plan B

Backyard
Bathroom
Veranda
Kitchen
Bed room
Drawing room
Veranda
Front yard
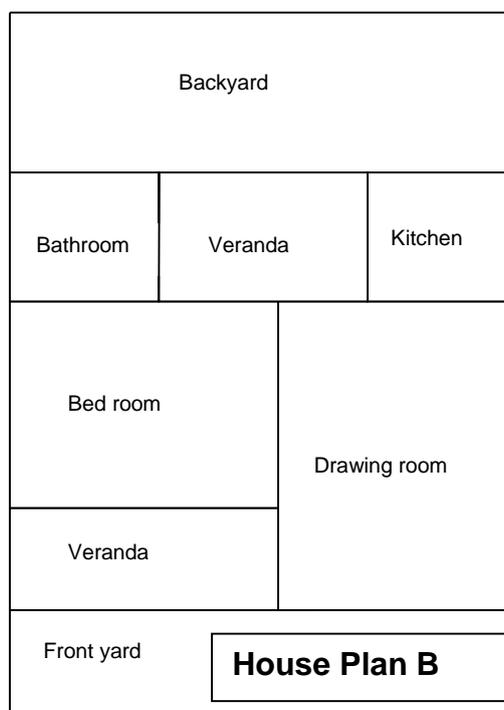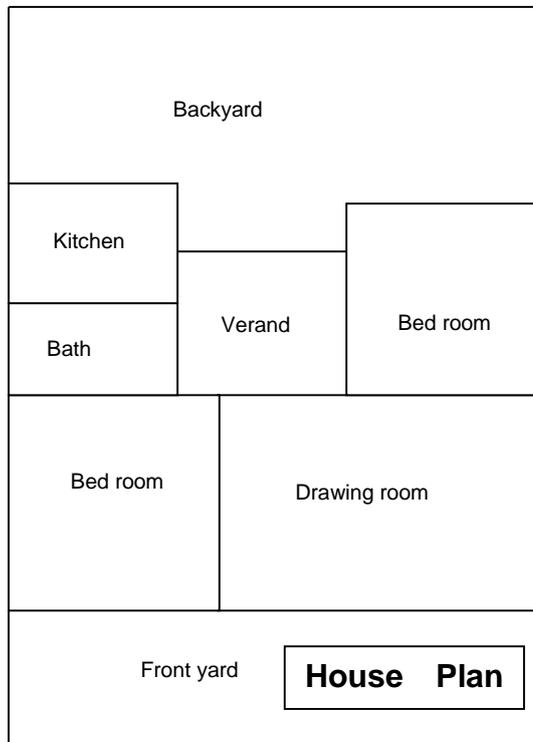
Appendix-10: Location of NIH Colony
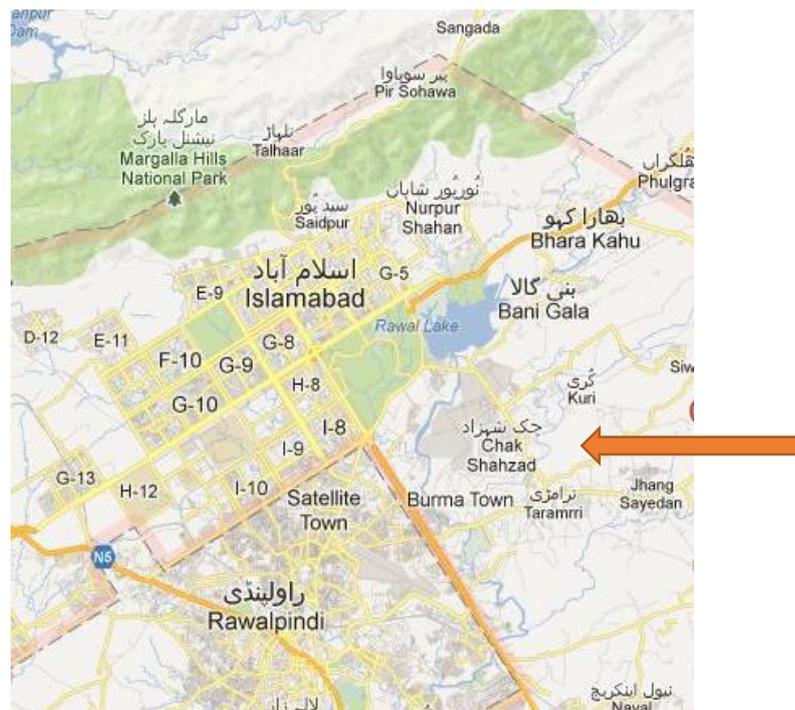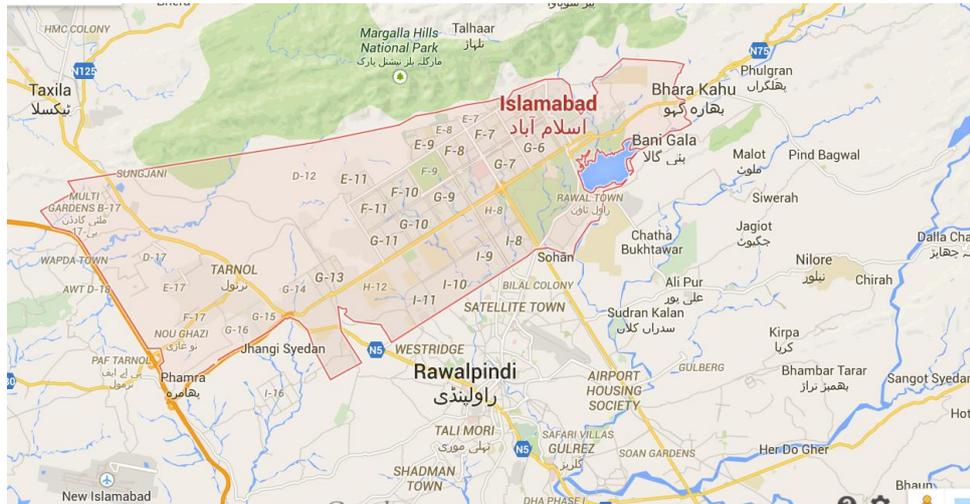
Appendix-11: FDE Admission Policy

Admission Policy
for all Educational Institutions under FDE

The admission policy aims at providing a uniform pattern and guidelines for admission, from Class-I-IX students in Islamabad Model Schools/Colleges (Boys & Girls) under Federal Directorate of Education, Islamabad. The general admission procedure for both Boys & Girls is as follows;

i.   Admission will be open for daughter /sons of Federal Government employees residing in Islamabad/ Rawalpindi and residents of Federal Capital Area of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

ii.   Admission will be offered according to the number of seats available in the various classes.

iii.   The students desirous of admission have to qualify the admission test with at least 40% marks in the subject of English, Math, Urdu & General Science.

iv.   All the admission cases will be managed at institution level by the respective Heads / Principals.

v.   Migration cases will be entrained at institutions level by the principal.

vi.   Foreigner / Refugees / IDPs will provide the Registration Certificate issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or respective authority at the time of   admission.

vii.   No request for change in name, DOB and Father Name will be entrained at later stage. In this regard the first entry in the admission form made by the Parents/Guardian at the time of admission will be considered final.

viii.   Fee / Fund will be charged as per Uniform Fee and Fund Structure for Educational Institutions working under FDE as and when notified separately.

ix.   The Admission of the students from Class Prep / I to IX shall be carried out sector based as first priority.

x.   The students from Class-Prep/I to IX from other sectors or areas may also be   accommodated in an institution in very limited proportion as second priority and earnest efforts will be made to ensure maximum enrolment as per Government Policy.

http://www.fde.gov.pk/admissionPolicy1213.htm Last visited: 23rd Dec, 2015

Appnedix-12: IMCB, G-10/4-Fee Schedule

Following fees/funds are charged for the classes mentioned against each:

Class I TO X (Free)

Class XI TO XII

Admission Fee/Admission Fund	Rs.1000/- (once only)
College Registration Fee for Admission	Rs.200/-**
Tuition Fee	Rs.200/- p.m.
Laboratory Fund (Pre-Engineering Group)	Rs.20/- p.m.
Laboratory Fund (Pre-Medical Group)	Rs.20/- p.m.
Library Security (Refundable)	Rs.250/- (once only)
Student Identity Card	Rs.20/- (annually)
Report/Result Card	Rs.20/- (annually)
In-House Examination Fee	Rs.200/-(annually)
Bus Fee	Rs.500/- p.m.
Magazine Fund	Rs.100/- (annually)
PTA Fund	Rs. 40/- (annually)
Fee Card	Rs.20/- (annually)

http://imcbgten4.edu.pk/?page_id=164 visited on 23/12/2015

Appendix-13: Basic Pay Scales- 2008

BPS	Min- Max (PKR)	Min- Max (GBP)
7	3530-9230	27.57- 72.10
8	3665-9965	28.63- 77.85
9	3820-10720	29.84- 83.75
10	3955-11755	30.89- 91.83
11	4115-12365	32.14- 96.60
12	4355-13655	34.02- 106.67
13	4645-14845	36.28- 115.97
14	4920-16320	38.43- 127.5
15	5220-17820	40.78- 139.21
16	6060-20160	47.34- 157.5
Average conversion rate from GBP to PKR during 2009 =128 https://www.oanda.com/currency/average		

Gazetted Posts		
1	Class I	Grade 17 to 23
2	Class II	Grade 16
Non-Gazetted Posts		
3	Class II	Grades 11 to 15
4	Class III	Grades 3 to 10
5	Class IV	1 and 2