

ABSTRACT

Title of dissertation: SOCIAL SPACES ENABLING GIRLS' EDUCATION IN
INDIA: AN OUTSIDER'S STUDY

Patricia Marie Kewer, Doctor of Philosophy, 2012

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Education is viewed as central to improving the quality of life in developing countries. Indeed, two United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) respectively call for every child worldwide to receive at least a primary education and the elimination of the so-called "gender gap," favoring boys, at all education levels. India has been striving to meet these MDGs, and has virtually eliminated the gender gap at the primary level. MDG statistics show, though, girls still trailing boys at the secondary level and a much wider tertiary-level gender gap.

This research studies, in a spatial context, a purposefully selected group of students--young Indian women who have been challenged not only by gender but also in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way. Nonetheless, these students are educational success stories. The four study participants all have been schooled in India through at least the undergraduate level and are graduate students in the United States.

The research investigates the specific social spaces, and the settings and processes found in or between these spaces, enabling the participants' educations. The role of patriarchy is also explored.

Conducted by an "outsider" American woman, the multiple case study is principally qualitative. Feminism, through a geographical lens, provides the theoretical framework.

An extensive questionnaire and in-depth personal interviews have been utilized as the main participant information collection tools. Data collected have been coded into categories used to construct participant education narratives. These narratives then have been analyzed to identify and develop research-related themes for each participant and also cross and collective participant themes.

The thematic findings identify a number of educationally enabling social spaces, including home, school, and cyber spaces. Other enabling factors, such as mentors, personal agency, and English language ability are also determined.

The research clearly shows the importance of identified social spaces in aiding or hindering the participants' educations. Often, too, both positive and negative influences were found in the same space. Furthermore, the education space has served as a link between the home space and the professional work space, and the participants' educations have resulted in spatial, economic, and social mobility.

SOCIAL SPACES ENABLING GIRLS' EDUCATION IN INDIA:
AN OUTSIDER'S STUDY

by

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2012

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the support and efforts of many individuals, both in the United States and in India. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the major players who have helped me and to thank all the people who assisted me in any way.

First of all, my thanks to my Advisory Committee, Professors Samuel Goward, Rajarshi Roy, Naijun Zhou, and Klaus Hubacek. Special thanks is owed to my chair, Professor Martha Geores, who held everything together even when there were significant challenges to overcome.

The guidance provided by the impressive group of experts who participated in the dissertation research background interviews (Appendix A) is also gratefully acknowledged. I was fortunate indeed to have the opportunity to do these interviews, and it was very kind of all of you to take the time to talk with me.

The research had its inception in talking with an Indian doctoral student in the Department of Geographical Sciences at the University of Maryland, Anupam Anand. Anupam, thank you for making sure I had the necessary logistical support in India when traveling there and for all your help and encouragement. I very much thank, too, your network of friends in India for their help, and especially Radhakanta Naik, N.R. Levin, Jaffar Ali, and Yash Raaj. I also must thank Amiya Das, whom I have never actually met in person but who always seemed to be magically behind the scenes to assist me in India.

To Dr. Tanya Roy, I truly appreciate your giving me a place to stay in Delhi when others would not during the swine flu epidemic. It has been a wonderful experience

getting to know everyone at your home. To Manali Baruah and to Dr. Arvind Thomas, I am very grateful to you both for your help during my initial visit to Delhi and since.

There are others, too, who have made significant contributions to this research effort. Please know your help was pivotal to this study being completed.

Clearly, the research would have been impossible without the remarkable young women who volunteered to be participants. Thank you for your courage in sharing your education stories and I have nothing but the utmost respect for each of you.

To Professor Anindita Datta of the University of Delhi, your assistance has been invaluable and my sincere thanks to you for being an important contributor to this study. To fellow student Praveen Noojipady, thank you so much, too, for your perspective on the research.

To Professor Marshall Bowen, Distinguished Professor of Geography, Emeritus, University of Mary Washington, you have been such a thoughtful sounding board in my pursuit of this degree. Thank you for this and for all your mentoring over the years.

Many thanks, also, to Wilhelmina Johnson and Bob Crossgrove of Geographical Sciences. The help you have given me administratively has been so important.

Finally, my family needs to be acknowledged for putting up with all of this. Your considerable contributions and sacrifices in this effort, which you appreciated was very important to me, will always be remembered.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Education is central to improving the quality of life in developing countries. Indeed, two of the 2001 United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) specifically address the critical need to educate all young people around the world. Education is key to achieving the other stated development goals as well. The eight MDGs are:

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

--(United Nations 2011)

India, one such developing country according to *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2011* (United Nations 2011, 67) and ranked 134th out of 187 countries on the 2011 Human Development Index (United Nations Development Programme 2011, 129-30), has been striving to meet Goals 2 and 3, and in the process also has been working to close a male-leaning “gender gap” at all levels of education. There has in fact been much progress in this regard, especially at the primary level, where the latest available MDG statistics for India show (as of May 22, 2012 and discussed in Chapter 2), that the gender gap at the primary level has been virtually closed. The MDG statistics also show, though, that girls still trail boys at the secondary level, and that the gender gap grows much wider at the tertiary level of education in India. India’s patriarchal culture is generally thought to underlie the educational gender gap which has existed in the country.

1.2: PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

In order to understand more fully and address this educational gender gap which has been found in India, the dissertation research studies, in a spatial context, a select group of students--young Indian women who have been challenged educationally not only by gender but also in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way. Nonetheless, these students are educational success stories. To be selected for the study, the women must have been schooled in India through the secondary level and be undergraduate or graduate students in the United States.

The research systematically investigates the social spaces which have been important to the study participants in their lived educational experiences. In addition, the research examines the traditional separation of home and work spaces by gender and the school space as a link between the two. The resulting information and analysis furthers the understanding of how social spaces can positively impact girls' education in India--understanding which may inform future discourse and actions related to this issue.

1.3: THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Three key research questions are addressed in this study. They are:

1. What are the specific social spaces, such as home or school spaces--often spaces in opposition to girls' education in India because of patriarchal considerations--which have enabled the students to succeed in their studies?
2. What are the settings and processes found in or between these spaces which have enabled the students' educational success?
3. What role, if any, has patriarchy played in their educations?

Social space may be characterized as that space which is "...constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all spatial scales..." (Massey 1994, 4). For the

purposes of this study, “social spaces,” where human interactions occur, have been broadly defined. For example, a social space may be:

- a specific physical space, e.g., a school;
- a cultural area, e.g., Hindu India; or
- a cyberspace, e.g., a relevant chat room.

1.4: RESEARCH DESIGN OVERVIEW

This “outsider” research by an American woman is principally qualitative, with feminism providing the theoretical framework as interpreted through a geographical lens. The study participants were purposefully selected as described above. Prospective students were recruited through appropriate channels (discussed in Chapter 3), and the final participants were selected using a questionnaire.

The main participant information collection tools for this instrumental, multiple-case study were the questionnaire and in-depth personal interviews. Data collected were coded and research-related themes emerged (Cope 2005; Creswell 2007, 172-73) in participant narratives which were constructed focusing on the coding categories, and which constitute a unique database. These themes were analyzed for each individual participant and cross/collective themes for the participants were also identified and analyzed. These themes then formed the bases for answering the research questions and other research concerns. Research validation approaches included the extensive use of participant description; provision of supporting context; and participant, peer, and expert reviews.

1.5: EXPECTED OUTCOMES

One would expect the home space, and the presence of an encouraging family member or members within this home space, to be an important social space enabling a girl's education. This may also be true for a school space in which one or more key teachers are found. Furthermore, one would also expect patriarchy to be a negative factor in the study participants' educational experiences or to be a non-factor. These preconceptions, however, were not assumed; for example, a student could be motivated to succeed because of a poor home environment. One outcome of the study was to determine if the preconceptions were supported or not.

It was envisaged, however, that particular social spaces would have enabled the study participants in their educations, and that this study would identify these social spaces, whether "expected" or "unexpected" spaces. The identification of these spaces contributes additional information to addressing the issue of girls' education in India and, possibly, in the right contexts, other parts of the developing world.

1.6: IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Clearly, girls' education in India is a critical issue. "Ensuring gender equality and empowering women in all respects...are required to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to ensure sustainable development" (United Nations 2008, 5).

This research study gives voice to the participants' experiences, thus providing context to the issue of girls' education in India while addressing the key study questions. The study findings provide meaning and understanding to issues related to the equitable education of girls in India and may also positively influence, in some way, debate, social policy, and, ultimately, outcomes in the effort to strengthen girls' education in India.

As one mainstream writer has put it:

[I]f you want to change the world, invest in girls....

“...Investment in girls’ education may well be the highest-return investment available in the developing world,” Larry Summers wrote when he was chief economist at the World Bank....

...We have to start by listening to girls....

--(Gibbs 2011, 64)

This is what the dissertation research has done--listen.

1.7: DISSERTATION ORGANIZATION

Following this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 presents the research context. The chapter examines the Millennium Development Goal 2 and Goal 3 indicators for India related to the research and also includes a discussion on patriarchy in general and in India in particular. Additionally, relevant Indian demographic and educational system information is given.

Chapter 3 presents the specifics of the research design. The theoretical framework focuses on feminism as well as gender and space. The research procedures related to the case studies are also delineated. This includes discussion of the Institutional Review Board approval required for the study and also the issue of researcher positionality. Finally, a brief overview of each participant’s home state or union territory, including sex-ratio and literacy figures indicative of female status, is also found in this chapter.

The case studies are presented in Chapter 4, with Chapter 5, concerned with research validation, containing the verbatim reviews of the research. The final chapter, Chapter 6, centers on the dissemination of the study and what may be accomplished by doing so.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH CONTEXT

2.1: INTRODUCTION

Two United Nations Millennium Development Goals have associated with them four education-related indicators used to monitor the goals. These goals, indicators, and associated statistics for India are presented in this chapter to provide context for the research study. Also in this regard, an examination of patriarchy, both in general and specifically in India, is undertaken. Furthermore, select demographic data for India are given, and, finally, some specifics concerning the Indian education system are presented.

2.2: THE EDUCATION MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Millennium Development Goal 2, *Achieve universal primary education*, has the target to “[e]nsure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling” (United Nations 2011, 16). Goal 3, *Promote gender equality and empower women*, has as its target to “[e]liminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015” (United Nations 2011, 20). It is clear from looking at statistics for indicators used to monitor these goals (United Nations) that India has made much progress in regard to education.

For Goal 2, three indicators are utilized. The first one is the “Net enrolment ratio in primary education,” which includes children who are of primary school age. In India, admission to primary school (Grades 1-5) generally begins at age five or six. As of 2008, 96.9% of all Indian children of primary school age were enrolled in school. For 2007,

this enrollment figure for boys was 97.3%, and 93.6% for girls. In 2000, these figures were 85.0, 92.3, and 77.1, respectively (Table 2.1).

Enrollment, of course, is not the same thing as attendance, and school attendance is a concern in India. For example, according to one recent report, for the Indian rural schools surveyed having Standards I-VII/VIII (Grades 1-7/8), an average of 28.1% of the enrolled students were absent the day the school was visited (Pratham 2012, 69).

The second indicator for Goal 2 is the “Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who [are expected to] reach last grade of primary,” also referred to as the “Survival Rate.” Included under this indicator is the “Primary completion rate” or the percentage of students, age-appropriate or not, who actually reach the last primary grade for the first time out of that grade’s age-appropriate population. In 2008, this rate for Indian boys and girls together was 94.8%. For boys only, it was 95.3%. For girls, it was 94.3%. In 2000, these figures were 72.4, 79.9, and 64.2, respectively (Table 2.2).

Finally, the third indicator for Goal 2 is the “Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds, women and men.” This rate is defined in the metadata for this indicator as “...the percentage of the population aged 15-24 years who can both read and write with understanding a short simple statement on everyday life.” Literacy is considered to be “[c]rucial for economic, social and political participation and development, especially in today’s knowledge societies” (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization 2005, 2). In 2006, 81.1% of Indian males and females in the 15-24 age group were considered to be literate, 88.4% of the males and 74.4% of the females. In 2001, the corresponding figures were 76.4, 84.2, and 67.7. The “Women to men parity

Table 2.1 Net Enrolment Ratio in Primary Education (MDG 2)

(All figures last updated on July 7, 2011)

INDIA	2000	2007	2008
Both sexes	85.0	95.5	96.9
Boys	92.3	97.3	
Girls	77.1	93.6	

Table 2.2 Primary Completion Rate (MDG 2)

(All figures last updated on August 9, 2011)

INDIA	2000	2007	2008
Both sexes	72.4	93.6	94.8
Boys	79.9	95.3	95.3
Girls	64.2	91.7	94.3

Table 2.3 Literacy Rate of 15-24 Year-Olds, Women and Men (MDG 2)

(All figures last updated on July 7, 2011)

INDIA	2001	2006
Both sexes	76.4	81.1
Men	84.2	88.4
Women	67.7	74.4
Women to men parity index, as ratio of literacy rates, 15-24 years old	0.80	0.84

**Table 2.4 Gender Parity Index (GPI):
Ratio of Girls to Boys in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education (MDG 3)**

(All figures last updated on August 9, 2011)

INDIA	2000	2007	2008
GPI in primary level enrolment	0.84	0.97	
GPI in secondary level enrolment	0.71	0.86	0.88
GPI in tertiary level enrolment	0.66	0.70	

Source for Tables 2.1-2.4: United Nations.

index, as ratio of literacy rates, 15-24 years old” was 0.80 in 2001 and rose to 0.84 in 2006 (Table 2.3).

The 2006 literacy rates for 15-24 year olds were significantly higher than the corresponding 2006 literacy rates found for all Indian adults 15 and older. For males and females together, the literacy rate was 62.8%. For males, this rate was 75.2% and for females, 50.8% (UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data Centre).

For Goal 3, one indicator directly relates to education, the “Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education.” This ratio, called the Gender Parity Index (GPI), is based on the ratio of the actual number of girls or boys enrolled at a particular educational level to that level’s number of appropriately aged girls or boys in the population (Gross Enrolment Ratio or GER). The GPI is the girl’s GER divided by the boy’s. India’s “Gender Parity Index in primary level enrolment” was 0.97 in 2007 and 0.84 in 2000. At the secondary level (Grades 6-12), the 2008 figure was 0.88, rising from 0.71 in 2000. For those students who reached the tertiary or higher education level (the tertiary population age consists of the five years following the appropriate secondary school completion age), the 2007 GPI figure was 0.70 compared to 0.66 in 2000 (Table 2.4).

All of the statistics for India cited above for Goals 2 and 3 indicate educational improvement--in most cases, substantial gains have been made in recent years, and especially by females. The statistics also reveal, however, that while the so-called educational “gender gap,” favoring males, has been virtually eliminated at the primary level, it is still found at the secondary level of education, and grows much wider moving

to the tertiary educational level. India's widespread patriarchal culture is seen by many to be fundamental to the past and present gender gap in Indian education.

2.3: PATRIARCHY

While many women around the world enjoy much more freedom and equality than in times past, patriarchal restrictions on girls and women are still a fact of life. The need for the third Millennium Development Goal, *Promote gender equality and empower women*, underscores this reality.

McDowell and Sharp (1999, 196) offer this definition of patriarchy:

In its most general sense, the term patriarchy refers to the law of the father, the social control that men as fathers hold over their wives and daughters, but in more specific usage within feminist scholarship patriarchy refers to a system in which men as a group are assumed to be superior to women as a group and so have authority over them.

Dixon and Jones (2006, 47-48) state that:

The term 'patriarchy' describes the systematized exploitation, domination, and subordination--in short, oppression--of women and children through gender relations. It is held together through language, as when men speak loudest, longest and last, and is given form through rules of behavior and legal statutes that stamp in gendered terms what types of activities are desirable, appropriate, expected, or sanctioned, and that specify, formally or informally, who maintains access to material resources.

India's strong patriarchal tradition is still very much in evidence. This is borne out by looking at the Country Profile for India found in the World Economic Forum's *The Global Gender Gap Report 2011* (Hausmann, Tyson, and Zahidi 2011, 198). According to the Forum's Gender Gap Index 2011, which is based on economic, educational, health, and political subindices, India has a score of 0.619 out of 1.00, where 1.00 equals full female equality. This score places India far down the list of countries ranked in the index from more to less equality, 113th out of a total of 135 countries.

One variable used to determine this index is “sex ratio at birth” (Hausmann, Tyson, and Zahidi 2011, 4). There is a pronounced “gender gap” in India’s sex ratio at birth. The Central Intelligence Agency (2012) estimates the 2011 male/female sex ratio at birth for India to be 1.12, or 112 male children born for every 100 females (or about 89 females/100 males). A sex ratio at birth of about 105 males to 100 females is generally considered to be normal (or approximately 95 females/100 males).

Many facets of life in India have been affected by patriarchy, including education. Patriarchy’s impact on girls’ education is embodied in the *Public Report on Basic Education in India* (De et al. 1999) or PROBE Report, concerning rural primary education in five states of northern India.¹

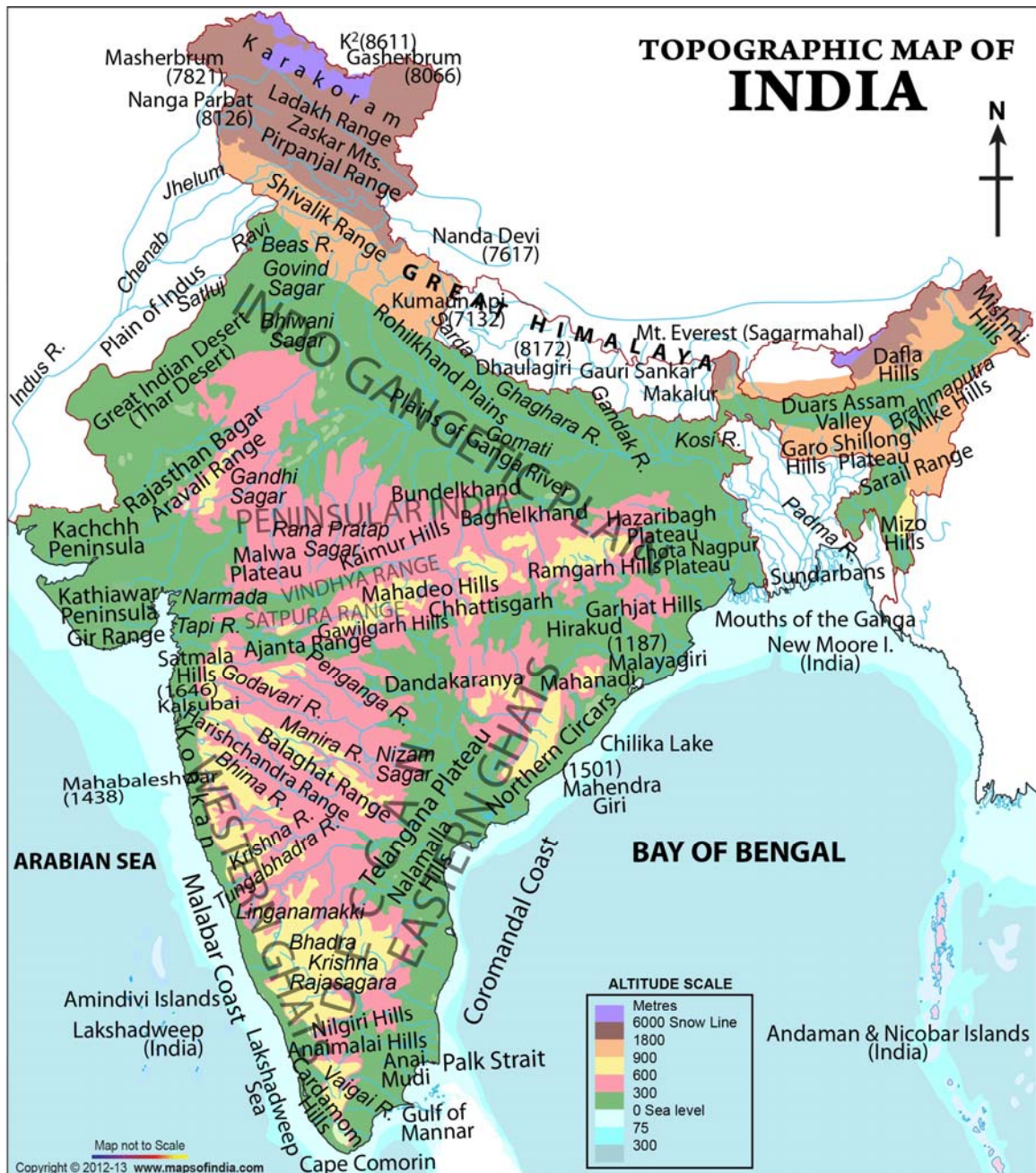
It should be noted that the Indo-Gangetic Plain region of northern India (Figure 2.1) is considered to be the “patriarchal heartland” of the country (Datta 2005, 127). Also, rural education is of special concern in India. For example, *Census of India 2011* provisional figures (2011a) show rural India continues to trail urban India in literacy (see p. 19 below).

The PROBE Report is based on field survey work which took place in 1996 (De et al. 1999, 2). A second survey was carried out in 2006 and the final report from this survey, *PROBE Revisited: A Report on Elementary Education in India* (De et al.), was published in August of 2011.¹ The *PROBE Revisited* investigators have concluded that “[d]espite a quantum leap in the number of children able to access schooling...the situation continues to be dismal” (Collaborative Research and Dissemination).

¹In the PROBE reports, primary education includes Classes 1-5 and elementary education includes Classes 1-8. Classes 6-8 are called “upper primary” or “middle school” in India.

Figure 2.1

Topographic Map of India



Map used by permission of www.mapsofindia.com. Approximate map scale: |——|
~200 kms.

Many of the patriarchal situations described in the original PROBE Report still commonly occur in India and provide insight into the patriarchal educational milieu which has characterized the country. For example, the authors state that “[m]ost parents (mothers no less than fathers) expressed much stronger interest in their sons’ education than in their daughters” on economic grounds (20). For daughters, marriage often is all-important, and when married, the daughter becomes part of the husband’s family (21). As one farmer puts it in the report: “‘It is a problem to get educated girls married. Good families don’t like educated girls. It’s not that girls are going to get a job’” (23). On the other hand, some educated Indian families believe that “[e]ducated girls are valued as brides because they run their houses well” (23).

Dowry considerations also affect a girl’s education as “...social norms require her to marry a better-educated husband” (23).² More education for a daughter, therefore, would seem to translate into a more advantageous match; however, the girl’s parents may have to pay a larger dowry to make that match (23).

Girls may be expected to do housework and to take care of siblings rather than to go to school (22, 31, 34, 121). Even if they are attending school, girls may be confronted with a “sexist curriculum” and the fact that “...boys often receive more attention than girls from the teacher” (51).

The authors also point out that “[t]he absence of female teachers in many schools reinforces the male-dominated nature of the school environment” (51). Even where there

²In India “[a]nti-dowry laws exist but are largely ignored...” (Thakur and Pandey 2009, 150).

are women in teaching positions, they “...are widely treated as second-class employees by their male colleagues” (62).

In the *PROBE Revisited* report, the authors state that, regarding education, “...gendered motivations and aspirations persist” for parents in their study area (48). “As in 1996, motivation for education of boys was very strong and closely tied to improved income and employment opportunities...” (48). Also as in the previous study, “[e]ducation-employment linkages were less important for girls than boys in the 2006 Survey...” (48). The second study does find, however, “...that parents’ [educational] aspirations for their girls have increased considerably in the decade between the two surveys...” (50). The *PROBE Revisited* authors relate (49):

Parents strongly felt that educated girls can get married more easily and into more respectable and more modern families. Many also linked education to increasing a woman’s ability to guide her children and look after the family. This was an important motivational factor for parents and was closely linked to a girl’s primary responsibility as a home-maker.

Realizing that action was needed to address the negative effects of the country’s patriarchal ways on both female and male students, India’s National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) formed a National Focus Group to study “Gender Issues in Education.” Its efforts resulted in a position paper on this subject in which the group explains the gender quandary as follows:

Gender is not a women’s issue; it is a people’s issue. “Femininity” does not exist in isolation from “Masculinity”. The construction and power of one determines the construction and power of the other. Gender relations are neither “natural” nor given, they are constructed to make unequal relations seem “natural”, and can be naturalised only under the duress of socialisation. Thus there is undue pressure on boys and girls to live up to the established “norms” of masculinity and femininity. While girls endure unwarranted social control, discrimination and domination, boys too suffer from the stereotyping that exists in a patriarchal culture. Discouraged from being emotional, gentle or fearful they are thrust into the role of

breadwinners, protectors, and warriors. Thus--unequal gender relations stunt the freedom of *all* individuals to develop their human capacities to their fullest. Therefore it is in the interest of both men and women to liberate human beings from existing relations of gender.

--(National Council of Educational Research and Training 2006a, v)

In the position paper, twenty-two specific recommendations are put forward to meet the challenges of educating and empowering girls while moving toward gender equity for all (49-53). First and foremost, every girl, regardless of her station in life, must have access to free, quality schooling, whether in terms of proximity, teaching, facilities, or instructional materials. Moreover, gender discrimination in whatever form, e.g., boys' patriarchal attitudes toward girls or gender biases in textbooks, needs to be addressed.

Of special interest to geographers in the NCERT position paper is the "feminist critique" of the discipline of Geography (35, 54-56). Many of the feminist-masculinist tensions which are found within present-day Geography, such as whether space is gendered or not, qualitative vs. quantitative research, and the male dominance of the field are discussed.

Finally, the authors of the NCERT gender position paper broach the subject of India's "progressive education policy" toward females over the years (1). Even with the cited efforts to advance girls' education, the authors conclude that "...despite over three decades of commitment to gender equality and the universalisation of education, the ground realities are grim, specially in the context of girls from marginalised groups and rural areas" (1).

Bandyopadhyay and Subrahmanian (2008) provide additional examples of patriarchal considerations negatively affecting girls' education in India. They talk about the possibility that there exists "...continuing "son" preference whereby boys are educated in schools managed by non-state providers which are (perceived) better quality,

and girls sent to public schools of (perceived) relatively poor quality” (vii). There is no question, however, that “[s]exual harassment and violence...continue to be major constraining factors preventing parents from freely sending their girls to school” (3). Even if a girl goes to school, her socially advantaged brother may resent an educated sister, possibly leading to violence toward the sister (33). Also, the child marriage of girls, which still often takes place in India, obviously is a deterrent to educating girls (3, 4, 32, 37). Even the lack of toilet facilities for girls at many schools has patriarchal overtones (vii, 26, 27). Central to the issue of educating Indian girls is the fact that “[t]he deeply embedded undervaluation of female labour, identified primarily with the reproductive or household sphere, underlies the belief in many communities that educating females bring[s] low returns...” (2). Indeed, there is an “...ideological bias against considering women as household bread-winners” (2). This “ideological bias,” of course, has at its roots patriarchy.

While a patriarchal milieu continues to undermine girls’ education in India, it is not the only factor at work in this regard, as touched on above by the NCERT gender group. Bandyopadhyay and Subrahmanian explain that “[g]ender inequalities interlock with other forms of social inequality, notably caste, ethnicity and religion....There are also considerable inter-state variations in gender parity” (2008, vii). Govinda and Bandyopadhyay identify four issues which comprise what they refer to as “a complex nexus of exclusion” in Indian education (2008, 73). These issues are gender inequality, social inequality, the role of location, and basic poverty (72-73). The authors write:

[G]irls continue to be more likely to be excluded than boys in schooling, but this disadvantage increases as girls move down the social and caste ‘hierarchy’. Vulnerability for girls also increases in rural areas, and the more remote the location, the more probable it is that girls will be

excluded from school. Overall, poverty seems to force families into making choices that directly affect the educational access of girls.

--(Govinda and Bandyopadhyay 2008, 73)

These other disadvantaging factors working in concert with gender bias to discourage girls' education in India are in themselves imbued with patriarchy. Rural areas are usually considered to be more conservative, i.e., patriarchal, than urban areas. Poorer families are going to favor sons, not daughters, in education, because in India's patriarchal society there is more potential for economic gain in educating sons. Caste and social stratum affect how much educational freedom a girl is allowed, but only within the bounds of that group's established patriarchal conventions. Bandyopadhyay and Subrahmanian state:

While gender inequalities intensify with poverty, caste inequalities and geographical location (particularly in underdeveloped rural areas), particular gender-differentiated ideologies cut across all social groups, explaining why in all social groups, girls lag behind boys in access to and participation in education.

--(2008, 3)

It is evident that patriarchy has constrained many Indian girls and young women from receiving a good education, and also from receiving various benefits which may result from having such an education. As Sen observes: "Despite the longstanding and vigorous women's movement, patriarchy remains deeply entrenched in India, influencing the structure of its political and social institutions and determining the opportunities open to women and men" (2000, abstract). The good news, however, is that India clearly is moving in the right direction in terms of girls' education, as evidenced by the MDG statistics referenced above. Within the context presented in this chapter, therefore, this research study takes a positive slant and investigates, in a spatial context, how some

Indian girls, now young women, have managed to become educational success stories despite their gender and other challenges.

2.4: INDIA DEMOGRAPHICS

According to *Census of India 2011* provisional figures (2011a), the total population of the country is 1,210,193,422, of which 623,724,248 are male and 586,469,248 female. More than two-thirds of the population, about 69%, lives in a rural area. Males outnumber females by less than 2% in both rural and urban areas. The population density for the country is 382 people per square kilometer.³

The provisional Census sex-ratio figures for India show a male bias. Countrywide, there are 940 females for every 1,000 males. In rural areas, the female sex-ratio figure is 947, and in urban areas, 926 females. For 0 to 6 year olds, the national figure for girls is 914, 919 in rural areas and 902 in urban areas.

These sex-ratio figures are often said to be skewed because of sex-selective abortions subsequent to ultrasounds or amniocentesis procedures, female infanticide, and just the general neglect of daughters (for example, see Bradshaw et al. 2012, 295-96; Desai et al. 2010, 128-31), but they have as their basis the son preference which exists in India (and which was previously discussed in this chapter in relation to education). As Thakur and Pandey (2009, 31) have put it:

The strong preference for sons is a deeply held cultural ideal based on economic roots. Sons not only assist with farm labour as they are growing up (as do daughters) but they provide labour in times of illness and unemployment and serve as their parents' only security in old age....

³The area of India is 3,287,263 square kilometers. The country ranks seventh globally in areal size and is second only to China in population size (Central Intelligence Agency 2012).

...The cost of theoretically illegal dowries and the loss of daughters to their in-laws' families are further disincentives for some parents to have daughters. Sons, of course continue to carry on the family line.

In addition, “[a] further motivation for a son over a daughter is the belief among Hindus that, it is essential for a son to perform rituals at his parent’s cremation and at every death anniversary thereafter (Ramaiah, Chandrasekarayya, and Murthy 2011,192).

The 2011 provisional figures for literacy show that 74.04% of the total Indian population age seven and over is literate, 82.14% of the males, 65.46% of the females. For the urban population, this figure is 84.98%, with 89.67% male literacy and 79.92% female literacy. Corresponding figures for the rural population are 68.91% total, 78.57% male, and 58.75% female.

Population statistics for India by religion for 2001 are contained in Tables 2.5-2.8 (*Census of India 2001a*, 1-3). Table 2.5 shows that Hindus are by far the majority religious group in India, 80.5% of the populace in 2001. The largest minority religious groups are Muslims, accounting for 13.4% of the Indian population in 2001 and Christians, 2.3% in that same year.

In Tables 2.5-2.8, the 2001 sex-ratios, literacy rates, and work participation rates give some numerical perspective on gender equality issues facing females within each religion. Of particular note is that the 2011 provisional sex ratio for children age 0-6, 914 girls per 1,000 boys (p. 18), is even less than the corresponding 2001 figure of 927 shown in Table 2.6.

Table 2.5 2001 Population of India by Religion

Name of Religion	Percentage of Total Population	Sex Ratio
Hindus	80.5	931
Muslims	13.4	936
Christians	2.3	1009
Sikhs	1.9	893
Buddhists	0.8	953
Jains	0.4	940
Other	0.6	992
India	100.0	933

Table 2.6 2001 India Population Age 0-6, Percentage and Sex Ratio, by Religion

Name of Religion	Percentage of Age 0-6 Population to Total for Religion	Sex Ratio
Hindus	15.6	925
Muslims	18.7	950
Christians	13.5	964
Sikhs	12.8	786
Buddhists	14.4	942
Jains	10.6	870
Other	18.0	976
India	15.9	927

Table 2.7 2001 India Literacy Rate by Religion

Name of Religion	Total Literacy Rate	Male Literacy Rate	Female Literacy Rate
Hindus	65.1	76.2	53.2
Muslims	59.1	67.6	50.1
Christians	80.3	84.4	76.2
Sikhs	69.4	75.2	63.1
Buddhists	72.7	83.1	61.7
Jains	94.1	97.4	90.6
Other	47.0	60.8	33.2
India	64.8	75.3	53.7

Table 2.8 2001 India Work Participation Rate (WPR) by Religion

Name of Religion	Total WPR	Male WPR	Female WPR
Hindus	40.4	52.4	27.5
Muslims	31.3	47.5	14.1
Christians	39.7	50.7	28.7
Sikhs	37.7	53.3	20.2
Buddhists	40.6	49.2	31.7
Jains	32.9	55.2	9.2
Other	48.4	52.5	44.2
India	39.1	51.7	25.6

Source for Tables 2.5-2.8: Census of India 2001a, 1-3.

Caste plays a major role in Indian society and has been defined as “[a] social class system associated with Hinduism that is hierarchical and generally not changeable” (Bradshaw et al. 2012, 595). There is also an “affirmative action” system in place in India.

Article 341 of the Indian constitution allows the government to compile a schedule (list) of castes, races, or tribes or parts of groups within castes, races, or tribes that are economically and socially disadvantaged and are therefore entitled to protection and specified benefits under the constitution.

--(Thakur and Pandey 2009, 447)

In addition:

Article 342 of the Indian constitution includes a schedule (list) of tribes or tribal communities that are economically and socially disadvantaged and are entitled to specified benefits.

--(Thakur and Pandey 2009, 447)

Included in these Article 341 and 342 “benefits” are educational reservations for members of what have been designated as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes.

According to 2001 data (*Census of India 2001b*), about 16% of the total population of India were members of scheduled castes, with about 80% living in rural areas. For scheduled tribes, these numbers are 8% and 92%, respectively.

The *Census of India 2001* literacy rate for the total scheduled caste population was 54.69%, 66.64% for males, 41.90% for females. In urban areas, these figures were 68.12%, 77.93%, and 57.49%, and for rural areas, 51.16%, 63.66%, and 37.84% (Planning Commission).

The 2001 Census literacy rate for the total scheduled tribe population was 47.10%, 59.17% for males, 34.76% for females. In urban areas, these figures were 69.09%, 77.77%, and 59.87%, and for rural areas, 45.02%, 57.39%, and 32.44% (Planning Commission).

In terms of India's linguistic picture, "English enjoys the status of subsidiary official language but is the most important language for national, political, and commercial communication; Hindi is the most widely spoken language and primary tongue of 41% of the people [see *Census of India 2001c*]; there are 14 other official languages..." (Central Intelligence Agency 2012). Indo-Aryan languages, such as Hindi, predominate in northern India and Dravidian languages predominate in the southern part of the country (de Blij and Muller 2000, 387).

Finally, it has been estimated that the per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) using Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) for India in 2011 was \$3,700 US, which places India 161st out of 226 countries for this measure (Central Intelligence Agency 2012). In 2010, the Indian government said 37% of the population was living in poverty, although others think the poverty figure is much higher (Nanda 2010).

2.5: INDIAN EDUCATION CONTEXT

In India, as in the United States, national, state, and local governments as well as religious groups and the private sector all are part of the education process. NGOs also provide schooling in India. In the United States, English is the usual language of instruction across the country. In India, however, there are many languages of instruction, reflecting the linguistic diversity discussed above.

The Indian government, through its National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), has long supported a “three-language formula” in schooling (2000, 31; 2005, 37). These languages are “the mother tongue/the regional language, [a] modern Indian language and English” (2000, 30), with the first being the sole language through Class V (2000, 29). NCERT realizes, though, that

English is in India today a symbol of people’s aspirations for quality in education and a fuller participation in national and international life....[T]he current status of English stems from its overwhelming presence on the world stage and the reflection of this in the national arena....

The visible impact of this presence of English is that it is today being demanded by *everyone* at the very *initial* stage of schooling. The English teaching profession has consistently recommended a relatively late (Class IV, V, or VI) introduction of English, and this is reflected in spirit in policy documents. The dissatisfaction with this recommendation is evident in the mushrooming of private English-medium schools and the early introduction of English in state school systems.

--(National Council of Educational Research and Training 2006b, 1)

In fact, “[t]he increasing demand for English--both as a language and as a medium...has compelled most governments at the state (provincial) level to introduce English as a language from class One” (Meganathan 2009, 1). However, a “[t]eacher’s language proficiency, exposure to [the] language and materials are major concerns for quality English language learning” (Meganathan, 2009, 1).

The Indian high school system is also different from that in the United States. In the U.S., high school is from grades 9 through 12. In India, a student may be in a secondary school which ends after Class X. After the student completes this standard, or matriculates, he or she will receive a high school or secondary school leaving certificate. If this student wants to complete Classes XI and XII, the +2 or Intermediate level, this can be done at a pre-university college or similar institution. Another Indian student, however, may be at a secondary school which includes upper/higher/senior secondary standards--Class XI and Class XII. At the end of Class X and Class XII, Indian students take rigorous “board” exams given by their particular state, central government, or private education board.

The U.S. and India vary, too, somewhat in the time it takes to earn a bachelor’s degree. In the United States, undergraduate degrees generally require four years of study to complete. Many such degree programs in India, however, are completed in three years.

In terms of public spending on education, India spent 3.1% of its 2006 GDP on education. India thus ranks 129th in education expenditure when compared to 163 other countries (Central Intelligence Agency 2012).

Finally, some significant legislation and programs to advance education in India should be noted. In this regard, the “Mid-Day Meal Scheme,” started in 1995, now feeds “...all children studying in Classes I-VIII in Government, Government Aided and Local Body Schools...” and some other defined students as well (Government of India 2011, 247-48). The program is “...the largest school meal scheme in the world” (Kingdon

2007, 25) and “...has had a decisive impact in improving enrolment and attendance” (OECD 2011, 160-61).

Another key program has been Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (translation: Universal Education Campaign, also referred to as Education for All after the worldwide movement of the same name). This is the “Government of India’s flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by [the] 86th amendment to the Constitution of India [enacted December 12, 2002] making free and compulsory Education to the Children of [the] 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right” (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 2008). Among its myriad responsibilities is “...a special focus on girl’s education...” (Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan 2008).

A complementary program to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (translation: National Secondary Education Campaign), was initiated in 2009. This program has “...the objective to enhance access to secondary education [Classes IX and X] and improve its quality...” ultimately leading to “universal access” and “retention” in these grades (Government of India 2011, 254).

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009, effective April 1, 2010, is the follow-up legislation to the 86th Amendment (Article 21A) adopting this right. The Act delineates how children age 6 through 14 will receive a “...full time elementary education [Classes I-VIII] of satisfactory and equitable quality in formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards” (Government of India 2011, 253).

Some important provisions in the Act (commonly referred to as the Right to Education or RTE Act) have been summarized as follows:

Under the Act the state is liable for all direct and indirect costs of education, including tuition and the provision of uniforms and textbooks, as well as ensuring access to a place at a neighbourhood school, or alternatively free transport to the nearest school....

...School buildings must be all-weather, have a kitchen for the preparation of midday meals, separate toilets for girls and boys, have access to safe drinking water and a library and playground. The student-teacher ratio is capped at 30 to 1 for grades 1 to 5 and 35 to 1 for grades 6 to 8....All teachers are required to hold a minimum qualification, determined by state government rules, within a five-year phase-in period....All teachers are required to work a minimum of 45 hours each week and 200 days per year and are prohibited from engaging in private tutoring....

To increase choice and to promote an inclusive education system and classroom diversity, the Act requires all private schools to allocate at least 25% of places in first grade to government-funded students from officially-defined minority groups and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Schools will be required to ensure that education is provided freely to those pupils until the completion of grade eight....

--(OECD 2011, 155)

Further discussion of Indian education can be found at Government of India 2011, 243-277; Kingdon 2007; and OECD 2011, 153-188.

CHAPTER 3: THE RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1.1: Feminism

The theoretical framework for the research is feminism as interpreted through a geographical lens. Aitken and Valentine define feminism as:

A set of perspectives that seek to explore the way that gender relations are played out in favour of men rather than women. In human geography, such perspectives have suggested that space is crucial in the maintenance of patriarchy--the structure by which women are exploited in the private and public sphere.

--(2006, 339)

The Women and Geography Study Group (of the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers) has provided the following definitions of feminist epistemology and feminist methodology which contain the main components of feminist philosophy:

Feminist epistemology: Feminism challenges traditional epistemologies of what are considered valid forms of knowledge. Feminist epistemology has redefined the knower, knowing and the known (Harding, 1987; Moss, 1993: 49). It questions notions of 'truth' and validates 'alternative' sources of knowledge, such as subjective experience. Feminist epistemology stresses the non-neutrality of the researcher and the power relations involved in the research process (D. Rose, 1993: 58). It also contests boundaries between 'fieldwork' and everyday life, arguing that we are always in the 'field' (Katz, 1994: 67).

--(WGSG 1997, 87)

Feminist methodology: A methodology where links are forged between knowing and doing. Feminist methodology is committed to challenging oppressive aspects of socially constructed gender relations (whether these act alone or in conjunction with other oppressive relations based on race, class, sexuality, etc.). It recognises the social relations of research and has emancipatory goals for all those involved in the research process, leading to social change. Feminist methodology aims for mutual understanding and learning about the meaningful differences between the researcher and

the people who are the subject of research with respect to structures of domination (Katz, 1994: 70).

--(WGSF 1997, 87)

3.1.2: Gender and Space

Clearly, there exists an "...intimate relationship between gender and space..." (Datta 2005, 125). Dixon and Jones state: "The relations that link the lives of men and women take place within and between a variety of specific sites, such as the family, school, and church, each of which is infused with patriarchy..."(2006, 48). Staeheli and Martin add: "[F]eminist geographers pay particular attention to the gendered ways people come to learn about and interpret places..., the access women as individuals and as members of social groups have to places, and their ability to act in various ways within those places" (2000, 138-39). Massey offers the following analysis:

From the symbolic meaning of spaces/places and the clearly gendered messages which they transmit, to straightforward exclusion by violence, spaces and places are not only themselves gendered but, in their being so, they both reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood. The limitation of women's mobility, in terms both of identity and space, has been in some cultural contexts a crucial means of subordination. Moreover the two things--the limitation on mobility in space, the attempted consignment/confinement to particular places on the one hand, and the limitation on identity on the other--have been crucially related....

--(1994, 179)

The dissertation research examines the traditional separation of home (women) and work (men) spaces by gender and the school space as a link between the two. Inherent in this discussion is an examination of patriarchally derived spatial boundaries which may hinder or prevent the mobility of girls and women in a very real physical sense as well as in the social sense.

3.2: RESEARCH PROCEDURES

3.2.1: Introduction

The study takes a mixed-methods, but predominantly qualitative, research approach. Descriptive statistics have been used where appropriate, e.g., in painting the educational picture for girls in India as found in Chapter 2. Qualitative methods (Hay 2005; Creswell 2007, 2009; Marshall and Rossman 2006; Miles and Huberman 1994; Limb and Dwyer 2001) are used in exploring the key research questions through an instrumental, multiple case study with individual, cross, and collective case analyses (Creswell 2007, 74-75).

Qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data....([A]dapted from Creswell, 2007).

--(Creswell 2009, 4)

An “instrumental case study” is one which illustrates an issue (Creswell 2007, 74). For this research, the overarching issue is girls’ education in India, as characterized in Chapter 2, with the focus of the study, from a spatial perspective, on how some girls have succeeded educationally in spite of significant challenges.

Participants for this study have been “purposefully selected” (Creswell 2007, 2009), also known as “purposive sampling” (Hay 2005). Creswell defines this as when “...qualitative researchers select individuals who will best help them understand the research problem and the research questions” (Creswell 2009, 231). Hay says this is a “...procedure intended to obtain a particular group for study on the basis of specific characteristics they possess” (2005, 292).

For the dissertation study, the following are the criteria utilized in the selection of participants:

1. They must be young Indian women students who have been challenged in their educations not only by gender but also in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way. These other challenges could be related to poverty, caste, religion, geographical isolation, or other factors which may present themselves in the selection process. All participants will be expected to have a compelling story to tell to further the understanding of the research concerns.
2. The women will have been schooled in India through the secondary level and be undergraduate or graduate students in the United States. This criterion is important in several ways. First of all, these women have to be considered educational success stories as they are studying in the United States. This perspective also puts the research in a welcomed positive light, which may appeal to prospective participants. Secondly, if they are studying in the United States, they will be fluent in English, thus eliminating any language barrier. Also, as the students are adults, no parental permission is needed for them to participate in the study. Furthermore, as their parents are not involved, the women may be more open in their research responses. Please note that this criterion diverts from doing qualitative research “in the participant’s setting” as Creswell (2009, 4) delineates above (p. 29), but this diversion is seen as strengthening the research study. Finally, this aspect of the research is thought to make it unique.

3.2.2: Positionality

One distinctive aspect of this study is that it is done by an American woman who first visited India in the summer of 2009. Ethical considerations are especially important to “outsider” research, and to qualitative and feminist research as well, so in this regard the researcher’s “positionality” is of special concern. Hay (2005, 290) has defined positionality as “[a] researcher’s social, locational, and ideological placement relative to the research project or to other participants in it. [It] [m]ay be influenced by biographical characteristics such as class, race, and gender, as well as various formative experiences.”

As an American, I bring a different perspective to the study than an Indian researcher and have a somewhat different audience, resulting in greater exposure for the

issues involved. Moreover, not only am I an American woman but I am also an older woman who lived through the “Women’s Liberation Movement” of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. If anyone should understand at a very fundamental level the educational inequities faced by Indian girls, it is I. When I was of college age, I could not apply to my state’s University of Virginia, a public university, because only male students were allowed to attend. All of this has changed now in the United States, but I can still identify with and advocate for Indian girls. My own two daughters, now college graduates, have seemingly faced no educational discrimination, and I would hope the same for all the girls of India in the years to come.⁴

My outsider role, therefore, has made it especially important for me to reflect on the ethics of the study as it has been carried out. Furthermore, I was required to apply for initial and continuing review of the research by a University of Maryland Institutional Review Board (IRB), as there would be human participants in the study (University of Maryland). This review process tries to ensure the well-being of research participants.⁵ As part of this process, prospective participants are given a consent form which explains the research in detail and also the steps which will be taken to protect the participant’s identity.

⁴One daughter recently completed a two-year fellowship teaching primary grades at a private school serving a low-income neighborhood in Mumbai. I visited her and her class in August 2011.

⁵In February 2012, *The Professional Geographer* published a multi-article Focus Section concerned with human research subjects and IRBs (Price).

3.2.3: Preliminary Research Work

One of the first outsider challenges for this researcher was to establish access to key informants and information in India. With the encouragement and assistance, however, of Anupam Anand, an Indian Ph.D. student in the Department of Geographical Sciences at the University of Maryland and an alumnus of the University of Delhi, I embarked on a two-week trip to the Delhi area during the summer of 2009 to gather background information. During this trip, I had the opportunity to talk with various experts--governmental, academic, and non-profit--about the state of girls' education in India and also about my proposed research study (Appendix A).

In our conversations, it was abundantly clear that much effort was being expended throughout India to further girls' education. These experts better acquainted me with the issues involved, with social considerations, geographic disparities, religious concerns, and the like. They discussed ways to improve the situation, e.g., specific government programs, greater community involvement, upgrading the quality of teachers and facilities, peer pressure, decentralizing the educational system, more reliance on technology, and having role models for girls. I was also given much written material regarding my research subject. (It should be noted that English is widely used in India in government and academia. See Chapter 2, p. 22.) Most importantly, I found support for my research, in part because of its unique approach interviewing Indian students in the U.S. and also because it focuses on success not failure. In fact, some of the people with whom I spoke gave me suggestions about how to conduct my study. All in all, I established some very important contacts with key informants in India.

In March of 2010, I established many other important contacts and gained valuable research insights while attending the *Contextualising Geographical Approaches to Studying Gender in Asia International Seminar*, hosted by the University of Delhi and co-sponsored by the College of Asia and Pacific of the Australian National University, Canberra. At the conference, I presented a paper, based on my planned dissertation research, which was well received at the seminar's "Gender and Education: Exploring Spaces of Knowing" session.⁶

Preliminary work also included submitting an "Initial Application for Research Involving Human Subjects" to the University of Maryland Institutional Review Board (Appendix B), in order to undertake the proposed research, as discussed above (p. 31) in this chapter. As part of the approval process, I was required to take the on-line Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) "human subjects research" course on "Social and Behavioral Research" (University of Maryland). The course was successfully completed and IRB approval was received on March 9, 2011 for a one year period (Appendix C).⁷

Finally, an extensive review of literature relevant to this study was initiated at its conception. This literature review continued throughout the conduct of the study.

⁶Travel funding to attend this conference was provided by the University of Maryland, College Park, Goldhaber Grant program and the Department of Geography.

⁷The IRB has since been renewed for another year.

3.2.4: The Participant Search Process

Between four and ten participants were expected to be included in the study, seen as an appropriate range for the labor-intensive qualitative research to be undertaken. Ultimately, the study included four participants, which in hindsight should have been the uppermost number in a study with this participant data depth.

Diversity within the participant group in terms of finding students from different parts of India and with varying social-economic attributes was also a search goal. In interviewing the Indian experts about girls' education (see p. 32 above), the point was often made that India is a large, both in terms of area and population, and diverse country. Because of this, it would make sense to select a diverse group of participants. It should be noted, however, that "[i]n qualitative research...the sample is not intended to be representative since the 'emphasis is usually upon an analysis of meanings in specific contexts' (Robinson 1998, p. 409)" (Bradshaw and Stratford 2005, 72).

It was thought, too, that most, if not all, participants in the research study would be graduate students. This is because there are far more opportunities for financial support for graduate students than undergraduates at American colleges and universities and, presumably, the targeted study participants would need financial support to pursue their degrees. It turned out that all the study participants were graduate students.

It was seen to be a significant challenge, but not an insurmountable one, to find viable study participants, considering the selection criteria and the outsider nature of the research. Participant recruitment efforts were substantial, therefore, and made through the following avenues:

- Indian graduate student contacts in the United States;
- other Indian contacts;

- Indian student groups at U.S. colleges and universities; and
- Other appropriate individuals and organizations.

In the end, though, it was graduate student contacts in the U.S. which “snowballed” into other contacts, which ultimately yielded the study participants.

Beginning in September 2011, e-mails were sent out to recruit possible study participants. These e-mails were personalized depending on the sendee, but contained basic information about the research, including a study participant profile, a brief summary of what participants would be expected to do, and a statement that “[n]o participant would be identified in the study” (see Supporting Document 1 in Appendix B containing the IRB application). An abstract summarizing the research study also was attached to the search e-mail (Supporting Document 2 in Appendix B).⁸

If an individual indicated that she thought she would be a good participant for the study, she was e-mailed a unique password and then e-mailed a password protected/encrypted implied consent form and similarly secure study questionnaire to be filled out and returned (in Appendix B, see the Study Participation Implied Informed Consent Form and, for the questionnaire, Supporting Document 3).⁹ The final participant selection was based on the questionnaire responses, and it should be noted that not all who returned the questionnaire were thought to fit the participant profile. The participant

⁸Many details about the study can be found in the IRB application found in Appendix B.

⁹The questionnaire sent to each prospective study participants is identical to the one found in Appendix B with one addition to Question 11 for clarification. Where it reads “Please list: all primary and secondary schools attended...,” was revised to “Please list: all *pre-primary*, primary, and secondary schools attended...,” with the italics indicating the addition.

search did, however, yield four excellent study participants who met the study criteria and were a fairly diverse group.

The study participants are from three different Indian states and a union territory (see Figure 3.1 and section 3.3) and their home locales are a rural village, a small town, a city, and the outskirts of a megacity. Two are Hindus, two are Christians, and both Christians are tribal members. Financially, the range for the participants growing up was from very poor to solidly middle class.

3.2.5: Participant Information Collection, Coding, and Analysis

The two critical components of the research in terms of data collection were the participant questionnaire form and the participant interview guide (see Appendix B, Supporting Document 4). These were carefully developed, working with Indian graduate students, to try to optimize the collection of data which address the key research questions.

While the conclusion was reached that a highly structured questionnaire was needed for the dissertation study, a semi-structured interview approach was selected, designed to produce both very detailed and broad reaching responses. Similar questions could be asked of all participants, but the semi-structured approach allowed for: 1) modified or additional questions to be asked tailored to a participant based on her questionnaire answers; and also 2) extemporaneous queries which might present themselves during an interview. In addition, phone conversations and e-mails, with security in place on any sensitive documents attached for participants, were utilized in the data collection process.

Figure 3.1
Political Map of India



Map used by permission of www.mapsofindia.com. Approximate map scale: |——|
~200 kms.

Numbers identifying each participant state or union territory have been added.

In-depth personal interviews were conducted with all four participants during November and December of 2011. These interviews were deemed to be very important to understanding the participants' educational stories as questionnaires can't or rarely capture such human dimensions as emotions, body language, and personal rapport, which are found in interviews.

Prior to each interview, the interview guide specifically constructed for that participant (Appendix D) was e-mailed to her so she would be able to review it before meeting with the researcher. The interviews were held in the various places in the United States where the participants lived. One interview was in a participant's apartment, one a participant's apartment complex, and two were in the researcher's motel room near the respective participant's home. Only the researcher and the participant were present at each interview and every effort was made to make the participant feel comfortable during the interview process.

Before beginning the formal interview, which was recorded using two digital voice recorders (the second recorder was a backup), the researcher asked the participant about any information needed to complete the questionnaire fully. After this information was taken down, the formal interview was conducted. Any additional conversation relevant to the study was also written down by the researcher during or soon after the interview session.

Each participant audio file was subsequently securely transferred by computer, via a Secure Sockets Layer protocol, to a professional transcription company. Staff there, who are required to keep all transcriptions confidential, then transcribed the participant audio files verbatim. Completed transcriptions were e-mailed back to the researcher as

secure document files. The researcher then listened to each participant audio file, with the transcript for that file in hand, to verify, correct, and add any missing information to the transcript. Finally, any computer files associated with the participant interviews were deleted by the transcription company.

Coding of qualitative data is utilized to accomplish "...data reduction, organisation, and analysis" (Cope 2005, 232). For this research study, a manual coding system was employed, as opposed to a computerized one, as this maximized human judgment in the coding process and the study was seen as small enough to undertake manual coding.

To begin the coding process, an extensive list of initial coding categories for the study as a whole was made (Appendix E, p. 161). Category names were used as the "codes." It was thought to be constructive to have these possible categories in mind before actually coding participant data.

All relevant material for each participant was photocopied for coding. The review of all the collected data was comprehensive, methodical, and iterative, and the focus was on identifying information which might inform the research questions. Other information, seemingly not related to the research questions but which stood out nonetheless, was also noted. The material was highlighted, notated, and eventually initial categories for each participant were determined, with the relevant information categorized and indexed on cards (Appendix E, pp. 163-66).

It should be noted that this process was challenging because of the amount of information for each participant being examined and the nature of the process itself. The participant questionnaire, for example, is a compendium of categories and was utilized as

such (Appendix E, p. 162). Categories were named descriptively, such as Religion or Patriarchy, but often had analytical dimensions to them. In addition, categories often overlapped, and data could be assigned to more than one category.

The initial categorization of the data served to guide the construction of, and is reflected in, the detailed participant education narratives contained in the case studies. Most importantly, these narratives were then analyzed to identify and develop the central research-related themes for each participant, and also cross and collective participant themes. Conclusions based on these thematic findings were then reached in answering the research questions and other research concerns (Figure 3.2).

3.3: PARTICIPANTS' HOME STATES/UNION TERRITORY

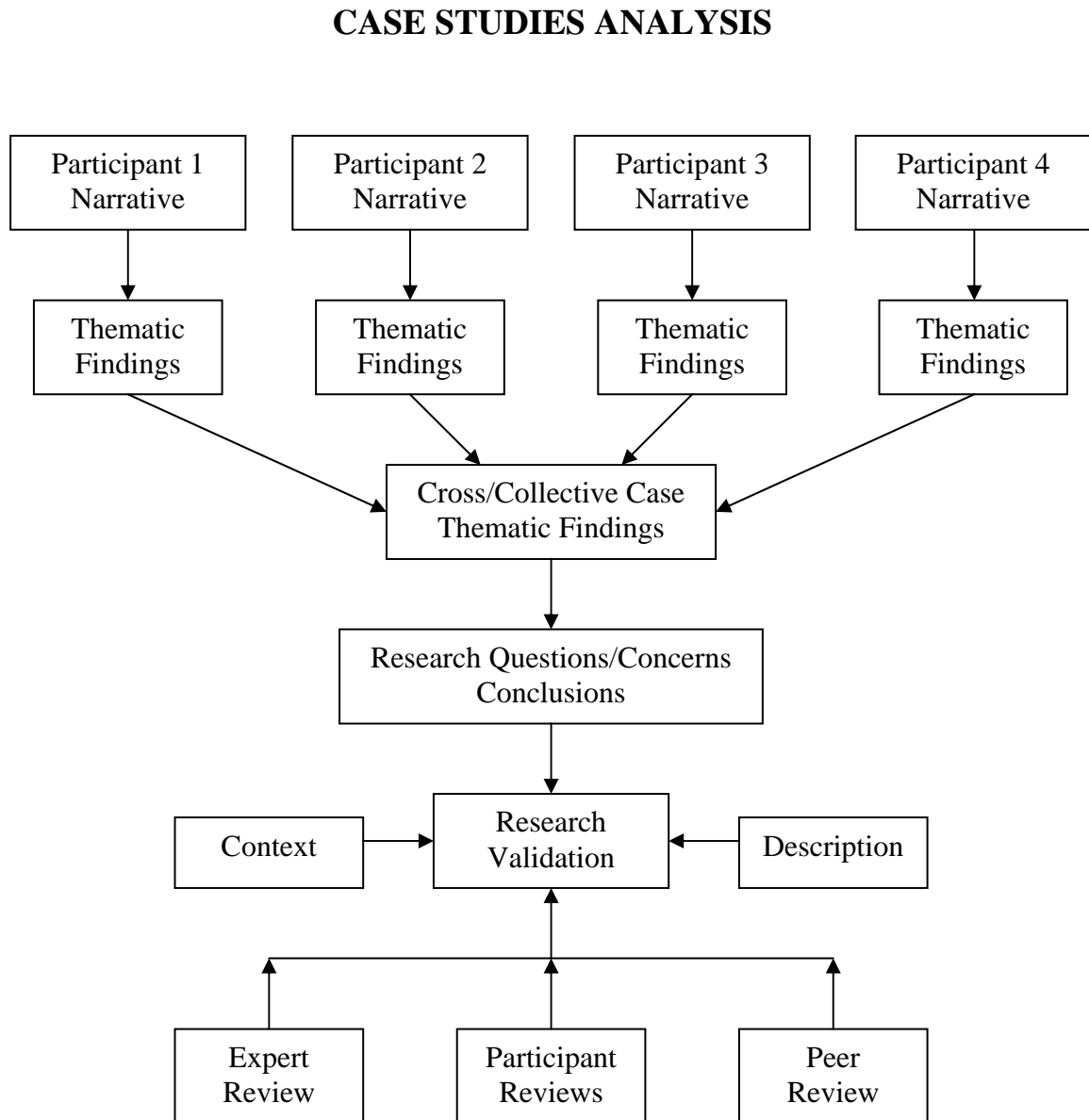
3.3.1: West Bengal (Participant One)

West Bengal is one of 28 Indian states, and is located in the northeastern part of the country. To its east is the country of Bangladesh. Northern West Bengal also borders the countries of Nepal and Bhutan. Himalayan foothills are found to the far north of the state and the Ganges River delta, bordering the Bay of Bengal, is at the southern end of the state (Figures 2.1 and 3.1, p. 12 and p. 37, respectively show physical and political map data for each participant's home state or union territory).

In the delta, on the Hooghly River, is West Bengal's megacity capital of Kolkata. The state's principal language is Bengali and "...nearly three out of every four persons is directly or indirectly involved in agriculture" (Government of India 2011, 1150-51).

Figure 3.2

Diagram of Research Study Case Studies Analysis



According to *Census of India 2011* provisional figures (2011e), the total population of West Bengal is 91,347,736, of which 46,927,389 are male and 44,420,347 female. About 68% of the population is rural. Males outnumber females by about 2.5% in rural West Bengal, increasing to about 3% in urban areas. The population density for the state is 1,029 people per square kilometer.

The provisional Census sex-ratio figures for West Bengal show a male bias. Statewide, there are 947 females for every 1,000 males. In rural areas, the female sex-ratio figure is 950, and in urban areas, 939 females. For 0 to 6 year olds, the figure for girls is 950 statewide, 952 in rural areas and 943 in urban areas. All of these sex-ratio figures, however, are higher than the national figures presented above (p. 18), and the figures for 0 to 6 year olds are at or relatively close to the sex ratio at birth generally considered to be normal of about 952 (see p. 11).

As for the 2011 provisional figures for literacy, 77.08% of the total state population age seven and over is literate, 82.67% of the males, 71.16% of the females. For the urban population, this figure is 85.54%, with 89.15% male literacy and 81.70% female literacy. Corresponding figures for the rural population are 72.97% total, 79.51% male, and 66.08% female. All of these literacy figures are higher than the respective national figures above (p. 19), except for the urban male literacy percentage, which is about half a percent lower.

In 2001, about 5% of the total population of West Bengal were members of scheduled tribes, with about 94% living in rural areas (*Census of India 2001b*). The 2001 Census literacy rate for the total scheduled tribe population in West Bengal was 43.40%, 57.38% for males, 29.15% for females (Planning Commission). In urban areas, these

figures were 58.67%, 68.57%, and 48.20%, and for rural areas, 42.35%, 56.60%, and 27.88% (Planning Commission). It should also be noted that, in 2001, Christian tribals accounted for 6.1% of the state's tribal population (*Census of India 2001d*).

3.3.2: Tamil Nadu (Participant Two)

Tamil Nadu is a state in the far south of peninsular India, at the southern end of the Deccan Plateau. Its coastline stretches from about 40 kilometers north of Chennai, the state's capital city on the Bay of Bengal, southward to beyond the tip of the Indian peninsula.

The principal language spoken in the state is Tamil (Government of India 2011, 1138). In terms of the economy, "[a]griculture is the major occupation in Tamil Nadu" (Government of India 2011, 1139).

According to *Census of India 2011* provisional figures (2011d), the total population of Tamil Nadu is 72,138,958, of which 36,158,871 are male and 35,980,087 female. Almost 52% of the population is rural. The rural and urban populations are both almost equally divided between males and females, with males having about a four-tenths and a one-tenth of a percent edge, respectively. The population density for the state is 555 people per square kilometer.

The provisional Census sex-ratio figures for Tamil Nadu show, statewide, there are 995 females for every 1,000 males. In rural areas, the female sex-ratio figure is 993, and in urban areas, 998 females. For 0 to 6 year olds, the figure for girls is 946 statewide, 937 in rural areas and 957 in urban areas. All of these numbers are considerably higher than their national counterparts (p. 18).

As for the 2011 provisional figures for literacy, 80.33% of the total state population age seven and over is literate, 86.81% of the males, 73.86% of the females. For the urban population, this figure is 87.24%, with 91.82% male literacy and 82.67% female literacy. Corresponding figures for the rural population are 73.80% total, 82.08% male, and 65.52% female. All of these literacy figures are higher than the respective national figures above (p. 19).

3.3.3: Jharkhand (Participant Three)

Jharkhand is found in east-central India. According to the Government of India (2011), Jharkhand, the nation's 28th state, was formed in 2000 and "...is the homeland of the tribals who had dreamed of a separate state for a long time....It largely comprises forest tracks of [the] Chhotanagpur plateau and [the northeastern panhandle of the state] and has distinct cultural traditions..." (1097). Economically, "[a]griculture and allied activities are the major source of Jharkhand's economy" (1097). In addition, "[t]he State is rich in mineral resources" (1097). The city of Ranchi is Jharkhand's capital and Hindi is the principal language of the state (1096).

According to *Census of India 2011* provisional figures (2011b), the total population of Jharkhand is 32,966,238, of which 16,931,688 are male and 16,034,550 female. About 76% of the population is rural. Males outnumber females by about 2% in rural Jharkhand, increasing to about 5% in urban areas. The population density for the state is 414 people per square kilometer.

The provisional Census sex-ratio figures for Jharkhand indicate a male bias. Statewide, there are 947 females for every 1,000 males. In rural areas, the female sex-ratio figure is 960, and in urban areas, 908 females. For 0 to 6 year olds, the figure for

girls is 943 statewide, 952 in rural areas and 904 in urban areas. All of these sex-ratio figures are higher than the national figures presented above (p. 18), except for the urban sex-ratio figure for all ages.

As for the 2011 provisional figures for literacy, 67.63% of the total state population age seven and over is literate, 78.45% of the males, 56.21% of the females. For the urban population, this figure is 83.30%, with 89.78% male literacy and 76.17% female literacy. Corresponding figures for the rural population are 62.40% total, 74.57% male, and 49.75% female. All of these literacy figures are lower than the respective national figures above (p. 19), except for the urban male literacy percentage, which is about a tenth of a percent higher.

In 2001, about 26% of the total population of Jharkhand were members of scheduled tribes, with about 92% living in rural areas (*Census of India 2001b*). The 2001 Census literacy rate for the total scheduled tribe population in Jharkhand was 40.67%, 53.98% for males, 27.21% for females (Planning Commission). In urban areas, these figures were 67.80%, 77.83%, and 57.38%, and for rural areas, 38.08%, 51.67%, and 24.38% (Planning Commission). It should also be noted that, in 2001, Christian tribals accounted for 14.5% of the state's tribal population (*Census of India 2001d*).

3.3.4: Delhi (Participant Four)

The National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi is one of India's seven federal territories, called union territories. It is located in the interior of India, on the northern plain. The principal languages of Delhi are "Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu & English" (Government of India 2011, 1163). Within the Delhi NCT is New Delhi, the national capital of India.

According to *Census of India 2011* provisional figures (2011c), the total population of the NCT of Delhi is 16,753,235 of which 8,976,410 are male and 7,776,825 female. About 97.5% of the population is urban. Males outnumber females by about 8% in rural Delhi and by about 7% in urban Delhi. The population density for Delhi is 11,297 people per square kilometer.

The provisional Census sex-ratio figures for Delhi markedly favor males. For all of Delhi, there are 866 females for every 1,000 males. In the rural area, the female sex-ratio figure is 847, and in the urban area, 867 females. For 0 to 6 year olds, the figure for girls is 866 for the entire NCT, 809 in the rural area and the 868 in the urban area. All of these sex-ratio figures are considerably lower than the national figures presented above (p. 18).

As for the 2011 provisional figures for literacy, 86.34% of the total Delhi population age seven and over is literate, 91.03% of the males, 80.93% of the females. For the urban population, this figure is 86.43%, with 91.05% male literacy and 81.10% female literacy. Corresponding figures for the rural population are 82.67% total, 90.04% male, and 74.03% female. All of these literacy figures are higher than the respective national figures above (p. 19).

CHAPTER 4: THE CASE STUDIES

4.1: INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, each participant's education narrative has been presented, **in the context of her life and her perspectives**. Each narrative is followed by a discussion of the main themes, as identified in the narrative, which relate to the study questions. The participant narratives and themes have then been cross and collectively analyzed to further address the research questions.

4.2: PARTICIPANT ONE

4.2.1: Narrative

I think my mother was very particular about us, my brother and I, going to a good school because she herself went to a government school. And knowing the fact that English is important--she cannot converse in, she's not very fluent in English--so she thought that she had to send her children to a good school where they can have a good future for themselves....[She] gave up so many things just to give us a better education.¹⁰

“Karma”

November 26, 2011 interview

Karma was born and grew up in a small Himalayan hill town in the Indian state of West Bengal. For most of her childhood, she lived in a rented house with her parents and younger brother. Her father was a government employee and a college graduate. Her mother, a housewife, completed the 12th grade.

Karma's first language was a Tibetan/Nepali mix, but she is now fluent in several languages, including English, Hindi, and Bengali. She is a member of a scheduled tribe and a Pentecostal Christian, the faith of her father's family.

¹⁰Where participants are directly quoted in this dissertation, minor changes to their language, such as omitting “er” and “ah” from interview transcriptions, and correcting typos in questionnaire answers, may have been made by the researcher.

Her parents very much valued education and, particularly her mother, English-medium schools. At age three, she began attending a private, co-educational, pre-primary school with a small class size, 10-12 students. It was an English-medium school which she characterized as “expensive” but “good.” To get to the school, however, she had to walk about 45 minutes. She traveled, though, with a group of children supervised by some women and they stopped for breaks along the way.

From age six to 18, Karma went to a private, English-medium school for her primary and secondary schooling. It was a co-ed school which in terms of cost was “moderate initially” but the fees were “raised later.” The class size was 30-35 students. Karma thought her primary/secondary school facilities and instruction were “very good.” She also said that “...I don’t think there was any gender-based or any class discrimination in the school, no, no.”

Although Karma described her family as middle-class, it was a financial challenge for her family to pay private school tuition. Not only did her parents have to make financial sacrifices in order to afford private schooling for their children, Karma did as well. For example, children whose families can afford it are often tutored in India. Karma’s family had no money for this. Karma was able to turn to her mother’s brother, however, for “tution” as tutoring is commonly called in India. For the children to go to a private school, “...my parents had to limit most of our needs in order to pay the fees...” and Karma had to “[c]ompromise with my desires.” She couldn’t take guitar lessons, or go to the movies or out with friends often. She had to use “second-hand books” and if a book were torn “...my father used to help me bind it.” Her economic situation also influenced how she dressed, which led to other issues.

She said “...whenever you’re called or invited to a birthday party, you always have to wear the same dress....So at times...people ask you to sit somewhere else or not with these children here who are well dressed....I would call it class discrimination....Even when I finished my school, I wasn’t very much into western clothes. So I used to wear the Indian dress...[and] people always thought that if you are wearing an Indian dress, then you ought to be from a poor government school. You know, you cannot be speaking English, so that’s how they kind of portray you.”

The family’s financial situation meant Karma and her brother were unable to ride in “...shared jeeps taking children...to [their primary/secondary school] every morning and evening bringing them back, but again it was expensive. So we were told to walk to school.” It was about one-and-a-half kilometers from her home to the school “[a]nd it was quite an uphill walk. But there were other children with us....[W]e walked to school for 12 years.”

Most of the time, though, she enjoyed walking to her school, saying it “...was fun because it gave me time to talk to my friend and enjoy the nature walk.” She did not, however, enjoy walking to school during monsoon season.¹¹

She said the monsoon rain started in May and fell till August (and her school was in session during this period). As she related: “The monsoon rain, so it’s not very pleasant to walk up to school because by the time you reach school...you’re fully drenched.” As she could only afford one complete uniform, she couldn’t “...change,

¹¹India’s climate “...may be broadly described as tropical monsoon type” (Government of India 2011, 4).

so...the whole day I had to stay with my wet clothes. It wasn't very exciting to be in wet clothes, so I didn't like monsoons at all."

Her mother was an especially important person in Karma's education story. Her mother equated "a good school" with "a good future" for her children. Karma said that her mother's "...values I think were very strong, which made her send us to good schools. And that...always gave me a strong feeling that I had to keep up to those values that my mother had because she saved a lot for us."

Her father seemed to play a lesser role in Karma's education story. This may have been because in his job he "...was posted out to another district and he visited on weekends." Neither her father nor her mother, however, favored her brother over her. Karma said "...my parents always treated us equally." In fact, both children had to do chores around the house, "...washing dishes, sweeping, fetching water etc."

After she completed her secondary education, Karma had to face the reality that she "...didn't really have a choice to go to a private school and going to Delhi was too expensive for me. So the best I could do was to choose something nearby which gave me a course that I wanted to do." She wanted to study science and she decided to do this at a co-ed, minimal-cost, government college where English was the language of instruction.

The school was in a city still in the northern part of West Bengal but far enough away from her hometown that she had to move. Karma found places to live off campus and walked to school, which during her last year, at a women's student hostel, was a five-kilometer walk. She said the quality of the school facilities were "limited" and the instruction was "not that great." She thought, too, that, even though she is a member of a

scheduled tribe, she received no reservation advantage at this school or any school she attended in India.

At this college, she earned a bachelor's degree in a science field. She then decided to pursue a master's degree in the same field at a different school in the city. The graduate school was much the same as her undergraduate school--a co-ed government school of minimal-cost where classes were in English but the facilities were "limited" and the quality of instruction was "moderate." Again she lived off campus and walked to school, but it was not very far from her home. At the age of 23, she graduated with her master's degree.

It should be noted that Karma's mother did sometimes have to take out loans to help pay for her education. Karma herself started, in the 10th standard, "...to give tutions to children for my pocket money."

After receiving her master's, Karma entered the workforce. She first worked at a school in her hometown as a science teacher. She then for a short while lived with a paternal aunt in what is now the state of Uttarakhand while she looked for "...a job in the Non Government sector." She soon found a position as a project officer with a conservation group in New Delhi, eventually advancing to be a programme officer.

By the time she was 27, however, Karma decided to set off in a different direction. She found a position with an organization which was involved with HIV-AIDS and its impact on men, women, and children. Also at this time, she started studying, on scholarship, at a central, or national, university for a post-graduate diploma which focused on the rights of children. This was a co-ed, English-medium university. She said the school facilities were "not that great" but that they were an improvement over the

state government schools she had attended before. Some of the teachers were good, and some of them were not. Her class size, however, was only 10 students. At her master's school, the class size had been about 35 students, and at her undergraduate college, it had ranged from a "few" in her major classes to about 60 in some other classes. To attend this university, she again walked to school, a kilometer away from her home.

After she received her diploma at the age of 28, she returned to the city where she had studied for her bachelor's and master's degrees. Here she started working in a managerial position for a non-governmental organization (NGO) dealing with children who were "traffick victims" and "abandoned runaways."

While Karma did not seem to experience gender-based discrimination at home or in her schooling, she did in the workplace. At the two NGOs where she worked, she said she "...faced a lot of gender discrimination."

At the Delhi NGO, she was selected to lead a particular project because of her knowledge of English. Her project responsibilities included supervising four young men. As she put it, "...they wouldn't listen to what I have to say." She appealed to her male boss for assistance in this matter, which she thought was gender-related, but to no avail. She was basically "...told to be quiet."

At the second NGO, while working with licensing an adoption, she came into conflict with a former organization employee she had supervised. He now chaired a government committee which was overseeing the adoption and wanted a large "donation" from the prospective parents. Karma refused to allow the adoption to proceed and brought the matter to the attention of her male boss. The boss, she said, "...feels that this guy is very important no matter what he's doing....[H]e's the chairperson and I should

listen to him, he's right." The boss e-mailed her, too, and said something along the lines of, "You're a woman....[A]t times women don't have the right way of deciding things...so just step down from this whole issue and let another person handle it."

Her reaction to this was, "You know, if I was a woman and I couldn't handle things, why have you placed me as a manager in your office? It's no point working here." She left the job after this and found some work as a consultant.

In terms of cultural sex-based discrimination, Karma said that there is "...not much gender discrimination in my culture," but that it is different for Hindus. In addition, she said that Muslim girls face discrimination, as do all Muslims, from Hindus. She related also that she had seen, when giving food away, that boys in Muslim and Hindu families were fed before the girls.

Eventually, Karma applied for a highly competitive, post-graduate scholarship from a multi-national, non-profit organization. She was awarded this scholarship, which would cover all her costs in applying, traveling to, and attending whatever institution she selected, in India or abroad. Karma decided she wanted to go to school in the United States.

In determining to which schools to apply, Karma turned to the Internet to visit the websites of various schools. Ultimately, she ended up being accepted at and attending an expensive, private university located in a suburban city in the U.S. northeast. She said the co-ed school's facilities are "excellent" and the instruction is "good." She lives off campus but close enough to walk to school easily. (And if it rains, there is a free shuttle bus she can take!)

Karma is now in her early thirties and studying at her U.S. university for a master's degree in the field of international development. When she finishes her degree, she plans to "...return to India and I hope to start a training center for trafficked victims or an orphanage."

Karma thought "...the whole journey from [her hometown] to coming to [the] U.S. is important for me because it gives me the fact that if a person works harder, no matter what,...you are able to achieve better things in life." She also thought "...that the values that my mother had and the best education that I had in my [primary/secondary school] paved the way for a better future for me."

Her mother clearly inspired her to succeed in her education and life. Karma said, "I think I kind of got that feeling of caring and nurturing from my mother because of the deeds that she did to people and...I told myself that I had to do something in the future. I had to study about women and children so that I can enable in creating a better society for them or better space for them." She also said that education was important to her because "[it] has earned me respect within and outside my community."

4.2.2: Themes

4.2.2.1: The Home Space

Karma's home space was extremely supportive in terms of enabling her education. Her parents sacrificed financially for both children's education, but the cost to them was worth the benefit. Very importantly, they treated both children equally, providing an excellent example not only to Karma but to her brother as well. An extended family member, her uncle who tutored her, also played a role in enabling her education.

Her mother was an especially important figure in Karma's education story. She thought that to have the best chance to succeed, her children needed to know English. This would open up opportunities for them, not just within India but around the world. Knowing English, therefore, would allow them to be geographically more mobile.

Karma's mother, in fact, served as her role model. Karma's decision to change career direction toward helping women and children was greatly influenced by her mother's example.

4.2.2.2: The Schooling Environment

Karma attended good schools in her hometown, which was very important to her educational success. Her schools provided facilities and instruction which encouraged learning. She especially appreciated the excellent education she received at her primary/secondary school. In addition, this was a co-ed school where she was never exposed to any gender-based discrimination. If a school's environment is one where there is no gender-based discrimination, this has an important ramification for the students, beyond enabling a girl's education by providing a gender neutral setting in which to learn. This is that both the girls and the boys are seeing gender equality as the norm. This could lead to these boys and the girls applying this norm to their lives beyond the school, whether it be in the workplace, at home, or in other settings.

It is apparent from Karma's narrative that government schools in her area were not highly regarded. She knew that she would probably not receive the highest quality education at the particular government schools she chose to attend for her bachelor's and master's degrees. Her family's financial situation, though, hindered her educational mobility. She did, however, make the best of the situation and earned her degrees.

Scholarships were also an important factor in her educational success. A university scholarship allowed her to earn her post-graduate diploma in Delhi. Another scholarship from the international community totally removed any financial or geographic barriers to her subsequent education--she was free to study anywhere in the world.

She chose to pursue a master's degree in the United States, far away not just from her hometown but from India itself. The geographic pull of the top-quality post-secondary education available in the United States exerts itself around the world, and India is no exception.

Her fluency in English was critical to her studying in the United States. This would not have been possible if she hadn't known English.

4.2.2.3: Social and Geographical Challenges

Karma seemed to have no tribal or religious gender discrimination concerns. This was of great benefit to her. Within her community space, however, she did experience class discrimination. This resulted in social barriers being erected which physically limited her mobility.

Karma had some geographic challenges traveling to school, too. For many years she had to traverse hilly terrain, sometimes in monsoon rains. Other times she had to walk long distances to school. She did not let these obstacles deter her from her schooling, however.

4.2.2.4: Work Spaces

Karma's education did result in her finding professional employment. Unfortunately, unlike her school environment, she was subjected to fairly egregious gender-discrimination in her NGO workplaces. She was faced with either working in an environment where gender discrimination was allowed or leaving her position. Her experience illustrates that while educational success may be a link to the workplace, workplace success for a woman may be at risk if gender equality is lacking there.

4.2.2.5: Personal Agency

The personal agency of Karma in pursuing her education cannot be understated. She was the one who took advantage of the opportunities she was given, who succeeded in her education spaces--no matter what their quality. She was the one who worked hard at school and earned the scholarships which came her way. Even when faced with various challenges to her education, she persevered.

4.3: PARTICIPANT TWO

4.3.1: Narrative

[I]t is always believed in South India that the girl should compromise her career life for her personal life.

“Amy”

December 10, 2011 interview

Amy is a young Hindu woman, in her mid-twenties, from rural, interior, Tamil Nadu state in southern India. She was born in a village and then, at age one, moved with her parents to another village. Her father owned the house in which her family, eventually including a younger brother, lived with her paternal grandparents and a paternal uncle and his family. Up to ten people lived in the four-room house.

She said her family was middle-class. Her father works for the central government and has a degree in civil engineering. Her mother completed the 12th standard and is a homemaker.

Amy's first language was Tamil. All of her schools, though, were English-medium schools, the norm in India, she said, for middle-class children. Amy reached fluency in English as a teenager. She also later became fluent in Kannada and Hindi.

For grades one through five, Amy attended a private, co-educational school, of minimal cost, within easy walking distance from her home. The class size at the school was about 30 or so students. Amy described the facilities as "bad" and the instruction as "average."

Her father then was transferred to the metropolis of Bangalore in the state of Karnataka. Moving to this urban area was an important change in Amy's life. She went to school here for four years.

The school was a private but government-aided Catholic school, for girls only. Most of the students there were from what Amy described as "a very poor background." This could mean, she said, being from a single-parent home or having parents who were laborers.

The fee to attend the school was minimal, and Amy said that the general quality of the facilities was "very bad." The Catholic nuns and other women who taught at this school, however, were "awesome," even as they had to handle about 70 students per class.¹² "Teachers were very friendly and caring and I still admire them a lot."

¹²According to India's National Council of Educational Research and Training, "[n]ational and international experiences have shown that a [class size] ratio higher than 1:30 is not desirable at any stage of school education" (2005, 80).

Amy went on to say the teachers “...didn’t grumble that you don’t have places to sit or your toilet is not good, this and that, but they tried to make their own best and they tried to bring change in everyone’s life there.” She was especially appreciative of their working with her on her English. “They took efforts. And that gave me confidence to talk to people.” This led to her having “the confidence to talk my mind.” She noted she would not have gained this confidence to speak her mind at her earlier school.

Amy made good friends at the Catholic school and said that “...it was a girls’ school, so you get to have all fun. You don’t really fear anybody, so it was fun.” She thought that the school in Bangalore “...made a very good, very positive difference in my life.”

She said that “[t]hough we didn’t really have good facilities there, I really enjoyed my time there in Bangalore....I used to travel like for an hour [by bus] from my house to my school, but I think even that made it more memorable, like, you know, the traffic and things....[Y]ou get to accommodate such stuff. You don’t grumble anymore, it’s like, okay, that’s how the life goes. So, it went fine.”

Her time at the school ended, though, when her father was transferred to another large Indian city, Chennai. Her father decided, however, that Amy would be better off going back to her “native place” as he perceived her as being “culturally wrong.” He didn’t like the shirt-and-skirt uniform she wore at the Bangalore school and he didn’t like the way the urban environment was influencing her behavior. Her father wanted her to act in a traditional, conservative fashion. Her father thus decided that while he would go to Chennai, the rest of the family would go back home.

Returning home was a cultural shock to Amy. As she had been exposed to a more open urban environment, it was difficult to “...switch back to the mindset.” She said that “...when I came from the rural area to the urban area...I was dressed up like a village girl, so there was some time to get settled to an urban area. And then when I just got settled down there and was just getting along with people, again my dad put me back in the rural area. So again I had issues transforming....”

Amy was re-enrolled in her old school, where she struggled some academically in the 10th standard. This was because it was her first year back in her old school and she also had to take state board examinations at the end of the school year. She managed, though, to do pretty well on the exams.

The gender environment at the school was not good. A double standard existed for boys and girls. For example, “...if a girl talks to a guy, she’s so bad. But if a guy talks to a girl that’s fine. They don’t question the guy, rather they question the girl. And it is always portrayed in my society, at least from the town where I come from, that they blame everything on the girl.”

Amy talked about her behavior constantly being monitored by her parents and grandparents. For example, she said that “...my grandparents, they would never accept me talking to a guy. They would rather call it’s a sin. They say like, ‘You’re from a good family. You don’t talk to guys in the roads....[W]hat would the people think?’”

Amy would reply something like, “‘What would people think if I’m talking to a guy? It’s normal [*laughing*].’ But then, they don’t really accept that.”

Amy realized by the time she was studying in Bangalore that her father was financially “...capable of putting me into a very better school....” She thought that “...he

was so much into his work that he didn't really search for a good school." She did say, though, that her schools were better than government schools.

When it came time for Amy to find a college, again her father was of little help. He was, however, very involved in deciding what Amy should study in college.

She was thinking of studying either medicine or English literature. She did not think she was strong enough academically, however, to pursue medicine, and so she "...thought I should do my B.A. in English literature."

Her father, though, was adamant that she major in civil engineering. He told her, she said, "I am a civil engineer so you should do your engineering." She did not want to study this--it just did not fit her in terms of her personality. She said she wanted to do something where she could "...be socially interactive." She did not see civil engineering as people oriented; rather, it "...was just so much with buildings and books which I really don't like it." Her father prevailed in the matter, though, and she enrolled in an engineering school.

She stated that "...I still regret choosing that college, but then I had no choice....I had lack of exposure that I did not know how to apply for colleges outside my place, so this is the only good college I could figure out near my place."

Her brother's schooling experience was different from hers, in part, she said, because he learned from his sister's experience. He saw that she wasn't prepared well enough in school to study medicine. Amy said that her father, unlike for her, did help her brother with finding schools, and sent him to a very expensive school for the 11th and 12th standards when the son realized he needed a better education than his sister had gotten in these grades.

The father also wanted his son, like Amy, to be a civil engineer. Her brother, though, stood up to their father and said he was going to go into a different engineering field. Amy said her father gave her brother a say in matters, whereas he gave Amy none. She thought that her father "...gives [my brother] good space."

While in college, Amy continued to live at home. She traveled to the private school, about an hour away from her home, on a school bus. She said the "average" cost college, in a rural setting, had good facilities and instruction. While it was a co-educational college, there was a wide student gender gap--only 15 of the about 70 students in Amy's class were female. In addition, Amy said that "...the college is known for the discipline, dress code and it imposed heavy punishment for talking to [the] opposite gender." The women had to wear traditional dress which made Amy feel "so, so covered."

Amy stated that "...my [undergraduate] education in civil engineering I would say was awful...." She had difficulty with the subject matter, which really didn't interest her. "I didn't want to work with bricks and non-living things, but I ended up doing it."

Amy felt quite socially constrained at this point in her life. "I cannot talk....When the whole world says that this is how it should go, eventually [even though] you know it is wrong, you just go with it. Because you have parents, you have grandparents, your college management says like, 'This is how you have to dress up. This is how you have to do and this is what you have to eat. You shouldn't talk to guys.' And though I have so many questions in me, like why, why, why for everything, I'm like, 'Okay, fine. You people are telling me. I just don't want to argue with you, I'll just find my own way.'"

Within this oppressive social environment, however, Amy still found the means to escape it through some of the teachers at the engineering college. These “very good” and “supportive” teachers helped her succeed in her studies. This led to her moving to the city of Pune, about 120 kilometers southeast of Mumbai, to pursue a master’s degree in a branch of civil engineering in which she found she did have an interest.

At the same time, some other teachers at Amy’s undergraduate college were very “strict” and sometimes would “embarrass you” in class. She talked about one undergraduate teacher who harshly criticized a female student about her dress.

Unlike all of Amy’s previous schools, her private master’s school was expensive, with her father paying the cost. It was a co-educational institution, with good facilities and instruction, and the average class size was about 40 students. Amy lived in a women’s hostel and walked to class.

In urban Pune, in the state of Maharashtra, Amy found her freedom. She said that Pune was “...like a heaven...[for girls] having [been] brought up from this kind of place where you have a lot of social constraints, social constraints mostly due to your education institutes and due to your family....” The urban environment and the school itself “...gave me full liberty and showed me [a] different perspective of life.” She stated that “...I could not perform well when I had too many constraints in my undergraduation, but I got freedom in my master’s programme [and] I could perform well in my studies.”

In Pune, she could come and go as she pleased. She said she “...felt more secured in a liberal place like that than...in my town where it was so protective...,” and where she was made to feel as if she were a “bad girl.”

In Pune, she had “an identity,” and the city “...was a place...that really changed my life.” Pune reminded her of “...my old days in Bangalore...in a more sophisticated way.” This was a time when Amy could worry less about what others thought, “explore herself,” and think about “...what do I want out of life.” She stated that in Pune she “...had the liberty to talk for myself which was very much deprived in [the] south.” She thought that “...life in [an] urban area brings the confidence in girls.”

Amy described her teachers in Pune as “awesome.” Amy’s friends there were “super-awesome.” These friends “...helped me to change my clothing, the way I have to talk,” so as to fit in better in her new urban world.

The teachers also made an effort to help her fit in. She said, “They understood like, ‘Okay, this girl is from a rural background,’ and they just made sure that I feel comfortable.” They didn’t care what one wore to class because, in Amy’s words, “They think human character is more important than the dress [students] wear.” Important also was the fact that her teachers thought Amy would be a good researcher and encouraged her to continue her studies.

Amy gained an important mentor at this time when she attended a professional conference in Delhi, “...the first time I’m going to Delhi in my life.” This was a professor from India who taught in the United States. He talked to her about going to graduate school in the U.S. She said about this, “[O]nly that time I came to know...there is a world outside.” The professor explained that you did not have to be rich, as she had thought, to study as a graduate student in the U.S., that such things as tuition “waivers” were available.

Amy, “inspired” by the professor, started thinking about attending an American college or university. Her friends in Pune encouraged her to go, as they told her, she said, “[Amy], you’re not going to waste your life listening to your parents and thinking what your grandparents would say or your uncle would say or your aunt would say. You have to ...start living your own life.”

Amy was drawn to studying in the United States because she knew “...I can speak my mind here and get a sense of ownership for my own life. I want to bring a small change in [the] lives of girls from [the] rural area where they have financial and social constraints. So a degree and exposure in [the] U.S. will help me say my words louder for the deprived group of girls.” Amy was able to research possible graduate schools in the U.S. by visiting their websites.

Amy said, though, that “I had [a] tough time convincing my parents to let me go for my further studies because they said, ‘No, it is too much for a girl to study and you’re not going to get a right guy for your marriage.’” In fact, her father came “...to Pune to spy on me.” After talking with a male faculty member, though, who supported Amy’s goal of continuing her graduate education, her father agreed to pay her testing fees and let her apply to schools in the U.S.

Also while in Pune but before she started contemplating going to an American school, Amy met a young man, with a good job, “...who actually matched my frequency.” She said that “...he was very broad-minded. He felt that girls should have their own identity....[S]he should enjoy the rights as much as the man [does] in this society.” Amy stated, “We never had any ego issues.”

All of this was in direct opposition to the patriarchal environment Amy found in her home. As Amy put it, “[I]n my house what happens is my dad just says and my mom listens. My mom or any females in my house, they never had their words said.”

Amy and the young man wanted to get married, but Amy feared telling her parents. Once she did, however, her parents “...couldn’t accept it because he’s from another caste.” Amy asked them, ““What do you think is more important, your child’s happiness or your caste?””

This situation caused much anger in her household. Only her brother supported her and it pleased her to see him breaking with tradition. Amy’s boyfriend was even willing to have just a “court marriage.” In the end, however, Amy said she “...was not brave enough to take the position,” and they parted ways.

Her brother again learned from his sister’s experience. He told Amy, in her words ““[I]f I’m falling in love with a girl I’m not going to tell [the] parents at all. I’m just going to get married and then go inform them.””

Amy said, however, that her brother could do this and their parents would accept it. This would not be the case for her. She said that “...if I elope and then marry a guy, my parents are never going to take me back.” In fact, she had a female friend who had eloped. The young woman took all the “blame” for the situation, the young man none.

Amy is now studying in the United States, working on her doctorate in civil engineering at a large state university in a West Coast college town. She said the school facilities were “good” and the teachers “awesome.” She shares an off-campus apartment and rides a free shuttle bus to the university. Amy supports herself on a research assistantship.

Before coming to the United States, Amy said that “...many of my relatives ask my parents why should a girl be let to study after 21.” Amy herself said that “...my family life is getting delayed.” Her grandparents disapprovingly thought that an educated girl “...talk[ed] her mind out,” which Amy could not do, she said, when she “was dependent on” her family.

Amy thought that attitudes toward girls’ education were now changing in her family because of her education. She said that, “They think girls can do a lot better. But then I just try to tell them girls can do a lot more better if you give them [a] little more liberty. Because, if I had known that a person can come out of India with scholarships and with the things being taken care of, maybe I would have done it [a] little earlier.” Amy realized, though, that she “...was victimized because I was the first one to start. So, the opener always faces the trouble.”

Her family has now even accepted females wearing jeans. Despite changing attitudes, though, Amy admitted that she still has issues talking with her parents. Moreover, she still feels that she has “...to get their consent for everything.” This has not been the case for her brother, though. She said “...he is never questioned for anything. But I was questioned even if I am late from my college for academic reasons.” Her parents continue to tell her repeatedly that they “...think they have invested their money in me but [the] beneficiaries will be my husband and his family.” Amy definitely thought patriarchy has had an “...impact on my growth in my academic life.”

Amy also had some observations concerning gender-based restrictions in South India as opposed to North India. She thought that “...they are more prevalent in South India....” She based this on her interactions with male friends she had in Pune who came

from all over India. She said that where she was from “...girls are supposed to cook, girls are supposed to clean....[I]t was my duty to take [my brother’s] plates.” The North Indian guys she knew in Pune, though, “...they used to take [the women’s] cups. So I was really amazed because they treated their wives or treated their girlfriends, they treated their sisters the way they get treated. So, they don’t mind washing their clothes. They don’t mind cleaning the house. They do it.” This was not the way it was back home.¹³

Amy said she has told her brother not to expect to be catered to by his girlfriend or wife. She told him “...girls are changing and you have to give them the space. You too should learn to do your dishes. You too should treat them equally good.” She was telling her brother this because “...I don’t want to see the next generation girl being treated the same way I was treated.” Amy believed her brother is “kind of understanding” now.

Amy also thought that in South India, “...Islamic girls have more problems with [gender-based restrictions].” She talked about a Muslim girl she knew who was “brilliant” in school. Amy wanted this girl to have a college education and Amy was willing to pay for it. She said, “I convinced her parents, I told her the outcome would be really good. Your family will go to the next stage....Your life is going to change.”

¹³It should be noted that North India is generally considered to be more patriarchal than South India. (South India corresponds to the region where Dravidian languages are spoken, basically from the states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh southward. See de Blij and Muller 2000; 382, 387-88, 414). In addition to the patriarchal nature of the northern plain of India discussed above (Chapter 2, p. 11; Datta 2005, 127), “[i]n India, social and cultural discourse on gender overwhelmingly refers to the North-South differences as the basic praxis for regionalisation in terms of a gender-egalitarian South, as compared to the North, which is characterised by a more restrictive domain for women” (Raju 2004, 93).

The young woman did start college; however, "...for some reasons [her parents] didn't let her continue her studies and they just got her married to [an auto-rickshaw] driver. So again, her standard of living remains the same." The young woman is now in her early twenties with two children, and is very despondent about her life.

Amy thought her education was important "[b]ecause it made me think beyond what I heard from people, when people scorned me since I questioned their doings." She thought that if she were to "...become a professor...my voice could be heard more." If she were "...just sitting there as a housewife, nobody's going to listen to me." Amy also believed that her education "...would come with me for ever...."

Friends and family listen to her voice now because she has gone so far in her education. She said, "Now I can say to people, 'You can let your daughter study. She's going to be fine. She can take care of herself. You may not tell her.'"

After completing her doctorate, Amy would like to be a visiting professor in the United States for four months each year "...so that I maintain my relationship with this country and give back to the country which gave me employment." She said also, though, that for the other eight months "...I want to work for the girls in [the] rural area in south India to find their way for their dreams."

Amy still faces, however, a significant uncertainty in her life--who her husband will be. She said "...I do not know [if] the guy whom my parents would bring [through an arranged marriage]...will let me talk my mind or will let me work for people. I'm not sure whether the guy [would] let me do all these things."

During a school break, though, Amy went back home to India for a visit. During this time, she reconnected with her old boyfriend. She now says she is determined to marry this man, regardless of her parents.

Finally, Amy noted that while she had social constraints challenging her education, she knew of people who had both economic and social constraints. She observed that, “Not many try to come out fighting against all these.”

4.3.2: Themes

4.3.2.1: The Home Environment

Amy grew up in a traditional, patriarchal household where her father was in charge, even when he was not physically living with the family. The females were subservient to the males in the home and given little voice. Amy’s younger brother was allowed far more freedom than she was.

Her father did, however, allow Amy to go beyond the 12th grade education that her mother had. He paid all her educational expenses up until the time she received her assistantship in the U.S. Ultimately, too, he did agree to her studying in the United States.

His financial support of Amy’s education, and his support of her decision to study in the U.S., indicate that he did see value in educating his daughter. In these ways, therefore, he enabled Amy’s education, although other factors worked to constrain it.

4.3.2.2: Social Constraints

Amy’s life, including her education, was negatively impacted by social constraints. This was because she was female and, as such, she was limited in how she

could operate in social space. A multitude of patriarchally based social rules often controlled her actions in her home, her schools, and in her community. Her spatial mobility and social access to participate in various facets of life were curtailed.

These social constraints placed a significant burden on Amy as she searched for her identity. This search was very difficult for her because the cultural community around Amy was telling her that her identity was as her father's daughter, and, in the future, as her husband's wife.

4.3.2.3: Geographical Factors

Many important geographical factors were embedded in Amy's story. First of all, the social constraints faced by Amy were found in the geographical context of her origin. She was born into a Hindu family, which principally lived in a rural village, in South India. In effect, there were multiple and expanding layers of culturally based social spaces where patriarchal values were found.

Also surfacing in Amy's story was the rural versus urban dichotomy. Her native rural area was conservative, traditional, and constraining. Bangalore and Pune were just the opposite: liberal, progressive, and open. Amy was isolated in her rural area, out of touch with the world. Bangalore, Pune, and Delhi, though, were modern and informed, windows to the rest of India and the world. For Amy, these cities were stepping stones to the United States, where far more personal freedom awaited.

The spatial link from India to America was provided by the mentor Amy met in Delhi. The professor made the effort to inform her that it was financially possible to attend graduate school in the United States. Once she decided to act on this information, he guided her along the way to the United States.

4.3.2.4: Personal Space and Identity

Amy has struggled in the face of patriarchal forces, and much of the time on her own, to take control of her personal space and identity within, and outside of, that space. She has had considerable success in this regard. She is studying, on an assistantship, for an engineering doctorate at an American university. Furthermore, Amy knows that her ideas have value and, because of her education, others now respect her ideas. She knows, too, what she would like to do with her life.

Her parents still exert a strong influence over Amy, though. She wants to marry someone of a different caste and to do this she knows she will have to defy them. An arranged marriage, though, could put an end to the personal freedom she has now, including negating many of the gains and potential benefits her education has produced.

4.3.2.5: Teachers

Amy mentioned a number of teachers without whose support her education story might have been much different. The teachers who stand out the most in her story are the nuns and other women who taught her at the Catholic school in Bangalore.

These teachers had little to work with in terms of facilities. Many of their students were disadvantaged. Yet, they didn't complain about things. Instead, they created a nurturing learning environment. All of this set an example for Amy and the other students.

Perhaps most importantly for Amy was the fact that the Catholic school teachers worked diligently and successfully with her to improve her English. By the time she left the school, she was fluent in English, which enabled her education which followed.

The Catholic school space itself, as a girls-only school with the teachers invested in their girls' education, seemed to be a patriarchy-free zone. The irony of this, of course, is that the Roman Catholic Church is generally seen as one of the most patriarchal entities in the world.

4.4: PARTICIPANT THREE

4.4.1: Narrative

[My] tribal group is kind of maternal....It's matriarchal....And [the women] are responsible for the whole family and the work and the children. So, they have the whole responsibility. And the men...in the tribal group...have a habit of drinking. So, everything the woman has to do. Even if she's going to the school, before coming to the school, she has to cook for the family. She has to look after the siblings when the mother goes out to work....I have seen girls in the schools who have walked around six to seven kilometers to attend a 7:00 o'clock school. But then before coming to the school they have done all the household work, and they have cooked, and even after going, they work in the field, and they do the household work, and things like that.

“Manorma”

December 21, 2011 interview

Manorma was the first-born child of a tribal couple living, at the time, in a town in what is now Chhattisgarh state (then eastern Madhya Pradesh). When she was around one, the family moved to a city which is now in the state of Jharkhand (then southern Bihar).

Manorma's family was Roman Catholic. Her mother had converted to Catholicism, her father's religion, upon her marriage. Manorma said that in India, if a couple to marry are not of the same religion, the woman usually takes the man's faith.

In Jharkhand, the family moved into the four-room house owned by Manorma's mother's parents. In time, two younger brothers were added to the family. When Manorma was in Class VIII or IX, her mother's brother, and his wife and two children, also came to live in the home following an economic setback. Describing the home

environment, Manorma said, “The atmosphere was not good as there were always family tensions and [my] father also stayed away.”

Her mother, a college graduate, was a homemaker. Her father had twelve years of education and a good, central government job. The job, however, was not near his family.

Manorma said that her father “...had the habit of drinking. And then he was away from our home and so he did not care about us. Initially, when I was young, my mother tells me he used to give money, but then, later on, slowly, it was like he stopped giving [to] us.” Her father did, though, provide financial support to his parents and a sister.

Manorma described her family as being “lower middle class.” Because of the situation with her father, her mother and the three children often had financial problems as Manorma was growing up. Manorma said, though, that “...my mother has done everything she could to make me study in a good school and her motivation has helped [me] to study further.” Manorma thought that her mother “...has done a lot for all her children.”

At the age of 3, Manorma started at the first of two, private, girls’ pre-schools run by Catholic nuns. These were both inexpensive schools with “good” instruction and facilities. Although Manorma’s family spoke Hindi, the schools’ medium of instruction was English.

The pre-schools were located three or four kilometers from her home and her parents took her there by bicycle or rickshaw. Manorma’s parents took her out of the first school, however, after a teacher grabbed an earring out of her ear.

Manorma was in the second pre-school when she was admitted to “one of the best schools” in the city. She completed two more years of pre-primary education at the pre-school associated with this school. She then started her primary studies at the main school. Manorma attended the main school from Standard I until she matriculated, or graduated, after Standard X.

Both the pre-school and the main school were operated by “Anglo-Indian Catholics” and were English medium. The “expensive” co-educational schools had “good” facilities and instruction, and a class size of about 50 students. Manorma traveled the eight kilometers to the school by bus.

Manorma’s school fee eventually tripled and became a problem for her mother to pay after her younger brothers started attending the school. Manorma said that “...I would be getting a [monthly] notice because I had not paid my fees. And every time I had to write an application to the principal, [as] my mother doesn’t know English, ...stating that we have so and so problem and we’ll be giving a fee later on. So, my mother signed it, and then I went to the principal and got it sanctioned. And even the school authority, they knew about our condition, financially we were not well off. So they agreed every time [that] we could pay [the] fee later on.”

Her mother became “a kind of social worker” to help support the children’s education. Manorma said that “...people know that she can do some of the work which they can’t do.” For example, “...she helps the old people to get their pensions and things like that.” Her mother used the money she earned “...to help us in our studies.”

The picture Manorma painted of the environment at the school was one of being socially isolated. She said “...I was [a] very introvert[ed] kind of person....And the

children in the school, they belonged to well-off families, and like they were very different. They had no tensions and they could spend money....[T]hey had good friends when they came to school.” She thought that “...I should be away from them kind of thing.” There were some adults in the school, though, who “liked my nature” and did befriend her.

Manorma talked about her mother giving her the same chappati--fried potato and flatbread--for lunch “...every day....I mean, from Class I to Class X, because...she couldn’t afford good food....I saw the other friends and I felt bad about it. But then I realized that, no, it’s my condition, and I have to live into it.” Other students went to parties together outside of school but she didn’t. Her mother, though, did “whatever she could” to help Manorma fit in socially at school, such as getting her a “colorful dress” and “sweets” for the other school children on her birthday.

Manorma described herself as “very committed towards my work,” and in spite of the social isolation she felt, she wanted to be one of the team leaders at her school during Class IX. Her teachers, however, did not think she was “active enough” to serve as team leader and told her to let a boy a year younger than she be the team captain and she could be his assistant. She didn’t like this decision, but went along with it.

She noted that, as the assistant team leader, her “...confidence grew...because I had to lead people.” Holding this position turned out to be, in fact, “a good experience.” Nevertheless, on reflection, she thought this was the only time she experienced what she considered to be “sex-based discrimination” in any school.

Manorma also spoke about a particular teacher at the school. Manorma thought that “...she supported the students who were doing well in their studies or those who

were well off, or whose parents were like doctors or engineers kind of thing.” She said that this teacher gave her the “feeling of being excluded.”

She also felt excluded in that she could not afford tutitions. In school, she heard her classmates “...discuss things which were taught in the tutition class...” and she “wanted to go.” Her family was able to manage three months of tutition, though, before Manorma’s Class X board examinations. She did very well on these exams.

The “family conflicts” found in her home, though, were detrimental to her studies, she recounted. She explained, though, that “...I managed it because I was the eldest and I had in my mind [that] I have to do something for my family. So I studied....” Manorma said that the stress in her life also affected her health.

After Standard X, Manorma, her mother and her brothers “suddenly” moved in with a maternal relative and her family who resided in the same city. There were family tensions in this household, too, for Manorma. During the year and a half they spent here, her mother “took the initiative” and had a two-bedroom house built for the family on land owned by Manorma’s paternal grandfather, although her father’s relatives “made this difficult.”

By the time Manorma finished Standard X, she was reasonably fluent in English. She also was somewhat able to speak a rural-based language used by tradespeople in her area. She never, however, learned her tribal language.

Following Standard X, Manorma “wanted to study science” and “become an engineer.” She said, however, that her “low marks in science” precluded this, as did her mother telling her that “...she doesn’t have [the] money to help me study, so I had to

leave my choice.” Manorma needed to find a school where she could study inexpensively.

She found such a school close by, a private, government-aided Catholic school. She gained admission “without any problem.”

The college was a co-ed school where both English and Hindi were used in the classroom. Manorma described the facilities and teaching as “good” and said the class size was about 60 students. She started at this school in its “Intermediate” program in which she completed Standards XI and XII. She then pursued a bachelor’s degree in economics.

The school was of average cost but Manorma received a partial stipend from the college. For most of the time in the Intermediate program, she worked as an assistant teacher at a nearby nursery school. For a year and a half during her bachelor’s program, she worked as an assistant in nursery through fourth grade classes, teaching in English which enhanced her fluency. To get to this school, though, she had to endure about a nine-kilometer ride on the back of a scooter driven by another teacher.

For both of these jobs, she would teach “in the first half” of the day and then go to classes in the “second half.” She said that “...in the evening, I gave tutitions to around ten children. So, my time was whole packed and I did not have time for [socializing].” The money she earned went toward her school expenses and also toward supporting her family.

Manorma then considered what to do after her bachelor’s degree. She knew of a good local school where she could work on a post-graduate diploma in the area of rural development. She saw rural development as a “kind of social work for the people.”

She explained that her mother "...kind of does a social work so I was motivated like, she does so I should also do. And, I was motivated by her behaviors with other people....[M]y mother never looks down [at people]. She treats everybody equal....I wanted to take her quality in me." She said her mother was "an inspiration for me."

Manorma decided to apply to this school. She especially liked the fact that, upon completion of the school's program, she thought she could find a job "immediately."

Even though she was well qualified academically to be admitted and was "confident" she had performed well in her interviews and group discussions at the school, she was not admitted. People "...who were ranked below me, they were admitted, and I was not admitted."

She went with a neighbor, a man employed by the school, to talk with an administrator about the situation. The administrator "...did not have any answer, because I came to know that [the school had been taking admission bribes]." She told him, "[I]t's my right to be admitted....[T]his is not correct.'"¹⁴

Her neighbor then took up her case with the administrator. Eventually, she was the very last person admitted to the school.

Manorma said the private, co-educational Catholic school had "good" facilities and teaching. Class size was about 80 students and instruction was in both English and Hindi. The school was extremely expensive, however, and this was a "big hurdle" for Manorma.

¹⁴This is not an unusual situation in India as "...corruption and nepotism are rife in the postsecondary system" (Garland 2012, B2).

A maternal aunt paid for her admission costs. Manorma tried and failed to get a bank loan. She was, though, awarded a state government scholarship which covered some of the school fee. She also continued to tutor, and borrowed additional funds from some maternal relatives to help finance the program.

After earning her diploma, she “immediately got a job” in rural Rajasthan with an Indian NGO. Here, she “stayed with the NGO group” and walked wherever she “needed to go.” Soon thereafter, though, she got a much better paying job with the government of Bihar.

She lived in the city where she worked, renting a small place with two other young women and driving a motor scooter the ten or so kilometers to work. For more than a year, she was the head of an administrative department dealing with rural development. She said, though, that this was a “terrible” job. Local leaders were constantly trying to bribe her, and other government officials were inappropriately trying to get money from her. She took the high road in these situations but her staff did not. The financial malfeasance “frustrated” her and she decided to look for another job. Subsequently, she successfully interviewed for an “educationalist” development position with a large charitable foundation, winning out over others with connections in the organization.

In this position, she worked in rural Jharkhand. She rented a room with others in a small town and, to get to work, traveled by bus into the countryside. This was a “Naxalite-affected” area and “...nobody wanted to work in that place, because it was very dangerous. But I being a girl, I was very confident in me and I did not fear anyone. I thought I’m doing the correct thing. So I don’t have to fear anybody. So I went to

places alone. Like I went to the very interiors of the place where those Naxalite people were there.¹⁵ And when you go to those places, you won't know who is the correct person and who is the wrong person. And everyone has [an] eye on you because you seem very different from those people.” She went on to say that in this area she “...experienced bombings and things like that....So I had these kind of experiences, but then I never feared.”

In her work, which she did for about a year, she monitored NGOs receiving funds from her employer for education projects. Manorma discovered one NGO official was “misusing all the money” received. Manorma informed her organization about this and her honesty was much appreciated. She noted she “...retained respect through whatever I have found.”

Manorma “shared” her Naxalite and other experiences with an international foundation panel interviewing people for education fellowships. Manorma’s qualifications and “confident” interview led to her being awarded a fellowship. The fellowship would pay all her degree expenses, in the country of her choosing.

Manorma wanted “to study education.” This was because when she did “field” work in her monitoring position, she “...went to the schools [where]...the situation was very pathetic and the children did not have proper teachers. Like there were [a] hundred students in a class. And the pedagogy was very poor. And the girls’ education was also very poor. So I was very moved with all these situations I face, so I thought myself that I have to work in this education sector.”

¹⁵The Naxalites are Communist “...groups waging a violent struggle on behalf of landless labourers and tribal people against landlords and others” (Diwanji 2003).

She decided she would like to pursue a master's degree in education in the United States. Manorma said that U.S. universities are "[v]ery respected" in India and for any Indian to study in the U.S. is a "big thing" there, but especially so for someone in her financial circumstances. She thought she could "...learn [the] best [things] from the schools here [in the U.S.] and replicate them in my own place."

In college, Manorma would access the Internet via an Internet cafe. After graduating, she got her own computer so now, in looking for a master's program, she could easily get on-line to check out U.S. schools. Her scholarship sponsor suggested some schools to her and she applied to these.

She had attended Catholic schools her entire life and this did not change when she selected her master's school. Manorma is now studying at an "expensive" Catholic school on the eastern seaboard of the United States. Her program has social justice as its focus.

Manorma said the school facilities and instruction are very good, and the class size ranges from 16 to 30. She lives several miles from the school, though, and gets there by bus or train. She was unable to get housing near her campus and decided to live with a man from her hometown in India, and the man's wife. This has worked out well for her because he has been able to ease her entry into American life. He knew "how things work." Manorma also said she had some Indian friends at a nearby university, which meant "I won't be alone."

It should be noted that Manorma said that her scheduled tribe status may have been a factor for her in school admissions and employment. In addition, her financial and tribal circumstances were factors in her scholarship awards.

Manorma thought that while her home environment was “negative,” it had a “positive” influence on her and her education in that it led her to “...ma[k]e up my mind that I have to do something good, and I have to show people...I am worth enough and I can lead my family. I can help my family.” She said, “[T]he kind of family situation I was in, I did not want my brothers to struggle. Hence, I studied and got a job to support them.”

One social space which provided refuge from her stressful life was a Christian worship group, which she joined after Class X through a woman she considered her godmother. Manorma said, “...I was boosted a lot [by the group], and they were there to support me. They prayed for me, and they counseled me. So, they helped me in my education and all.”

Manorma did not think that patriarchy at home had affected her educational experience, stating, “I was supported by my parents.” She also did not think that girls and women in her tribal group faced gender-based educational restrictions per se, but their family responsibilities, in effect, could restrict their educations. She said, however, that she herself “had no time for housework” because of her busy schedule outside her home.

She thought Christian families and the Christian community treated boys and girls the same educationally, but in her experience, “...I feel like there is some kind of restriction for the Hindu and the Muslim girl....I got an opportunity to study further, but then [some she knew] they had to marry and then they had to bear children.”

She said education has been important to her in that it allowed her “to get [an] immediate job,” which she said was a financial necessity for her in order to help her family. Manorma continues to provide support to her family today.

The younger of her two brothers currently attends college. Her other brother had to leave school during Class IX because he wasn’t “...performing well because of the family tensions.” He went to live in another part of India with a maternal aunt. After completing distance learning classes to finish his secondary schooling, he is now working on a distance degree in engineering with Manorma’s financial help and his own earnings.

Her father has retired and lives in the family house with Manorma’s mother and their younger son. Manorma’s father has a pension but she helps her parents some financially, too.

Now “...my siblings and others see me as their role model.” Her parents have told her that people tell them “...they want their children to follow me.” Manorma reflected that “...I did not have any opportunity...I was not financially well. But then, I reached this place.” She believes that “...my education story is beneficial for others,” that it can be supportive for some.

Manorma said, “The educational status of tribals in Jharkhand is very poor and I have plans to specifically work for them after the completion of my Master’s.” She also has “...plans to work in India for the teacher development and other educational issues.” It is possible, too, that Manorma will enroll in a Ph.D. program, either in India or the United States.

Still in her twenties, Manorma has put her “struggles” behind her now. She has, through her education, “overcome” them.

4.4.2: Themes

4.4.2.1: The Home Environment

Manorma's home environment was, in many ways, not an enabling social space. There were problems within the family, especially financial problems caused by her father's absence. Her mother, however, provided much support to her daughter in her education and served as her role model. It should be noted that Manorma's mother did have a college degree and more education than her husband, both not the norm for a woman in India.

When Manorma was old enough, she had to become a provider in her home space. She was especially concerned, as the eldest child, with the welfare of her younger brothers. She took her provider responsibility seriously, as her obligation to her family, and this was a strong impetus for her to make the most of her education spaces and then build on her education to succeed in the workplace.

Finally, Manorma's family did not put any pressure on her to give up her education in order to get married. This was in contrast to some of her Hindu and Muslim acquaintances.

4.4.2.2: The School Milieu

Manorma did have the opportunity to attend good schools in India and at an early age, also. All of her schools were English-medium schools. At her nursery/primary/secondary school, the school administration generously gave her family financial leeway so that she and her siblings could attend the school. Nevertheless, inside and outside the classroom she felt marginalized socially because of her financial status. Her description of the environment she found at this school was a description of a space of exclusion.

Manorma did, however, receive scholarship money at all levels of her higher education. These scholarship programs have been critical to her educational success.

Through Manorma's own efforts and those of the international organization sponsoring her, her education has transcended her national borders. Manorma now occupies American educational and community spaces, with all the benefits and challenges they bring.

4.4.2.3: Religious Space

Manorma's Catholic faith underlies her entire educational experience. All of her schools, in India and the United States, have been Catholic schools. As a Catholic, she is part of a global religion, and thus her lifelong religious space can be easily accessed by Manorma in the U.S.

Another religious space which was important to Manorma was her worship group in India. This was a place where she could find some inner peace, and which could be viewed as a coping strategy for her in dealing with her life.

4.4.2.4: Transnationalism

Beyond Manorma studying in the United States, on an international fellowship, and the geographical reach of the Catholic Church, two other instances of transnationalism surface as well in Manorma's story. The first concerns her living accommodations in the United States. She essentially has found a hometown enclave, a place which has a familiar feel to it. In addition, her hometown friend knows how to operate in American space, which has been a great advantage to Manorma in adapting to her new surroundings.

Secondly, Manorma chose her American school in part because she would be near Indian friends also studying in the United States. These friends, along with her hometown compatriot, gave her a rudimentary social network in the United States.

4.4.2.5: Tribal Space

The tribal social space found in Manorma's story is one in which girls and women carry much of the family responsibility and where men are susceptible to alcoholism.¹⁶ For Manorma, seeing the load of a married tribal woman may have been a disincentive to get married and an incentive to study.

The matriarchal dimension of her tribal society, as it related to her personally, was clear in Manorma's narrative. Manorma's mother was the de facto head of their family, the family lived with her maternal grandparents for many years, and other maternal relatives significantly assisted the family in general and Manorma herself in her education.

4.4.2.6: Embracing Freedom of Movement

Manorma came across as quietly confident in her abilities, and determined to succeed. These qualities particularly manifested themselves in her decision to move about freely in the Naxalite area. Her willingness to venture into this risky territory in the performance of her job was a factor in her being awarded the fellowship to study in the United States.

¹⁶For more information on alcohol usage in India and its tribal societies, see Arora 2002, Benegal 2005, and Subramanian et al. 2005.

4.5: PARTICIPANT FOUR

4.5.1: Narrative

[I think my education story is important]...because I had strength and I had belief. If I work through situations, I will be able to get where I want. And, if somebody else who is in the same situation, and is thinking of giving up because of the hard situation, they should not. If I have been able to survive, anybody can survive.

“Goma”

December 12, 2011 interview

Goma was born into a Hindu family which lived in a slum in “outer Delhi,” which was a “[r]ural part of Delhi....” Her family rented one room of a house in which she lived with her mother, father, older sister, and two younger brothers. They had electricity “...maybe for one or two hours of the day.” Twice a day, people had access to public water taps. Goma would wait in line till it was her turn to fill a plastic container with water, which she would then carry home. The family did not have a bathroom in their home, which necessitated walking fifteen or twenty minutes to the public toilets.

Neither her mother nor her father had any education at all. Her father pulled a rickshaw and her mother was a factory worker. Her father had once had “a good business” in the slum area, but “...he lost all his business” after the rioting in Delhi which followed the 1984 assassination of Indira Gandhi.

Goma said, “We didn’t have any money. My father was old and had to pull a rickshaw, carry heavy loads so we could at least eat, but it didn’t give us enough money to even eat one time a day properly.” Goma described her home environment as having a “[s]tressed atmosphere, [with] fights most of the time....”

The slum in which Goma lived “...was full of crime.” She said going to the public toilets was “...really scary. Sometimes you go there and you’ll find somebody dead. Like people would kill somebody and throw them there. But there is no other

choice--you have to go there.” She said “...you can find people like killing somebody on the road in front of you....[Y]ou can see somebody has killed someone and hanged them on the tree....[S]o it was very scary.”

She said that “[t]he place I grew up was very conservative. Girls didn’t have much liberty to go out of [the] home. It was also risky for girls to be out as the area was dangerous. Everyday there used to be cases of rapes, murders. Parents didn’t feel safe to send their daughters out of [the] home.” Goma recounted, “[The slum] was hard for me...as [a] girl. Everywhere you will find people who want to physically harass you.” The reality was that “...it was very difficult to survive in that area with being a girl.”

Goma was allowed, though, to attend the government primary and secondary schools in the slum, which were “almost free.” Her sister and brothers, however, “...barely went to school because of the effect of [the] environment around. People either do not go to school or drop out very early.”

Goma’s siblings “...dropped out very early.” Not a good student, her sister left school during the seventh standard and was married at sixteen. Goma said that impoverished families often “keep girls back” and it was common for poor girls to be married by the age of fifteen. The older of her two brothers dropped out of school during his sixth standard “...and he became a pickpocket....” Her younger brother tried but consistently “failed” at school.

Goma, however, excelled at her primary and secondary schools. The schools operated on two shifts; the girls attended classes in the morning and the boys went to school in the afternoon. Both schools were Hindi-medium schools. Goma said that, “I used to study very hard. I liked studying.”

Goma's father strongly encouraged her education, and had great "confidence" in her that she would succeed in life. She stated that "...my father was always motivative. He always used to tell all of us [his children] that if you have to get out of the situation, we have to study. He is not himself educated. He has not gone to school. But he has seen that somebody who is educated can at least get a job and work at a respectable place....[H]e used to always tell me and even everybody else that I'm going to be at least an engineer or a doctor."

Goma's mother did not support her education. Goma told of her mother being "...a big block. In my education she would always create trouble when I'm going to school or I'm studying." Goma's mother would keep food from her. "[T]here is barely anything, and even if there is something to eat, she would not let me eat--that's how it was." Goma went on to say that "...when my father is not at home she'd throw me out from the house at night. And, I had really good neighbors who would let me in if they are still awake."

Her mother did these things, Goma said, because "[s]he didn't like me going to school and studying. Everybody else [her siblings] was like, 'We'll do what she says.' And I wanted to study and go to school..., that's all [that] was in my mind."

Goma thought there wasn't any gender-based discrimination in her primary and secondary schools and that she got just as good an education as the boys did. The schools also did not discriminate on the basis of religion.

She did say, however, that, "The distinction I have seen, that was in [the] family, like parents. They give more importance to boys not girls." She said this occurred in Hindu, Muslim, and Christian families alike. Goma related, "In my family, my mother

always gave very good treatment to the boys. Even my elder sister...because she used to listen to her.”

Goma’s primary school was about a kilometer’s walk from her home. She said traveling to school “...was stressful because the locality was bad to walk around as a girl.” Goma characterized the general quality of the school facilities and instruction as “bad.” Class size was around 50 students. In spite of these challenging conditions, however, Goma said that she “...was lucky that I had good friends. Teachers always helped me.” The teachers “...would get me shoes or they would get me [a] school bag or sometimes food.” Her friends “...they will bring me something to eat...or [help in] whatever way they could....” Goma’s primary school principal actually offered to adopt her, but Goma “...did not want to leave my father,” who was so supportive of her.

Getting school supplies and books was financially a “little difficult” for Goma. To buy these, she would turn to some neighbors who paid her to do tasks for them, such as buying their groceries at the market. Other people lent her supplies.

The secondary school Goma attended was a two-kilometer walk for her. She described the facilities and instruction as “average,” and there were about 50 to 55 girls in a class. She thought the “...school was fine. Teachers were not so serious. Students were a little better than [the] previous school. Teachers were really helpful again.”

Goma was a “topper” in the school--toppers being the students with the “highest marks.” Because she was one of the best performing students there, she was provided with a uniform, books, and school supplies at no cost. She also participated in school “writing, drawing, and running competitions,” through which she won scholarship

money. After about two years at the secondary school, Goma began to earn some money as a tutor as well.

Goma said her “biggest problem” wasn’t so much affording books and supplies, but rather that the slum “...area wasn’t so good. And, on top of that my mother was always beating and abusing and giving me a lot of problem at home.” Again, Goma stated this was “[b]ecause I wanted to go to school....”

Goma could cope with most of the abuse, but was particularly upset when her mother would burn her clothes, from “...people [who] would just give me their own kids’ clothes if they’re old,” and burn her books. She recounted that “...whenever there was any fight the first thing I used to do, I used to run with my books out of the house, so she doesn’t touch those....If somebody is awake I’ll just go to their place or I’ll just stay outside.”

When she was 13 years old, Goma joined a tuition class a man in her slum taught to a few children in his home. One day, however, “...when I was alone there and there was nobody at his home, he tried getting physically abusive and I escaped.”

She went home and kept silent about the attack. She decided, “There was no use of telling anybody because in that area if you tell these things, people would really abuse you.” She just wanted to forget about it and continue her studying.

The man, though, began to harass her in public. Finally, she went to the police about this and the police put an end to it.

Goma tried to put this behind her and concentrate totally on her high school studies. She knew that, “If you get good marks in high school, you have chances of getting in good colleges after that.”

Her efforts were rewarded as she "...was [the] topper in that whole area when I did my high school." At age 15, Goma received her high school leaving certificate after Standard X. (There were no senior secondary classes--Standards XI or XII--at her school).

At this point, Goma could have tried to get into a school offering Standards XI and XII and then gone to college, but she knew that she didn't have "...money for any kind of college, even for a government college." She wanted training so she could get a job, but at minimal cost. These requirements led her to a particular "diploma college" located in Delhi proper. She thought she could gain admission to this technical institute based on her strong academic record, so she decided to apply to the school.

She had to figure out on her own, however, how to do this. As she had no money, she had to ask a friend for some for the application form. Then, for the first time in her life, she took a bus out of the slum. She had no idea where the college was and had to keep asking directions there. She eventually found it and got her application form. She returned to the college again by bus on the night the admission results were announced, and she was accepted. When she finally made it home, though, after completing the admission process, it was to an angry mother shouting, "'Where were you?'"

The technical institute was a "minimalistic" cost, government school for women. The English-medium school had "good" facilities and instruction, and 41 students were in her class.

Goma continued to live at home with her family and took the bus to the school, which was about 25 kilometers and a forty-minute ride away. She did not have the money, however, to pay the bus fare. "So I would generally just get into any bus, and if

somebody asks for the ticket, they'll take me out of the bus. I'll take another bus. But I used to get to the college."

During her first year there, her principal took a liking to her and, because of Goma's circumstances, offered her "free hostel accommodation," including food, at the school. Goma took advantage of this arrangement until her third, and last, year in the program, when the school got a new principal. At this point, Goma had to return home and resume her bus commute.

Goma faced a language challenge at this school. She was a Hindi speaker and, up until this point, she had attended Hindi-medium schools. She didn't know English and "...initially it was very difficult because I would not understand anything." She relied on a dictionary to "learn the whole vocabulary" for her subjects. She was "comfortable" studying in English after about half a year. She said that in time she "...was doing much better than [other students] who have their education in English and...are coming from good families." This gained her the respect of friends and teachers alike.

Goma also had to figure out a way to pay for her textbooks. She did this by taking correspondence college exams for other people. Additionally, she tutored to make some money.

At age 18, Goma received a diploma in electronics engineering. Prior to this, she had already begun a job search. She could find positions which paid decently but only in "bad places." A teacher, though, told her about "apprenticeship training" available at a government ministry. She and another young woman from the technical school both got paid apprenticeships there. The other apprentice found out that her boss, a ministry manager, "...helps people who want to study." She talked to the manager about Goma

and he, in turn, met with Goma. The man agreed to support her financially in her studies and, after finding out about Goma's living situation from her apprentice friend, invited her to live at his government apartment where he could help her prepare for her engineering school entrance exam.

There were a couple of other young people living and studying with this man, but Goma still knew it could be "risky" to live in his home. She decided to take the risk, though, to get out of the slum.

This man, "such a nice person," became her mentor and changed her life. He provided a nurturing home for her while at the same time helping her study for her entrance exam, which she took after studying for a year. Goma did well on the difficult exam and was admitted to an excellent engineering college for women. Moreover, she was admitted as a second-year student in the four-year computer science and engineering program, because of her diploma training.

Goma continued to live with her mentor, who paid all her fees at the "expensive" government college. She said the school facilities and instruction were "good" and there was a class size of approximately thirty-five women. The school was about 20 kilometers away from her mentor's home and Goma took a bus there, about a thirty-minute trip.

As at her diploma college, the engineering college was an English-medium school. Goma recollected, "Now I can study in English, but I was still not able to speak in English." This was a problem for Goma as "...in that school, people come from really, really good families. And they generally speak in English. So people barely used to talk to me at that time."

During Goma's last year at the engineering school, her third year there, companies came to the campus to recruit students for positions with their companies. The companies would give technical exams, followed by job interviews in English. Goma was fine in terms of the technical exams, but could not pass the interviews because she was not fluent in English.

This was a dilemma for her, but one she was able to resolve through the use of text chat rooms. She explained that, "I sat at home for a month when the campus interviews are going on and I started chatting with people from U.S. and U.K. chat rooms. And, so when I was chatting with them I was chatting in English." At the end of this time, she was fluent in English.

The last recruiting company was now visiting the college. A friend encouraged her to test and interview with this company, and she decided to do this. Goma passed the exam, "generally very tough," and then she had the interview. She related that "...in the interview, I can't believe myself but I was talking in English....I was happy....[W]hatever the result is, I don't know. But one thing I know, that I can talk in English."

She was offered a position. She said that the tech firm was "...one of the companies that pays [the] highest. And, only four people from that whole college got the job in that company." Her job offer drew attention at the school and "...people started talking with me."

Goma contemplated continuing her education as she was finishing up her bachelor of technology degree, but she decided to take the offered job so that she could

support her family. She did not want to live with her family, though. Her mentor's home had become her home.

Goma said that her mentor "...became everything to me. Even when I go back to India now, I live with him. That's my home." She considers him to be "my family."

Goma thought that "...there are a lot of things that I got to learn from him....[H]e taught me more [the] value of being on time, keeping yourself organized, dedication, and focus."

Her mentor, she said, was "...like the first person I came across where my thinking matches....I do not believe in religion or castes or any kind of division. The other person I came across who thinks the same was this person. For me, God has given me a brain and I can think. I don't need to follow a religion to really know what is right and what is wrong. And he confirmed that."

He told her "...there are really, really few people in the world who will be good to you....[V]alue those people." He also thought that "...you have to be really good to people who are in [a] not-so-good situation." He advised her "...whether it's your family or outside, you should treat [everybody the] same."

She has applied these principles herself; for example, she now gives money to the neighbors "...who helped me when my mother used to throw me out....[T]hey always treated me like their family. I mean, they gave me food and they gave me clothes, even when they knew they wouldn't get anything from me."

Goma began working as a software engineer at the tech company. The company was outside of Delhi, 35 kilometers from her mentor's. Goma rode on a company bus for about an hour to get to work.

Goma only stayed in this position for about half a year, though. She decided she would rather teach, and found a position at an engineering college. This position was a two-hour bus ride, one way, from her mentor's home in Delhi.

She enjoyed teaching and she liked the respect it brought her. The job didn't pay very well, though, and she was worried about supporting her parents and brothers. She left her teaching position after about a year and a half.

Goma started to consider "...how to earn more money." She wanted to be able to "...support my family and friends better." Using the Internet, she discovered a university in the midwestern U.S. with a unique study/work master's program in computer science. A student in the program does coursework initially on campus. After this, the student goes to work in a paid position as the practical training part of the degree program. Foreign students receive student work permits to do this. While working, additional distance education courses are taken.

For students who need financial assistance, the university has a loan program. The student begins to pay back the loan after employed.

The structure of the program appealed to Goma, as did gaining the "experience of working in [the] USA." Goma decided to take her Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and apply to this university. As she had been working, she "...had the money to do all that." Goma was accepted and, at the age of 24, she started her coursework at this university in the United States.

This "expensive" private university, located in a small town in a rural area, was co-educational--the first co-ed school Goma had ever attended. She said "[i]t was a really good university." The facilities and instruction were "good" and the class size was

about 30 students. Goma lived in a women's dorm on campus. She earned money there as a teaching assistant and also as "a global student council representative for the university." As she was finishing her on-campus coursework, she found a software engineering job via a phone interview with a company which recruited at the university.

Goma moved to a West Coast suburb to start working as a contractor at a multinational high-tech company. It was a short bus ride to the office from the apartment she shared "...with other friends from the same university." She said that she "...really enjoyed working [there]." When her contract ended after more than two years, however, she took a software development position with a contractor which sponsored her for an American H-1B employment visa. This position, in which she worked at another large corporation, was located in a small suburb in the U.S. midwest. Here, she shared an apartment and walked to work nearby.

Goma did not stay in this place long, though, as the "full-time position" she had been promised didn't materialize. She relocated to the U.S. northeast, where she worked in another software position for a short while.

Goma then decided to move to a West Coast suburban area to take a well paying software engineering job with a financial services company contractor. She said her English ability helped her get the position, which she found on-line. She now lived in a very upscale apartment complex within easy walking distance of work.

Not long after taking this job, Goma married an Indian-American man she met on an on-line Hindu marriage site. She is confident that she will retain her personal freedom in this marriage, saying that her husband "...won't make me do things I don't want to

do.” She has relocated to the southwestern U.S. city in which her husband lives and hopes to get a “green card,” giving her permanent residency in the United States.

Goma continues to provide financial support to her parents and brothers back home. The younger brother is now in an excellent music school, the cost of which she pays. Her older brother has given up pickpocketing and “...works on his own for himself.” She cannot help her sister, though, who married into a “not-so-good” family. Goma said that with her sister she “...can’t do anything. Because if I interfere in her life, her whole life gets screwed up.” Her sister, however, does live in “a little bit better” area “...a little away from the slum.”

Goma said she had not experienced any gender-based or other discrimination within her specific school environments. She did, however, have to deal with the home and slum environments in which she found herself.

Goma thought the slum actually served as a catalyst for her to succeed educationally. “I just could not think [of] myself living in that situation. I knew that I had to do something, and, the only way there was...is to study and be able to maybe find a good job. But I knew at least that if I study I will be able to come out.” She was spurred on by her father, her teachers, and her school friends in her quest to escape the slum “...and make [a] fortune for myself.”

She elaborated, “All the hardships in that area,...these people who would harass me sexually or the environment or my mother, they all used to give me more strength. Whatever happens I was like, let’s forget about it. I just have to study and when I will be at the place I want to be,...on their own all this will stop. So, it’s like [the] situation itself was strengthening.”

Goma also talked about getting “strength” and “inspiration” from others who have succeeded, whether co-workers or people such as Mahatma Gandhi or Martin Luther King. She has been especially inspired by Steve Jobs’ 2005 Stanford University commencement address, which she has listened to on YouTube™ repeatedly. Through this speech, she has come to realize that “...it’s all inside you....It’s just the confidence that you can do something....[A]t some point I [will] be able to know that [everything is] happening for a reason. So you just have to do things and leave everything on I guess God.”

Goma is still enrolled in her master’s program and will graduate from the university as soon as she finishes a required project, which is underway. Goma says she “...want[s] to support people in India if I can, like the person who supported me for my Bachelor’s. If I had not met him, I might not exist today.”

Goma also wanted to say, “There are hard times, so hard that dying seems to be the easiest than fighting the situation. There are times we lose all hopes and feel nothing is going right. But those situations should make you stronger not weaker, because anyone can survive the good time. The beauty is to survive in the hard time and be able to tell yourself, you will get through it like you did till now. Have faith in God and in yourself.”

4.5.2: Themes

4.5.2.1: Family Challenges

Goma’s family situation presented multiple challenges not just to her education but to her well being in general. The family had little more physically than a roof over their heads because of their poverty. This poverty also meant basic necessities, such as

food and clothing, were in short supply. The family's paramount concern was just surviving from one day to the next.

On top of the material deprivation found in the home, Goma had to deal with her mother's physical and verbal abuse. This abuse was directed at her because Goma wanted an education, which did not fit in with her mother's patriarchal norms, the cultural norms which prevailed in the community.

Her father, however, was not patriarchal in terms of Goma's education--just the opposite. His strong support was the one positive factor found within Goma's home environment which did enable her education.

Finally, Goma's home was spatially nested within a slum community. This geographic situation only added to the disadvantage found in her home.

4.5.2.2: The Slum

The environment of the slum was a constant challenge and threat. There were people within this social space, though, such as her neighbors, who did help her in very meaningful ways.

For Goma, the slum environment worked to "push" her out of its bounds and made the "pull" of education even stronger. Even so, Goma had to overcome any number of formidable obstacles to get an education and use that education to gain the mobility to move elsewhere.

4.5.2.3: School Spaces

Goma's government school environments, even if not always good, did enable her education. Goma was able to study in discrimination free spaces and was able to learn in

these spaces. At her secondary school, performance incentives and school-sponsored competitions were available to her to help cover schooling costs. In addition, Goma had school personnel and friends who helped her along the way.

4.5.2.4: The Mentor

Goma's mentor provided a safe and caring home environment in which she could study, and he became, in essence, a surrogate parent to her. The mentor personally tutored Goma and gave her a sense of social awareness beyond herself. He also supported Goma financially, including paying for her bachelor's degree. In short, the mentor provided a milieu which enabled Goma's education and improved and enriched her life.

4.5.2.5: Active Actor

Goma has not been a passive participant in her schooling. Instead, she has been very focused on and highly engaged in her education, taking control of it as much as possible. She has worked extremely hard in her studies and exhibited constant determination and confidence in herself in overcoming the myriad and intertwined geographical, economic, and social challenges in her life. Above all, Goma has been a survivor.

4.5.2.6: Cyberspace

Cyberspace can be considered an extension of physical, geographic space, and social interactions occur in cyberspace just as they do in physical space. In Goma's case, she "travelled" via her computer to an English culture realm when she visited the British and American chat rooms. These computer spaces enabled her to learn to communicate

freely in English, and the language facility she gained broadened her educational experiences and employment opportunities.

In addition to the chat rooms, Goma used the Internet to find and explore her U.S. university. Some of the classes she “attended” while at this university were distance learning classes. Moreover, Goma found employment on-line. Via the Internet, she also was able to be at Stanford with Steve Jobs as he gave his commencement address, which encouraged her to succeed. Finally, Goma found a seemingly non-patriarchal husband on-line who would let her use her education as she saw fit.

4.5.2.7: Employment Mobility

Goma’s education has resulted in her gaining technology skills very much in demand in the global workplace. This is illustrated by the fact that she was sponsored for a coveted H-1B foreign worker visa. Thus, Goma’s skills have given her a high degree of spatial freedom in determining where to work.

4.5.2.8: Role Models and Voice

Goma has been positively influenced by various role models in the conduct of her education and her life. She was inspired by people she knew personally, such as her mentor, or gained motivation listening to the stories of more famous people. Goma, too, is a role model and wants her education story to inspire others.

4.6: CROSS AND COLLECTIVE ANALYSIS OF CASES

4.6.1: Introduction

Based on the narrative data and themes detailed above for each participant, a number of themes became apparent between and among the participants regarding the research questions. These cross and collective themes are discussed below.

4.6.2: Cross and Collective Themes

4.6.2.1: The Home Space

The participants' home spaces, as could be expected, have played important roles in enabling their educations. Sometimes, however, the enabling has been in counterintuitive ways.

Karma seemed to have the most stable home environment, although there were financial challenges. Her parents completely supported her education, with her mother taking the lead in this. Her home environment thus nurtured her education.

As for Amy, she and her family, unlike all the other participants, were fairly well off financially. Her home situation was highly patriarchal, however, which was difficult for her. Even so, her father did financially enable her education.

No one could have predicted Goma's remarkable educational success based on the slum environment in which she was raised. The extreme challenges she faced were not just outside her home but within it also, as she had to deal every day with deprivation at the most basic level. Added to all this was a physically, verbally, and psychologically abusive mother. Goma's father, though, did support her in her education. Goma wanted to escape the slum and her father told her how: get an education.

Manorma, as with Goma, saw her home environment as a catalyst to study and have a better life. Her mother's situation repeatedly illustrated the need for Manorma to make her own way and not be dependent on others.

It is interesting to note that three of the participants were the eldest child in the family. The fourth, Goma, had one older sister. All of the brothers in the study, therefore, were younger than the participants, and all of the participants had at least one younger brother and no younger sister. The two participants with the greatest financial need, Goma and Manorma, were motivated to provide for their families and especially their younger brothers. Education was the means to accomplish this.

Also of interest are the absences of three of the fathers from the home space. With the exception of Goma's father, all the other fathers had government jobs which kept them away from home in some fashion.

4.6.2.2: The School Space

The participants, first and foremost, all had access to schooling in India--not necessarily the best schools but schools nonetheless. The participants' schools actually ran the gamut from virtually free government schools to very expensive private schools. All four participants, however, went to at least one government or government-aided school. The quality of the participants' schools in India ran the gamut, too, but generally most of the private schools they attended were of better quality than the government schools. Karma attended all co-ed schools in India, Goma all girls' or women's schools, and Amy and Manorma both types, although predominantly co-ed schools, so there was variance in this regard, too. All of the participants, though, even Amy, received at least

some of their education in Indian cities, seen as being more open to girls' and women's education.

All study participants mentioned school personnel in their interviews, often in a favorable light but sometimes as people who were not very supportive. The teachers who enabled the participants' educations were those who taught them well, took an interest in them, and provided encouragement. In Goma's case, sometimes they even provided basic necessities for her. Principals for both Goma and Manorma used their offices to help them, and both participants in their interviews remembered and appreciated these actions.

What all the participants seemed to have in common was the capacity to make the most of whatever schooling situation in which they found themselves. This was something they actually had some control over--maybe the only thing they really had control over as children.

All four chose to study at graduate schools in the United States. This speaks to the perceived quality of higher education in America, a centripetal force attracting students globally. Indeed in India, the collective educational space comprised by American colleges and universities is highly prized. This is illustrated by the fact that for international students studying in the U.S. during the 2010-11 school year, India was second only to China in the number of students, with almost 104,000 (Institute of International Education 2011).

4.6.2.3: Mentors

Three of the participants each had a parent who played an important role in enabling her education. For Karma, this parent was her mother, as it was for Manorma.

For Goma, her father was her mentor. The parent's level of education had no bearing in this regard as Karma's mother completed Standard XII, Manorma's mother was a college graduate, and Goma's father had no formal schooling whatsoever.

As a young woman, Goma also gained another, life-changing mentor. This was the government official who became a surrogate parent to her, gave her a good home, and was personally involved in her education.

As a child, Amy did not really have a mentor, although the Catholic school teachers were role models for her. Her pursuit of her own personal identity seemed to be the principal force behind her educational success and the personal freedom it might bring. As a young woman, however, Amy did find a mentor, the professor she first met in Delhi, and he was instrumental to her studying in the United States.

It should be noted that both Manorma's mother and Goma's surrogate-parent mentor respectively told each of them, as recounted in their interviews in almost identical language, to treat everybody equally. Both took this advice as a life lesson.

4.6.2.4: Friends and Extended Family

Friends and extended family were often cited by participants as assisting them in navigating their educational and other social spaces, such as Amy's friends in Pune, or Karma's uncle who tutored her. Manorma's hometown friend in the U.S. even provided an enabling home environment for her from which to pursue her American education.

4.6.2.5: Financial Aid Programs

Scholarships and other financial aid have been critical enablers in the four participants' educations. Whether originating from the schools, a state, or the

international community, this financial assistance has allowed them to study. For example, none of the participants' families, including Amy's, had the economic means to pay for graduate school in the United States. The young women all found vehicles to accomplish this, however: Amy an assistantship, Goma a study/work program, and Karma and Manorma scholarship grants.

4.6.2.6: Religious Space

Religion was a significant influence on the participants' schooling. For example, both Hindu participants, Amy and Goma, came from families with conservative family values which negatively impacted, as daughters, their educations and other facets of their lives. This was not the case for the two Christian, tribal participants, Karma and Manorma, who seemed to experience no gender discrimination within their families.

Furthermore, Catholic schools played significant roles in two of the participants' educations. For Amy, a Hindu, the Catholic school she attended in Bangalore was a very positive space for her. For Manorma, who is Roman Catholic, Catholic schools defined her whole schooling experience. Manorma also valued the social space created by her Christian worship group.

Caste did not surface directly in regard to aiding or hindering any of the participants' educations. The only instance in which caste was discussed was in regard to Amy's marriage situation, where it was, and still is, an issue. If Amy were to have an arranged marriage, the possibility exists that the value of her education, and her personal identity as well, could be eroded. If she marries her boyfriend, she feels she will have the opportunity to use her education to the fullest and just be herself. Amy risks alienating her family, though, if she makes this choice.

It should also be noted that Goma found a Hindu man to marry who respects her as her own person. This allows Goma to make the most of her education.

4.6.2.7: English

One thread which tied all the participants together was their mastery of the English language. Obviously, none of them would be studying in the United States without it.

A young girl in India doesn't make the decision as to whether or not to go to an English-medium school, her parents do. Three of the participant families did decide to send their daughters to private, English-medium schools. For Amy's family this wasn't a financial hardship, but it was for Karma's and Manorma's families. It should be noted that both Karma and Manorma started their schooling at the age of three in English-medium pre-schools.

For Goma, there was no money for an English-medium school. Her parents' only choice was to send her to the local Hindi-medium government school or to no school at all.

Goma basically had to teach herself English, beginning at the age of sixteen when she entered her diploma program. Later, when she was studying for her bachelor's degree, her lack of fluency created a barrier between her and the mostly English-speaking students at the school. It also was eliminating her from consideration for good jobs. In that, however, she had learned the requisite computer skills, had access to the Internet at her mentor's home, and drew on her own ingenuity to turn English-text chat rooms into her classroom, she overcame this language deficit and gained fluency in English. Beyond

giving her linguistic entrée to graduate school, her knowledge of English has additionally been a factor in her being employed in the United States.

All of the participants may have done well educationally and professionally in India without learning English. Their knowledge of English, however, has only increased the opportunities and influences they may have in their lives, in India and the English-speaking world beyond.

4.6.2.8: Cyberspace

Although Internet use is still limited in India,¹⁷ all of the participants visited “cyberspace” to look at graduate programs in the United States via their websites. In addition, one of the most intriguing dimensions of this study is how Goma learned English in the virtual communities found in the chat rooms she visited. This use of the Internet serves to illustrate the ever-growing possibilities modern technology can bring to education, especially as the “digital divide” in India closes with increased access to computers by individuals and schools.

4.6.2.9: Globalization

Globalization has been defined as: “The expansion of economic, political, and cultural activities to the point that they become global in scale and impact. This process has been aided by technological advances in transportation, information management, and telecommunications” (de Blij and Murphy 2003, R-21). Karma, Amy, Goma, and

¹⁷In 2009, there were about 61 million Internet users in India (Central Intelligence Agency 2012). The July 2009 total population of India was estimated to be 1.116 billion (Central Intelligence Agency 2009).

Manorma are studying in the United States because of this process, and, in fact, are part of the process.

The school websites available around the world, the jet airplanes routinely connecting India and the United States physically, and e-mail, Skype™, and cell phones to stay in touch with home--all of these globalization tools have contributed to the participants attending graduate schools in the U.S. In turn, they will take what they learn in America, both their educational and life experiences, back with them to India to disseminate to others there. This geographical diffusion is at the heart of globalization.

4.6.2.10: School Space to Workplace

All of the participants have been able to find employment in professional positions because of their higher educations. Karma, Goma, and Manorma have held multiple positions, and Amy has a research assistantship.

Karma, Goma, and Manorma were also able to draw on their educations to tutor others. Tutoring was especially important to the latter two in staying afloat financially.

The transition to the workplace wasn't always without problems. Both Karma and Manorma had to confront financial irregularities in the workplace. The "donation" situation Karma uncovered and reported resulted in her being subjected to gender discrimination, which led to her resignation. Karma also faced gender discrimination in another job.

For all the participants, their schooling has enabled them to move from the private space of the home, traditionally associated with women, into the public work space

generally associated with men.¹⁸ Their schooling has thus given them physical and economic mobility.

4.6.2.11: Personal Agency

All of the participants in the study were personally committed to getting an education and at high, post-graduate levels. This commitment was influenced by circumstances, supportive or not, within each one's particular social spaces and the realization that with education came more control over their personal spaces and thus their lives.

4.6.2.12: Patriarchy

Patriarchy has played a significant constraining role in the educations of Goma and Amy, the Hindu participants with traditional families. Although geographically they were from different parts of India, Goma from the north and Amy the south, both came from rural areas--though very different rural areas as Amy was from a rural village and Goma from a rural Delhi slum.

For Goma, it was not her father, however, who held her back educationally. It was her mother's patriarchal values which impeded her, among other things.

Amy was brought up in a decidedly patriarchal family with a controlling father as its head, and she faced myriad patriarchally-derived social challenges inside and outside her home which were detrimental to her education in some way. Nevertheless, her father

¹⁸According to National Sample Survey data for India from July 2009 - June 2010, 56% of the rural male population and 56% of the urban male population were in the labor force. For females, these figures were 27% and 15%, respectively. For more information about these figures, see National Sample Survey Office 2011; ii, v.

did not prevent her from getting an education and, in fact, financially facilitated her education.

4.6.2.13: The Returns to India from Girls' Education

All four of the participants have plans to use their educations to benefit India, and, in particular, young people facing their own challenges in Indian society. No one can know just how many lives these young woman may change for the better because of the knowledge, skills, and financial wherewithal they have gained from their educations. Clearly, however, the returns to India will be significant and make the case for the value of girls' education in India. (A summary of all the participant and cross/collective themes developed in the research study is presented in Table 4.1.)

4.7: THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OTHER RESEARCH CONCERNS

The above case studies have identified the social spaces, and the interactions within and between these spaces, which have enabled the study participants in their educations. (Figure 4.1 presents a general diagram of the positive social spaces and factors which have enabled the participants in their educations and the realized or expected outcomes from these educations.) What is clear from the case studies is just how important these social spaces have been in aiding or hindering the participants' educations. Often, too, both positive and negative influences were found in the same space.

Patriarchy emerged as a significant negative factor in the Hindu participants' educations. The education space as a link between the home space and the professional

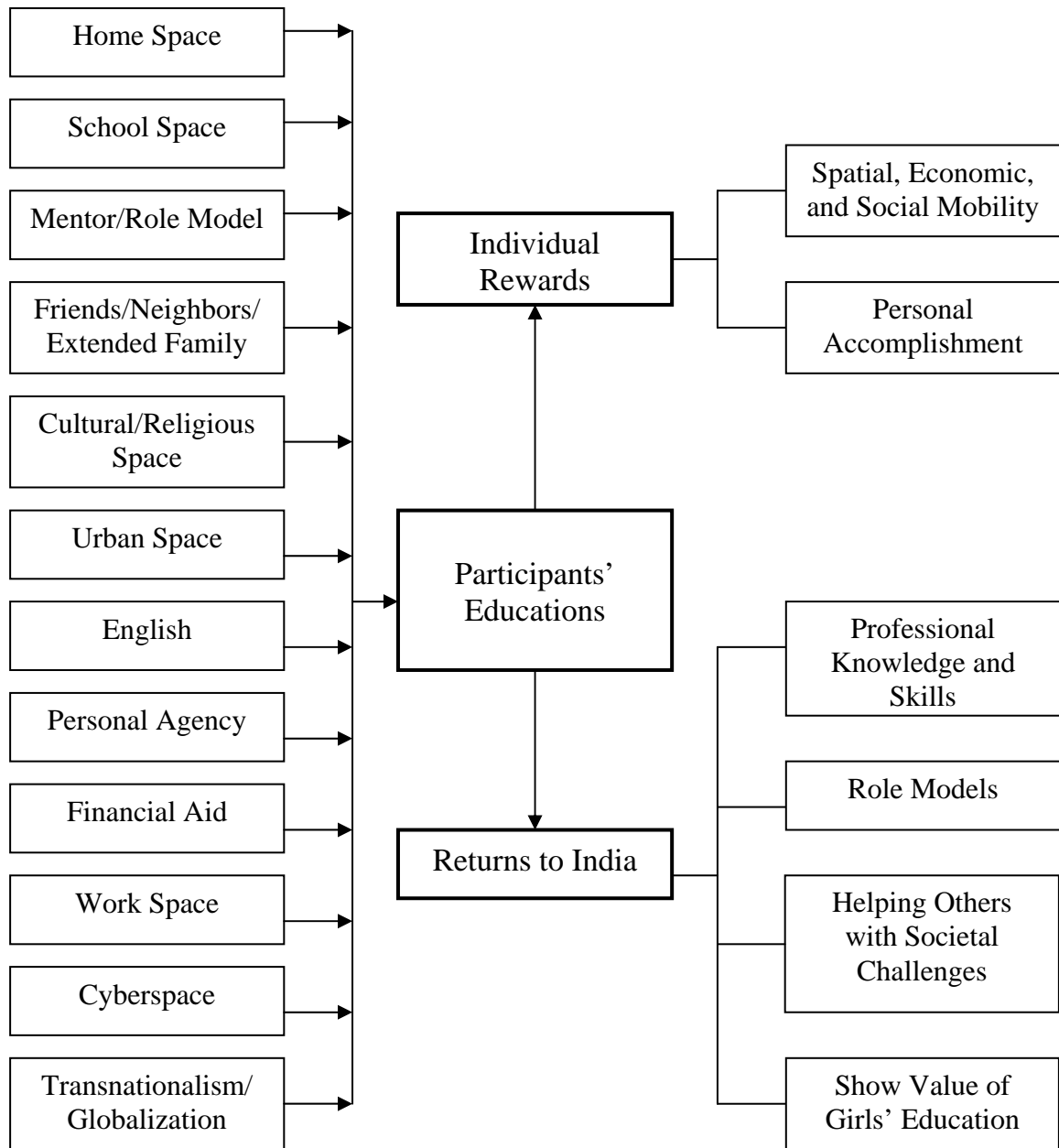
Table 4.1

Summary of Themes Developed

<p>Karma (One)</p> <p>The Home Space The Schooling Environment Social and Geographical Challenges Work Spaces Personal Agency</p>	<p>Amy (Two)</p> <p>The Home Environment Social Constraints Geographical Factors Personal Space and Identity Teachers</p>		
<p>Manorma (Three)</p> <p>The Home Environment The School Milieu Religious Space Transnationalism Tribal Space Embracing Freedom of Movement</p>	<p>Goma (Four)</p> <p>Family Challenges The Slum School Spaces The Mentor Active Actor Cyberspace Employment Mobility Role Models and Voice</p>		
<p>Cross/Collective Analysis</p> <table> <tr> <td> <p>The Home Space The School Space Mentors Friends and Extended Family Financial Aid Programs Religious Space English</p> </td><td> <p>Cyberspace Globalization School Space to Workplace Personal Agency Patriarchy The Returns to India from Girls' Education</p> </td></tr> </table>		<p>The Home Space The School Space Mentors Friends and Extended Family Financial Aid Programs Religious Space English</p>	<p>Cyberspace Globalization School Space to Workplace Personal Agency Patriarchy The Returns to India from Girls' Education</p>
<p>The Home Space The School Space Mentors Friends and Extended Family Financial Aid Programs Religious Space English</p>	<p>Cyberspace Globalization School Space to Workplace Personal Agency Patriarchy The Returns to India from Girls' Education</p>		

Figure 4.1

**Positive Social Spaces/Factors* Enabling Participants' Educations
and Realized or Expected Education Outcomes**



*For one or more study participant

work space was established for all the participants. It also was shown for all the participants that their educations have resulted in spatial, economic, and social mobility.

Of paramount importance concerning the case studies is the fact that they have given voice to the participants' education stories. All of the participants know that they can serve as role models for other girls and young women who may be challenged in their pursuit of an education.

It should be noted that others may draw other thematic conclusions from the participant narratives and reach other conclusions regarding the research questions and other research concerns. In fact, some appropriate individuals were asked to review the findings of this research and offer their own insights regarding girls' education in India. Their evaluations of the research are found in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: VALIDATING THE RESEARCH

5.1: VALIDATION PROCEDURES

Various approaches are utilized to evaluate and validate qualitative research (see Creswell 2007, 201-221). In this research study, the validation process has focused on three specific approaches (see Figure 3.2, p. 41).

The first has been the extensive use of description throughout the study, but most importantly in constructing the participant narratives. Nothing speaks with more validity than a participant's own words, so these were frequently utilized in the narratives.

The second approach has been a heavy emphasis on context, both qualitative and quantitative, throughout the study. Clearly, relevant context to support the research is imperative to understanding and assessing it.

The third approach, the review of the research, is at the heart of the validation process employed for this study. In this regard, the research was reviewed by:

- 1) All four research participants;
- 2) A graduate student "peer," an Indian man studying in the same U.S. geography department as the researcher; and
- 3) An "expert" evaluator, an Indian woman who is a professor in a geography department at an Indian university.

Of importance is the fact that all of these reviewers are Indians, each thus having an "insider's" perspective regarding the research and the issue of girls' education in India.

For the study participants, this review process really began in March of 2012. At that time, each participant was e-mailed a secure draft of their particular case study, i.e., their individual narrative and themes, for approval before the case study was read by any other reviewer. If any changes needed to be made, these were put in place. The participant education stories were considered complete as of the end of April 2012.

In June of 2012, a review draft of the dissertation was e-mailed to all six individuals participating in the review process. They were asked to evaluate the study, and in particular the thematic conclusions drawn from the participant narratives and the other conclusions reached regarding the research questions and other research concerns. In addition, they were invited to add any other thoughts they might have regarding the research topic. Their feedback, as received from each of them, follows.^{19, 20}

5.2: THE RESEARCH REVIEWS

5.2.1: Participant One Review

Karma wrote:

The research paper does give a glimpse of the influences that social spaces have on the education of girls in India. The findings illustrated in this paper are interesting but it is important to mention here that most of these findings would stand true only for the individuals interviewed. It would not be correct to generalize these findings, considering the fact that India has diverse communities, different financial statuses, geographical span and a mix of matriarchal and patriarchal societies.²¹ Additionally, it would have been better if the participants' verbatims were paraphrased.

5.2.2: Participant Two Review

Amy had the following comments:

¹⁹Minor edits to a review may have been made by the researcher.

²⁰In finalizing the dissertation from the review draft sent out June 30, 2012, some material has been summarized graphically or organized differently, and other relatively minor revisions have been made.

²¹*Author's Note:* This view underscores what was previously discussed (p. 34) about India's size and diversity and that qualitative research focuses on "meanings in specific contexts" not generalizability.

I read the document and feel that you have done an excellent work which will be of huge help for any one who wants to know about the current women's situation in India. While reading your work it reminded me of my old days and gave me more confidence to pursue further in the academic area. I was very happy to see how the other women have also succeeded.

5.2.3: Participant Three Review

In her review, Manorma said that:

I feel good that through this paper others will get to read that girls or for that matter anyone who struggles, with determination, hard work, and perseverance can reach to a position where they can act as leaders and be an inspiration to others. When I share my experiences with others, they get motivated and see me as an example. I am thankful to God for letting me go through all this because it has helped me grow into a better person and I try to fulfill the verse from the Bible: "Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity" (Titus 2:7). These experiences have also led me to get better opportunities in work and education because of the abilities I have acquired. I take these struggles as stepping stones for my success and not as failures. I feel your work itself will be read again and again to get encouragement from the experiences of the people you have studied. Thank you so much for writing down my experiences in your work.

5.2.4: Participant Four Review

The final participant, Goma, offered this evaluation of the research study:

I read your study from start to end. I liked the way you organized the sections. Giving background information of the geographical location helps people to understand the daily challenges people living at that place have to go through. The study is very detailed. You did a great job doing this study and bringing up the challenges in front of the world that girls have to face in India. This study will give strength to others to fight the situations. I am glad to know about other girls also who fought under all circumstances and didn't let others make them feel weak.

I wish a big audience for this study.

Thanks again for doing the great work.

5.2.5: Peer Review

The graduate student peer reviewer for this study is Praveen Noojipady, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Geographical Sciences at the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland. (A curriculum vitae for him is found in Appendix F.) After reading the dissertation review draft, Praveen wrote the following:

Participant 1:

The narrative here is often true, especially for students coming from rural areas. In the first place, schools are limited and the distance to school is an added burden on children. The economic conditions of parents in rural areas are such that few have enough money to buy a personal vehicle and public transportation is scant, or in another sense it can be said, “it doesn’t exist.” Technology influences parents in many ways to take major decisions towards their children. Teledramas (many) portray day to day modern life, and people (even in rural areas) watch them every day on television. Although, in this case, the mother was educated until the 12th grade, many in small towns and rural areas now do understand the importance of education and the quality of life it can offer.

The participant here was fortunate to acquire scholarships to pursue her studies. However, it is sad that many of the students (both in urban and rural areas) have limited information on the type of scholarships that the central (federal) and state governments have to offer. Moreover, the total numbers of scholarships offered are limited to begin with. School personnel should have all the information regarding scholarships and opportunities that are available, but it’s often neglected or they have no information.

The discrimination in the work space is often true. This fate is not limited to NGO’s, but is also quite extensive in many of the government agencies. Often times, male workers are preferred as it is believed that they tend to be socially/politically active, which plays a major role in the NGO’s and government agencies.

Participant 2:

Since, I hail from south India, I see 100% truth in her narratives. I too studied in rural areas until 12th grade and my perspective of life changed completely after I moved to Bangalore for my engineering studies. It’s open, liberal, and you get to know the world. Yes, Catholic schools are often considered the best, especially in Karnataka. My hometown, Mangalore, is often known for the best secondary and high school education in the state and to some extent Catholic schools are responsible.

In rural areas, it is very true that girls talking to guys is considered bad. Brand names (in a bad way) are given for such girls, depriving them of their dignity and character and the news spreads into the society. Parents of a girl child try to make sure that their girls don't get branded under such a (before mentioned) category as this might cause trouble for the family in living within the society and also in finding a suitable boy for marriage in the future.

Girls sent to school/college are monitored constantly. Parents check on them every day, what time they leave home and what time they come home. If there is even 10 minutes delay in their arrival in the evening, they are questioned. Any hesitation in giving the answer becomes a big issue and the drama lasts for the next couple of days.

The older generation in India, irrespective of whether in rural/urban areas, has lived their lives for others and the society surrounding them. People (both men and women) often think about what others might think/say if they go out of their regular course. Whether one likes it or not, they are often behind pleasing the society. Participant 2 has to cope not only with her parents' generation, but also with her grandparents' generation, who are much more conservative and are in no disposition to change to the new generation.

Investing in girls' education is not popular in the rural areas (predominantly) and to some extent even in urban areas. Religion often plays the greater role in girls' education investment. In the rural areas, girls often are considered a burden to the family. One of the main concerns is to take care of them until their marriage and to find a suitable boy to marry. The higher the girl's education, the more limited the pool of boys and the more dowry. In other words, a girl's education is directly proportional to her dowry and inversely proportional to the pool of boys. Girl parents don't see any incentive in getting the girl educated, or in other terms, parents might think they (girls) will create a whole lot of problems in the coming future, if given a good education. However, with the technology (television) coming to every part of the rural world, the perceptions are slowly changing.

Teachers play a very important role in some part of every individual's life, boys are no exception. Often times, kids listen to their teachers more than their own parents as there is always the scope for learning new things and constant encouragement. It's inspirational that this participant had a lot of support from her teachers.

Participant 3:

Scholarships played an important role with Participant 3. All through her education, she had some sort of financial support from multiple agencies (not mentioned exactly which agencies). Many of the Christian churches around India do support financially education enthusiasts to

some extent. As mentioned earlier, religion plays an important role and the Christian community in India is very much in support of education.

Mothers play a major role in a girl's education--not to a great extent for Participant 2, but highly supportive for Participant 1 and 3. Often, they (mother and father) sacrifice in every aspect and every bit to fulfill their children's education. This trend is not just limited to the rural population, but is seen even in the urban areas with middle class families as well. Although, people are highly educated, open, liberal, etc. in urban areas, the majority of the housework is still undertaken by women. No matter that she (the woman) is employed or not, the majority of the women cook, clean, and take care of the kids (especially with the day to day school chores).

In rural areas, alcohol is a major concern in maintaining a balanced family life. Unlike western countries, alcohol consumption is socially not respected in India. Overconsumption by men causes disputes at home and has a major impact on children. Lower income, habitual alcohol consumption, more children, etc. just increase the burden on the family and others (children and mother) in the family need to compromise in many ways to meet their daily needs.

Participant 4:

The narrative from Participant 4 is truly heart wrenching! As said earlier, girls' education is not so welcomed in the lower economic population sector, predominantly in the rural areas. Slums are a somewhat similar situation, where the living condition is not so good, congested with less educated people, crimes, social insecurity, etc. Schools (mainly government owned) are usually overcrowded, understaffed, and lack basic facilities, thus leading to schools offering a low quality education.

Mothers can be a role model in creating an atmosphere for a girl's education or they can be detrimental, which the mother is in this case. There are still worse stories, what a mother could do to stop her girl child from going to school. Please watch the first episode of "Sathyamewa Jayathe" meaning "Let the truth prevail," a television program which brings real social issues to the public. The first episode (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1ByZCLOvXY>) is on female feticide, which opened up the eyes of millions of Indian people and the officials concerned both in the central and state governments.

Delhi is an unsafe metropolitan area, especially for women. Harassment, molestation, etc. are quite common. Slums add more complexity, as people in here are less educated and safety towards women is much more jeopardized. It's quite impressive that the participant has overcome all these difficulties.

Mentoring is very much important to any individual's life (badly needed in rural areas) and in this case, her mentor played a crucial role in

shaping the participant's future. She was lucky to have such a person in her life, which is quite rare to find.

English plays a greater role in modern India and if one is to excel in life, he/she needs to know English in terms of reading, writing, and speaking. Often times, people from rural areas are not exposed to such cases and there is a steep learning curve as they progress through their education. It's quite rare to find good English medium schools in rural India. Even if there is one, it is quite expensive. In some cases, parents do want to send their children to good English schools, but their economic condition will restrict them not to.

Technology opens up an ocean full of information and opportunities, which has been vital in all four participant lives. This is very true with the developing India and has played a major role in seeking opportunities and higher education. However, technology/Internet comes with a cost and the rural population has no inclination towards acquiring it as it involves a cost (both a monthly recurring cost and an initial computer setup). Luckily our central government has taken an initiative on e-learning under a program which facilitates providing 7-inch Aakash tablets to schools. Only time will tell us how successful this program will be.

Overall:

I see this as an excellent study and the dissertation is very well written. The narratives from the participants clearly illustrate the problems and struggle involved to be successful. I wish there were more such case studies, but I do understand the amount of effort involved in conducting such a study.²² I hope publications from this dissertation can bring some changes, especially in empowering girls' education in the rural areas and in underprivileged society.

Praveen also made the following comments in regard to specific lines in the dissertation document. (Please refer to the page and line noted to see the specific context for each comment.)

Page 4, Line 7:	<i>a student could be motivated to succeed because of a poor home environment.</i>
Praveen:	This is often the case.

²²*Author's Note:* Other researchers may want to utilize facets of the study design to do similar case studies in the future and, in effect, add to the participant pool.

- Page 13, Line 17: *“...boys often receive more attention than girls from the teacher”*
 Praveen: This is questionable.
- Page 13, Line 20: *Even where there are women in teaching positions, they “...are widely treated as second-class employees by their male colleagues”*
 Praveen: Not really. It used to be, but not any more.
- Page 14, Line 11: *Parents strongly felt that educated girls can get married more easily and into more respectable and more modern families. Many also linked education to increasing a woman’s ability to guide her children and look after the family. This was an important motivational factor for parents and was closely linked to a girl’s primary responsibility as a home-maker.*
 [Block quotation]
 Praveen: This is true and nowadays it’s having a greater impact in the Muslim society, where educated girls are trying to have fewer children to give them a better education and life.
- Page 14, Line 26: *Thus there is undue pressure on boys and girls to live up to the established “norms” of masculinity and femininity.* [In block quotation]
 Praveen: Very true.
- Page 23, Line 27: *However, a “[t]eacher’s language proficiency, exposure to [the] language and materials are major concerns for quality English language learning” (Meganathan, 2009, 1).*
 Praveen: Very true!
- Page 24, Line 22: *The program is “...the largest school meal scheme in the world” (Kingdon 2007, 25) and “...has had a decisive impact in improving enrolment and attendance” (OECD 2011, 160-61).*
 Praveen: Many of the NGO’s and temple organizations (for example ISKCON²³) do offer meal programs.

²³International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Page 26, Line 13: *All teachers are required to work a minimum of 45 hours each week and 200 days per year and are prohibited from engaging in private tutoring....* [In block quotation]

Praveen: This is often preached. As government paid salaries are so low, and to maintain a good living, good teachers have to do the private tutoring to meet their needs.

Page 48, Line 11: *“...I don’t think there was any gender-based or any class discrimination in the school, no, no.”* [Karma]

Praveen: This is generally true in India, especially in private schools.

Page 60, Line 12: *For example, “...if a girl talks to a guy, she’s so bad.* [Amy]

Praveen: This is sad, but very true--especially in the rural areas.

Page 67, Line 17: *Her parents continue to tell her repeatedly that they “...think they have invested their money in me but [the] beneficiaries will be my husband and his family.”* [Amy]

Praveen: This is 100% true and still exists.

5.2.6: Expert Review

Dr. Anindita Datta is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi. I first met Professor Datta in July of 2009, when I conducted a dissertation research background interview with her (see p. 32 and Appendix A). Dr. Datta was also the co-organizer of the *Contextualising Geographical Approaches to Studying Gender in Asia International Seminar* I attended in March of 2010 (see p. 33).

Dr. Datta’s curriculum vitae, delineating her bona fides to evaluate this dissertation, is contained in Appendix F. Her review of the research study is reproduced in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1

Expert Review



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Doctoral Dissertation Entitled *“Social Spaces Enabling Girls Education In India: An Outsider’s Study”* Submitted By Pattie Kewer.

COMMENTS AND VALIDATION.

The doctoral dissertation submitted by Ms Pattie Kewer titled *“Social Spaces Enabling Girls Education in India: An Outsider’s Study”* is an interesting exploration of the social spaces that have acted as enabling in the question of higher education of Indian women.

Most studies attempting to investigate this problem have tended to focus on the negativities or drawbacks that the majority of Indian women continue to face when trying to access education in general and higher education in particular. This primarily negative focus is rather overdone and tends to see the constraints faced by subjects as developmental hurdles that can be dismantled through developmental interventions. This I may point out is a typically western approach to the problem. By choosing to focus instead on enabling spaces, Pattie Kewer’s doctoral work is a welcome departure. In choosing this approach the researcher has been able to locate her subjects “within” the problem and also endows them with the agency to create new spaces for themselves and negotiate with the constraints that they encounter. This is something that earlier studies on similar themes have more or less omitted.

The researcher has taken great pains to draw out the background for readers unfamiliar with the Indian context. Detailed statistics and charts show the scenario for women’s education in India in the context of the entire country and also for the states.



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The choice of subjects for the study is in itself interesting and most appropriate to the theme. By choosing women of Indian origin now located in the US for their higher studies, Kewer has made sure she has zeroed in on subjects who have overcome cultural, economic and most importantly gendered constraints to access a (seemingly) more equal space in terms of educational opportunities in the US. Secondly, given the large social diversity of India, Kewer takes care to select subjects from diverse backgrounds in order to be able to explore the nature of enabling spaces against completely different contexts. In this, the researcher's sensitivity and care must be appreciated.

Choice of methodology in carrying out in depth personal interviews is also appropriate to the study. The researcher could have more explicitly included mental maps to map the everyday geographies of her subjects in a bid to identify the enabling spaces. However, confining herself to interviews does not take away from her work.

At least two of Kewer's findings are extremely interesting. The way that the participants have used cyberspace is one and the manner in which they have found empowerment within spaces which in general are seen to be constraining is another.

The internet emerges as an important medium that the participants use to learn about and also to connect to more enabling spaces. The role of cyberspace then in connecting the local spaces with the transnational space is underlined in this study.

The manner in which participants have found agency within either a very constraining home space or within a conventional and largely conservative catholic school is also interesting. Conventionally, such



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spaces are not the point within which agency or empowerment is usually located. However when participants identify these as the locales from which they drew agency, the complex and layered nature of these spaces which can be both constraining and empowering at the same time at different scales is brought out. Kewer has not failed to note this even though she has not gone into a detailed analysis of the same. Perhaps these are questions that can be taken up in future research projects.

A reference to some theoretical work such as RD Sack's work on relational spaces or Le Febvre's work on the production of space would have enriched the study.

Overall the researcher is to be commended for her choice of theme and novel approach. The study contributes to the growing knowledge of the geographies of empowerment when it comes to women's education in India.

It is my pleasure to be associated with this study as an expert reviewer. I have pleasure in validating this study.

(ANINDITA DATTA)

Page 3 of 3.

Author's Note: Relational space has been defined as "...the understanding and feeling of spatial relations which we carry in our mind and on which our actions are based" (Holt-Jensen 2009, 23). Sack's views on relational space can be found in his *Homo Geographicus* (1997). In *The Production of Space* (1991), Lefebvre expounds on three types of socially produced space, "[t]he perceived-conceived-lived triad..." (40).

5.3: CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the research, as presented above, is generally supportive. Future readers of the dissertation will, of course, make their own evaluations of the study, and may in turn add to the discourse surrounding the social spaces enabling girls' education in India--an important research goal.

CHAPTER 6: GOING FORWARD

6.1: RESEARCH BENEFITS

The primary goal of this research study has been to further the understanding of the social spaces enabling girls' education in India. In this process the study has also found conditions, people, and processes within various social spaces which have not been enabling.

To meet the goal of furthering this understanding, four extensive case studies have been presented involving a mix of young Indian women. The study participants are not merely statistics but real people who have come up through the Indian educational system. In fact, they started primary school from the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, a time period when most observers would say it was far more difficult than now for a girl or young woman to get a quality education at any level. Many of the issues faced by the study participants in their educational journeys, though, still mirror issues faced today by young Indian females, in and out of school.

The study may also inform further research, including quantitative studies, and play some role in relevant policy matters as well. Importantly, too, the study may encourage other Indian girls and young women in their educations.

This research has been conducted from a spatial point of view. Using this perspective, a unique database has been constructed in the form of the participant narratives. Other individuals, however, whether geographers or not, may draw on this database, leading to analyses which materially add to the analysis found in this dissertation.

It also should be noted that it takes a certain amount of personal courage for someone to take part in a study of this type. All of the participants, though, wanted their voices to be heard. The dissertation provides the platform for this to be accomplished.

6.2: STUDY DISSEMINATION

None of the research benefits discussed above can be realized without the effective dissemination of the study. The venue which today offers the broadest dissemination possibility for the research is the Internet.

After the dissertation has been successfully defended, it will be archived in the Digital Repository at the University of Maryland (DRUM) on-line system found at <http://drum.lib.umd.edu>. The dissertation can then be readily accessed at this site. Also through DRUM, “[d]escriptive information on the deposited works is distributed freely to search engines” (University of Maryland Libraries).

There may, however, be a time lag in the DRUM archival process. To ensure that the dissertation is available to others as quickly as possible, the researcher will also post the dissertation on a separate on-line site.

At least one professional article is expected to come out of the research. It has also been suggested by a dissertation committee member that both the publication of a book based on the study and the establishment of a blog site to facilitate discourse related to the research be considered.

Finally, the researcher will personally try to contact appropriate individuals about the availability of the dissertation. This includes all the participants, reviewers, the key informants referenced in Appendix A, and many others who have had some interest in the research.

6.3: SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

There has been considerable success in closing the educational gender gap in India. Efforts to close this gap completely, however, still need to continue at the higher levels of education.

It also is not enough to provide gender equality in educational enrollment. There must be equality as well in the quality of the education, with every Indian child, female or male, ideally receiving a sound education to ensure a productive future for all.

The case studies serve to underscore just how important the home and school spaces, and the family members and teachers within these spaces, are in enabling education. Supporting parents, of all walks of life, in supporting their children's educations clearly should be a priority. Teachers should also be supported by whatever means available in carrying out what is often a difficult but vital job. Religious communities, too, can be especially important entities in supporting girls' education.

The research also suggests that the effective use of technology in educating and promoting education should be a major tool, where possible, in enabling education. This could be anything from incorporating accepted or creative usages of the Internet into the learning process, to encouraging education--and especially for girls--through entertainment media such as television shows or movies. India would seem to be particularly able to excel in this regard as the country is renowned for its technological expertise and, of course, the success of its Bollywood movie industry.

English is essentially considered to be the language of the globalized world. This study reinforces the value of learning English and, in doing so, also reinforces why Indians think it is imperative for their children to learn this language.

Finally, the future holds “extraordinary promise” for India, according to the President of the United States, Barack Obama, who called the country “a rising global power” in addressing the Indian Parliament in 2010 (White House Office of the Press Secretary). India is counting on its billion plus population, often referred to as its “demographic dividend,” to help achieve this promise. For this demographic dividend to be fully realized, however, everyone must be on board, males and females alike, and education is the key to every Indian reaching his or her fullest capability in contributing to all the varied social spaces which comprise India and the world. As the Government of India says:

Education is not only an instrument of enhancing efficiency but also an effective tool of augmenting and widening democratic participation and upgrading the overall quality of [the] individual and society. India has a vast population and to capture the potential demographic dividend, to remove the acute regional, social and gender imbalances, the Government is committed to make concerted efforts for improving the quality of education as mere quantitative expansion will not deliver the desired results in view of [the] fast changing domestic and global scenario.

--(Government of India 2011, 243).

It is through education, therefore, including girls’ education, that India will be assured a prominent place in the worldspace to come.

Appendix A

2009 Dissertation Research Background Interviews (All in Delhi except for one in Jaipur, Rajasthan^{*})

Claire Noronha and Meera Samson

Researchers, Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD); July 27th

Dr. Anindita Datta

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi; July 28th

Dr. Pritam Pal and Varsha Kalla

Researchers, Society for Study of Education and Development (SANDHAN), Jaipur; July 29th

Dr. Amarendra Behera

Associate Professor and Reader, Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT); July 30th

Dr. Gouri Srivastava

Professor and Head of Women's Studies, NCERT; July 30th

Dr. Karuna Chanana

Education and Gender Consultant; Retired Professor, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU); July 30th

Rudra Narayan Sahoo

NCERT Research and Training Consultant; July 30th

Dayaram

Senior Programme Officer - Education, Aga Khan Foundation (India); July 31st

Dr. Venita Kaul

Retired Senior Education Specialist, The World Bank, New Delhi; former NCERT official; Visiting Professor, Ambedkar University; August 1st

^{*}I was unable to meet with **Professor Usha Nayar**, formerly of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai, who was in Delhi during part of my trip. As she was teaching in the fall at The New School, a New York City university, I conducted a phone interview with her on December 16, 2009.

Dr. Saraswati Raju

Professor of Geography, Centre for the Study of Regional Development, JNU; August 3rd

Dr. Geetha B. Nambissan

Professor of Sociology of Education, Zakir Husain Centre for Educational Studies, JNU; August 3rd

Dr. Suman Bhattacharjea

Director of Research, ASER (Annual Status of Education Report) Centre, Pratham; August 4th

Dr. R. Govinda

Acting Vice-Chancellor, National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA); August 5th

Dr. Pranati Panda

Professor, Department of Comparative Education and International Cooperation, NUEPA; August 5th

Malini Ghose

Founding Member and Delhi Team Member, Nirantar - a centre for gender and education; August 5th

Appendix B

**University of Maryland, College Park
Institutional Review Board
Initial Application for Research Involving Human Subjects**

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
Institutional Review Board
Initial Application for Research Involving Human Subjects

Last Rev 09/8/2010

Principal Investigator/ Project Faculty Advisor (NOT a student or fellow)	Dr. Martha E. Geores Associate Professor Department of Geography	Email Address	mgeores@umd.edu
		Telephone Number	301-405-4064

Co-Investigator		Email Address	
		Telephone Number	

Student Investigator	Patricia M. Kewer Ph.D. Student Department of Geography	Email Address	pkewer@umd.edu
		Telephone Number	540-341-4967

Project Title	Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India: An Outsider's Study
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Department/ Unit Administering the Project	Department of Geography
Where to send Approval Documents	Dr. Martha E. Geores Department of Geography
Check if this is	Student master's thesis <input type="checkbox"/> OR Dissertation research project <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

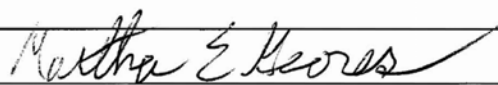
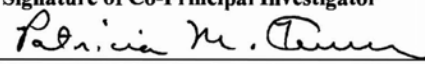

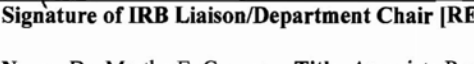
Funding Agency(s)	
ORAA Proposal ID Number	

Target Population: The study population will include (Check all that apply):

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> pregnant women | <input type="checkbox"/> neonates | <input type="checkbox"/> individuals with mental disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> minors/children | <input type="checkbox"/> prisoners | <input type="checkbox"/> individuals with physical disabilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> human fetuses | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> students | |

Exempt (Optional): You may suggest this protocol meets the requirements for Exempt Review by checking the box below and listing the Exempt category(s) that may apply. Please refer to the Exempt Category document for additional information.

☐ **Exemption Category(s):**
Rationale:

2/18/11	
Date	Signature of Principal Investigator [REQUIRED]
<hr/>	
2/18/11	
Date	Signature of Co-Principal Investigator
<hr/>	
2/18/11	
Date	Signature of Student Investigator
<hr/>	
2/18/11	
Date	Signature of IRB Liaison/Department Chair [REQUIRED]

Print Name Dr. Martha E. Geores **Title** Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Department of Geography
(Please print name of IRB Liaison/Department Chair)

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
Institutional Review Board
Initial Application for Research Involving Human Subjects

Last Rev 09/8/2010

1. Abstract:

Education is central to improving the quality of life in developing countries. In India, however, there is an educational “gender gap,” favoring boys. India’s patriarchal culture is seen to be fundamental to this gender gap. The dissertation research will study, in a spatial context, a purposefully selected group of students--young Indian women challenged by gender and in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way. Nonetheless, these students are educational success stories. The women will have been schooled in India through the secondary level and be undergraduate or graduate students in the U.S. The research will principally be qualitative, with feminism providing the theoretical framework. The overarching issue in this multiple case study is girls’ education in India with the key research questions being: 1) What are the specific social spaces, such as home or school spaces, which have enabled the students to succeed in their studies; 2) What are the settings and processes found in or between these spaces which have enabled the students’ educational success; and 3) What role, if any, has patriarchy played in their educations. The main participant information collection tools will be a questionnaire, personal interviews, and, if indicated, an on-line focus group. The resulting information will be coded and themes may emerge which further the understanding of how social spaces can positively impact girls’ education in India. Ethical considerations are especially important to outsider research and, in this regard, the researcher’s positionality will be given particular attention. Also, every effort will be made to ensure the well-being of research participants by such means as: 1) the secure handling of participant information; 2) conducting interviews in a private setting; 3) and having participants involved throughout the research process.

2. Subject Selection:

- a. Research participants will be young Indian women educationally challenged by gender and some additional factors as delineated in **b.** below. The women will have been schooled in India through the secondary level and be undergraduate or graduate students in the United States.
- Recruitment efforts will be made through: Indian graduate student contacts; Indian student groups at U.S. colleges and universities; non-governmental organizations working with Indian students in the United States; and other key individuals who have some association with the research, e.g., Indian academics. It is expected that these initial contacts will “snowball” into other contacts and ultimately yield the study participants.
- While there almost certainly will be some oral communication involved in the recruiting process, it is expected that much of the recruiting will be done via e-mail. These e-mails will be personalized according to the sendee, but in many cases will contain basic information about the research, which may include a study participant profile, a brief summary of what participants would be expected to do, and a statement that “no participant would be identified in the study” (see Supporting Document 1). An abstract may also be attached to the e-mail (Supporting Document 2).
- b. The participants will have been challenged not only by their female gender but also in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way. The selection process will also strive for diversity within the participant group in terms of finding students from different parts of India and with varying social-economic attributes. All participants will be expected to have a compelling story to tell to further understanding of the research topic and key research questions.

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c. The participants described above offer an excellent window to the research topic. The fact that they will be studying in the United States validates their educational success, eliminates language issues, and makes them accessible to the researcher. Moreover, as adult students, and not minors, they can speak for themselves without parental permission.

d. Questionnaires will be sent out to possible participants until from four to ten individuals meeting the participant profile are identified. This number of participants is appropriate for labor-intensive qualitative research and for a focus group.

3. Procedures:

All prospective participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire (please see Supporting Document 3). If the prospective participant does not answer all the questions, a supplemental questionnaire may be sent asking for the missing information. (Please note this supplemental questionnaire will NOT be used for any question the student indicates she does not want to answer.)

In addition, study participants, selected using the questionnaire, will be personally interviewed by the researcher at a time and place convenient for them. A semi-structured approach will be taken for the interview. Many of the questions will be the same in the interview guide for each participant (Supporting Document 4), but some different questions may be asked of participants based on questionnaire answers, and also some ex tempore questions may be asked in the course of the interview.

There may be follow-up communications (e.g., e-mails or phone conversations), as needed, subsequent to the completion of questionnaires and interviews. In addition, participants could also be asked to participate in a private and anonymous on-line focus group, if such a group is deemed necessary. Focus group topics/questions will be determined based on questionnaire and interview information provided by study participants and, thus, cannot be provided at this time. If there is a focus group, an Addendum with the topics/questions to be discussed will be submitted to the IRB.

4. Risks:

A study risk is the possible loss of privacy if for some reason confidentiality safeguards were breached—this is seen as a very low risk. It is possible, however, that someone may associate the participant with or identify her in the study, e.g., someone who brought the study to her attention, someone close to the student, or a focus group member. Also, the student may choose to tell anyone about her participation in the study.

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5. Benefits:

The research study will give voice to the participants' experiences, thus providing context to the issue of girls' education in India while identifying social spaces and related settings and processes which have enabled the students to be successful educationally. The study findings will provide meaning and understanding to issues involved and may also influence, in some way, future discourse and social policy to strengthen girls' education in India. Furthermore, the study participants can take pride in their academic accomplishments, serve as role models for others, and know that their participation may further girls' education in India.

The benefits of this research being an "outsider" study are twofold. First of all, as an American woman, the researcher will bring a different perspective to the research than an Indian researcher. Secondly, the research will have a somewhat different audience than an Indian study, resulting in broader exposure of the issues involved.

6. Confidentiality:

Researcher measures to maintain participant confidentiality will include: 1) encryption and/or password protection for all participant computer files—textual and audio—and any on-line forum; 2) maintaining due diligence when working with participant data; 3) safely storing hard copy information and original audio recordings in a locked environment when not in use; 4) document shredding, when appropriate; 5) conducting all interviews in a private setting; and 6) assigning pseudonyms to participants when presenting the research in any form.

Participant interviews will be recorded on two digital voice recorders (the second a backup). The audio files will then be transferred to a personal computer, encrypted and password protected, and transcribed to similarly protected text files. Participants will NOT be identified in the files (nor any on-line forum). Transcription may be done by the researcher or another transcriber. In the latter case, any associated computer files will be deleted immediately after transcription, with such deletion being verified by the researcher.

7. Consent Process:

An implied informed consent process will be used in the research project. Once a prospective participant indicates (whether by e-mail, phone, or other means) that she would like to be considered for the study, a secure informed consent form (see attached) and a secure questionnaire (Supporting Document 3) will be e-mailed to her. The student will be asked to read the consent form first and told that her completion and e-mail return of the questionnaire to the researcher will imply she has read the consent form and agreed to be a study participant.

Using an implied informed consent process minimizes the time involved in the consent process. In addition, it eliminates a signed consent form and thus boosts participant confidentiality.

8. Conflict of Interest:

There is no known conflict of interest.

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9. HIPAA Compliance:

Not applicable.

10. Research Outside of the United States:

All of the study participants will be students in the United States.

Background interviews were conducted in India (all in New Delhi except for one in Jaipur, Rajasthan) with education experts from government agencies, NGOs, and universities, July 27 – August 5, 2009.

Attended the March 3-5, 2010 *Contextualising Geographical Approaches to Studying Gender in Asia International Seminar*, hosted by the University of Delhi, at which a paper based on the planned dissertation research was presented. Travel funding awards for the conference were provided by the University of Maryland, College Park, Goldhaber Grant program and Department of Geography.

11. Research Involving Prisoners:

Not applicable.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Each copy of the application must include the IRB application cover sheet, the information required in items 1-11 above, and all relevant supporting documents including: consent forms, letters sent to recruit participants, questionnaires completed by participants, and any other material that will be presented, viewed or read to human subject participants.

For funded research, a copy of the Awarded Grant Application (minus the budgetary information) must be included. If the Grant has not been awarded at the time of submission of this Initial Application, a statement must be added to the Abstract Section stating that an Addendum will be submitted to include the Grant Application once it has been awarded.

NUMBER OF COPIES

Please send 1 original application including the signed cover sheet to:

**IRB Office
0101 Lee Building
College Park, MD 20742-5125**

Kewer IRB Initial Application--Supporting Document 1

Sample Language To Be Used in Research Participant Recruitment E-mails

I am a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am trying to find participants for my dissertation research entitled "Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India: An Outsider's Study." Central to the research is the educational "gender gap" in India, favoring boys.

For this study, I need to find from four to ten young women from India who have succeeded academically. **Specifically, the women will have been schooled in India through the secondary level and be undergraduate or graduate students in the United States. The women will have been challenged educationally in India not only by gender but also in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way.** An abstract which gives more information about the research has been attached.

No participant would be identified in the study. Prospective participants would be asked to fill out a questionnaire and study participants would be selected based on questionnaire answers. Study participants would be interviewed in person at a time and place convenient for them. Participants could also be asked to participate in a secure and anonymous on-line focus group. All participants would be asked for their feedback concerning study findings.

The time involved would be minimal for a participant, probably less than ten hours total. The rewards, however, could be much more substantial. A student's participation would give voice to her education story and allow her to be a role model for others who follow. In addition, the study findings would provide meaning and understanding to the issues involved and might also influence, in some way, future social policy regarding measures to strengthen girls' education in India.

Kewer IRB Initial Application--Supporting Document 2

Abstract

Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India: An Outsider's Study

Pattie Kewer*

Education is viewed as central to improving the quality of life in developing countries. Indeed, two United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) respectively call for every child worldwide to receive at least a primary education and the elimination of the so-called "gender gap," favoring boys, at all levels of education. India has been striving to meet these MDGs but there still exists a gender gap which grows wider moving from the primary to secondary and then tertiary educational levels. India's patriarchal culture is seen by many to be fundamental to this gender gap.

The dissertation research will study, in a spatial context, a purposefully selected group of students--young Indian women who have been challenged not only by gender but also in some additional social, economic, geographical, or other relevant way. Nonetheless, these students are educational success stories. The women will have been schooled in India through the secondary level and be undergraduate or graduate students in the United States. Prospective students will be recruited through appropriate channels and final participants selected using a questionnaire.

The research will principally be qualitative, with feminism providing the theoretical framework as interpreted through a geographical lens. The research will examine the traditional separation of home and work spaces by gender and the school space as a link between the two. Inherent in this discussion is an examination of patriarchally constructed spatial boundaries which may hinder or prevent the mobility of girls and women physically and socially. The key research questions will be:

- 1) What are the specific social spaces, such as home or school spaces—often spaces in opposition to

girls' education in India because of patriarchal considerations—which have enabled the students to succeed in their studies; 2) What are the settings and processes found in or between these spaces which have enabled the students' educational success; and 3) What role, if any, has patriarchy played in their educations.

The main participant information collection tools for this multiple case study will be the questionnaire, in-depth personal interviews, and, if indicated, an on-line focus group. The resulting information will be coded and themes may emerge, such as the presence of an encouraging family member in the home space, which further the understanding of how social spaces can positively impact girls' education in India—understanding which may inform future discourse and actions related to this issue.

As this is “outsider” research, being conducted by an American woman who first visited India in the summer of 2009, concerns associated with this type of research have to be addressed. Ethical considerations are especially important to outsider research. In this regard, the researcher's positionality will be given particular attention. Furthermore, the research will be approved by the University of Maryland's Institutional Review Board to ensure the well-being of participants.

The benefits of this research being an “outsider” study are twofold. First of all, the researcher will bring a different perspective to the study than an Indian researcher. In addition, the research will have a somewhat different audience than an Indian study, resulting in broader exposure of the issues involved.

*Pattie Kewer is a doctoral student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. She holds an M.A. degree in Geography from the University of Florida and a B.A. in Geography from Mary Washington College (now the University of Mary Washington) in Virginia. She has worked as an adjunct professor of Geography at the undergraduate level and as a geographer at the U.S. Geological Survey. A paper based on an earlier version of the planned research was presented by her in March 2010 at the *Contextualising Geographical Approaches to Studying Gender in Asia International Seminar*, hosted by the University of Delhi.

Kewer IRB Initial Application--Supporting Document 3

Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India Prospective Participant Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire. Please fill out the items below as best you can. If there is a need to add information not specifically requested in an item, please feel free to add that information. The information provided will not be associated with you by name, which will be held in the strictest confidence.

- 1) Date Questionnaire Filled Out:
- 2) Birthdate:
- 3) Place of Birth (locality, state/territory, and whether rural or urban):
- 4) Where else have you lived (within or outside of India)? Please give each location; whether the location was rural or urban; your age while there; and any special circumstances (for example, living with a relative other than a parent or at a boarding school).
- 5) What is your birth order and that of any siblings in your family (please provide only sibling sex and current age—no names), for example, brother 28, myself 26, sister 20, brother 15.
- 6) Do you qualify for SC, ST, OBC reservations?
- 7) Religion, if any:
- 8) First Language; Other Languages and Age of Fluency:
- 9) Father's and Mother's Occupation and Highest Level of Education:
- 10) Would you consider your immediate family to be poor, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, or wealthy?

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- 11) Pre-Primary (if any), Primary, and Secondary School History. Please list: all primary and secondary schools attended and at what age; the location of each school and whether rural or urban; what type of school (for example, private, government, church-affiliated); the language(s) of instruction; whether the school was co-ed or only for girls; the approximate distance from your home to school; how you got to school (for example, walked or rode a bus); if the school was of no or minimal cost, expensive, or somewhere in-between; the general quality of school facilities and instruction; and class size, if known.
- 12) Higher Education History. Please list each college/university attended (or currently attending); its location; your age while attending; what type of school; the language(s) of instruction; co-ed or only for girls; any degree earned; where you lived while in attendance; if living off campus, the approximate distance from your home to school and how you got to school; if the school was of no or minimal cost, expensive, or somewhere in-between; the general quality of school facilities and instruction; and the range of class size.
- 13) What was your family's home like? (For example, did you live in a flat or a house, did your parents rent or own your home, who lived with you, how many rooms were there, what was the atmosphere like in your home, et cetera.)
- 14) What was traveling to school like? (For example, for specific schools, was it difficult because the trip was long or dangerous, or was it fun because you were with friends, et cetera.)
- 15) In India, what social spaces, if any, and people and/or conditions within them, do you believe have enabled your education (for example, your home or a particular school)? If any, please provide details.
- 16) Do you believe that patriarchy has had any affect on your educational experience (for example, your brother got to go to a better school than you)? If so, please specify.
- 17) Have you or a family member ever had to take out a loan to pay for any educational expense (including such things as GRE or college application fees)? If so, what were the circumstances?

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- 18) Were you employed in India or elsewhere before attending graduate school in the United States? If so, what was your occupation and where was your job located? Did you have to work in order to pay for expenses associated with applying to and/or attending graduate school?
- 19) Why did you want to attend graduate school in the United States?
- 20) How do you pay for graduate school (for example, have a scholarship or assistantship)?
- 21) Do you financially support anyone besides yourself? If so, please specify.
- 22) Has any specific on-line “social space” played a role in your educational success? If so, in what way?
- 23) Do you believe you have experienced any significant social, economic, geographical, or other challenge to your education? If so, please explain.
- 24) Why has education been so important to you?
- 25) What are your plans for after you complete your degree in the United States?
- 26) Is there any other information about you which you think would be useful to this study?

Kewer IRB Initial Application--Supporting Document 4

**Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India
Sample Participant Interview Guide**

I, Pattie Kewer, am a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am conducting a dissertation study concerning social spaces enabling girls' education in India.

You have kindly agreed to be a participant in this study and, as such, to be interviewed at this time _____ (time, day, date), at _____ (place).

Just a reminder that personal information provided by you for this study will not be associated with you by name, which will be held in the strictest confidence. Are you ready to go?

- 1) Please tell me, in your own words, your education story.
- 2) You indicated on the questionnaire that (a particular social space) was important to enabling your education. Could you tell me more about this?
- 3) Were any other social spaces important in enabling your education?
- 4) Within your specific school environments, did you experience any sex-based or other discrimination?
- 5) Were there any specific social or school-related programs which enabled your education?
- 6) Why do you think your education story is important?
- 7) Is there anything else you would like to add?

University of Maryland College Park

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Study Participation Implied Informed Consent Form

Project Title	<i>Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India: An Outsider's Study</i>
Purpose of the Study	<i>This dissertation research is being conducted by Pattie Kewer, a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park, under the direction of Dr. Martha Geores. You are being invited to participate in this research project because you may be able to provide valuable information regarding the research topic. The purpose of this research project is to investigate, through a select group of women students, social spaces enabling girls' education in India.</i>
Procedures	<p><i>You will be asked to complete a questionnaire concerning your personal background, educational experience, and social spaces which have enabled your education. From the pool of prospective participants who complete the questionnaire, from four to ten actual study participants will be selected based on the questionnaire answers. If selected, you will be personally interviewed about the research topic at a time and place convenient for you. There may be follow-up communications (e.g., e-mails or phone conversations), as needed, subsequent to the completion of the questionnaire and interview. In addition, you may be asked to participate in a private and anonymous on-line focus group, if such a group is indicated. You will also be asked for your feedback concerning study findings.</i></p> <p><i>This study will be conducted in the United States. It is expected that you may spend two hours or less on the questionnaire. Personal interviews may take about an hour. If you were to participate in an on-line forum, it is expected that this would involve an hour or less of your time.</i></p>
Potential Risks and Discomforts	<p><i>A study risk is the possible loss of privacy if confidentiality safeguards were breached—this is seen as a very low risk. It is possible, however, that someone may associate you with or identify you in the study, e.g., someone who brought the study to your attention, someone close to you, or a focus group member. Also, you may choose to tell anyone about your participation in the study.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the possibility exists that you may feel uncomfortable about a question. You do not have to answer any question which makes you feel uncomfortable.</i></p>
Potential Benefits	<i>The research study will give voice to your and other participants' experiences, thus providing context to the issue of girls' education in India while identifying social spaces and related settings and processes which have enabled the participants to be successful educationally. The study findings will provide meaning and understanding to issues involved and may also influence, in some way, future discourse and social policy to strengthen girls' education in India. Furthermore, you and the other study participants can take pride in your academic accomplishments, serve as role models for others, and know that your participation may further girls' education in India.</i>

University of Maryland College Park

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Study Participation Implied Informed Consent Form

Confidentiality	<p><i>Any potential loss of confidentiality will be minimized by: 1) encryption and/or password protection for all participant computer files—textual and audio—and any on-line forum; 2) maintaining due diligence when working with participant data; 3) safely storing hard copy information and original audio recordings in a locked environment when not in use; 4) document shredding, when appropriate; 5) conducting all interviews in a private setting; and 6) assigning pseudonyms to participants when presenting the research in any form.</i></p> <p><i>You will NOT be identified in the files (nor any on-line forum). Only the researcher will have access to your identity.</i></p> <p><i>Transcription may be done by the researcher or another transcriber. In the latter case, any associated computer files will be deleted immediately after transcription, with such deletion being verified by the researcher.</i></p> <p><i>In any presentation of the research, written or oral, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.</i></p>
Right to Withdraw and Questions	<p><i>Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time.</i></p> <p><i>If you decide to stop taking part in the study, if you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or if you need to report an injury related to the research, please contact the researcher at: pkewer@umd.edu.</i></p> <p><i>If you are a University of Maryland student, your employment status or academic standing will not be affected by your participation or non-participation in this study.</i></p>
Participant Rights	<p><i>If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">University of Maryland College Park Institutional Review Board Office 1204 Marie Mount College Park, Maryland, 20742 E-mail: irb@umd.edu Telephone: 301-405-0678</p>

University of Maryland College Park

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Study Participation Implied Informed Consent Form

	<i>This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subjects.</i>
Statement of Implied Consent	<p><i>Your implied consent indicates that you are at least 18 years of age, you have read this consent form, your questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.</i></p> <p><i>To give your implied consent, you must open, complete and e-mail back to the researcher the secure questionnaire e-mailed to you with this consent form. Please keep a copy of this consent form for your records.</i></p>

Appendix C

IRB Approval of Dissertation Research

Date: Wed 9 Mar 10:39:41 EST 2011

From: University of Maryland IRB <irb@umresearch.umd.edu> [Add To Address Book](#)

Subject: IRB Protocol Approval

To: "Dr. Martha E. Geores" <mgeores@umd.edu>, "Patricia M. Kewer" <pkewer@umd.edu>

Initial Application Approval

To: Principal Investigator, Dr. Martha E. Geores, Geography
Student, Patricia M. Kewer, Geography

From: James M. Hagberg
IRB Co-Chair
University of Maryland College Park

Re: IRB Protocol: 11-0095 - Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in
India: An Outsider's Study

Approval Date: March 09, 2011

Expiration
Date: March 09, 2012

Application: Initial

Review Path: Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) Office approved your Initial IRB Application. This transaction was approved in accordance with the University's IRB policies and procedures and 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. Please reference the above-cited IRB Protocol number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Recruitment/Consent: For research requiring written informed consent, the IRB-approved and stamped informed consent document will be sent via mail. The IRB approval expiration date has been stamped on the informed consent document. Please note that research participants must sign a stamped version of the informed consent form and receive a copy.

Continuing Review: If you intend to continue to collect data from human subjects or to analyze private, identifiable data collected from human subjects, beyond the expiration date of this protocol, you must [submit a Renewal Application](#) to the IRB Office 45 days prior to the expiration date. If IRB Approval of your protocol expires, all human subject research activities including enrollment of new subjects, data collection and analysis of identifiable, private information must cease until the Renewal Application is approved. If work on the human subject portion of your project is complete and you wish to close the protocol, please [submit a Closure Report](#) to irb@umd.edu.

Modifications: Any changes to the approved protocol must be approved by the IRB before the change is implemented, except when a change is necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the subjects. If you would like to modify an approved protocol, please [submit an Addendum request](#) to the IRB Office.

Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks: You must promptly report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others to the IRB Manager at 301-405-0678 or jsmith@umresearch.umd.edu

Additional Information: Please contact the IRB Office at 301-405-4212 if you have any IRB-related questions or concerns. Email: irb@umd.edu

The UMCP IRB is organized and operated according to guidelines of the United States Office for Human Research Protections and the United States Code of Federal Regulations and operates under Federal Wide Assurance No. FWA00005856.

1204 Marie Mount Hall
College Park, MD 20742-5125
TEL 301.405.4212
FAX 301.314.1475
irb@umd.edu
<http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB>

Appendix D

Participant Interview Guides

Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India
Participant One Interview Guide

I, Pattie Kewer, am a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am conducting a dissertation study concerning social spaces enabling girls' education in India.

You have kindly agreed to be a participant in this study and, as such, to be interviewed at this time _____ (time, day, date), at _____ (place).

Just a reminder that personal information provided by you for this study will not be associated with you by name, which will be held in the strictest confidence. Are you ready to go?

- 1) Please tell me, in your own words, your education story.

- 2) You indicated on the questionnaire [Question 15] that your home environment, and specifically your parents, were important to enabling your education. Could you tell me more about this?

- 3) Were any other social spaces important in enabling your education?

- 4) You said in the questionnaire [Question 23] that, in terms of your education, you were socially challenged by "class discrimination," economically challenged in that you had to "compromise with [your] desires," and geographically challenged by "walk[ing] to school." Could you tell me more about these challenges?

- 5) Within your specific school environments, did you experience any sex-based or other discrimination?

- 6) Were there any specific social or school-related programs which enabled your education?

- 7) Why do you think your education story is important?

- 8) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India
Participant Two Interview Guide

I, Pattie Kewer, am a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am conducting a dissertation study concerning social spaces enabling girls' education in India.

You have kindly agreed to be a participant in this study and, as such, to be interviewed at this time _____ (time, day, date), at _____ (place).

Just a reminder that personal information provided by you for this study will not be associated with you by name, which will be held in the strictest confidence. Are you ready to go?

- 1) Please tell me, in your own words, your education story.
- 2) You indicated on the questionnaire [Question 15] that the environment you found in Pune was important to enabling your education. Could you tell me more about this?
- 3) In your questionnaire, you talked about gender-based restrictions in your family, at school, in South India, and in rural areas. Could you tell me more about this? Do you think non-Hindu girls and women face the same restrictions?
- 4) In addition to Pune, were any other social spaces important in enabling your education?
- 5) Within your specific school environments, did you experience any sex-based or other discrimination?
- 6) Were there any specific social or school-related programs which enabled your education?
- 7) Why do you think your education story is important?
- 8) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India
Participant Three Interview Guide

I, Pattie Kewer, am a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am conducting a dissertation study concerning social spaces enabling girls' education in India.

You have kindly agreed to be a participant in this study and, as such, to be interviewed at this time _____ (time, day, date), at _____ (place).

Just a reminder that personal information provided by you for this study will not be associated with you by name, which will be held in the strictest confidence. Are you ready to go?

- 1) Please tell me, in your own words, your education story.
- 2) You indicated on the questionnaire [Question 15 and Question 23] that your mother was particularly important in enabling your education, especially in regard to making sure your schools were good. Could you tell me more about your mother and how your school environments enabled your education?

You said in the questionnaire [Question 13] that in your home environment "[t]he atmosphere was not good." You seemed to indicate on the questionnaire [Question 15] that your home environment served as a catalyst for you, as the eldest child, to succeed educationally as you said "the kind of family situation I was in I did not want my brothers to struggle hence I studied and got a job to support them." Could you tell me more about this?

- 3) Were any other social spaces important in enabling your education?
- 4) Within your specific school environments, did you experience any sex-based or other discrimination?
- 5) In general, do you think tribal or Christian girls and women face gender-based educational restrictions? Do you think Hindu or Muslim girls and women face gender-based educational restrictions?
- 6) Were there any specific social or school-related programs which enabled your education?
- 7) Why do you think your education story is important?
- 8) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Social Spaces Enabling Girls' Education in India
Participant Four Interview Guide

I, Pattie Kewer, am a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Maryland, College Park. I am conducting a dissertation study concerning social spaces enabling girls' education in India.

You have kindly agreed to be a participant in this study and, as such, to be interviewed at this time _____ (time, day, date), at _____ (place).

Just a reminder that personal information provided by you for this study will not be associated with you by name, which will be held in the strictest confidence. Are you ready to go?

- 1) Please tell me, in your own words, your education story.
- 2) All of your schools in India were for girls only. Why was this?
- 3) In your questionnaire [Questions 18 and 25], you talked about a sponsor who financed your Bachelor's degree. Could you tell me more about this person, including how you met him?
- 4) You seemed to indicate on the questionnaire [Question 15] that your upbringing in a slum served as a catalyst for you to succeed educationally. Could you tell me more about this?

You said in the questionnaire that while conditions in and around your home were very poor, within your home space your father, who had no schooling, encouraged your own education. Could you elaborate on this?

Could you also please tell me about the "teachers and friends" within your school environments whom you said in the questionnaire [Question 15] "motivated" you educationally?

- 5) Were any other social spaces important in enabling your education?
- 6) Within your specific school environments, did you experience any sex-based or other discrimination? Do you think the quality of the education at your girls' schools equaled the education boys were getting at government schools?
- 7) Were there any specific social or school-related programs which enabled your education?
- 8) Why do you think your education story is important?
- 9) Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix E
Initial Coding Categories

**Some Possible Initial Coding Categories
Envisioned by the Researcher**

Access to Education	Mobility
Birth Order	Mother
Caste	Neighborhood
Class Size	No School Fees
Co-Ed School	North India
Community Spaces	Patriarchy
Determined Actor	Physical Abuse
Doctor	Poverty
Dowry	Private School
Enabling Environments	Relatives
Enabling Programs	Relevant Processes
Engineer	Relevant Settings
English-Medium	Religion
Equality	Religious Schools
Ethnicity	Rural
Family	School Facilities
Father	School Link between Home and Work
Finances	School-Related Loans
Financial Support to Family	School Space
Free School Meals	Single-Sex School
Gender Bias	Social Justice
Geographical Isolation	Social Norms
Government School	Social Unrest
Harassment	Son Preference
Helpful Individuals	South India
Helpful Organizations	Spatial Boundaries
Home Space	State Differences
Hostile Environments	Transport
Individual Agency	Travel Conditions
Link to U.S. Education	Travel Distance
Language	Tribe
Location	Urban
Marriage	Value of Education

**General Initial Coding Categories
Found in the Participant Questionnaire Questions**

Birthdate	Other Useful Information
Birth Order	Patriarchy
Education Challenges Experienced	Paying for Graduate School
Educational Loans	Place of Birth
Employment	Plans after U.S. Degree
Family Home	Religion
Family's Economic Status	SC, ST, or OBC
Father's Highest Education Level	Schooling
Father's Occupation	Siblings
Financial Support to Others	Social Spaces Enabling Education
Languages Spoken	Travel to School
Mother's Highest Education Level	Why Education Important to You
Mother's Occupation	Where Else Lived
On-Line Social Spaces	Why Graduate School in U.S.

**Initial Coding Categories
for Participant One**
(in addition to Questionnaire Question Categories)

All Schools English-Medium	Government School
Brother	Grade 1-12 School
Change from Science	Home Space Enabled
Dress	Interest in Women's/Children's Issues
Economic Challenges	Mother
Education = Respect	Personal Agency
English	Scholarships
Gave Tutions	Scholarship to U.S.
Father	Social Challenges
Father Away During Week for Job	Uncle
Geographic Challenges Traveling to School	Work at NGOs
Gender Challenges in School	Work-Related Gender Discrimination

**Initial Coding Categories
for Participant Two**
(in addition to Questionnaire Question Categories)

“Bad Girl”/“Good Girl”	GRE/TOEFL
Bad School Space	Help Girls Succeed
Bangalore	Her Good Attitude
Board Exams	Islamic Girls
Boyfriend	Isolated
Boys Are Bad	Language
Brainwashing	Marriage
Brother	Medicine
Career Choices	Mentor
Caste	Middle School Cohort
Changing Attitudes Toward Girls	Mother
Church School	“Not Settled”
Civil Engineering	Parents
Controlling Own Space	Pune
Culture	Restrictions as Girl/Behavior
Dependent/Independent	Rural/Urban
Dress	School Facilities
Education’s Importance	School Fees
English Literature	Social Constraints
Exploring Self	Social Person
Family	School Social Constraints
Father	Social Ramifications of Behavior
Financial	South India
Freedom	Teachers’ Attitudes Good
Friends	Teachers - Bad
Geographical Constraints	Teachers - Good
Girl’s School Fun - No Fear	Trailblazer
God	U.S./World Spaces
Good School Space	Voice
Government School	

**Initial Coding Categories
for Participant Three**
(in addition to Questionnaire Question Categories)

Alcoholism	Health
Apply U.S. Education in India	“Introvert”
Bad Home Environment	Jharkhand Job
Bad Home Environment Education Catalyst	Leader
Birthday	Marriage
Board Exams	Master’s School
Bombs	Mother
Bribes and the Like	Naxalite
Brothers	No Fear
Class Discrimination	No Time for Socializing
Clothes	Overcame “Struggles”
College	Poor Schools in an Area
Confidence in Self	Post-Graduate School
Determination	Pre-Primary Schools
“Different”/Socially Isolated	Principal Childhood School
Distance Education	Rajasthan Job
Education Field	Relatives
Eldest	Reservations
Engineer/Doctor	“Role Model”
English	Rural Development
Family Problems	Scholarships
Father	School Environment
Fellowship	School Personnel
Financial	Self Esteem
Food	Social Justice
Friends	Social Space
Gender Discrimination	“Struggle”
Girls Doing Chores	“Studied and Got a Job”
Girls’ Education “Poor” in an Area	“Tensions”
Good Nature	Tribal
Good Schools	Tutions
Good Student	U.S. Schools
Government Job	Working in Primary Schools

**Initial Coding Categories
for Participant Four**
(in addition to Questionnaire Question Categories)

Abuse in Home	Home Facilities
Active Actor	Likeable
Apprenticeship - Helpful Program	“Make Fortune”
Bad Areas To Work	Marriage
Beliefs Align with Mentor	Mentor
Bus	Mentor’s Home Enabling Space
Caste	Mobility
Clothes	Mother
College	Neighbors/Neighborhood - Helpful
Confidence “Inside You”/Personal Space	No Gender/Other Discrimination in Primary/Secondary Schools
Determination	“Pain” in “Life”
Diploma College	Primary School
Doctor/Engineer	Respect
Economic Constraints - Poor and Hungry	Role Model as Educated
Education Generally	Role Models
Education Way Out of Slum	School Supplies
Engineering Exam	Secondary School
English	Sexual Harassment
Family Home Not Enabling Space	Sibling Stories
Father	Slum - Bad Environment
Father Encouraged Her Education	Slum Catalyst for Success
Financial Considerations	Slum Environment Not Conducive to School
Food	Social Constraints for Girls
Friends - Helpful	Students from “Good Families”
Friends and Teachers Motivated Her	Teachers/Principal - Helpful
Gender Restrictions in Families	“Topper”
Geographic Pull of Family	Tutor Abuse
Girls’ Schools Only in India	Voice
Good Student	U.S. Generally
Government Schools	U.S. University
Helping Others	Work in India
Hindi	Work in U.S.

Appendix F

Peer and Expert Reviewer Curriculum Vitae

Praveen Noojipady

Department of Geographical Sciences, 2138, LeFrak Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD
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Education-

University of Maryland, College Park, MD. (2007-Present) Ph.D. Geographical Sciences
Bangalore University, India (2002-2004, First Rank) Water Resources Engineering
Bangalore University, India (1996-2000) Civil Engineering

Employment

2011(Jun-Aug) Consultant, Global Environment Facility (GEF)/ World Bank, Washington D.C
2007-Present Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), Department of Geographical Sciences,
University of Maryland, College Park
2007-2011 Undergraduate lecturer for Summer/Winter Semesters, Department of Geographical
Sciences, University of Maryland, College Park, MD
2005-2007 Regional Research Officer (RS/GIS), International Water Management Institute
(IWMI), Sri Lanka
2004-2005 Consultant, Geo spatial metadata expert, IWMI, Sri Lanka
2004 Research Assistant, Water Resources Engineer, Institute for Social and Economic
Change (ISEC), India.

Achievements and awards-

- Graduate research assistant (GRA) at the Department of Geography, University of Maryland
- Member of Special achievement in GIS Award (2007) for IWMI, ESRI
- Outstanding Team 2006 (in 2006 annual research meeting of IWMI) for the Global Irrigated Area Mapping (GIAM) core team.
- Best Team Initiative 2005, Tsunami Mapping Team, IWMI
- First rank and “Gold Medal” Master of Engineering; July 2004, Bangalore University, India.
- “Visvesvaraya Scholarship Merit Award”, 1999-2000, an award for academic excellence in Bachelor of Engineering, Bangalore University, India.

Relevant publications – (from 15+)

- Townshend, J. R., J. G. Masek, C. Huang, E. F. Vermote, F. Gao, S. Channan, J. O. Sexton, M. Feng, R. Narasimhan, D. Kim, K. Song, D. Song, X. Song, **P. Noojipady**, B. Tan, M. C. Hansen, M. Li, and R. Wolfe. 2012. Global characterization and monitoring of forest cover using Landsat data: opportunities and challenges. *International Journal of Digital Earth*
- Carroll, M., Townshend, J., DiMiceli, C., **Noojipady, P.**, Sohlberg, R., 2009, A New Global Raster Water Mask at 250 Meter Resolution. *International Journal of Digital Earth*, 2(4).
- Thenkabail, P.S., Biradar C.M., **Noojipady, P.**, et al.. 2009. Global Irrigated Area Map (GIAM), Derived from Remote Sensing, for the end of the last millennium. *International Journal of Remote Sensing*, Volume 30, Issue 14, pp 3679-3733.
- Biradar, C.M., Thenkabail, P.S., **Noojipady, P.**, et al. 2009. A global map of rainfed cropland areas (GMRCA) at the end of last millennium using remote sensing. *International Journal of Applied Earth Observation and Geoinformation*, 11 (2009) 114–129.
- Velpuri, M., Thenkabail, P.S., Biradar, C.B., Gumma, M.K., **Noojipady, P.**, et al. 2009. Influence of Resolution or Scale in Irrigated Area Mapping and Area Estimations. *Journal of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing*. 75(12).
- Thenkabail, P.S., Biradar C.M., **Noojipady, P.**, et al. 2007. Sub-pixel irrigated area calculation methods. *Sensors Journal (special issue: Remote Sensing of Natural Resources and the Environment (Remote Sensing Sensors Edited by Assefa M. Melesse)*. 7:2519-2538
- Praveen, N.**, Anand, B.K., et al. 2006. “Drinking Water Quality in Urban Areas: Why and How it is Getting Worse? A case study of South Indian Cities”; *Elixir of Life the socio-ecological governance of drinking water*. Books for Change, Bangalore, India. Pp 353-371.

CURRICULUM VITAE.

DR. ANINDITA DATTA

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, University of Delhi.

Date of Birth : 24.06.1968 [Twenty fourth of June, Nineteen hundred and sixty eight].

Academic Qualification : Ph.D (Jawaharlal Nehru University), MA (Geography, JNU)

CAREER PROFILE.

Current Position : From Sept 2002 to date: Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, University of Delhi.

Past Positions : From January 1999 to Sept 2002: Lecturer, Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

RESEARCH INTERESTS.

Geographies of Gender, indigenous feminisms, politics of knowledge creation.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS.

1. Awarded the ERASMUS Mundus Fellowship for Academic Mobility to the Dept of Gender Studies, Lund University, Sweden, w.e.f. September 1, 2012.
2. Member, Steering Committee, Commission on Gender and Geography, International Geographical Union for a term of four years from w.e.f August 2012.
3. Nominated and Elected to the International Society of Women Geographers, Washington, USA. w.e.f June 2012.
4. Member, International Advisory Board, Multi Disciplinary Journal of Social Diversity w.e.f June 2012

5. Member, International Advisory Board, *Gender Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, Published by Taylor and Francis, w.e.f January 2011.
6. Invited by Centre for Feminist and Gender Studies and the Dept of Geography, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway under the 'India Week' Programme in Oct 2011.
7. Invited by the Population research Centre, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, the Netherlands, under its New India Programme, Oct 2011.
8. Invited to deliver Keynote Address at the 4th Gendering Asia Conference, organized by University of Copenhagen and Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS) November 2010, Copenhagen Denmark.
9. Invited to speak at the Plenary Session, International Seminar Masculine Feminine: New Issues in Geography organized by the University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France, September 2010.

PUBLICATIONS.

1. Gender and Space: Themes from Asia, *Gender Technology and Development*, Special Issue Volume 15, number 3, November 2011, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. (Guest Editor).
2. 'Space, Gender and Social Value: Analyzing Gender Inequalities in Relation to Space' in Dutt A.K, Vandana Wadhwa, B. Thakur and F.J Costa (eds) *Facets of Social Geography: International and Indian Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, New Delhi, 2012, pp 382-399.
3. 'Natural Landscapes and Regional Constructs of Gender: Theorising Linkages in the Indian Context', *Gender Technology and Development*, Special Issue on Gender and Space: Themes from Asia, Volume 15, number 3, November 2011, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. pp: 345-362.

4. 'Re imagining Impossible Worlds: Beyond Circumcised Geographical Imaginations'. *Progress in Human Geography*, Vol 32, Number 5, October 2008, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. (co authored with Aparajita De) pp:603-612.

5. *Claiming the Dawn Sky: Gender Issues in Indian Geography* in Nayak D (ed). Progress in Indian Geography, 2004- 2008, Indian National Science Academy, New Delhi, pp: 77- 79.

6. 'MacDonaldisation of Gender in Urban India: A Tentative Exploration', *Gender, Technology and Development* Vol 9 Number 1, Jan-Apr 2005, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi pp: 125-135.

7. 'On Not Holding Half the Sky: Gender in Indian Geography', in H.N Sharma (ed) Progress in Indian Geography: A Country Report, 30th International Geographical Congress, Glasgow, Indian National Science Academy, 2004, Delhi. Pp: 131-134, (co authored with Saraswati Raju).

8. 'Articulation of an Integrated Women's Health Policy Using the Life Cycle Approach', *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, Vol 10 Number 1, 2003, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. pp: 25-43.

9. 'Our Worlds, Our Lives: Gender Equality and Governance in the Indian and Norwegian Contexts', Skriftserie 3/2002; Senter for Kvinne og Kjønnforskning, Working paper published by the Centre for Feminist and Gender Studies; Department of Inter Disciplinary studies of Culture; Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, 2002.

10. 'Gender Disparities in Social Well Being: An Overview', *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, Volume 4, Number 1, 1997, Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi. pp:51-65 (co authored with Sachidanand Sinha).

11. Review of 'Why Loiter: Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets' by Shilpa Phadke, Sameera Khan and Shilpa Ranade in *Gender, Place and Culture*, Volume 18, Number 6, December 2011, pp:786-787

12. Review of 'Women and Migration in Asia, Vol 5: Marriage, Migration and Gender', by Rajni Palriwala and Patricia Uberoi, eds. In *Journal of Geographical Sciences*, No 57, December 2009, *Special issue on Gender and Transnational Migration*.

KEY PRESENTATIONS.

1. *Youth Risk and Sexuality: Some Thoughts from India*, Keynote address at workshop on Youth Risk and Sexuality in India and Vietnam, organized by the Department of Gender Studies, Lund University Sweden and the Vietnam Institute of Educational sciences, Hanoi on 5th July 2011 at Hanoi, Vietnam.
2. *Contextualizing Asian Feminisms: A View from India*, Keynote Address at the 4th Gendering Asia Conference organized by NIAS and University of Copenhagen on 13th November 2010, Copenhagen, Denmark.
3. *Reinterpreting Power and Agency within Indigenous Feminisms: An Exploration*, presented at the plenary session of the International Seminar Masculine Feminine: New Issues in Geography organized by the University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France on 18th September 2010.
4. *The Royal Courtesan, The Kingmaker's Concubine: Re imagining Delhi*, International seminar "Contextualizing Geographical Approaches to studying Gender in Asia" 3rd - 5th March 2010 at University of Delhi and at the National seminar on Human Settlement Dynamics and Population, Economy, Environment Interface with special reference to North west India, organized by the Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh, February 2008.
5. *Voices from the Bamboo Forest: Gender Issues In North East India'* presented at the National seminar on Gender and Space: Discourses from Women in India, Council for Social Development, on September 7th 2007.
6. *Re Assessing Gender, Gender Disparities And Gender Issues In North East India- A Socio Geographic Perspective*. Presented at the National Seminar on Tradition, Continuity, Change:

'An Assessment Into the Gender Disparity In the Context Of North East India' organized by St. Mary's College Shillong on May 15 2007.

PROFESSIONAL CONSULTANCY.

Peer review : for following Journals (i) Social and Cultural Geography, Taylor and Francis (ii) Gender Place and Culture, Taylor and Francis (iii) Indian Journal of Gender Studies, Sage Publications.

Text Book writing: (i) NCERT, Class VIII Geography textbook "Resources and Development"(2007); (ii) NCERT, Class XII Geography textbook "Fundamentals of Human Geography" (2006).

ORGANISATION OF SEMINAR AND WORKSHOP.

1. Convener, IGU endorsed DU - ANU collaborative international Seminar "Contextualizing Geographical Approaches to Studying Gender in Asia", March 3-5, 2010, University of Delhi.
2. Convener, One Day workshop "Reading the City" on February 22nd, 2011, University of Delhi.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS.

1. NORAD Post Doctoral Fellowship in Social Change, Centre for Feminist and Gender Studies, Department of Inter Disciplinary Studies of Culture Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway, Spring Term 2002.
2. Thavraj Award, 1992: For highest scores in MPhil Course work at the Centre for the Study of Regional Development, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
3. University GOLD MEDAL in Geography, 1989 North Eastern Hill University, Shillong.

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SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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