CONCLUSIONS

This study has explored the schooling of sex-workers' children in Kolkata in five primary schools around the red-light areas of Sonagacchi and Rambagan. Out of the five schools, one is for boys, one is for girls, and three are co-educational. Four out of the five schools are private, grant-in-aid schools, and one is a government school. In total, 182 children of sex-workers were observed in the five schools and a comparison was made of their schooling with other non sex-workers' children who also attended these schools.

As marginalised members of the society, the sex-workers and their children survive on the lower rungs of the social hierarchy, and as the preceding chapters show, such marginalisation stems from their socio-cultural dissociation from the larger society. The reason for such dissociation is primarily twofold. Firstly, though it is being argued that the profession of sex-workers is viewed as just another form of labour, yet no form of labour can be considered in isolation from its context. So, the socially degraded status of sex-work results in marginalisation of those individuals who practice this form of labour. The other reason is that like all other forms of labour, sex-work also gives rise to, and at the same time, is a product of, those specific cultural expressions or symbols that are unique to the profession, and reflect the 'derogatory' position of this form of labour in the society. Sapir's comment would further elucidate this argument: 'Peculiar modes of pronunciation, characteristic turns of phrase, slangy forms of speech, occupational terminologies of all sorts—these are so many symbols of the manifold ways in which society arranges itself and are of crucial importance for understanding of the development of the individual and the social attitudes' (1985). Thus, the cultural expressions or symbols pertaining to sex-work, by virtue of the significantly different (or 'derogatory') nature of sex-work or sex-labour, result in the marginalisation of sex-workers as a cultural community.
Children of sex-workers, though not practising the profession themselves, are intrinsically part of this same community. This is true for children who stay with their mothers as denizens of the red-light areas and are inhabitants of the socio-cultural environment comprising of sex-workers, clients, pimps, madames, the local police, political leaders, and also social workers. Those children who do not stay with their mothers and those who are brought up segregated from their mothers (in residential schools or with other family members and relatives) are a part of this community, even then their knowledge of the nature of their mother’s profession might, at times, result in a dissonance between their own socio-cultural identity and their mothers’. For example, a sex-worker once told me that her daughter, brought up in isolation from her with her other family members was not aware that her mother was a sex-worker. The mother said that the daughter might commit suicide if she came to know the truth. Though this might be considered as an example of extreme reaction on the part of the daughter, it reflects the level of mental tension and insecurity of the mother when her child is faced with such a dissonance. On the other hand, in the case of those children who stay with their mothers in the red-light areas, the aspects of the sub-culture of the red-light areas shape their social and cultural consciousness and become an integral part of their cultural identity.

However, as observed above, the sub-culture of red-light areas is at variance from the dominant culture, and for this very same reason, it would be likely that the socio-cultural identity of the sex-workers’ children would be at variance when compared to members of the society. Within the context of schooling, the interaction of the sex-workers’ children with their teachers, with other sex-workers’ children and with the non sex-workers’ children reflect this very variance. The socio-cultural indicators peculiar to the community of sex-workers serve to highlight the dynamics between the sex-workers’ children and the non sex-workers’ children and the teachers at school, thus reflecting the articulation of social relations within the context of schooling. The schooling experiences of the sex-workers’ children constitute of an interface between their
cultural experiences and the cultural experiences of other members of the society, namely the teachers and the other children. What needs to be further analysed is that how the school, as an educational institution brings about the reproduction of the differences in the socio-cultural position of the sex-workers' children vis-a-vis the teachers and the other students. Initially, gender was not included as one of the factors to be explored, but in course of the observation, it was found to be an important factor, so was included in the subsequent analysis—both for the students as well as the teachers, as evident in the earlier chapters. Also, teachers' comments in the class and the messages they transmit—not only to children of sex-workers but especially to the other children, also bear extreme relevance, however, has not been analysed in depth as this is not within the purvey of the study.

The 'cultural reproduction theory' of Peirre Bourdieu has been used as the basic framework of this analysis, chiefly because this theory ventures beyond considering economic disparities as the sole reason for reproduction of social inequalities, and looks at the cultural aspects of the process of reproduction. Bourdieu begins his theory with the notion of 'cultural arbitraries' which, according to him are those aspects of culture that cannot be accounted for by logical analysis. He says these cultural arbitraries chiefly comprise of two aspects. One is the 'habitus' or the largely unconscious thought patterns of an individual that shapes her/his attitudes, predispositions and conscious patterns of thought. 'Habitus' is that aspect of culture that is transmitted from generation to generation through agents of socialisation like the family and the school. The other aspect is the 'habitat', which comprises of the material objects that enable the individual to relate to her/his immediate surroundings which is her/his reality—the way s/he sees and thinks about her/his social context. Within a class-based society, this would mean that the dominant class or the elites have a different set of cultural arbitraries from that of the working class.
Bourdieu goes on to say that educational institutions like schools reproduce the cultural ingredients and the way of life of the elite sections of the society. This they do by transmitting, through pedagogic communication, the cultural codes possessed by the dominant elites as legitimate knowledge. Consequently, children belonging to the dominant class are the ones who can appropriate and internalise school knowledge to their benefit since they possess the 'cultural capital' or codes transmitted to them through generations. On the other hand, working-class children are not in a position to internalise the knowledge transmitted by the schools, as they do not possess the necessary cultural arbitraries. As a result they undergo 'symbolic violence' at school according to Bourdieu—a struggle that ensues from the imposition of the dominant class culture on them and their inability to internalise it due to the lack of 'cultural capital'. Thus, they are selectively shut out from the entire academic process, which ensures that the class-based inequalities in the society are reproduced and maintained.

Another study that can be considered as an extension of this theory of Bourdieu include Bernstein's study on how middle-class children and working-class children appropriate the symbols pertaining to their respective social positions through their interaction with their family members, and how the school, by distributing and legitimising the 'social knowledge' of the middle-class families (the 'elaborated code'), further emphasises the socio-cultural differences between the middle-class and working-class children.

Within the context of schooling, the role of the teacher is central to communicating the middle class symbols, social knowledge and cultural capital. This study highlights this process through student-teacher interaction and peer group interaction.
Student-teacher interaction

In the schools, the difference in social positions of the students and teachers is evident, because the teachers do not come from the same socio-cultural environment as the children. While most of the students, either sex-workers’ children or the other children, come from poor homes and are usually first or second generation learners, the teachers come from middle-class families with academic and professional degrees. Social class differences between teachers and students are the focal points of several studies, which amply reflect the social attitudes of teachers for lower-class students: Referring to Becker (1966), Banks (1989) mentions that in interviews with Chicago school teachers he found that lower-class children were, on the whole, considered unrewarding to teach. This was particularly true of children in slum schools. Comments were made by the teachers on such characteristics as the low level of motivation of the children, and the difficulty of maintaining control over the classroom. There were also criticisms of the habits of such children including their aggression, and their lack of cleanliness and hygiene. A larger study by Kaplan has been also been cited by Banks (1989), which reached much the same conclusion. Teachers reported that they were disturbed by such behaviour as stealing, lying, cheating, aggression and destruction of property. They also disliked inattentiveness, indifferences to schoolwork and nonconformity.

The social class differences that emerge in these studies are the result of interplay of the forces of the socio-cultural norms and values of the teachers and the students, members of two hierarchical social classes. The teachers’ attempts at legitimising and transmitting the socio-cultural norms and values of the middle class are resisted by the students through a display of their own norms and values pertaining to their class, creating the essential conflict. The idea of ‘nonconformity’ is essential in as much it denotes resistance of the lower class students to the middle class social and cultural symbols and consequently, evokes among middle-class teachers feelings of disinterestedness and sometime, disturbance, a lack of achievement and presumably, a feeling of having failed at their job.

164
As communicators of the symbolic codes of the cultural capital of this dominant class, the teachers fulfil this task through classroom interaction with students. Not only do they communicate these cultural symbols to students, but they also legitimise them as the properties of the entire society. The same could be said about middle-class social norms and values, which are transmitted and institutionalised by them at school. The student-teacher interaction, being direct and essentially verbal in nature, is the most viable and continuous communication process through which the socio-cultural symbols of the dominant class are communicated from the teachers to the students. As mentioned elsewhere, such communication is the sole means by which individual communicators, such as the teachers and the students deny, transform, or conform to the existing ensemble of social practices that they term 'reality' (Carey: 1989). In this manner, this process articulates social relations among the actors within a given social context.

Within the context of the present study, the student-teacher interaction likewise reflects the manner in which teachers attempt to inculcate among the students several values and norms, for instance, conformity to the code of discipline at school. Starting with the ‘prarthana’ or the morning-prayer at the school assembly, the teachers congregate the children together in an orderly manner. They strive to enforce discipline by punishing, verbally or physically, students who do not conform to the norms pertaining to the school assembly. Those who conform are not punished, indicating that appropriation of the concept of discipline and conforming to this routine is what the school as an educational institution transmits. The teachers, in their acts of punishing and rewarding children for non-conforming/conforming communicates the tenets of discipline as existing within the school and also, as within the larger society.

The reaction of children in response to such enforcement, especially in the case of sex-workers’ children also merit discussion. It has been observed that in the comparatively larger schools like HAFB/HAFG, the observance of rules and their enforcement is stricter in comparison to schools like St. Martin
and Matasundari. The rules are understood and obeyed by most of the children especially, in the first two schools. Except for children who have been freshly admitted, the students have a clear understanding of the norms of the morning assembly. However, the manner in which the students react to them in all these schools vary widely. It has been observed in all the schools, that the prominent 'resisters' who do not adhere to them, are sex-workers' children. Interestingly enough, this does not mean that in all the schools, sex-workers' children are the only children who defy norms. The other children also do it, but there is a difference in the manifestation of such behaviour between the sex-workers' children and the others. The former do it overtly, even if the teacher can see it. Sometimes, they do it to break the monotony of the school routine. Also, it seems that they do not understand the need to obey and the need to conform to the greater majority of students, as the teachers would want them to. It seems that they want to accept the importance of the symbolic codes of the social norms and values of the school's readily as the others.

When other children resort to such behaviour, however, the manner in which they do it is different. This is because they can comprehend the need to conform to the rules pertaining to the socio-cultural norms and values of the school. Consequently, they do it by ensuring that the teacher does not see them and do not label them as 'bad' children. Even if a non sex-workers' child is caught breaking a rule overtly, the teachers treat this as an isolated incident and do not label these children as 'bad' or 'troublesome', as they do with sex-workers' children. Thus, through the morning assembly, the non sex-workers' children and the teachers share a common understanding of the meaning of 'obedience' and 'conformity'.

Moreover, teachers usually resort to punishment and reward to transmit behavioural codes to the students. Besides 'immediate' measures, the directness of which makes them most likely to be effective with children, teachers also resort to explanations about 'decent' or 'proper' codes of behaviour, not only pertaining strictly to the classroom but also to life outside classroom and school.
However, these messages, though similar in content, are received differently by the sex-workers' children and the non sex-workers' children, owing to their difference in perceptions.

For instance, an incident took place in HAFB when the teacher lectured the children on proper behaviour at school and also, in the same breath, told them about the pains taken by their parents to get them educated. He points out how the children should concentrate on getting a decent education and look after their parents when they start earning. Instead of resorting to punishment, the teacher explained to the children the benefits of getting an education, and connected it to the future processes of economic security and familial or parental pride. Students were advised by the teachers to concentrate on their studies, to realise the troubles taken by their parents to get them educated, and also, to serve their parents, in turn, after obtaining an education that leads to financial security. Thus, the teachers, as part of the schooling process, communicate a whole range of socio-cultural norms—from the need for financial security to the need to respect family values—to the children.

It is likely that such a message, though communicated to all students, would be interpreted differently by different sections of students. The sex-workers' children are unlikely to understand the relationship between education and financial security since they need immediate income. Besides, their experience does not help them in understanding a relationship between deferred earning and education. In fact, as a conversation between the researcher and a sex-workers' child reveals, some of them actually want to discontinue studies and school, so that they would be able earn in order to meet their daily needs by doing odd jobs. Also, since they are not part of traditional family structures as understood within the socio-cultural codes of the mainstream society, they may find it difficult to comprehend the feelings related to family pride or the values of looking after parents. Their schooling experiences do not form a continuum along with their home experiences, due to disparities between these two environments. Also, since the "teaching" that they receive at school does not
receive any explicit support from the values transmitted to them in their homes, therefore, these children are not able to readily receive such messages. This widens the gap between these children and the teachers.

The non sex-workers’ children, on the other hand, seem to relate to such explanations because their families are similar to the kind mentioned by the teacher and the inputs that they get in school reinforce their experiences within their socio-cultural environment at home. Therefore they are able to appropriate whatever is ‘taught’ at school. On the other hand the lack of mutual understanding between the teachers and the sex-workers’ children leads to the latter not being able to utilise their schooling experiences to their advantage.

Though the teachers generally ‘teach’ appropriate forms of behaviour, and try to cultivate the social norms and values among the students in an apparently neutral context and the manner of teaching is the same for both sex-workers’ and non sex-workers’ children, yet there are also exceptions. In all the schools, for instance, such situations have been observed in which a teacher’s behaviour with the sex-workers’ children is different from that towards the non sex-workers’ children, especially in schools like HAFB, HAFG and GBFG where the sex-workers’ children are a minority. In HAFB it has been observed that the number of instances when the teachers interact directly on a one-on-one basis with students is more for the non sex-workers’ children than for the sex-workers’ children. It needs to be emphasised here that the process is usually mutual, that is, sex-workers’ children also seem to avoid direct, one-on-one interaction with the teacher. Generally, it is the other children who attract the teacher’s attention in class and answer when teachers ask questions. They are also usually punctual in their class and home assignments, and get their exercises corrected by the teacher. Sex-worker’s children prefer to remain unnoticed by the teacher, and when they are noticed or reprimanded by the teacher they do not reply to the teacher’s scolding and choose to ‘get over with’ the situation as quickly as possible. Sometimes, if they utter coarse words or profanities in the classroom, the teachers usually pretend that they did not hear,
even though such words are strictly prohibited. Their explanation is, ‘What else
can be expected from them, we know that they do not belong to decent homes’.
On the other hand, if a non sex-workers’ child were to ever utter such words,
the teacher immediately punishes the child most harshly and takes further
preventive measures by informing the child’s parents, dissociating the child
from his erstwhile peer group, etc. The objective is to communicate to the child
that such an utterance is not socially desirable in his family.

The teachers believe, that the sex-workers’ children would hardly
improve their manners, behaviour or classroom performance, in turn leads to the
reluctance of sex-workers’ children to interact with them. They also assert that
their perceptions are based on longstanding experience with the sex-workers’
children. In their discussions with the researcher, several teachers expressed
their cynicism and lack of faith in the ‘improvement’ of these children, since,
they said, the children are not willing to make an effort, and neither are their
family members or guardians.

In the smaller schools like St. Martin and Matasundari School where the
sex-workers’ children form a majority, the student-teacher interaction is
different. Here, teachers have one-on-one interaction with all the students. They
are also often able to generate information about the exact nature of inputs that
several of these children receive from their family or home environment. For
instance, a teacher would know that a child’s mother goes out of Kolkata at
times if the client so requires, and during those days the child cannot come to
school since s/he would be running the ‘household’ and looking after the
siblings. Additionally, the teachers seem to show more understanding of why
the sex-workers’ children are disinterested in their schooling.

Moreover even though apparently the teachers in these schools do not
seem to enforce rules or emphasise the need to obey school rules and conform
to them, yet in the long run, they expect the children to do so. The head-teacher
of St. Martin, for instance, stated that these children are not forced to obey rules,
because the teachers know that this increases the probability of dropouts among the children. The strategy adopted by the teachers is to let the child come to school as and when s/he can so that in the long run, students voluntarily come to school and adapt themselves to the process of schooling. Thus, the initial effort of the teachers is to let the children get used to the school environment and discipline. This is followed by an interesting pattern of communication between the teachers and the student. This is the stage when the children start attending school on a regular basis. At this point, the teachers try so that the children internalise the norms of certain basic rules. For instance, every student should bring her/his textbooks, along with at least one exercise book to school. However, at this point, the students may not obey them since they were not emphasised by the teachers from the inception of their schooling. As a result, there is an impasse where the teachers attempt to transmit the school rules and children cannot internalise them.

This is substantiated by a conversation between a student and a teacher at St. Martin, as referred in chapter 5 when a sex-worker's child had neither brought the textbook nor the exercise book to study. Initially when the teacher came to know about the textbook, he merely chided the student mildly, and instructed him to bring his 'old book' to school. A few minutes later, however, the teacher realised that the boy had also not brought his exercise book, without which he cannot study. This led to the teacher threatening the student with punishment. Finally he issued instructions to the child to tell his mother to buy an exercise book for him. Throughout the process of the teacher's threats and admonitions the student was silent, looking at the ground and occasionally, at the teacher's face.

The incident portrays the efforts taken on the part of the teacher to communicate to the pupil the necessity of bringing the required study items to school. However, what is also reflected is the student being unable to comply with that. He can either not afford an exercise book or a textbook or his mother/guardian does not have the time or understanding of the centrality of a textbook and an exercise book for the process of teaching and learning.
Since these situations are repeated, like these, teachers tend to lose their interest in teaching these children, especially because they seem to believe that, in the long run, the children do not seem to 'get used' to the school routine, nor does their academic performance improve. Teachers also despair because they presume that the mothers will seldom reinforce and reiterate the inputs that the teachers provide in school. As a consequence, there are occasions when the teachers openly express their cynicism, disdain and disinterest.

For instance, as mentioned in chapter 5, in HAFB, the teacher chided a sex-worker's child on his reluctance to do his classroom assignment, and said, 'tell your guardian to meet me'. However, immediately after that, she said in an undertone 'though God knows what good that would do. She is hardly ever in a position to discuss such things and reeks of alcohol constantly', thereby expressing her cynicism in the guardian's ability to change the child's classroom behaviour. The message that is communicated to the child is that the child's mother belongs to such socio-cultural environment that she has alcohol and smells of it even when she comes to school to discuss the child's performance with the teachers, a trait that is most definitely not a part of the 'cultural capital' of the school. The mother, therefore, would be unable to assist the child in his schooling, and the child would remain a poorly performing student.

It needs to be mentioned here that teacher presumptions like these are not always correct regarding the level of parental interest for the sex-workers' children. The very fact that the sex-workers send their children to schools, to boarding schools if affordable, and try to keep them in separate establishments away from the red-light environment—all this prove that they want their to receive education. The fact that almost all these children also have either private tutors at home or attend coaching classes, further shows that the mothers, though unable to provide reinforcement to their children's studies themselves, try to arrange for additional support so that their children can be helped at home with appropriating the lessons of the school.
Such blatant statements on the teacher's part, however, are likely to decrease whatever interest the sex-worker's children have towards coming to school and studying. Through such messages, teachers also convey a strong message to the other children in the class. "In this manner, the teacher reinforces the reality of the social experiences of the sex-worker's children. This is an instance where symbolic violence is visible where the codes of the 'cultural capital' of the school dominates the other cultural codes of the sex-workers' children and their mothers, resulting in the gradual acceptance of the sex-workers' children of the fact that the school and the academic process are not meant for them.

The nature of academic performance of the sex-workers' children helps one to analyse the impact of schooling experiences on the child's education. In all the schools, by and large, the level of academic achievement of the sex-workers' children is considerably below that of the other children. Teachers, in the process of teaching, tend to reduce the levels of such standards once they realise the academic potential of the students. Despite this, barring Matasundari school, all the schools have two different sets of academic performance for the sex-workers' children and non sex-workers' children. In HAFB and HAFG, several of the sex-workers' children in class IV have problems reading or writing simple words in Bengali, not to mention English, the very ones which the other children do not have any problem learning. In St. Martin the students in class II do not have a full grasp of even the Bengali alphabets.

The reason for this seems to be that the syllabus does not consist of socio-cultural symbols or codes that are familiar with the sex-workers' children as part of their socio-cultural environment. For example, in HAFB, a word like 'mora' ('us' in Bengali) is not part of the everyday language used by them, and was confused by a child as 'moda' (corpse). Again, there are words that are spelt differently in school and pronounced differently by the sex-workers' children, and this sometimes lead to their difficulty in grasping lessons. An example of this the instance mentioned earlier in GBFG where a sex-worker's
child spelt the Bengali word for village as 'gaan' instead of 'gram', the latter being the spoken and written version used by the 'cultural elites' in Bengal. Such literary cultural heritage is evidently what Bourdieu calls the 'habitat' or the 'objectified state' in which cultural capital is transmitted within a society. This is the immediate material context or the objectifiable elements, which a person relates to his 'habitus' or 'embodied state' of culture. Also, as stated earlier, even within communication and linguistic theories, the 'high' and 'low' varieties of a language and its socio-cultural implications have been explained through the concepts of 'dinomia' and diglossia' (Saville-Troike 1985). An inability to distinguish between such 'high' and the 'low' varieties of Bengali distinguish these children as those who lack knowledge to appropriate such codes and symbols that constitute 'cultural capital' of the dominant class. In comparison, the other children can appropriate the codes and symbols of textbook Bengali without any difficulty, as they are familiar with them. Consequently, the chasm between their academic performance and that of the non sex-workers' children increases. This chasm increases in course of time since non sex-workers' children, with more and more appropriation of the codified symbols of culture, tend to gain 'cultural capital' and the sex-workers' children, unable to do so, are the ones who lack 'cultural capital'.

The role of the teachers in this process is also extremely significant, because the feedback from the teacher has an important influence on the academic performance of a child. Teachers tend to lose their interest in these children and neglect to monitor their academic progress. For a sex-worker's child, also, coming to school and getting an education is 'unreal' compared to the tangible reality of staying at home and making money by selling newspapers or weaving baskets, or do the housework when one's mother is tired and resting after the night's 'business'.

As discussed earlier, some sex-workers' children, whose academic achievement is at par with, or sometimes, superior to the other children in class, are highly commended by the teachers. Even in those instances when the
children at least try to understand the teaching at school, despite their academic performance being not very good, they are praised and rewarded by the teachers if they are ‘quiet’ and ‘obedient’ and ‘at least try their best to learn’. In other words, they are commended for being able to conform to the school norms. They are praised regularly in class, granted special favours in the form of lending of their own textbooks to the teacher to teach from, carrying exercise books with assignments to the staff room for the teacher, carrying the class register to and from the class, or being made the class monitor.

Such examples of teacher-student interaction among the sex-workers’ children seem to point to the fact that though by and large, most children of sex-workers’ conform to the messages transmitted to them by their teachers in a routine manner, there are some who do it very well. However, there are two aspects to this conforming—academic and behavioural, that is, either behaviour wise they conform but fall back academically, or their academic performance is good even if behaviour-wise they do not conform. Then, there are some sex-workers’ children who do not conform either academically or behaviour-wise—on the contrary they actively resist the messages transmitted to them by overtly disobeying them or sharing a private joke amongst themselves about it. These are usually children who are labelled by the teachers as ‘naughty’ or ‘troublesome’.

Cultural reproduction happens not merely through student-teacher interaction but also through the interaction between students and their peer groups within the context of schooling. In the next section, peer group interaction has been examined to see if such interaction reinforces the marginalised status of the sex-workers’ children.

Peer group interaction

Besides the interaction of students with teachers, peer group interaction is also critical to the understanding of the schooling process of the sex-workers’ children in school. As already mentioned, sex-workers’ children usually maintain friendship with their neighbourhood friends. The importance of the
neighbourhood indicate that they find it more comfortable to interact with those children who they know and who are already part of their socio-cultural environment.

Besides sex-workers’ children prefer those who are from the same neighbourhood because collectively they can challenge or resist the attempt of teachers to make them conform to the school rules. Peer group activities like cracking jokes with friends while teacher is teaching, uttering coarse gaalis or swear words that are full of sexual connotations and are peculiar to the vocabulary of red-light areas, or not reacting when scolded or punished by the teacher—all of these point out collective resistance by the students. Cracking jokes or uttering coarse words is an act of choosing one’s own cultural symbols over the dominant cultural code that is transmitted to the child at school.

Apart from this, another reason that sex-workers’ children closely associate with only their own kind and not with others is that their home environment is at a great variance with the other children. For example an apparently simple gesture of inviting a friend to visit one’s home becomes a complex problem for them. Also, in an informal conversation with the researcher, a mother had revealed that her child avoided talking to the other children in her class because she cannot identify with them culturally (‘oder shonge to culture-e mele na’). Such problems are responsible for the sex-workers’ children refraining from associating closely with non sex-workers’ children. If the other children are aware of the home background of a sex-worker’s child, then their reaction to it is diverse, ranging from poking fun at that child or teasing her/him about her/his home environment, to actually concealing such knowledge from outsiders. The latter, however, is an exceptional case. Usually, the two groups interact only at a superficial level, exchanging sentences only during classroom assignments.

However, within the usual pattern of interaction, in some instances sex-workers’ children interact closely with non sex-workers’ children. Such instances are more common among boys than among girls. It is likely that such
children would like to identify more with the socio-cultural codes of the school rather than those of their own marginalised community. This again is an example of cultural reproduction where children belonging to the marginalized community attempt to conform to the norms of the dominant society. Additionally, children in classes I and II who are comparatively young and are not in a position to understand the vast difference between the socio-cultural environment of their home and their school also befriend the other children.

Among the older children in classes III or IV sex-worker’s children who befriend non sex-workers’ children usually do not live within the environment of the red-light area. They stay elsewhere with a guardian to look after them, and have common interests with the non sex-workers’ children e.g playing football at the same club, or going for tuitions to the same coaching centre. Moreover, those sex-worker’s children who get adequate support for schooling, despite their mothers being in the sex trade, are the ones who conform to the school rules and maintain interaction with her/his teachers as well as the non sex-workers’ children. While interacting with the researcher, a guardian of a sex-worker’s child, who was also a long-term client of the mother and lived with her at Sonagacchi, strongly emphasised that if a child was to be provided with an adequate support system at home, then s/he would definitely not ‘become rotten or spoilt’ by staying within the red-light area. He cited the example of his own ‘son’ (the son of the sex-worker who stayed with him), who, he said, was doing well in school and did not have any difficulty to cope with his studies or his schooling. Later, the researcher had also observed this child at HAFB, and found that he did not interact too much with non sex-workers’ children, avoided other sex-workers’ children too, and quietly confined himself to his studies. He was, however, known and liked by all the teachers as he conformed to the norms and rules at school and was a ‘good student’.
Summing up

It follows from the analysis of the interaction that sex-workers' children have with their teachers and their peer group, that schools, through such systems of pedagogical communications as the teaching-learning system, serve as institutions that transmit the cultural norms and values of the dominant class.

Since sex-workers' children are already marginalized, it can, therefore, be inferred that such a process of reconfirming the 'cultural capital' of the dominant section of the society through schools would result in further marginalisation of the sex-workers' children and further reproduction of their erstwhile social status. Since the schools transmit only the cultural norms and symbols of the dominant society, therefore sex-workers' children are not be in a position to appropriate such cultural norms. Even if they were to appropriate them, they will not be able to utilise this 'capital' to change their erstwhile social position because these very norms are the ones to which they owe their marginalised social position.

Still, mostly these children tend to conform to the dominant cultural codes transmitted by the school. Student-teacher interaction among the sex-workers' children as well as the non sex-workers' children in their schools is a process where students try to conform either behaviour-wise, or academically, even if they are not in a position to appropriate the dominant cultural norms as intended by their teachers. In some instances, some of these children do not conform but actively resist the transmission of the dominant cultural codes by the school. But these children are exceptions who are labelled s 'bad' children in school, and other than them, these who choose to conform often make an active choice to do so.

The process of transmission of cultural norms and values through teaching-learning method is an active and two-way process. The behaviour of sex-workers' children who conform to school rules and try to perform well academically, portray that they are not passively receiving the cultural patterns
communicated to them at school, on the contrary, they actively try to appropriate the necessary cultural symbols as expected of them by their teachers. The instances when sex-workers' children befriend non sex-workers' children by being part of their peer group also reflect that these children are making active choices to do so. However, sex-workers' children who choose to conform tend to struggle more, due to the variance between the school and their home environment. They suffer from handicaps of inadequate material support, motivation from parents and lack of a family environment that would socialise them according to the norms of the dominant society. Also, sometimes teachers become disinterested and cynical in their attitude towards these students and this further results in difficulties for these students to conform.

The act of conforming can be explained within the reproductive framework of Bourdieu because these children are facilitating reproduction of cultural capital by conforming. It can also be explained within the neo-Marxists perspectives according to which the schooling process reinforces the status quo, and these children conform are accepting the status quo. Arronowitz and Giroux (1989) also explain such behaviour in the schools within the framework of resistance. According to them, the act of conforming to the dominant ideology might also be looked at as a 'subtle form of resistance deliberately adopted by those children who do not care to renounce access to knowledge and skills that may allow them to move beyond the class-specific positions of dead end' (1990:102).

The act of those children of sex-workers who do not but resist the norms transmitted by the school can be explained within the argumentative framework of resistance theorists like Paul Willis (1977). These sex-workers’ children resemble Willis’ working class children in that they seem to contend with the process of transmission of cultural arbitraries of the dominant society by 'resisting' or refusing to obey and conform to them because they are part of the norms and values that the school infuses in them.
The focus of the present study, therefore, moves beyond the mere idea of cultural and social domination of the theory of resistance. Cultural domination and reproduction of socio-cultural position is a process that is substantially influenced by the education that children receive. In case of lower class children or children who belong to a marginalised community like the workers' children, such education tends to reproduce their socio-cultural position. However, the process is hardly all-encompassing and unidirectional. Sometimes, marginalised students attempt to resist this dominance actively, or sometimes attempt to appropriate the codes of the dominant culture to the extent that these would later enable them later to overcome this very situation of dominance and reproduction of socio-cultural positions that they are subject to. Transmission of dominant forms of culture, as well as resistance to these forms of culture, are, thus, simultaneous processes influencing, overlapping and getting influenced by each other. Consequently, both these processes are active in influencing the articulation of social relations as witnessed within the context of schooling and education.