

**Reproducing Gendered Knowledge and Class
through Education: A Case of a Muslim Habitation in
North East Delhi**

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Outline of the presentation

- Central Idea
- Background
- Conceptual Framework
- The Field
- Research Design and Sampling
- Secondary Girl students on Subject Choice
- What do School has to offer?
- Discussion and Conclusion

Central Idea

- How school as a State institution facilitate **in reproduction of gendered knowledge and class** through **over-stratification** and offering **selective knowledge** to Muslim girls?

The paper

- Part of Qualitative study and based on the school experiences of twelve XII grade Muslim girl students, living in a Muslim dominated habitation in North East Delhi.

Background

Discourse over educating Muslim women in free India emerged from :

- Constitutional obligation



- Towards Equality Report (1975)



- Sachar Report(2006)



State's initiative

- Right to Education Act (2009)
- Minority schemes (2010)



Outcome-Surge in Enrolment (population proportion for Muslim girls (7.1%) at secondary level is slightly higher than Muslim boys(6.4%), but poor transition to higher education and work.

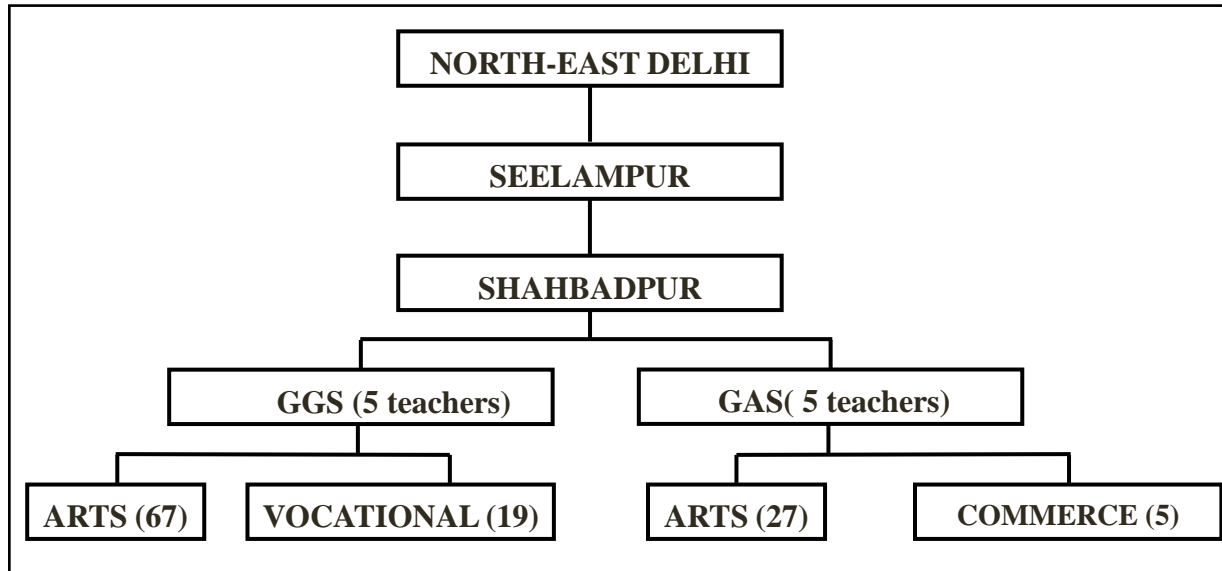
Conceptual Framework

- Drawing from Willis' work (1977) that working class children engage in working class jobs as schooling reproduces class based inequalities, paper focuses on how **school as state institution induces compartmentalization of knowledge and segregation of learners at secondary level of schooling on the basis of meritocratic principal.**
- In a stratified Indian school education system, Muslim working class children access subsidized or free government school education, amongst **girls due to poor academic help in school and home fail to perform and are at risk of withdrawing from education and work.**

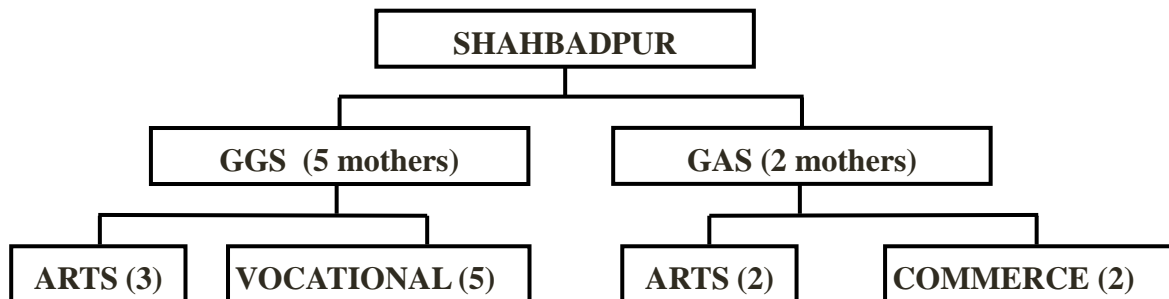
The Field

- **Population in Shahbadpur is largely engaged in household industry** (7.2%), higher than the level of north-east Delhi, which is at 4.7%. (Census, 2011).
- **Lower work-participation rate** of females (share of main and marginal workers) in Shahbadpur at 5.1%.
- The only government senior secondary school in Shahbadpur that had 98% Muslim student population, with around 65% from Shahbadpur.

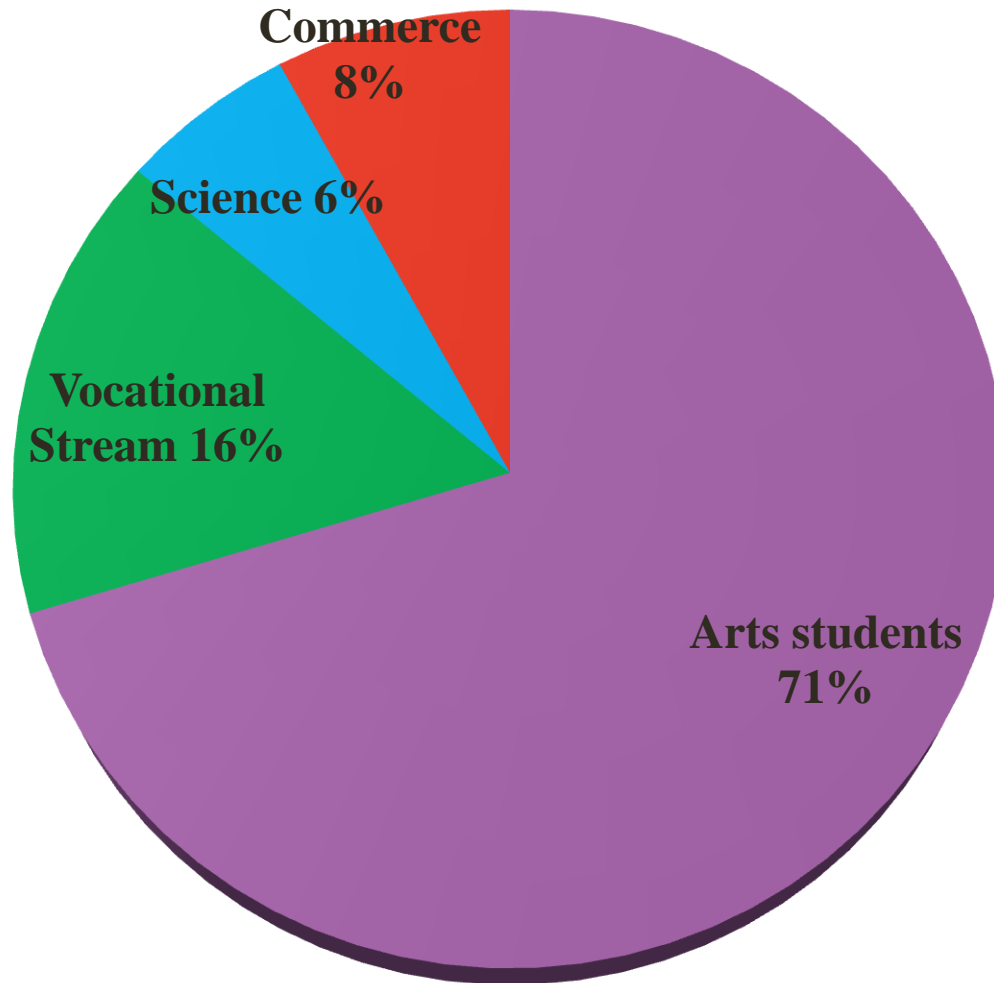
First stage of the data collection



Second stage of the data collection



Percentage of Enrolment in Different Streams in the Government Schools






Girls' Responses on subject-choice at Secondary level

1. No- choice rather allocation on merit basis.
2. Low scorers are given Arts (with score up to 60%) and Vocational stream (with score below 60%) whereas girls with good score can exercise choice but only if **merit is complemented by affordability**.
3. Even within Vocational stream, girl students with marks less than 50% are not given Stenography and Computer Applications.
4. *Madam ye Arts wali ladkiyan kutch jyada hi samjhti hain apne aapko, kahti hain- tum log to bal katna aur sui-dhaga chalana hi janti ho..hum apna suit tumhin se silwayengi chinta mut karo...aur fir hansti hain.* (Madam,these Arts section girls feel themselves superior and says that 'you just know how to cut hairs and needle work, don't worry we will give our dresses to get for stitching..' followed by giggling.) – a girl student from Vocational stream

School on 'Weak' students

- **'Weak'** girl students- who scored less than 50 percent in English of grade X were given Beauty and Hair and Holistic Health or Fashion Design and Garment Technology irrespective of their interest.
- **Welfaristic attitude** in helping girls to learn *apna kaam* (skill) which they can use in later life in difficult times. (**reproducing gendered knowledge for gendered role in future**)
- Despite of having interest to go for higher education, girls were **clueless about future prospects** of their subject stream in higher education.
- Teachers' outlook and girls' built up notion during schooling over **no direct connection between Vocational education and higher education** land girls in exploring traditional courses (B.A.).

When School Fails to cater...

- **Shortage of teachers:** No Math, English and Geography teachers since the beginning of the session (4-6 months).

- Affected Teaching learning process

- School strategies to **pull back 'Weak' students** to achieve 100% result in grade XII board exams.

- State's logic of improvising employability through vocational education at secondary level in current scenario is defied by reproduction of class and gender for Muslim community in this case.

Pattern of enrolment and participation in board examination

	2014-15			2015-16			2016-17		
Grade	Enrolment	Appeared in Exam	Passed (%)	Enrolment	Appeared	Passed (%)	Enrolment	Appeared	Passed (%)
X	599	593	100	691	686	100	703	694	93
XII	643	624	94	547	538	98	451	441	97

Source: DISE, 2014;2015;2016

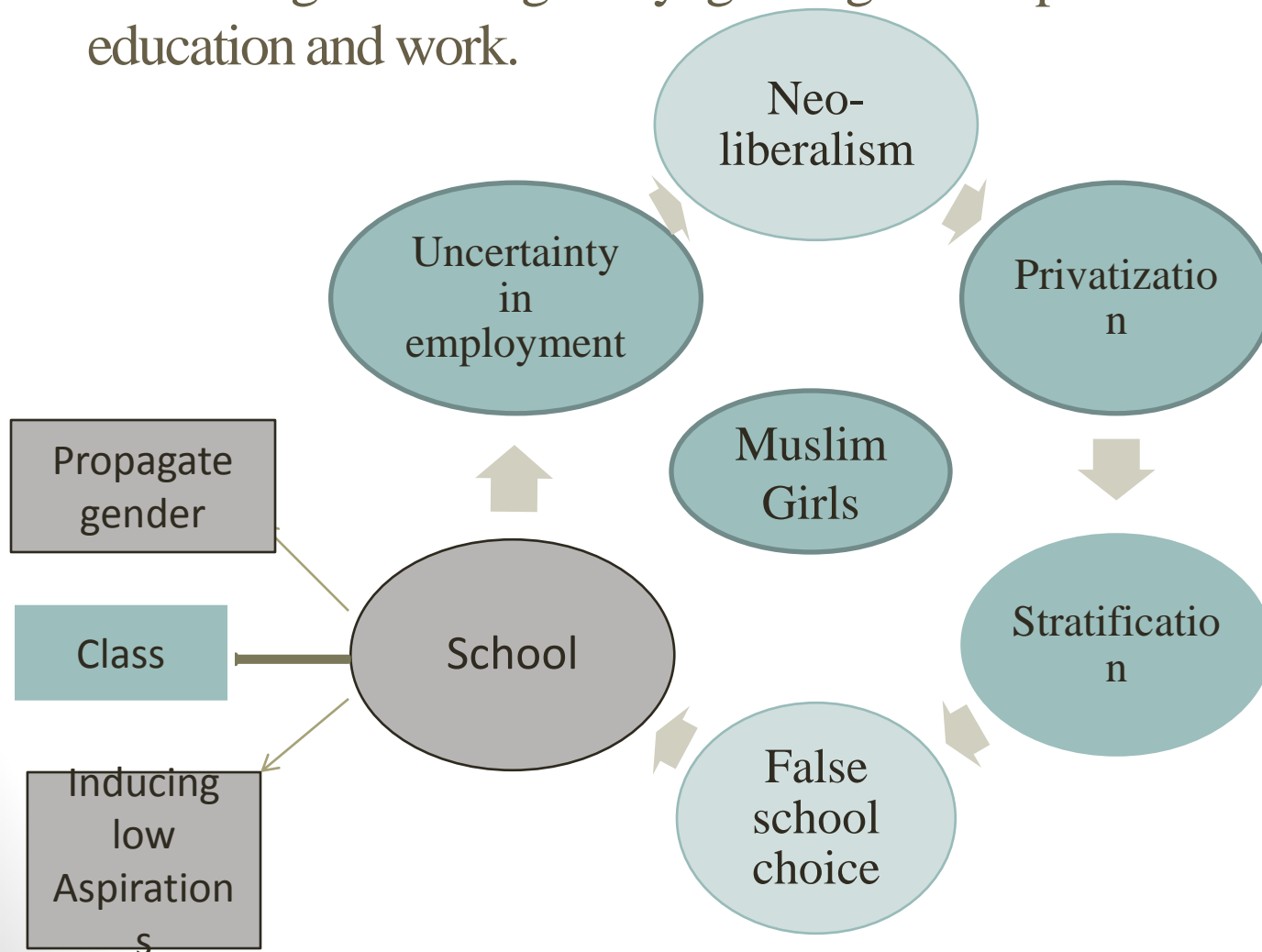
Life after School- When Aspirations Meet Reality

1. **Reinforcement of Missing college-going culture** in habitation.
2. Transition from school to home routine → **decline in their mobility.**
3. Out of 12 girls, 6 had applied for graduation through distance mode; two (both from commerce stream) had applied for graduation through regular mode in a government college. While **four girls** from Arts (1) and Vocational education (3) had **withdrawn** from education.
4. Girls' withdrawal from education despite of good performance reflects at the interplay of **gender and class** impinging on aspirations.

Conclusion and Discussion

1. **Schooling to empower disadvantage appears to be a paradox because...**
 - **School Education system** follows exclusionary principle of stratification against common school system (Juneja, 2010). The process reflects on catering to different social class structure.
 - **Class/Affordability** – decisive in accessing ‘good’ school and ‘market oriented’ subjects at secondary level in this neo-liberal era.
2. As a result, for Muslim girls, the **provision of schools and financial incentive are not necessarily getting translated into raised awareness for education in relation to work.**
3. The study observed not only class reproduction by compartmentalizing knowledge in hierarchical manner like in Willis’ study but also gender is reproduced by associating soft skills like Beauty and health and Textile with poor performer girls.
4. This **interplay of class and gender** pulls back Muslim girls from education and work.

State, despite of education development agenda for Muslims, fails to deliver under the influence of neo-liberalism. School reproduces class and gender for girls by ignoring their aspirations for further education and work.



THANK YOU