

Call for Papers for a Conference on
Aspects of Inequality in India

To be organised by
Institute of Development Studies Kolkata (IDSK)

The last few decades have witnessed a surge in research on economic inequality across the world. India has been shown to be one of the most unequal regions of the world, with the richest decile possessing about 55% of its national income. While sociologists have been largely interested in 'relational inequalities', meaning inequalities which are embedded in the social structure in the form of relations of 'superordination' and 'subordination', the analysis of 'distributional inequalities' has almost been an exclusive pursuit of economists. Economists have measured and analyzed 'pure' or interpersonal disparity in economic status, using indicators such as wealth and income, or in important human functionings, measured in terms of objective non-income indicators, such as life expectancy and educational attainment. A recent strand of literature has tried to address multidimensional inequalities, considering simultaneous deprivations in multiple indicators of human well-being.

Another stream of research has emerged from the moral philosophical understanding that systematic differences in income and non-income outcomes between population-subgroups are normatively disturbing and deserve policy attention. This is particularly true when the sub-groups are defined along historically and politically relevant axes of social power, such as class, caste, and gender. Group inequality in different spaces has attracted increasing attention from scholars in India in the last few decades. An emerging area of research, however, has argued that instead of looking at different grouping parameters in isolation, it would be more meaningful to focus on the simultaneous and complex interactions of multiple identities in shaping the achievements of individuals in different outcome spaces. Intersectionality research, using qualitative and more recently, quantitative techniques, has tried to uncover how benefits and disadvantages combine and conflict in the middle of the social spectrum. Sociologists have extensively worked in this field, challenging the mainstream practices of looking at different dimensions of social power, such as race and gender as distinct and non-intersecting. They have been particularly interested in relational inequalities rooted in the basic structure of the society and manifesting as differences in power, privileges and obligations. Important theoretical and empirical work by economists with a similar motivation has tried to address inequality of opportunity, both across individuals and between social groups.

Finally, studies have not only sought causal explanations of inequality, but have also tried to outline the consequences of inequality on outcomes such as economic growth, social tension and political stability.

This conference aims to bring together inequality scholars from different disciplines, namely economics, sociology, political science and others. Papers engaging with but not limited to the following sub-themes are welcome.

1. Inequality – moral philosophic issues
2. Interpersonal/group inequality in income and non-income dimensions
3. Multidimensional inequality
4. Intersectional Inequality
5. Inequality of Opportunity
6. Causes and consequences of Inequality

Extended abstracts of 1500 words or full-length papers not exceeding 8000 words must be submitted on or before 30 November, 2019. There is no registration fee for the conference. Accommodation and travel support (2 AC railway fare) will be provided to the participants.

Contributions must be sent to:

simantinihalder@gmail.com

Deadlines:

Last date for sending extended abstracts:**30 November, 2019**

Communication of acceptance:**06 December, 2019**

Last date for sending full papers:**31 January, 2020**

Conference dates:**20-21 February, 2020**