

## International Institute for Higher Education Research and Capacity Building

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## Centre for Comparative and Global Education

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### THINKING THURSDAYS: IIHed Research Seminar Series

on

## Inequalities of Access: Intersectional Barriers to Higher Education in the Indian and the International Context

by



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#### Abstract

Higher Education is universally perceived as a significant means through which societies can enhance development and address social inequalities. Access to higher education and the social barriers which hinder entry of students into post-secondary higher education is therefore a global concern, even in developed countries (USA, Canada UK, France, Australia etc).

This presentation will be a discussion on the concept and conceptualisation of access to Higher Education. The first section will explore how access has been conceptualised and measured, and how this concept has identified different kinds of intersecting barriers or inequalities in the Global North and Global South (for example, Reay et al 2005, Burke 2011, Mullen 2014, Brinbaum and Guegnard 2013). A majority of research studies across the world identify social class background, gender and race or ethnicity as some of the most significant barriers experienced by students attempting to enter different kinds of higher education institutions.

The second section of this paper will compare this body of work across different international contexts with research in India on access to higher education (for example, Thorat and Khan 2018, Sudarshan 2018, Gautam 2015). The objective of this comparison is to examine how the different Global and Indian conceptualisations of access have been able to effectively study significant social barriers like gender, caste and social class background in the specific context of India. This would help develop a more refined conceptualisation of access and in turn help develop an appropriate research design to study access to higher education in India.

#### Short Bio of Speaker

Anjali Thomas is a PhD candidate at the Centre for Education Studies at University of Warwick. Her PhD is being funded by the Fair Chance Foundation and the University of Warwick. Her PhD research will inform the Fair Chance for Education Project on Gendered Pathways to Educational Success in Haryana, India. This is a five-year action research project that seeks to determine the gendered factors that contribute to educational success for young people in Haryana, India.

Anjali is a graduate of English Literature (Lady Shri Ram College for Women, New Delhi) and has a Masters in Social Work (University of Delhi). She also has an M.Phil. degree in Social Sciences (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai) through which she studied the narratives and experiences of caste-based social discrimination and prejudices among undergraduate students in a college in Delhi University, India.

In the past, she has worked with CORD (Collaborative Research and Dissemination) and ICRW (International Centre for Research on Women) on a qualitative research project in Haryana, India. The project evaluated how a long term conditional cash transfer social scheme might have changed the value of the girl child within the families and societies in Haryana.

Date: Thursday, 11 April 2019 | Time: 11:00 am

Venue: IIHed Seminar Room, T1, 2nd Floor, O. P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat-131001, Haryana