**RAISE Additional information on sampled population**

The RAISE research project is a mixed-methods, multi-site study of accountability relations in elementary schooling in India. It examines how norms for educational provision as set out in India’s RTE Act are reshaped as they interact with competing ideas and conditions across and within four scales of the education system: families, communities, schools, and the educational bureaucracy. Across these four scales, we studied accountability relations that concerned educational access, participation and monitoring.

This study was carried out in the States of Bihar and Rajasthan. According to the 2011 census, against India’s average adult literacy rate of 74.04 per cent, Bihar averages 63.8 per cent (male 73.4 per cent, female 53.3 per cent); Rajasthan’s average rate of 67.1 per cent is slightly higher, albeit still well below the national average, but the gender discrepancy is greater (male 80.5 per cent, female 52.7 per cent). In both States, approximately 5 per cent of children aged 6-13 are out of school. According to Government of India sources in 2018, the transition rate from the primary stage (Grades 1-5) to the upper primary stage (Grades 6-8) in Bihar is 76.1 per cent — India’s lowest, compared with 91.6 per cent in Rajasthan. In both States, while low learning levels have been reported annually for over a decade in the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), the 2018-19 (pre-Covid) ASER reported a deterioration in learning outcomes in the primary Grades. Fewer than 40 per cent of Grade 5 students in government schools across both States could read a Grade 2 level text, while over three quarters of all Grade 5 students could not do basic (Grade 2 level) arithmetic operations.

Both Bihar and Rajasthan have a high proportion of groups recognised by the state as India’s most socially and educationally disadvantaged populations. In Bihar, 15.72 per cent of the population is classified as Scheduled Caste (SC), 1.3 per cent as Scheduled Tribe (ST), and 17.6 percent Muslim; in Rajasthan, 17.8 per cent of the population is SC, 13.5 per cent ST, and 9.0 per cent Muslim (NIEPA, 2017). UNICEF and official government sources report that children from these communities have the lowest levels of attendance and highest rates of dropout from primary schooling.

The RAISE empirical research was carried out in one District in each State: Patna District in Bihar and Udaipur District in Rajasthan.

**Qualitative sample**

Within each District, we drew up one urban and one rural cluster, informed by transect walks and open-ended interviews with key informants such as village leaders and school principals which added geographical and social nuance to data already in the public domain. Each cluster comprised six schools and the villages/ neighbourhoods that access each school. The total sample comprised 24 schools (6+6 = 12, x 2 = 24), purposively constructed to include government, low-cost private, non-government organisation (NGO) and religious provision.

In Patna’s rural cluster, parents are typically landless labourers in agriculture and the service sector, with unstable livelihoods. They belong to different caste groups that largely fall into the SC and Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories. Generally fewer than 20 per cent (and sometimes no) students from ‘general’ castes attend government schools in the cluster. The urban cluster is in a commercial and residential neighbourhood with several informal settlements (*bastis*) and market areas, where most of the adult population is in the informal service sector. A prominent social grouping in the cluster are the Musahar community, which constitutes 31 per cent of Bihar’s SC population (and among whom the average literacy rate is below 20 per cent, with the female rate a maximum of 2 per cent (Singh, 2018)).

In Udaipur, schools in the rural cluster served a predominantly ST (Gameti community) population (52%), alongside 7% SC (predominantly Meghwals), Rajput, Brahmin and OBC communities. Most parents are either subsistence and dairy farmers or work as labourers in agriculture and the service sector of nearby towns. Many men migrate out to access work in construction and textile industries in neighbouring Gujarat. The urban cluster is a large, heterogeneously populated area that falls across three wards of Udaipur city and includes several informal settlements. Mostly, the fathers of children using schools in this cluster work as rickshaw drivers, daily wage labourers, or vegetable vendors, and mothers work as domestic maids, home-based handicraft workers, or in tailoring.

**Procedure:** We conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers and principals of all schools in each cluster, village and community leaders in school locations, and representatives of private school management and the state education bureaucracy, particularly District and sub-District officers. We observed Grade 2 and Grade 5 classrooms in each school for three days and talked with teachers and parents about what we observed; attended formal school meetings and events in the community such as enrolment drives; and carried out focus group discussions (FGDs) with parents in all the clusters. Data generated by these methods were discussed and triangulated by each field team and then with the full project team, in an iterative process of reflection, data generation and qualitative analysis that was finalised using NVivo software.

**Quantitative sample**

Quantitative data were collected through surveys in the period December 2019 – March 2020. Representative schools were chosen as follows. We first delineated geographical clusters in rural and urban areas of the two districts. Government schools and LFPSs were identified in each cluster using the government’s Unified District Information System for Education and then chosen randomly. NGO schools were identified using separate inquiries among NGOs and chosen randomly. In each district, 25 schools each from rural and urban clusters were chosen in this manner. For each chosen school, we identified representative teachers and parents, as well as community members from local government and other locally prominent individuals, and captured their responses in a survey questionnaire. In Patna, after surveys of 36 schools were completed, fieldwork had to stop because of Covid-19 induced lockdowns; in Udaipur, the selected 50 schools had been covered by then.

Table 1 presents information on the number of schools (government, LFPS, NFE) by rural and urban location across the two districts. Table 1a also gives some details of the 403 families and 70 community leaders surveyed across 86 schools. Our surveys omitted community leaders in LFPS areas because during the qualitative phase we found that they did not engage with LFPSs and did not have information about them.

#### Table 1: Information about schools and respondents

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Government | Private (LFPS) | NGO | Total |
| Number of schools | | | | |
| Rural | 21 | 14 | 6 | 41 |
| Urban | 22 | 23 | 0 | 45 |
| Total | 43 | 37 | 6 | 86 |
| Number of families | | | | |
| Rural | 112 | 50 | 35 | 197 |
| Urban | 101 | 105 | 0 | 206 |
| Total | 213 | 155 | 35 | 403 |
| Number of community leaders | | | | |
| Rural | 38 | 0 | 7 | 45 |
| Urban | 25 | 0 | 0 | 25 |
| Total | 63 | 0 | 7 | 70 |

Note: Private schools include madrassas (Udaipur) and ‘aided’ as well as ‘unrecognised’ schools (Patna).

Table 2 provides summary background statistics regarding the 403 families surveyed. The information it presents derives from surveys of 403 families chosen through modified clustered stratified random sampling. The majority of families were from disadvantaged social groups. Further, for most of them the income source was unstable and located in the ‘informal’ sector, with only 18 percent having salaried employment. In the rural clusters, a large number of adults engage either in agriculture-related work, with some migration. The urban clusters are commercial and residential neighbourhoods in heterogeneously populated areas; men work in occupations such as rickshaw driving and vegetable vending, and women typically work as domestic maids or in home-based handicrafts and tailoring work. In both rural and urban areas, many families work as daily wage labourers in agriculture, construction and hotel industries.

#### Table 2: Backgrounds of surveyed families

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Social group | |  | Occupation | |
|  | percentage |  | percentage |
| ST | 32 | Mainly farming | 21 |
| SC (Hindu) | 16 | Mainly wage labour | 19 |
| OBC (Hindu) | 21 | Farming & wage labour | 13 |
| non-ST/SC/OBC (Hindu) | 14 | Small business | 18 |
| Muslim | 15 | Salaried employment | 18 |
| Other | 2 | Other | 11 |