

CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, Calcutta
R 1 BAISHNABGHATA PATULI, KOLKATA 700094

ECONOMICS STUDY GROUP SEMINAR

Tamoghna Halder
University of California, Davis

shall present

"Unity in Diversity is a Myth: Social Mobility and Educational Experience of Dalits and Muslims in India"

Abstract: Drawing upon a previously unused data on university graduates spanning over six decades (1959 – 2017), the paper seeks to measure the implied rates of social mobility for the highest and lowest caste groups in India, as well as that of the Muslims. These under-privileged and discriminated groups together constitute about a third of India's population. The estimates obtained in this paper matches expectations from previous literature, but further finds that the rates of social mobility have been relatively higher for both the upper and lower caste groups in recent decades. Exploiting the treatment-control framework induced by the affirmative action policy in India, the paper analyzes the academic performance of these groups prior and post the implementation of the policy's latest version. It finds significant evidences that the policy affects an individual's rank in a graduating cohort depending on the individual's caste membership whether highest or lowest. The findings of the paper reject the idea that social prohibition of inter-caste marriage is the sole channel of social rigidity in India, since even within the highest caste, the highest sub-caste dominates the others. Bolstered by the largest individual level data ever used in a caste-based research, the paper further deals with the dynamics of career choice and aspirations of the under-privileged caste groups. Robust analysis reveals that the socio-economic discrimination against Muslims and lower caste groups affect both aspirations as well as achievements of these groups, and leads to a highly divided and rigid social reality of India.

Date: Thursday, 16th August, 2018
Time: 3 pm

Venue: CSSSC's Seminar Room, Patuli Campus

All are welcome to attend.

Dr. Tushar Nandi
(Convener, Seminar Sub-Committee)