

SOCIOLOGY OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IN INDIA (SS 457N)  
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING LIST

Center for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University  
M.A. 1<sup>st</sup> (Monsoon) Semester [July-December 2018]; Credits: Four  
Course instructor: Divya Vaid

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Social stratification is one of the primary areas of research in sociology. This course aims to introduce students to the major theories and forms of social stratification. We will engage with empirical research on different dimensions of stratification and inequalities. We will look in particular at class, caste, gender, ethnicity, race and disabilities. Intersecting inequalities and mechanisms of reproduction of inequality will be discussed. While the focus will be on India, relevant research including empirical studies from outside the country will be discussed to contextualise the Indian case.

**Readings** – Readings are arranged under specific modules. However, they are interconnected and may be referred to under other modules as well. Core readings are essential. Suggested readings will be useful for a deeper engagement with the subject. Alterations to the list will be mentioned in class.

**Tutorials** – The course involves tutorials which are compulsory. Tutorial details will be confirmed in class.

**Course Evaluation** – this course is worth 4 credits (2 credits=final exam; 2 credits=combination of written mid-term test, tutorial essay with presentation/discussion/viva). Deadlines and details of the coursework will be given in class. All coursework: including exams, written work, tutorials, etc. is compulsory.

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### MODULE-WISE READINGS

#### **MODULE 1: Introduction: Concepts and Theories**

This section will introduce the systems and forms of stratification and key concepts. Theories, including functionalism and its critiques, will be discussed.

**Readings:**

1. Davis, K. & W. E. Moore. 1945. Some Principles of Stratification. *American Sociological Review*, 10 (2):242-249.
2. Grusky, D. 1994. *Social Stratification: Race, Class, and Gender in Sociological Perspective*. Colorado: Westview Press, 1<sup>st</sup> edition [Chap. 1: Contours of Stratification].
3. Gupta, D. ed. 1991. *Social Stratification*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. [Chap. 1]
4. Tumin, M. M. 1953. Some Principles of Stratification: A Critical Analysis. *American Sociological Review*, 18 (4): 387-94

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Tumin, M. M. 1987. *Social Stratification: the forms and functions of inequality*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India. [pp. 1-7]

#### **MODULE 2: Forms of Stratification: Caste**

This module will cover the major theories on caste, with a focus on contemporary India. Empirical studies on caste, including on caste in the labour market etc. will be covered (here and in subsequent modules).

**Readings:**

1. Ambedkar, B.R. 1916. Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development, Anthropology Seminar of Dr. A. A. Goldenweizer at The Columbia University, New York, U.S.A. on 9th May

- 1916, Source: Indian Antiquary, May 1917, Vol. XLI. Available online: <http://www.ambedkar.org/ambcd/01.Caste%20in%20India.htm>
- Fuller, C.J. 1996. *Caste Today*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. [Introduction, Select chapters]
  - Gupta, D. ed. 1991. op. cit. [Select Chapters]
  - Jodhka, S. S. 2012. *Caste. Oxford India Short Introductions*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
  - Kumar, V. 2014. 'Dalit Studies – Continuities and Change' in *Indian Sociology ICSSR Volume 3*, ed. Yogendra Singh, pp. 19-52. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
  - Srinivas, M.N. 2003. An Obituary on caste as a system. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38: 455-59
  - Thorat, S., & K. Newman, eds. 2010. *Blocked by caste*. Delhi: OUP [Select Chapters]

#### **Suggested Readings:**

- Ambedkar, B.R. 1944. *Annihilation of Caste*: available online at: <http://ambedkar.org/ambcd/02.Annihilation%20of%20Caste.htm>

### **MODULE 3: Forms of Stratification - Class**

The focus will be on *Class* in India. However, theories of class, including Marxist and Weberian theories (and their critiques) will be covered. We will cover empirical studies on class and its changing nature, and the rise of the middle class in India.

#### **Readings:**

- Baviskar, A. & R. Ray. 2011. *Elite and Everyman: The Cultural Politics of the Indian Middle Classes*. Delhi: Routledge. [Leela Fernandes]
- Dickey, S. 2012. The Pleasures and Anxieties of being in the middle: Emerging middle-class identities in urban South India. *Modern South Asian Studies*, 46 (3): 559-99
- Giddens, A. 1980. *The Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*. London: Unwin. [Introduction, Chapter 1 (Marx), Chapter 2 (Weber)]
- Grusky, D. B. & Szelenyi, S. 2011. *The inequality reader: Contemporary and foundational readings in race, class and gender*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Westview Press. [Marx; Wright; Weber]
- Wright, E.O. 2006. "Class", in *International Encyclopedia of Economic Sociology*, edited by Jens Beckert and Milan Zafirovsky (Routledge), pp. 62-68

#### **Suggested Readings:**

- Marx, Karl and Engels, Friedrich. 1848. *The Communist Manifesto*. Available online at: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/manifest.pdf>

### **MODULE 4: Gender and Stratification**

This module will cover concepts such as sex and gender, gender inequalities in the labour market, caste and its interaction with gender and research on masculinities.

#### **Readings:**

- Acker, J. 1998. Women and Social Stratification: A Case of Intellectual Sexism, in *Feminist Foundations: Towards Transforming Sociology*, Kristen et. al. (ed.) Delhi: Sage.
- Chowdhry, P. 2014. 'Masculine Spaces'. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 49 (47): 41-49.
- Crompton R. & M. Mann ed. 1986. *Gender and Stratification*. Cambridge: Polity Press. [Chapter 1]
- de Beauvoir, S. 2010. "Woman – The Second Sex?" pp. 143-46 in A. Giddens and Sutton P.W. (eds.) *Sociology: Introductory Readings*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Polity Press
- Dube, L. 1996. 'Caste and Women' in M. N. Srinivas (ed.) *Caste: In Its 20th century Avatar*. Delhi: Viking

6. Mies, M. 1981. 'Dynamics of Sexual Division of Labour and Capital Accumulation: Women Lace-Workers of Narsapur'. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. XVI (10).

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Chakravarti, U. 1995. "Gender, Caste, and Labor: Ideological and Material Structure of Widowhood." *Economic and Political Weekly*: 2248-2256.
2. Donner, H., ed. 2011. *Being Middle-Class in India*. London: Routledge [selected chapter]

**MODULE 5: Critical issues: Race, Ethnicity, Disability and Social Mobility**

While this course deals with some of the major forms of stratification – there has been an increasing engagement with other issues. This module covers some of these other issues which are emerging as critical for the study of social stratification; such as: race, ethnicity and disability as well as the significance of social mobility for the reproduction of inequalities.

**Readings:**

1. Grusky, D. B. & Szelenyi, S. 2011. *The Inequality Reader*. Westview Press. [Selected Chapter]
2. Heath, A.F. 2003. Social Mobility, in *The Oxford Encyclopaedia of Economic History*.
3. Jenkins, R. 1991. Disability and Social Stratification. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 42 (4): 557-80
4. Milton, Y. 1985. "Ethnicity," *Annual Review of Sociology* 11:211-239
5. Xaxa, V. 2003. 'Tribes in India' in Veena Das ed. *Oxford India Companion to Sociology and Social Anthropology*, 1: 373- 408. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

**Suggested Readings:**

1. Jeffrey, C., R. Jeffery & P. Jeffery. 2004. Degrees without freedom: Assessing the impact of formal education on Dalit young men in north India. *Development and change*, 35 (5): 963–86.
2. Ram, N. 1988. *Mobile Scheduled Castes – Rise of a New Middle Class*. Delhi: S. Asia Books.
3. Weber, M. 1978. "Ethnic Groups", in *Economy and Society*, pp. 385-398