Power to the Parents? Representation and Interest Aggregation in Delhi*

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An increasing number of people in low- and middle-income countries now live in urban areas. How will states best serve their growing urban populations? We study this question through a series of reforms in the city of Delhi that decentralized discretionary funds to elected bodies of parents. We ask if the reforms were representative of citizen preferences motivated by three normative measures of representation. We trace the full representative pathway from the selection of representatives to realized outcomes through a conjoin experiment, two household surveys, and administrative data of all school-level expenditure across 52 schools in Delhi. We find that citizens have preferences for representatives that are substantially more educated than them and discriminate against Muslims. Citizens act on these preferences when given the opportunity to elect representatives and elect representatives that are of higher status. Those representatives, in turn, are better at representing their own preferences, even as they diverge from those of the median citizen. The paper provides empirical evidence on where along the chain of accountability and representation we see deviations from normative ideals of representation and has implications for theories of democratic representation.

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INTRODUCTION

The United Nations estimates that by 2050, 68% of the world's population will live in urban areas, with most of the growth in urbanization driven by Africa and Asia (United Nations, 2019). A challenge in managing this urbanization will be to devise effective and efficient service delivery strategies to their growing urban populations. Many governments are implementing strategies that have been popular and often successful in rural areas such as decentralizing the provision of services and using community-driven development programs. These rely on a paradigm that urban governance will resemble rural governance, and that urban inequalities and cleavages will mirror those in rural areas.

One example is that of education, a service that brings parents and students from different backgrounds into close proximity and conflict over how resources should be distributed within schools. While residential segregation in urban areas results in homogeneous neighborhoods, patterns of urbanization and development do not allow for similar segregation and homogenization in schools. The children of long-term urban residents share classrooms and playgrounds with the children of newly arrived migrants from rural areas, in an intermingling of class, religion, and identity. This intermingling raises questions of how to best represent the interests of a diverse student and parent body, and whose interests are best represented.

This paper studies one case of urban governance in a large metropolis in India. We study a series of reforms in the city of Delhi that decentralized the administration of discretionary school-level budgets to elected bodies of parents. Specifically, in 2015, the Government of Delhi instituted elections for School Management Committees (SMCs), bodies of 12 parents and four members of the school, local community, and low-level bureaucracy. SMCs are theoretically supposed to represent the interests of parents and make decisions on how school budgets should be spent. In 2019, the Government increased the discretionary budgets of all schools by approximately twenty percent. In this paper, we ask if the types of representatives reflect the larger body of parents they are tasked with representing on a number of descriptive and substantive forms of representation.

In this paper, we provide empirical evidence on how different cleavages matter in service provision in urban areas for different services. Much of the evidence we have on service provision and claim-making in urban areas is within geographically circumscribed areas (Auerbach, 2016; Auerbach and Thachil, 2017; Auerbach and Kruks-Wisner, 2020; Bertorelli et al., 2017; Post, 2018; Rains, Krishna and Wibbels, 2019), yet one of the promises of urbanization is that it will bring diverse groups of people together in the same space. Education is one of the few services that does this.

We also provide evidence on the impacts of decentralization programs from a new context: one of the world's largest, and India's second largest city in terms of population. Much attention has been paid to decentralization in rural areas, particularly in India after the 73rd constitutional amendment that devolved many administrative and political powers to panchayats. Most work concentrated on decentralization in rural areas where relationships along lines of caste, gender, and wealth inequality are likely to be radically different in cities. Far less has been written about urban areas in India, and those of other low- and middle-income countries. The Delhi school district serves approximately 1.5 million students (Biswas, 2020). To get a comparative sense of scale, the Delhi school district serves

as many households as the New York and Los Angeles school districts combined, the two largest school districts in the United States. [1] We study conflict over service provision to a diverse group of urban citizens. Education is a rare service in which diverse citizens come into close contact, and conflict, over how to best provide a service.

Work on education has largely focused on the "inward conquest" of populations (Ansell and Lindvall, 2020; Paglayan, 2021). Most education provision today, however, follows a different logic, not of control, but of redistribution, looking to reduce inequalities of opportunity. While conflicts between citizens and the state still exist, conflicts over education are as much *between* groups of citizens as they are to be between citizens and the state. We also speak to theories of representation. Conceptualizing representation as either descriptive or substantive, we see no evidence that parents demand that their representatives descriptively represent them: they both state that they want representatives of higher status than them, and when given the opportunity to select representatives, select representatives that are of higher status than them. In terms of substantive representation, however, elections bring the preferences of constituents both closer in line with those of representatives, and those representatives also do a better job of ensuring that actual budgetary expenditures match their preferences.

We argue that service provision in urban areas requires different paradigms than those in rural areas, especially for a service like education. Unlike most work on urban service provision in low- and middle-income countries that is focused on ethnically heterogeneous but relatively economically homogeneous populations, education in urban areas brings together heterogeneous citizens in conflict over how to distribute services. The social heterogeneity in service recipients in urban areas means that different cleavages will drive preferences and service provision. Many services in urban areas, such as water and electricity provision, are geographically circumscribed and require engaging in collective action with groups of citizens that share similar backgrounds. This also resembles service provision in rural areas where village demographics and economies are more homogeneous. Public education in urban areas in low- and middle-income countries, however, requires bridging across neighborhoods that often span caste, religion, and wealth. While exit is certainly possible, in our data we find that parents that send their children to government schools in Delhi are broadly representative of the larger population of the city across a number of ascriptive and material markers.

Between 2018 and 2019, we surveyed 1985 parents who send their children to 50 government schools in Delhi, 613 SMC members, 104 parents who ran for the SMC but were not elected, 100 teachers, and 89 political representatives in the same schools. To measure representation, we collect detailed data on the identity of parents, representatives, and school officials on a broad range of ascriptive and material markers, as well as preferences on how budgets should be spent. We also collected administrative data on how SMCs spent school budgets.

We find that parents have preferences for representatives that are substantially different to them on socioeconomic lines – education is the strongest predictor of what parents demand in an SMC.

[1] For some notable exceptions that we discuss further below, see Auerbach (2016); Auerbach and Thachil (2017), Auerbach (2017); Auerbach and Thachil (2018), Bertorelli et al. (2017), Post (2018), and Rains, Krishna and Wibbels (2019).

Semi-structured interviews with parents suggest they think of SMC members as "trustees", tasked with managing public goods in the best way on behalf of the larger parent body. When given the opportunity to elect SMC members, parents act on these preferences. They elect parents that are wealthier and more educated and are also of higher caste status. Teachers appoint representatives that are more descriptively representative of the parent body, although they are still wealthier and better educated than parents as a whole. Descriptive representation, however, does not lead to substantive representation. Elected SMC members, who look different than regular parents, have preferences over expenditures on budgets that are *closer* to parents than appointed SMC members. Turning to actual expenditures, wealth and education, or new hierarchies of status, result in a greater deviation between the preferences of parents and their representatives than social identities like caste and religion. Elected parents and teachers are the two types of people in SMCs that are most likely to have their preferences translate to actual expenditures.

DECENTRALIZATION AND REPRESENTATION IN URBAN AREAS

The decentralization of administrative, fiscal, and political responsibilities to lower level administrative units and community-driven development (CDD) have increased over the last three decades with the intention of improving local public goods provision (Heller, 2001; Casey, 2018). By bringing government closer to the people (in the case of decentralization) or giving beneficiaries a greater say in how public goods are distributed (in the case of CDD programs), public goods provision is supposed to be more responsive to local needs and better reflect the demands of beneficiaries. At the same time, there is concern that decentralization and CDD programs can result in elite capture as elites are best able to mobilize and capture the benefits of decentralization (Bardhan and Mookherjee, 2000).

Questions about whether decentralization and CDD programs are subject to elite capture are ultimately concerned with issues of representation. Elite capture implicitly suggests that either the positions of power have been captured by elites or the final distribution of public goods favor elites. To understand whether local politics have been captured, however, we need to first ask whose interests are represented and how interests are aggregated from individuals to the final distribution of public goods.

Schools provide a complicated site for questions of service provision and representation. As there are 1,030 government secondary schools in Delhi serving approximately 20 million residents, each school serves approximately 20,000 residents. While all residents do not send their children to government schools and private school attendance is high, a substantial number of Delhi citizens has some form of contact with the education system.[2] Given these numbers, there is likely to be substantial heterogeneity in the population that sends their children to schools in Delhi, both in terms of religious and ethnic heterogeneity, but also in terms of socioeconomic markers of status such as wealth and education. Moreover, teachers, the bureaucrats that serve as the front-line functionaries of the state within schools (Lipsky, 2010), command high wage premiums in India and other low-

[2] If we assume, at a minimum, a two parent household for the 1.5 million children in Delhi Government schools, this represents at least a quarter of the city's population that is in regular contact with schools.

and middle-income countries (Barton, Bold and Sandefur, 2017; Kremer et al., 2005), and are likely of higher social status than the families they serve in schools. Unlike individual neighborhoods that can often be segregated on lines of class, religion, and ethnicity, schools have catchment areas that cross several neighborhoods and are a site of integration in the city. We look to literatures on decentralization, urban politics, and representation to explore how service provision may be different in urban areas and in schools.

Decentralization represents the process of shifting the locus of responsibility for the administration of service provision, either the collection of local revenues or expenditure of revenues transferred from higher level administrative units, or the competitive selection of representatives at lower-level administrative units (Falleti, 2010). Positive accounts of decentralization suggest that by bringing the administrative of service provision closer to the people, public goods will more closely reflect the preferences of eventual recipients, or be better able to respond to changing demands or needs. Fiscal decentralization is presumed to increase accountability of expenditures as how revenue is raised or budgets spent are more visible to end users. Finally, political decentralization should hold local level representatives more accountable as they are directly elected by their constituents.

The decentralization reforms also took place in a large and densely populated city . There is a growing body of evidence that suggests that urban politics operate differently than rural politics, and this is especially so in India. Robinson (2014) finds that ethnic identity is weaker in urban areas and Ichino and Nathan (2013) argue that ethnically heterogeneous neighborhoods in cities weaken expectations of ethnic favoritism in the distribution of public goods, suggesting that ethnic ties may lose importance in the provision of public goods in urban areas. Providing further evidence on the declining significance of ethnicity, Auerbach and Thachil (2018) find that individuals in urban area value the ability of brokers to "get things done" rather than shared ethnicity. Thachil (2017) finds that ethnic identities are situationally salient, with migrants identifying along ethnic lines when dealing with each other, but ignore ethnic divisions when dealing with elites.

More specifically to the Indian context, work on urbanization and the urban poor has mixed findings. In a study of access to services in urban Bangalore, Bertorelli et al. (2017) show that service delivery is uneven across all traditional markers of identity such as caste and religion. Using satellite imagery, Rains, Krishna and Wibbels (2019) show that much variation in the conditions of slums is a result of differences *between* rather than *within* slums, suggesting that access to services are heterogeneous between neighborhoods. Our sample is heterogeneous on caste and religious lines (Table 1) and reflects the ethnic heterogeneity of Delhi as a whole, suggesting that the ultimate beneficiaries of public education in Delhi are heterogeneous across a range of identities, and that questions of how heterogeneous groups come together to select representatives and distribute public goods are relevant in this context.

Normative theories of representation suggest a number of ways of thinking about representation that we call Hobbesian, descriptive, and Burkian, with different empirical implications that follow. Pitkin (1967) has argued that Hobbesian representation suggests that representatives "act for" rather than "stand for" constituents. Pitkin views this conception of representation as profoundly undemocratic, as representatives do not take the preferences of their constituents into account when deciding

how to act. Empirically, we would observe this form of representation if the preferences of representatives diverged substantially from the preferences of their constituents.

Turning to descriptive representation, Mansbridge (1999) makes a case for descriptive representation on four grounds: that in-group members would better internalize the preferences of their group members (see also Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2004)), that there would be better channels of communication between in-group members (see also Munshi and Rosenzweig (2015) and Munshi (2019)), that representation by previously discriminated groups would serve to create perceptions that they could rule (see also Chauchard (2014)), and finally that they increase the legitimacy of the representative body (see also Parthasarathy, Rao and Palaniswamy (2019), Rao and Sanyal (2010), Rao (2019), and Rao and Sanyal (2019)). The Government of Delhi saw the reforms as part of a larger packages of reforms, including raising the education budget and investing in school infrastructure, that would improve citizen perceptions of the quality of their local schools, increase trust in the state, and increase trust in programmatic service delivery across the city (Biswas, 2020). As much as descriptive representation would advance those goals, we can consider these an important outcome of the reforms. For Mansbridge (1999), however, in three of the four arguments for descriptive representation, this only matters in as much as representatives then accurately reflect the preferences of their constituents, setting a higher bar than whether representatives *look* like their constituents. For descriptive representation to be defensible, representatives should also channel bottom-up demands accurately and be *substantively* representative of their constituents.

Finally, Edmund Burke (1889) has argued that representatives serve as "trustees" of the interests of constituents, doing what is best for the community without necessarily representing the interests of the community. The idea is similar to Hill and Huber (2019) who look at the differences in preferences for roll call votes between legislatives and their constituents. They find that although constituents preferences on roll call votes differ substantially from those of their representatives, once constituents are provided with information on the votes, their preferences begin to align more with those of their legislators. This suggests a process of "Burkian" representation: representatives have more time to invest in understanding what the problems are of their community and will naturally have different preferences than their constituents as a result. While we should not expect parents and SMC members to hold similar preferences as parents are not as informed on the problems of their schools as their representatives, the context is not analogous to Hill and Huber (2019), as parents are likely to have better information on the quality of their children's school given the near daily contact they have with schools either directly or through their children.

EDUCATION IN DELHI: CONTEXT TO THE REFORMS

With the passage of the Right to Education Act in 2009, a constitutional amendment, every school in the country was required to have a School Management Committee or SMC that was responsible for drawing up a school development plan, although further responsibilities of SMCs were deleted to state governments (Government of India, 2009). With the election of the Aam Admi Party (AAP) in 2015, SMCs in Delhi were given various powers in Delhi that were designed to make them more

accountable. First, the Government of Delhi introduced elections to select members of the SMC (Directorate of Education, 2015). Each SMC is composed of twelve parents, one teacher, the head of school, a social worker from the local community, and a representative from the office of the Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) in the constituency in which the school is located.[3] Schools were required to hold elections to elect the twelve parent members who would serve on the SMC for two years. Our fieldwork was conducted after the second round of elections in November 2017.

SMCs are tasked with putting together a school development plan that outlines how the school will spend the discretionary portion of their budgets over the school year. In late 2018, the Government of Delhi also chose to increase the size of the discretionary budget, from ₹300,000 (approximately $4,000) to ₹500,000 (approximately $7,000) to ₹700,000 (approximately $10,000) depending on the size of the school and SMCs were then tasked with the administration of this new money. School development plans and budgets could be spent on six broad categories: infrastructure in the school including small repairs and new classrooms, health and sanitation that included the fixing or building new toilets or improving the school's drinking water sources, security that included hiring additional security guards in the school or installing security equipment such as CCTV cameras, teaching and learning material for classrooms such as textbooks or equipment, hiring new temporary teachers,[4] and on extracurricular activities that could be for children in the school or for the larger community such as celebrations around festivals.

We conducted fieldwork between mid-2018 to late 2019, between six and eighteen months after the second set of SMC elections had been held. For a number of reasons endogenous to individual schools, approximately half of the schools in Delhi *did not* hold elections for SMCs. In those schools a combination of teacher appointments and parent volunteers served on the SMCs in those schools, although 12 parents sit on the SMC in all schools in the city.

DATA & METHODS

We collect several sources of data to construct our measure of interest representation. We randomly sampled 52 schools in the city. Delhi is divided into 13 education districts, and we sampled two schools that held elections and two schools that did not hold elections in every district in the city. We sampled schools by stratifying the 1,029 schools in Delhi by the thirteen education districts across the city. Within each district, we sampled two schools that held elections and two schools that did not hold elections in each district, for a total of 26 schools that held elections and 26 schools that did not hold elections. We plot the location of the sample schools in Figure 1, with schools that held elections marked in green and schools that did not hold elections marked in red. The map

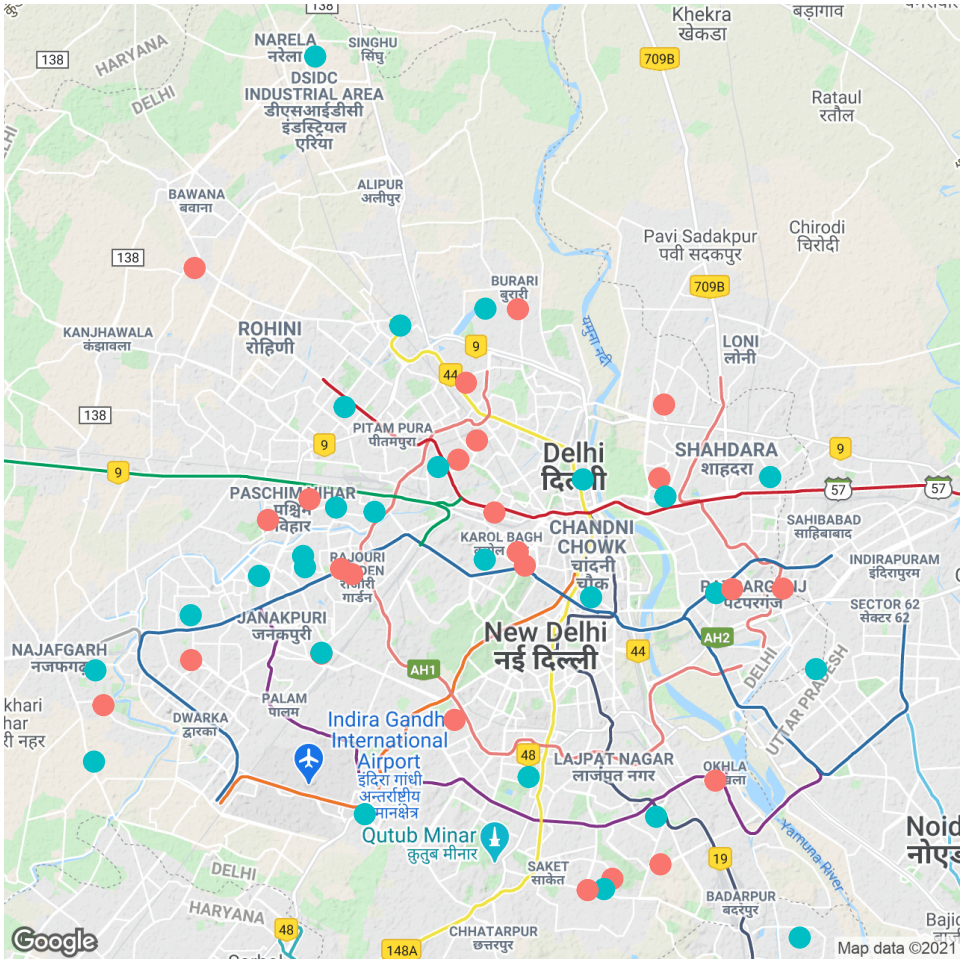
[3] In practice, the social worker was also often a member of the AAP, the incumbent party in Delhi during fieldwork. For the rest of this paper, we refer to the teacher and head of school together as "teachers" and the social worker and MLA representative together as "party workers".

[4] It is important to note that teachers that could be hired with this money would not be permanent civil service employees, but temporary teachers on short term contracts that did not last longer than the academic year.

provides location of major roads and subway lines in Delhi to provide a sense of the proximity to transportation infrastructure in the city.

From there, we conducted household surveys of approximately 40 parents per school that expressed no interest in running for the SMC, household surveys of all the parents that *stood for elections* in the 26 election schools, and household surveys of all the SMC members in the schools that did not hold elections. We also surveyed the teacher and head of school, both who sit on the SMC, and the social worker and MLA's representative in all 52 schools.

Figure 1: Location of Schools in the Sample



Notes: Location of sample schools within Delhi. Green dots represent schools where elections were held and red dots represent schools were no elections were held. The colored lines represent the lines of the Delhi Metro system.

We also collect data on actual expenditures of the schools by asking the head of school to complete a survey that provides the amount of each bill spent by the SMC, the bill number, and what the money was spent on. We match this to official public administrative records on school expenditures

to verify the amounts self-reported by the principals and find a high level of correspondence between what the head of school self-reported and the official and public documentation of budgets, despite these being reported at different points of time. We describe each source of data independently below.

Parent, SMC Member, and SMC Candidate Survey Data

We collected household survey data on 1,407 parents across the 52 sampled schools. The household survey collected data on a broad range of socioeconomic indicators, including wealth, level of education, caste and religion, as well as a constrained choice question that asked parents to distribute expenditure on budgetary items designed to mimic what SMC members would face when spending their school budgets. The constrained choice question is similar to "quadratic voting" from economics where individuals are given a budget which they can allocate over a number of goods (Lalley and Weyl, 2018). The tool is useful for valence goods such as education which almost all citizens have the same directional preferences (Holland, 2023; Stokes, 1963).

We administered an identical survey to all candidates for the SMC election in 26 schools, for a sample of 71 parents that ran but did not win election to the SMC, as well as all the 240 parents that ran and won a position on the SMC, and 187 parents that serve on the SMC in the 26 schools that did not hold elections, for a total of 498 SMC members.

Head of School, Teacher Convener, Social Worker, and Representative of the Member of Legislative Assembly Survey

We administered a shorter version of the survey to all the school-level members of the SMC, including the head of school, teacher convener, social worker, and representative of the member of the legislative assembly's office. The survey did not ask as many details about these individuals families or socioeconomics, although we do have sufficient demographic information to compare between groups.[5] We surveyed 36 heads of school, 37 teachers, and 31 MLA representatives and social workers.

Budget Data

We collected budget data from two different sources. First, we asked the heads of schools of all the schools in Delhi to complete an online survey that asked them to list their expenditures from the School Management Committee Fund, along with their bill number, the item the bill was spent on, and the total amount of the bill. We also scraped the official Ministry of Education portal that lists individual bill numbers along with the total amount spent on each bill, although it does not list

[5]For simplicity, from here on we group the head of school and the teacher convener under the more general category of "teachers" and the social worker and representative of the MLA as "party workers".

what the bill was spent on.[6] We then used the bill numbers to match these two sources to verify the expenditures the heads of school reported with the officially reported figures.

We provide summary statistics of all individuals in our sample in Table 1. Just under two thirds of the sample are women, 28 percent are Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, 38 percent are Other Backward Classes, 38 percent are Upper Caste, 18 percent are Muslim. For socioeconomic markers, the average household owns just under 9 assets in a list of assets, and respondents have 7.5 years of education. The next six variables are summary statistics for the number of tokens respondents selected for each of the six budgetary categories.

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Male	2,007	0.36	0.48	0.00	1.00
SC/ST	2,023	0.28	0.45	0.00	1.00
OBC	2,023	0.32	0.47	0.00	1.00
Upper Caste	2,023	0.38	0.49	0.00	1.00
Muslim	2,040	0.18	0.38	0.00	1.00
Number of Assets	2,041	8.76	2.68	1	17
Years of Education	1,875	7.45	4.70	0.00	16.00
Budget: Health and Sanitation	2,041	3.56	1.68	0	20
Budget: Infrastructure	2,041	3.19	1.68	0	20
Budget: Security	2,041	3.00	1.39	0	20
Budget: Teaching and Learning	2,041	3.96	1.71	0	20
Budget: Teachers	2,041	2.99	1.58	0	20
Budget: Extracurriculars	2,041	2.75	1.44	0	19

RESULTS

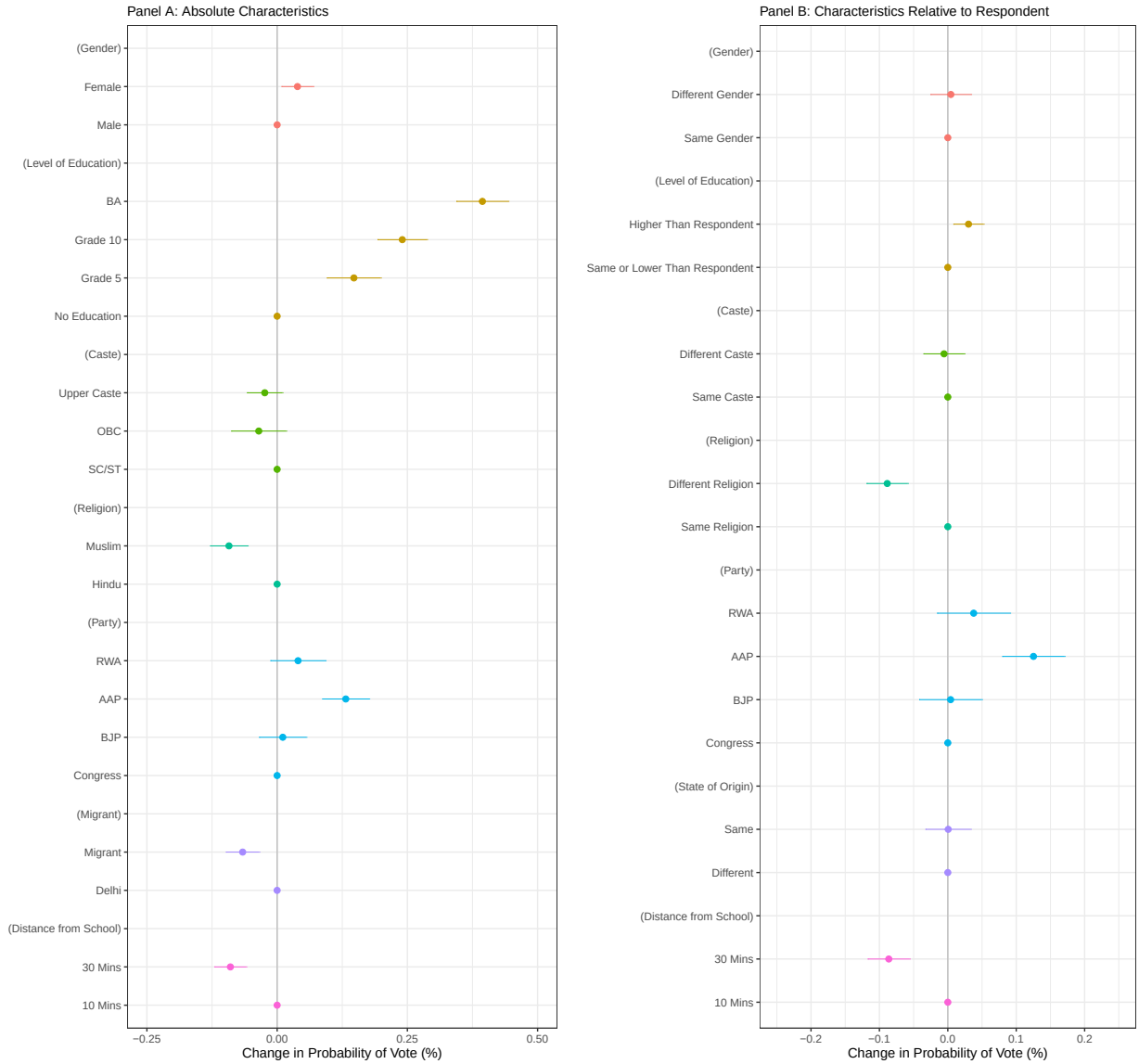
Descriptive Representation: Stated Preferences for Representatives

We first present a conjoint experiment administered on school parents to understand their preferences for SMC members. The conjoint experiment was designed to understand their preferences for who would represent them on their school SMC through visible characteristics of candidates such as caste, religion, and gender, as well as party affiliation, and place of residence, and we take this as stated preferences for representatives. In the conjoint, we asked parents to choose between two fictional candidates for SMC elections in a school just like theirs. We varied characteristics of the candidates on lines of gender, level of education, caste, religion, party, their state of origin, and how far they lived from the school. We presented a non-partisan option, whether the respondent was a member of their local residential welfare association (RWA) to test for the effects of partisanship.

Figure 2 shows how each attribute affects the likelihood of an SMC candidate being preferred to serve on the schools SMC. The figure displays both the average marginal component effect (AMCE) as points and the 95% confidence intervals as bars.

[6]The public portal can be found at http://www.edudel.nic.in.

Figure 2: A Conjoint Experiment Shows Respondents Prefer Educated Candidates



Notes: The plot on the left hand side shows estimates of the effects of the randomly assigned SMC candidate attribute values on the probability of being preferred as a member of the SMC. The plot on the right hand side recodes all attributes relative to the respondent. Estimates are based on an OLS model with standard errors clustered by respondent. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals. The points without horizontal bars denote the attribute value that is the reference category for each attribute.

We find the strongest effect in preferences being driven by the level of education of representatives. School parents strongly prefer SMC candidates with greater levels of education, and this effect increases monotonically with the level of education: candidates with university degrees are preferred to candidates with a secondary school degree, who are preferred to candidates with a primary school degree. Most parents in our sample have about a primary level of education (see Tables 1 and 2), so they have preferences for representatives that are significantly more educated than them. Second, there does not appear to be strong preferences on the basis of caste, but very strong preferences on the basis of religion. Respondents prefer Hindu candidates to Muslim candidates, with no significant differences for other religions. We will unpack this religious discrimination more when we discuss the characteristics of who was elected. School parents prefer women candidates, and candidates that live close to the school which we take to be a measure of the cost to being an SMC member as those that live closer to the school will spend less time commuting to attend SMC meetings. The preference for women, however, appears to be driven by the fact that most of our respondents were also women. When we recode the attributes of the conjoint relative to characteristics of the respondent – for example whether a female respondent received a female profile – this preference for women disappears. School parents prefer candidates that are affiliated with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), the ruling party in Delhi. Finally, parents weakly prefer candidates from Delhi, rather than candidates who are migrants from other states. The preference suggests that they prefer candidates from Delhi rather than discriminate against any particular state.

We also re-run the models of the conjoint experiment by recoding all variables to a dummy for whether the respondent shares that characteristic or not (Panel B of 2. Coefficients represent the difference between candidates that share the characteristic with the respondent and those that are different than the respondent. For example, if a respondent is Hindu and the profile they are shown is a Hindu candidate, they will be coded as being "Caste same as respondent". This recoding does not change the interpretation of the results, with the exception of gender as noted above. Religion still appears to be a strong dividing line. Most of our respondents are Hindus and when recoding by religion, we see that most respondents prefer co-religious candidates. Perhaps surprisingly, caste does not have any effects in either way of presenting the results.

Descriptive Representation: Revealed Preferences for Representatives

Next, we turn to differences in socioeconomic characteristics between school parents, SMC candidates, and school and community members of the SMC. We begin by looking at socioeconomic characteristics of the entire population in schools to observe if there are any differences along gender, caste, education, wealth, and religious lines (Table 2). To understand differences in the parental body, the pool of representatives, and school and community members of the SMC, we run a model of the form:

$$Y_{is} = \alpha \text{Elected}_{is} + \beta \text{Not Elected}_{is} + \gamma \text{Appointed}_{is} + \zeta \text{Teachers}_{is} + \theta \text{Party Workers}_{is} + \iota_s + \epsilon_{is}, \quad (1)$$

Where Y_{is} is either whether candidate i in school s is male, their years of education, how many assets they own in their household, whether they are SC or ST, whether they are OBC, whether they are upper caste, or whether they are Muslim. Elected is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if they were elected to the SMC, Not Elected is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if they ran but were not elected to the SMC, Appointed is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if they were appointed by the school to serve on the SMC, Teachers is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if they are a teacher or head of school on the SMC, and Party Workers is a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 if they are a party worker on the SMC. ι_s are school fixed effects, and ϵ_{is} is the error term.

Table 2: Characteristics of Representatives

	Male	Education	Assets	SC/ST	OBC	Upper Caste	Muslim	Delhi
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Elected	0.002	3.10***	0.87***	−0.04*	−0.01	0.07**	−0.06**	0.13***
	(0.03)	(0.26)	(0.17)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)
Not Elected	0.21***	3.03***	0.01	−0.06	0.08	−0.01	−0.02	0.15**
	(0.06)	(0.49)	(0.25)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.06)
Appointed	0.01	2.52***	0.72***	−0.04	0.01	0.05	0.01	0.07*
	(0.03)	(0.47)	(0.18)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Teachers	0.11	9.34***	3.68***	−0.05	−0.14***	0.21***	−0.12***	
	(0.08)	(0.19)	(0.29)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.03)	
Community	0.21***	7.44***	4.10***	−0.16***	−0.03	0.21***	−0.06	
	(0.06)	(0.27)	(0.47)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.04)	
School FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Parent Mean	0.34	6.1	8.3	0.3	0.33	0.35	0.2	
Observations	2,019	1,875	2,053	2,035	2,035	2,035	2,052	1,991

Notes: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Robust standard errors clustered at the school level in parentheses. Each column represents a linear model of the probability that each member of the SMC holds that characteristic. Column one is a dummy variable for whether the respondent is male. Column two represents the years of education of the respondent. Column three is a count of the number of assets in the respondent's household. Column four is a dummy variable equal to one if they identify as Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe. Column five is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent identifies as a member of an Other Backward Class. Column six is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent identifies as a Brahmin or other upper caste. Column seven is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent identifies as Muslim. Column eight is a dummy variable equal to one if the respondent is from Delhi. As all teachers and members of the community are expected to live in Delhi, we did not ask their state of origin and therefore coefficients on these variables are missing. The reference category in all regressions are parents in the school.

First, teachers and heads of school appear to be far more educated than the population of parents (Column 2 of Table 2). While the average level of education of parents is just under 10 years of education, representing a secondary school education, teachers have an average of 15 years of education, representing the advanced degrees required of many public sector teachers in India. Unsurprisingly given the wage premium for public sector workers in low- and middle-income countries (Barton, Bold and Sandefur, 2017), teachers and heads of school own about 3.5 more basic assets

than the population of parents, and about the same number of assets as party workers (Column 3 of Table 2). Teachers and head of schools also appear to be of higher social status within traditional caste hierarchies, as they are less likely to identify as Scheduled Caste (SC) or Tribe (ST) or Other Backward Class (OBC), but are more likely to identify as upper caste (Columns 4, 5, and 6 of Table 2 respectively). There is a clear gap between the social status of teachers and all parents, whether they sit on the SMC or not.

Turning to differences between parents and SMC members, we also find differences in social status, although they are less pronounced than that between teachers and parents. SMC members, whether they were elected or appointed, are better educated and own more assets than parents who did not run for the SMC. While elected parents are of higher status as indicated by lower numbers of SC and ST (column 4) and higher numbers of upper caste SMC members (column 6), this does not hold for for appointed members. Twenty percent of parents are likely to be Muslim, slightly higher than the population of Delhi in general (approximately 12%), and this is higher than both elected members of the SMC and teachers in the school.

The discrimination against Muslim candidates from the conjoint experiment in Figure 2 is reflected most clearly in election results where elected candidates are five percent less likely to be Muslim than either candidates appointed or the school parent body as a whole. While parents do not state any preferences for discrimination on the basis of caste, lower caste candidates comprise five percent less of the elected SMC bodies than the parental body as a whole and upper caste candidates are six percent more of the elected SMC body. This preference for caste is not manifested in the body of appointed candidates. While not fully aligned, parents *appointed* to the SMC appear to be more descriptively similar to the larger parent population than those that won elections. This is all the more striking as parents that were elected to the SMC body also appear to be of higher social status than the larger electoral pool they were competing against (the differences between Elected and Not Elected SMC candidates).

Turning to differences between appointed, elected, and non-elected parents, there are some differences of note between parents that were elected to SMCs and those that were appointed to the body by teachers and the head of school. Elections appear to select for wealthier women (the differences between columns 1 and 3 are significantly different from each other) as the not-elected pool contains more men and households with fewer assets. Elected representatives are also more educated and wealthier than appointed representatives (the difference between the coefficient on "Elected" and "Appointed" in columns 2 and 3 are significantly different from each other). There are no significant differences in caste between elected and appointed representatives, although there are fewer Muslims among elected representatives.

The electoral selection process appears to reflect the stated preferences of parents from the conjoint experiment, with highly a educated Hindu woman the modal SMC member, although elections also appear to have selected on caste. SMC members do not appear to be descriptively representative of the parent body, but this also appears to reflect the preferences of the parent body. Bureaucratic and political members of the SMC are also of significantly higher status than the parent body, producing a SMC body that looks significantly different than the parents they are supposed to represent.

Together with the conjoint experiment in Figure 2, we take this as evidence that parents do not attach importance to descriptive representation, nor do they act as if this matters when given the choice. The case for descriptive representation, however, rests on the ability of representatives to accurately reflect the preferences of parents, a test we turn to now.

Substantive Representation: Alignment in Budgetary Preferences

To measure substantive representation, we look at two aspects of this representation. First, we look at preferences over the six broad budgetary categories. We run a similar regression as in Equation 1, using the six budgetary categories as the dependent variable, controlling for the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondent. The dependent variable in each column can range from 0 to 20, with 0 meaning that the respondent did not allocate any of the budget to that item and 20 meaning the respondent allocated the entire budget to that category We present these results in Table 3 and more details of this constrained choice question is presented in Appendix A1.

The largest deviation between the preferences of parents and members of the SMC is on how much the SMC should spend on health and sanitation, with all members of the SMC except teachers suggesting that less of the SMC budget should be spent on health and sanitation than parents of the school. Teachers, perhaps unsurprisingly, want far more money spent on infrastructure than all other members of the SMC, and want less money spent on additional teachers.

On the whole, elected representatives have preferences that are closer to parents than appointed representatives, although they are further from those preferences than those they beat in elections. Preferences over budgets deviate in two budgetary categories (health and sanitation and extracurricular activities) for elected representatives, while they deviate across four budgetary categories (health and sanitation, security, teaching and learning materials, and teachers) for appointed representatives. Elected representatives also have preferences more in common with parents than teachers. Substantively, it appears that elected representatives represent the interests of parents better than either teachers or appointed representatives, although ultimately, the next question is whether this matters in how money is actually spent.

Next, to unpack how differences emerge, we turn to differences between representatives and their constituents on identity and socioeconomic lines. We construct dyadic measures of agreement between school-level representatives and parents over how budgets are spent over the fiscal year. In this model, the dependent variable can range from 0 to 20 for each budgetary category. We then sum all these values to provide a measure of deviation across *all* the budgetary categories and this variable can range from 0 to 40. A positive coefficient on any of the independent variables means deviation between the preferences of SMC members and parents, and a negative value means that the preferences of SMC member and parents are moving closer together. We run the specification in Equation 2:

Table 3: Differences in Preferences Among SMC Members

	Health and Sanitation	Infrastructure	Security	Teaching and Learning	Teachers	Extracurricular Actvities
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Elected	−0.571***	0.065	−0.087	0.085	0.111	−0.202*
	(0.115)	(0.114)	(0.095)	(0.123)	(0.128)	(0.103)
Not Elected	−0.335*	−0.109	−0.014	0.231	−0.011	−0.137
	(0.197)	(0.089)	(0.155)	(0.145)	(0.145)	(0.206)
Appointed	−0.615***	0.175	−0.247**	0.309**	0.246	−0.003
	(0.161)	(0.134)	(0.099)	(0.135)	(0.153)	(0.085)
Teachers	−0.068	0.937***	−0.409**	−0.138	−0.379	−0.008
	(0.180)	(0.292)	(0.181)	(0.178)	(0.287)	(0.183)
Community	−0.410*	−0.140	−0.217	0.129	0.152	0.273
	(0.210)	(0.184)	(0.170)	(0.223)	(0.199)	(0.220)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parent Mean	3.73	3.31	2.99	3.97	2.94	2.84
Observations	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856

Notes: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Robust standard errors clustered at the school level in parentheses. The dependent variable of each column represents the value in response to how much of the SMC budget the respondent would want to spend on the item and can range from 0 to 20 for the number of tokens they could allocate to that category in a constrained choice question. Health and sanitation represents expenditures such as new toilets, a sanitation worker, or a water filter. Infrastructure represents expenditures on a new classroom, repairs on school buildings, or an estate manager to manage infrastructural issues. Security represents expenditures on CCTV cameras in the school, security guards for the school, or a boundary wall or gate for the school. Teaching and learning represents new desks and chairs for a classroom, a new smart classroom in the school or computers, or buying equipment for a science lab. Teachers represents the hiring of a new teacher. Extracurriculars represents the purchase of equipment for sports and arts extracurriculars. Controls include gender, education, an asset index, and dummies for whether the respondent is SC, ST, OBC, or Muslim.

$$|\text{Budget preference}_{ms} - \text{Budget preference}_{ps}| = \beta_1 \text{Caste Match}_{mps} + \beta_2 \text{Religion Match}_{mps} + \beta_3 \text{Wealth Gap}_{mps} + \beta_4 \text{Education Gap}_{mps} + \gamma_m + \theta_p + \zeta_s + \epsilon_{mps}, \quad (2)$$

Where $\text{Budget preference}_{ms}$ represents the amount spent on a particular budget item by SMC member m in school s, $\text{Budget preference}_{ps}$ represents the amount spent on a budget item by parent p in school s, and the dependent variable is the absolute difference between these two values. Caste Match_{mps} takes the value of 1 if member m and parent p in school s are of the same caste category and 0 otherwise, $\text{Religion Match}_{mps}$ takes the value of 1 if member m and parent p in school s are of the same religion. Wealth Gap_{mps} is the difference in the number of assets owned by member m and parent p in school s, while $\text{Education Gap}_{mps}$ is the difference in the number of years of

schooling between member m and parent p in school s. γ_m, θ_p, and ζ_s are member, parent, and school fixed effects respectively, and ϵ_{mps} are robust error terms clustered at the school-level. There are 20,478 unique parent-SMC member dyads.

We plot the results from the model in Equation 2 in Figure 3. The most consistent predictor of the differences between the preferences of parents and parental SMC members is differences in the wealth of parents and SMC members, with the effect of SMC members owning one additional asset than a matched parental representative is between 0 to 0.7 tokens spent on that budgetary item. In the final column of Figure 3, we provide a sum of the total deviation between parents and SMC members. The full deviation between parents and parent representatives is 0.7 of a token, or ₹17,500 for each additional asset an SMC member has more than a parent. Given that SMC members have between half and 1.3 more assets than a parent, this substantively represents between ₹8,750 (approximately $120) and ₹22,750 (approximately $310) difference in how SMC budgets should be spent between parents and SMC members.

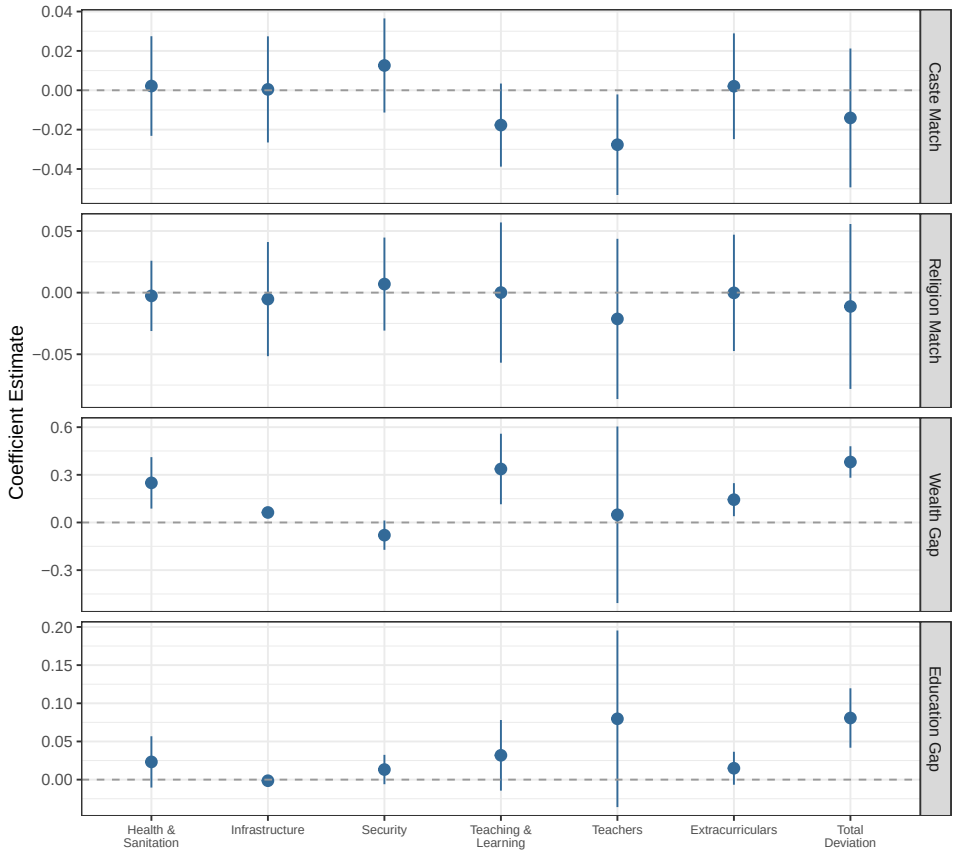
Differences in the level of education also substantively drive gaps in the preferences between parents and SMC members (the final panel of Figure 3), although by a small amount than wealth. While differences in education lead to greater deviation in preferences in all of the budget categories, none of these categories are individually significant. Taken together, however, in the full deviation, one year of education results in a difference of 0.15 total tokens, or about ₹3,750. Given that SMC representatives have between 2.5 and 3 more years of education than the larger parental body, this represents a difference in 0.38 to 0.45 tokens, or between ₹9,500 to ₹11,250 in preferences over how budgets are spent.

Caste and religion, two traditional markers of hierarchy, do not predict differences in preferences between parents and SMC members, with only preferences for money being spent on teachers moving closer to the preferences of members of the same caste, and no effects of religion on preferences for *any* budgetary expenditure. Together, these results suggest that the most important differences in schools are not along lines of caste and religion, but wealth and education. Traditional status markers do not appear to drive differences in preferences, while markers likely to be highly salient in urban areas, wealth and education, appear to have strong effects on differences in preferences. Finally, we turn to the question of elite capture, looking on how money is actually spent and whose preferences this reflects.

Elite Capture: How is Money Spent?

Next, we test for elite capture in two ways. First, we look within SMC members to see if certain groups or certain characteristics of SMC members are able to extract a greater share of the budget? We match data on how budgets were actually spent with data on the preferences of SMC members within schools to explore how much preferences of individual SMC members deviate from their school's budget. We convert the total amount of expenditure of the school budget on each category of items into a proportion of the budget and then subtract the share of the budget from the share of the budget each member indicated they would want to spend in the constrained choice game.

Figure 3: Differences Between Budget Preferences of SMC Members and Preferences of School Parents



Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the school level. Point estimates for differences in preferences between parents and SMC members in health, infrastructure, security, teachers, teaching and learning materials, and extracurriculars estimating the model in Equation 2. "Caste match" represents the coefficient on whether the parent and SMC member are of the same caste, "Religion match" represents the coefficient on whether the parents and SMC member are of the same religion, "Wealth gap" represents the difference in the number of assets between the SMC member and parent, and "Education gap" represents a difference in the number of years of education between the parent and SMC member. The dependent variable for models in columns 1 through 6 range from 0-20, with 0 indicating perfect alignment between the parent and the SMC member and 20 indicating perfect deviation between the parent and SMC member. The dependent variable for the model in column 7 ranges from 0-40 with 0 indicating perfect alignment and 40 indicating perfect deviation. All models include parent and member fixed effects. We provide a table of these results in Table A2. We rescale all continuous independent variables (education and wealth) by two standard deviations so they have mean zero and standard deviation 0.5 and are comparable to the other binary independent variables (Gelman, 2008).

Formally, we calculate,

$$\begin{aligned}|\text{Share of Budget}_{is} - \text{Share of Budget}_{ims}| = \\ \beta_1 \text{Male}_{ms} + \beta_2 \text{Education}_{ms} + \beta_3 \text{Wealth}_{ms} + \beta_4 \text{SC/ST}_{ms} \\ + \beta_5 \text{OBC}_{ms} + \beta_6 \text{Muslim}_{ms} + \zeta_s + \epsilon_{ims}, \quad (3)\end{aligned}$$

where $\text{Share of Budget}_{is}$ is the share of the budget spent on item i in school s from the six budget categories, $\text{Share of Budget}_{ims}$ is the share of the budget on item i member m in school s stated in the constrained choice game. Male, Education, Wealth, SC/ST, OBC, and Muslim are all individual level characteristics of member m in school s, ζ_s are the school-level fixed effects, and ϵ_{ims} are the error terms. This model presents the difference between how budgets are actually spent and how members want budgets spent as a function of individual level characteristics of members.

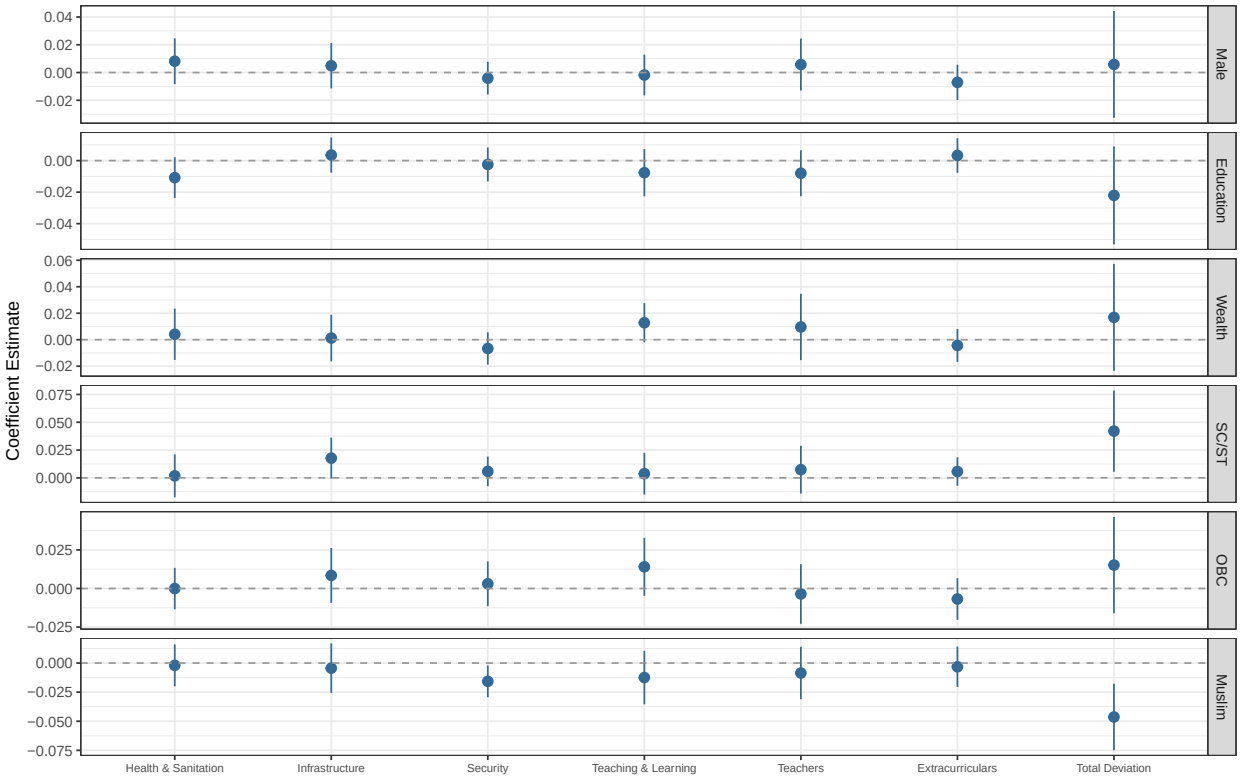
We present results graphically in Figure 4. A positive point estimate indicates that there is a larger difference between how budgets are spent and how the SMC member wants to spend money, while a negative point estimate indicates a smaller gap. There are two results of interest: the effect of being either scheduled caste or tribe, and the effect of being Muslim. Scheduled caste and scheduled tribe respondents see less of their demands for budgets met. While each individual item *except* infrastructure is not individually significant, cumulatively, they see fewer of their demands met. Perhaps surprisingly, Muslim respondents see more of their demands met. This is likely driven by some level of religious clustering within schools, with some SMCs composed of mainly Muslim members.

Next, we look at differences between the preferences of SMC members and what is actually spent in the budget or who gets what they want. We run the same specification as in Equation 2, but instead of looking at the differences between parents and SMC members, we look at differences between SMC members and actual budgetary expenditures. We collect data on budgetary expenditures directly from schools from self-reported expenditures and bills, and from formal sources of the official expenditures posted publicly on the Directorate of Education's website.[7] We match expenditures by calculating the percentage of the budget from official expenditures that is spent on each of the six items, and the percentage of tokens an SMC member allocated to that budgetary item. These outcomes range from 0 to 1 and are continuous percentage differences. We look at the various types of SMC members, elected, appointed, teachers, and party workers, in our data, to understand which group holds the most influence in the actual expenditures of SMC budgets.

We present these results in Figure 5. Each facet represents the difference between the preference of that particular type of member and the expenditure on the budget, with negative values meaning that the preferences of that member are closer to the actual expenditures of the school. The most important set of results is that the preferences of elected parents and teachers are those that are closest to being reflected in how budgets are spent within the school. Elected parents are four percent more likely than other members to have their preferences reflected in the final budget and teachers are nine percent more likely to have their preferences reflected in the final budget. Appointed

[7] Public reports of expenditures can be found at http://www.edudel.nic.in/welcome_folder/finance_public_report.htm.

Figure 4: Differences Between Actual Budgetary Outlays and SMC Member Preferences

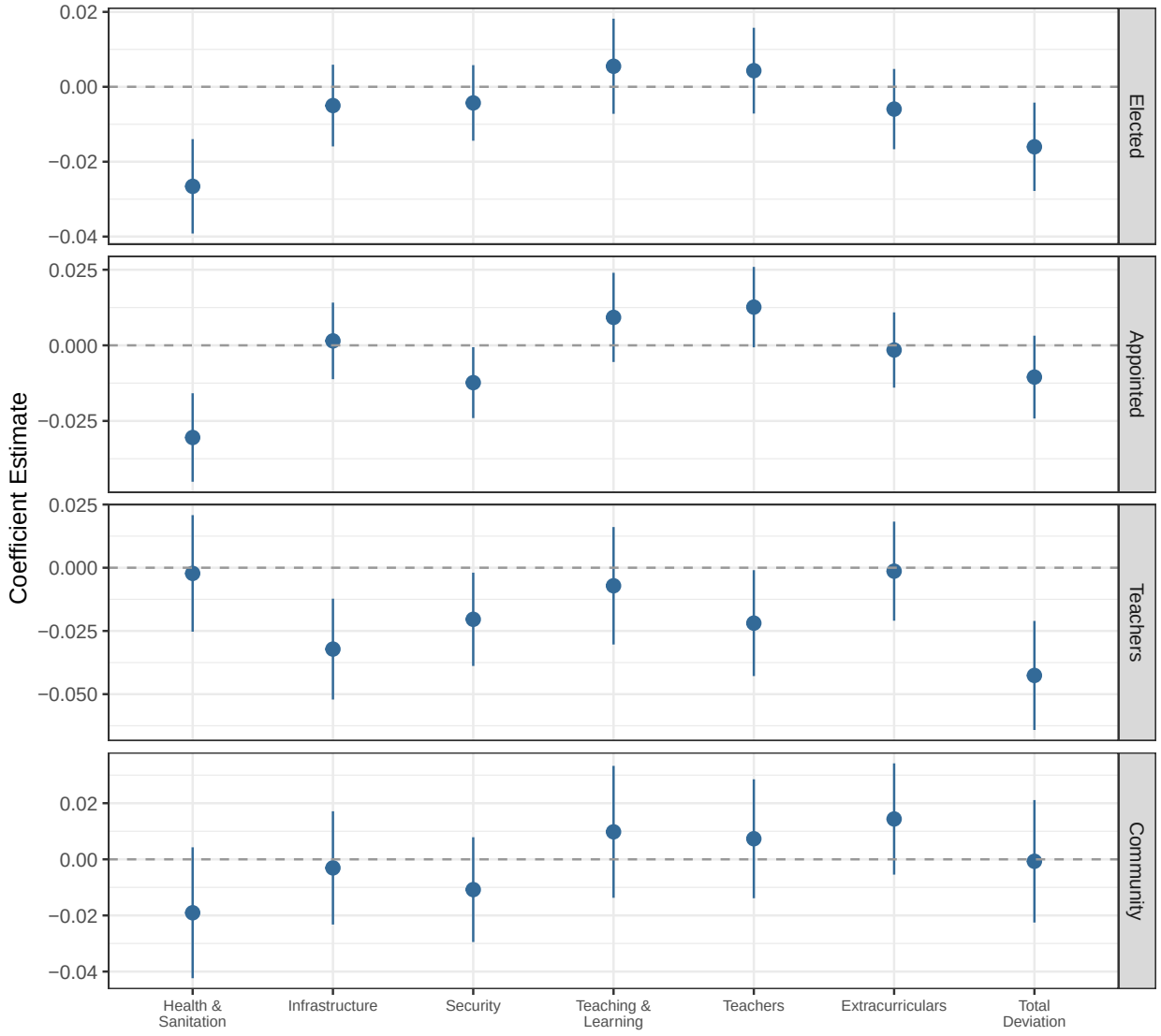


Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the school level. Point estimates for differences in preferences between actual budgetary outlays for each school and SMC members on health, infrastructure, security, teachers, teaching and learning materials, and extracurriculars estimating the model in Equation 3. The dependent variable for models in columns 1 through 6 range from 0-20, with 0 indicating perfect alignment between the parent and the SMC member and 20 indicating perfect deviation between the parent and SMC member. The dependent variable for the model in column 7 ranges from 0-40 with 0 indicating perfect alignment and 40 indicating perfect deviation. All models include school fixed effects. We provide a table of these results in Table A1. We rescale all continuous independent variables (education and wealth) by two standard deviations so they have mean zero and standard deviation 0.5 and are comparable to the other binary independent variables (Gelman, 2008).

SMC members and party workers do not appear to have their preferences more closely reflected in the final budget. For elected representatives, their preferences are most closely being met by their preferences over the health budget. Although their preferences over the infrastructure, security, and extracurricular budget are also closer to the budgetary expenditure, these results are not significant at conventional levels of significance. Teachers have a greater range of their preference for budgetary items reflected in final outcomes, with infrastructure, security, and teachers more closely matching their final preferences.

Appointed SMC members, perhaps unsurprisingly, do not have their preferences over budgets matched in the final budgetary expenditures. This is driven by their preferences for teachers, although they have greater, although not significant, differences in preferences for infrastructure, and teaching and learning materials. Party workers also do not have their preferences matched to actual budgetary expenditures. This suggests that elected parents hold greater sway in SMCs in which

Figure 5: Differences Between Actual Expenditures and Preferences of SMC Members



Notes: Robust standard errors clustered at the school level. Point estimates for differences in the preferences of SMC members and actual budgetary expenditures. The dependent variable of each column represents the absolute value of the difference between the percentage of the budget the respondent would want to spend on the item and the percentage of the actual budget that was spent on that item. Health and sanitation represents expenditures such as new toilets, a sanitation worker, or a water filter. Infrastructure represents expenditures on a new classroom, repairs on school buildings, or an estate manager to manage infrastructural issues. Security represents expenditures on CCTV cameras in the school, security guards for the school, or a boundary wall or gate for the school. Teaching and learning represents new desks and chairs for a classroom, a new smart classroom in the school or computers, or buying equipment for a science lab. Teachers represents the hiring of a new teacher. Extracurriculars represents the purchase of equipment for sports and arts extracurriculars. We include school fixed effects. The full deviation in column seven represents the sum of the deviation for each budget item. We provide a table of these results in Table A3. We rescale all continuous independent variables (education and wealth) by two standard deviations so they have mean zero and standard deviation 0.5 and are comparable to the other binary independent variables (Gelman, 2008).

they serve, although we cannot say how much of this is a result of school-level characteristics that result in schools that hold elections selecting different candidates and having different cultures of deliberation to decide how budgets are spent within schools.

CONCLUSION

We have studied the decentralization of discretionary school level budgets to elected or appointed bodies of parents, school teachers, and community members. We provide evidence on the changing nature of representation in an urban area that has received far less attention in the literature on decentralization and public goods provision. We trace the aggregation of interests from school parents, the constituents who select their representatives, to members of school committees tasked with choosing how school-level budgets are spent, to actual expenditures of the money.

We find that traditional hierarchies, namely religion and caste, do not predict how resources are distributed, but new hierarchies that are likely to emerge in urban areas, namely wealth and education, strongly predict how resources are distributed. Representatives that are elected by parents see their preferences over how budgets are spent reflected in actual expenditures more than representatives that are appointed by school teachers. We take this as evidence that elections shift power from school leaders to parents.

Turning to the substantive representation of parents, who we see as the ultimate constituents, we find that elected representatives do a better job of representing the interests of parents than appointed representatives. There are fewer differences between the preferences of elected parents and their constituents than between appointed parents and their constituents, although this is most likely due to selection, as the entire candidate pool in schools that held elections have preferences closer to those of parents.

These two findings, while pointing to the virtue of elections serving to select parents that serve as "trustees" of parents, should be taken with some caution. Elected parents are wealthier and of higher social status than appointed parents and the larger parental body as a whole, and the biggest predictor of differences between what the parental body wants and the preferences of their representatives is precisely wealth and education. Representatives are not descriptively representative of those they are tasked with representing, although stated and revealed preferences suggest that constituents are not looking to elect representatives that represent them descriptively. Substantively, elected representatives come closer to matching the preferences of their constituents than appointed representatives, and elected representatives also have their preferences realized more, suggesting that elections serve to bring outcomes closer in line with those of constituents. With respect to normative theories of representation, we provide evidence to suggest that descriptive representation matters only as much as this reflects the preferences of constituents. We describe representatives as "Burkian" in that they serve as "trustees" of the people. They are not descriptively representative, but they do internalize the preferences of constituents.

More generally, this paper advanced our understanding on three literatures: an emerging literature on public goods provision in urban areas in low- and middle-income democracies, normative

theories of representation, and the effects of decentralization and CDD programs. This paper adds to a growing body of evidence that suggests that public goods provision in urban areas is likely to be substantively different than in rural areas. While traditional hierarchies of caste and religion appear to drive public goods provision in rural areas, we find no evidence that those matter in this context. Instead, we find evidence that it is wealth and education that drive differences in preferences, and if we think of elite capture in urban areas, we should be paying closer attention to these differences in future work. Finally, we find evidence that one particular design aspect of decentralization and CDD programs – elections – do a good job of moving preferences closer to that of individuals, even if they result in elite capture.

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A1 BUDGET CONSTRAINED CHOICE

To understand respondent's preferences over how school-level budgets should be allocated, we presented all respondents with a constrained choice question in which they were asked to allocate an imaginary budget over the six broad categories that SMC budgets could be spent on. Respondents were told that the SMC budget for their school was ₹500,000 and that they had 20 tokens, each worth ₹25,000 to allocate as they wanted between the six categories in their school's budget.[8]

To represent the six budget categories, we presented respondents with 12 illustrations presented in Figure A1. Respondents were then asked to place tokens on the illustrations depending according to their preferences over allocation of the budget. Surveyors counted the number of tokens respondents placed on each of the categories and entered this data.

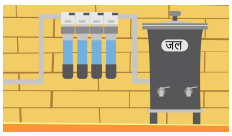
We asked respondents the following,

> We would now like to see how this SMC spends SMC fund. We have recently presented our initial findings to the education minister and the director and they were interested in knowing how the SMC fund is utilized. We will present you with these pictures (show pictures) indicating broad areas under which you could spend the SMC fund and 20 tokens each representing Rs. 25,000. Please use all the tokens according to your priorities by putting them on the pictures lying in front of you.

[8] Actual budgets range from ₹500,000 to ₹700,000 depending on the size of the school. We set the budget at ₹500,000 during the survey for ease of calculation and implementation in the field.

Figure A1: Figures Used for Constrained Choice Question

(a) Health & Sanitation Illustration

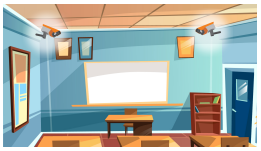


(b) Health & Sanitation Illustration

(c) Infrastructure Illustration

(d) Infrastructure Illustration

(e) Security Illustration



(f) Security Illustration

(g) Teaching & Learning Illustration

(h) Teaching & Learning Illustration

(i) Teachers Illustration

(j) Teachers Illustration

(k) Extracurricular Activities Illustration

(l) Extracurricular Activities Illustration

A2 RESULTS TABLES

In this section, we provide regression tables for all coefficient plots presented in the main manuscript.

Table A1 presents the results for Figure 4 in the main body of the paper. The columns in the table correspond to the columns in the Figure and the rows correspond to the six facets.

Table A1: Differences Between Actual Budgetary Outlays and SMC Member Preferences

	Health and Sanitation (1)	Infrastructure (2)	Security (3)	Teaching and Learning (4)	Teachers (5)	Extracurricular Actvities (6)	Full Deviation (7)
Male	0.009	0.005	−0.004	−0.002	0.006	−0.007	0.006
	(0.009)	(0.009)	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.021)
Education	−0.001	0.0004	−0.0003	−0.001	−0.001	0.0004	−0.003
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)
Wealth	0.001	0.0002	−0.001	0.003*	0.002	−0.001	0.003
	(0.002)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.003)	(0.001)	(0.004)
SC/ST	0.002	0.018*	0.006	0.004	0.007	0.006	0.042**
	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.019)
OBC	−0.0001	0.008	0.003	0.014	−0.004	−0.007	0.015
	(0.007)	(0.009)	(0.007)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.007)	(0.016)
Muslim	−0.002	−0.004	−0.016**	−0.012	−0.009	−0.003	−0.046***
	(0.009)	(0.011)	(0.007)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.009)	(0.015)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SMC Mean	0.15	0.4	0.16	0.15	0.13	0.14	1.13
Observations	415	415	415	415	415	415	415

Notes: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Robust standard errors clustered at the school level. Point estimates for differences in preferences between actual budgetary outlays for each school and SMC members on health, infrastructure, security, teachers, teaching and learning materials, and extracurriculars estimating the model in Equation 3. The dependent variable for models in columns 1 through 6 range from 0-20, with 0 indicating perfect alignment between the parent and the SMC member and 20 indicating perfect deviation between the parent and SMC member. The dependent variable for the model in column 7 ranges from 0-40 with 0 indicating perfect alignment and 40 indicating perfect deviation. We rescale all continuous independent variables (education and wealth) by two standard deviations so they have mean zero and standard deviation 0.5 and are comparable to the other binary independent variables (Gelman, 2008). The table presents the results from Figure 4 in table form.

Table A2 presents the results for Figure 3 in the main body of the paper. The columns in the table correspond to the columns in the Figure and the rows correspond to the four facets in the Figure.

Table A3 presents the results for Figure 5 in the main body of the paper. The columns in the table correspond to the columns in the Figure, and the rows correspond to the four facets in the Figure.

Table A2: Differences Between Budget Preferences of SMC Members and Preferences of School Parents

	Health and Sanitation	Infrastructure	Security	Teaching and Learning	Teachers	Extracurricular Actvities	Full Deviation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Caste Match	0.002	0.0004	0.013	−0.018	−0.028**	0.002	−0.014
	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.014)	(0.018)
Religion Match	−0.003	−0.005	0.007	0.00005	−0.021	−0.0002	−0.011
	(0.015)	(0.024)	(0.019)	(0.029)	(0.033)	(0.024)	(0.034)
Wealth Gap	0.249***	0.063***	−0.080*	0.337***	0.049	0.144***	0.381***
	(0.083)	(0.005)	(0.047)	(0.113)	(0.284)	(0.053)	(0.051)
Education Gap	0.023	−0.001	0.013	0.032	0.080	0.015	0.081***
	(0.017)	(0.001)	(0.010)	(0.024)	(0.059)	(0.011)	(0.020)
Parent FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Member FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reference Mean	1.27	1.49	1.35	1.23	1.32	1.22	3.94
Observations	20,478	20,478	20,478	20,478	20,478	20,478	20,478

Notes: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Robust standard errors clustered at the school level in parentheses. The dependent variable of each column represents the absolute value of the difference between the number of tokens SMC members would spend on a budgetary item and the number of tokens school parents would spend on a budgetary item. Health and sanitation represents expenditures such as new toilets, a sanitation worker, or a water filter. Infrastructure represents expenditures on a new classroom, repairs on school buildings, or an estate manager to manage infrastructural issues. Security represents expenditures on CCTV cameras in the school, security guards for the school, or a boundary wall or gate for the school. Teaching and learning represents new desks and chairs for a classroom, a new smart classroom in the school or computers, or buying equipment for a science lab. Teachers represents the hiring of a new teacher. Extracurriculars represents the purchase of equipment for sports and arts extracurriculars. The full deviation in column seven represents the sum of the deviation for each budget item. The table presents the results from Figure 3 in table form.

Table A3: Differences Between Actual Expenditures and Preferences of SMC Members

	Health and Sanitation	Infrastructure	Security	Teaching and Learning	Teachers	Extracurricular Actvities	Full Deviation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Elected	−0.027***	−0.005	−0.004	0.005	0.004	−0.006	−0.016***
	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.006)
Appointed	−0.030***	0.001	−0.012**	0.009	0.013*	−0.002	−0.010
	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.007)
Teachers	−0.002	−0.032***	−0.020**	−0.007	−0.022**	−0.001	−0.043***
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)
Community	−0.019	−0.003	−0.011	0.010	0.007	0.014	−0.001
	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.011)	(0.010)	(0.011)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
School FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Reference Mean	0.18	0.42	0.15	0.17	0.13	0.14	0.59
Observations	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856	1,856

Notes: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Robust standard errors clustered at the school level. The dependent variable of each column represents the absolute value of the difference between the percentage of the budget the respondent would want to spend on the item and the percentage of the actual budget that was spent on that item. Health and sanitation represents expenditures such as new toilets, a sanitation worker, or a water filter. Infrastructure represents expenditures on a new classroom, repairs on school buildings, or an estate manager to manage infrastructural issues. Security represents expenditures on CCTV cameras in the school, security guards for the school, or a boundary wall or gate for the school. Teaching and learning represents new desks and chairs for a classroom, a new smart classroom in the school or computers, or buying equipment for a science lab. Teachers represents the hiring of a new teacher. Extracurriculars represents the purchase of equipment for sports and arts extracurriculars. The full deviation in column seven represents the sum of the deviation for each budget item. The table presents the results from Figure 5 in table form.

A3 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIECONOMIC STATUS AND SOCIAL INDICATORS

In this section, we explore the relationship between sociecnomic status and social indicators available in our data. We run a simple model of the relationship between caste, gender and religion on education and wealth of the form:

$$Y_{is} = \beta_1 \text{Male}_{is} + \beta_2 \text{SC/ST}_{is} + \beta_3 \text{Upper Caste}_{is} + \beta_3 \text{Muslim}_{is} + \theta_i + \gamma_s + \epsilon_{is},$$

Where Y_{is} is either the number of years of education or the number of assets respondent i in school s owns, Male is a dummy for whether the respondent is male, SC/ST is a dummy for whether the respondent is a Scheduled Caste or Scheduled Tribe, Upper Caste is a dummy for whether the respondent is either Brahmin or other Upper Caste, Muslim is a dummy for whether the respondent is Muslim, θ_i is a vector of controls for whether the individual is an elected or appointed SMC member, whether they ran for SMC elections, if they are a teacher or party worker. Hindu OBC women parents are our reference category.

We present these results in Table A4. Men have about two years of education more than women, although male respondents do not live in wealthier households than women. Scheduled Castes and Tribes are no different to OBCs in terms of education or assets, while upper castes have about one more year of education than OBCs and nearly half an asset more. Muslims have a year and a half of education less than OBCs and half an asset less than OBCs.

Table A4: Relationship Between Socieconomics and Identity

	Education	Assets
	(1)	(2)
Male	1.98***	0.05
	(0.28)	(0.12)
SC/ST	−0.01	−0.04
	(0.26)	(0.18)
Upper Caste	1.18***	0.43***
	(0.28)	(0.15)
Muslim	−1.50***	−0.31*
	(0.36)	(0.16)
School FE	Yes	Yes
Hindu OBC Woman Parent Mean	6.5	8.7
Observations	1,856	2,000

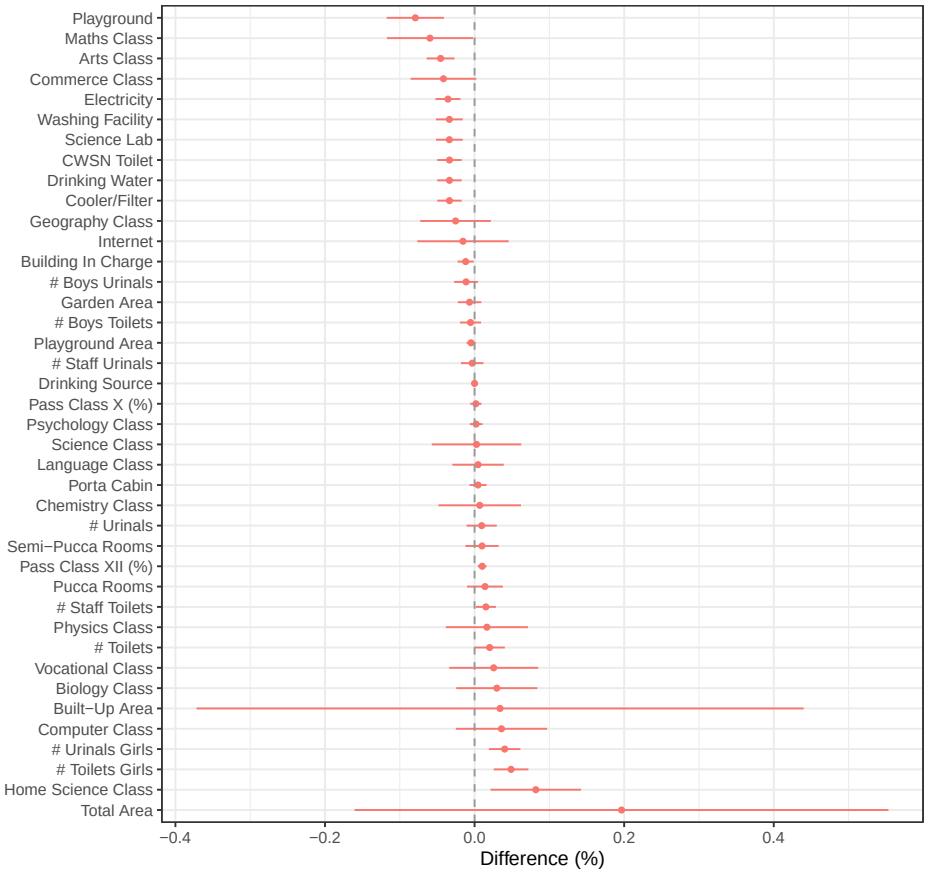
Notes: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01. Robust standard errors clustered at the school level in parentheses. Education measures the years of education of the respondent. Assets is a sum of the number of assets in the respondent's household.

A4 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SCHOOLS THAT HELD AND DID NOT HOLD ELECTIONS

While all schools across the city were mandated to hold elections, this mandate was not strictly enforced, and if a school did not have more than twelve parents submit their candidacy, the school would appoint those twelve parents to the School Management Committee. In this section, we look at differences between schools that held elections and schools that did not hold elections.

We collect data on school infrastructure for all schools in Delhi and test whether there are differences between election and non-election schools on observables. We plot these differences in Figure A2. While there are clear differences between the two types of schools, there is no clear pattern on the type of infrastructural differences between the two types of schools.

Figure A2: Differences on Observables Between Schools That Held Elections and Schools That Did Not Hold Elections



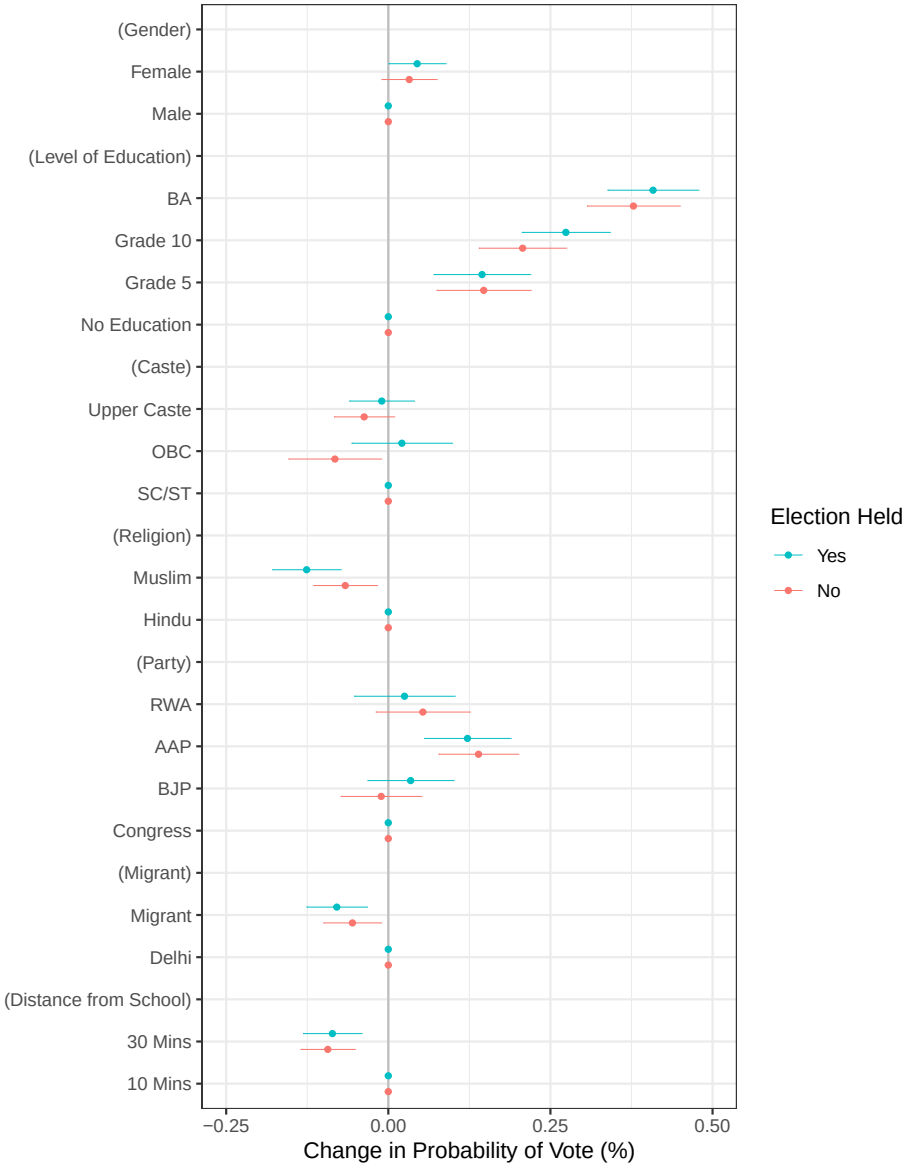
Notes: This figure presents differences between schools that held elections and those that did not. We present a simple t-test between election and non-election schools on observables.

In Figure A3, we plot results from an analysis of the same conjoint experiment on parents dividing

the sample by whether their children go to a school that held an election or not.

While results between the full conjoint presented in Figure 2 and the conjoint experiment by subsample in A3, parents in schools that did not hold elections are more likely to express preferences for scheduled caste and tribe candidates.

Figure A3: Preferences for Representatives



Notes: This plot shows estimates of the effects of the randomly assigned SMC candidate attribute values on the probability of being preferred as a member of the SMC. Estimates are based on an OLS model with standard errors clustered by respondent. Bars represent 95% confidence intervals. The points without horizontal bars denote the attribute value that is the reference category for each attribute. The conjoint experiment varied characteristics on lines of religion and caste, gender, and political party the fictional SMC candidate belonged to. In this analysis, we run models by whether respondents sent their child to a school that did or did not hold an election.