

## Seeing Education in its Social Context

Education of all kinds, including science education, gets its aims, its substantive form and its significance at least partially from the social context within which it operates. While we must avoid a sociological reductionism, education's goals and content also need to be understood in relation to their historical era and the challenges and opportunities of their time. Understanding that social context helps in getting a more comprehensive grasp of what science education has been doing and in stimulating imaginations of what it can or should do.

This course will introduce students to some of the major contours of the social context of education in the contemporary era, so that they can begin to see how education is influenced by them and also in turn influences them. It will bring out some of the most important processes shaping today's India and world, like the emergence of complex societies, marketisation, the rationalization of the world and struggles over identity. These have shaped us and the education system in a very deep-rooted manner. A sense of the structure within which education operates will be gained through an examination of the social stratification system and the role of education with respect to it. The specificity of belief and practice systems would be introduced through a discussion of culture and how it affects education. The dynamic, heterogeneous and political character of culture would be highlighted along with the place of education in the various dynamics that unfold in it. The place of meaning-making and negotiations would be introduced along with the importance of understanding everyday life. These are some of the processes which shape and give significance to education. These have had a considerable impact upon education policies, curricula and pedagogy and students would be helped to trace those influences. In parallel with the social context's influence on education, the course will also explore how education has helped in transforming the social world itself. It will aim to enable them to see education not as a sealed off domain, but in the complexity of its relations with the rest of the world.

The course will be divided into two week-long tranches, each being followed by an assignment through which students can explore education policies and see how selected themes have found expression and been interpreted in different ways in them.

### **PART 1**

**Days 1 and 2:** Some foundational processes shaping the contemporary world and their impact on education: complex societies, marketisation and rationalization.

#### **Readings:**

##### CORE READINGS

Chapters "Education in complex societies", "Education through formal organizations" and "Marketization and education" from a forthcoming book by Amman Madan to be published by Eklavya.

Basu, A. (1981). The origins and operations of the Indian education system, 1757-1947. In *Essays in the history of Indian education* (pp. 1–27). New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

Sharp, H. (Ed.). (1920). *Selections from Educational Records: Part I: 1781-1839*. Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, India.

#### EXTENDED READINGS / RESOURCES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

"Architects of Change: Reconstructing Society" from Newman, D. M. (2000). *Exploring the architecture of everyday life* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. 1848. *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Section I.

Madan, A. (2014). Max Weber's Critique of the Bureaucratisation of Education. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 11(1), 95–113.

Steger, M. B., & Roy, R. K. (2010). What's "neo" about neo-liberalism? In *Neoliberalism a very short introduction* (pp. 1–20). Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

**Days 3, 4, 5:** Social stratification and education, focusing on class, caste and gender in Indian society and education.

#### Readings:

#### CORE READINGS

Chapters on class, caste and gender inequality and education from a forthcoming book by Amman Madan, to be published by Eklavya (2018).

#### EXTENDED READINGS / RESOURCES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Ambedkar, B. R. (2014). *Annihilation of caste: the annotated critical edition*. (S. Anand, Ed.). London: Verson.

Bhattacharjee, N. (1999). Through the looking glass: gender socialization in primary school. In T. S. Saraswathi (Ed.), *Culture, socialisation and human development: theory, research and applications in India* (pp. 336–355). New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Breman, J. (1989). Agrarian Change and Class Conflict in Gujarat, India. *Population and Development Review*, 15, 301–323. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2807932>

Chopra, R. (2005). Sisters and brothers: Schooling, family and migration. In R. Chopra & P. Jeffery (Eds.), *Educational regimes in contemporary India* (pp. 299–315). New Delhi: Sage.

Deshpande, R., & Palshikar, S. (2008). Occupational mobility: How much does caste matter. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 43(34), 61–70.

Ember, C. R., Ember, M., & Peregrine, P. N. (2007). Chapter 20: Sex, Gender and Culture. In *Anthropology* (pp. 340–357). New Delhi: Pearson.

Kumar, K. (1996). Agricultural Modernisation and Education: Contours of a Point of Departure. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 31(35/37), 2367–2373.

Madan, A. (2007). Sociologizing merit. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 42(29), 3044–3050.

Velaskar, P. (2005). Educational stratification, dominant ideology and the reproduction of disadvantage in India. In S. M. Dahiwalé (Ed.), *Understanding Indian Society: The Non-Brahmanic Perspective* (pp. 196–220). New Delhi: Rawat.

### **Possible assignment themes:**

Neo-liberalism and education; Alternative developmental paradigms; India's class system and education policy; Caste and its transformation through education; The formation and questioning of gender through education, etc.

### **Part 2**

**Day 1:** Presentation and discussion of assignments.

**Days 1, 2 and 3:** Culture, identity and education.

### **CORE READINGS**

Haralambos, M., & Holborn, M. (2010). Sociology of culture. In *Sociology: themes and perspectives* (pp. 663–673). Oxford University press.

Barth, F. (1995). Ethnicity and the concept of culture. Presented at the *Rethinking Culture*, Harvard. Retrieved from <https://www.scribd.com/document/236958404/Barth-Ethnicity-and-the-Concept-of-Culture>

Mayall, J. B. L., & Jackson-Preece, J. (2011). *Nationalism and International Relations*. London: University of London. Pp 17-26.

Azhar, A. S. (2007, October 14). Indoctrinating young minds. *The News on Sunday*. Retrieved from <http://www.sacw.net/HateEducation/biasedtextsOct1407.html>

Apoorvanand. (2007, January 20). Return of the rightwing textbook. *Tehelka*. Retrieved from <http://www.sacw.net/HateEducation/apoorvJan07.html>

### **EXTENDED READINGS / RESOURCES FOR ASSIGNMENTS**

Advani, S. (1996). Educating the National Imagination. *Economic and Political Weekly.*, 31(31), 2077–2082.

Apple, M. W. (2000). Cultural Politics and the Text. In *Official Knowledge* (2nd ed., pp. 42–60). London: Routledge.

Bhog, D., Bharadwaj, P., & Mullick, D. (2012). Plotting the Contours of the Modern Nation A Feminist Reading of Geography Textbooks. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 9(1), 39–61.

Bourdieu, P. (2004). The forms of capital. In *The Routledge Falmer reader in sociology of education* (pp. 15–29). New York: Routledge Falmer. (Original work published 1984)

Foucault, M. (1977). *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. New York: Pantheon Books. Chapter "Panopticism". pp 195-203 .

Gellner, E. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell. Pp 24-38.

McLaren, P. (2006). *Life in Schools: An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundations of Education* (5th ed.). Allyn & Bacon. "Critical Pedagogy: An Overview".

Sen, A. (2008). Is nationalism a boon or a curse. *Economic & Political Weekly*, 43(10), 39–44.

Willis, P. (1981). *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Morningside). Columbia University Press. Extract: "Elements of a Culture"

**Days 4 and 5:** Student and teacher identity, negotiations of the self amidst face to face relationships in schools

#### CORE READINGS

Blackledge, D. A., & Hunt, B. D. (1985). Micro-Interpretive Approaches: An Introduction. In *Sociological Interpretations of Education* (pp. 233–248). Taylor & Francis.

Rist, R. C. (2007). On understanding the processes of schooling: the contributions of labelling theory. In A. Sadovnik (Ed.), *Sociology of Education: A Critical Reader* (pp. 71–82). New York and London: Routledge.

#### EXTENDED READINGS / RESOURCES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Blackledge, D. A., & Hunt, B. D. (1985). The “New” Sociology of Education. In *Sociological Interpretations of Education* (pp. 290–294). Taylor & Francis.

Giddens, A. (2006). Social Interaction and Everyday Life. In *Sociology* (5th ed., pp. 126–159). Cambridge: Polity.

Goffman, E. (1956). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1st ed.). Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Social Science Research Centre. Chapter 1 “Performances” pp 1-22.

Meighan, R., Walker, S., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Barton, L., & Harber, C. (2007). The action perspective. In *Sociology of Educating* (5th ed., pp. 299–315). Continuum.

Woods, P., & Jeffrey, B. (2002). The Reconstruction of Primary Teachers’ Identities. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 23(1), 89–106.

#### **Possible assignment themes:**

Cultural politics in Indian textbooks, different models of nationalism, construction of student identity, construction of teacher identity.

#### **EDUCATION POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS FOR ANALYSIS THROUGH ASSIGNMENTS**

Phule’s statement before Hunter Commission

Marjorie Sykes on Nai Talim

National Policy of Education 1968

National Policy of Education 1986 / 1992

Right to Education Act 2009

Some Inputs for NEP 2016