

School of Education Studies

Ambedkar University Delhi

Course Outline

Course Code: SES201104

Title: State, Society and Education

Type of Course: Core

Cohort for which it is compulsory: (MA Education, Semester 1), (MA Education ECCE, Semester 3)

Cohort for which it is elective: None

No of Credits: 4

Semester and Year Offered: Monsoon Semester 2017

Course Coordinator and Team: Manasi Thapliyal

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Pre-requisites: None

Aim:

- The core objective of this course is to engage with assumptions upon which education as an institution is founded, and ask some fundamental questions about the relationship between education and society. We try to understand the overarching presence of the State in predicating the nature of the institution as well as the social relations shaping the institutions of education. We address the questions of:
 - How does formal education become central to the project of modernity, development and democracy, particularly so in the Indian context?
 - What would “effective” education symbolize and represent?
 - What factors shape how schools or universities are run, how the systems get organized, and what gets taught?
 - How does inequality at the political, social, and at the level of economy, affect the educational experiences of students within schools, and society?

- How do schools help to maintain social-political asymmetries, or how they respond to the existing pulls of the socio-political divides and the political economy of reforms?

These are the questions that students will engage with in this first semester compulsory course and it is hoped that having done that they would be able to engage meaningfully and critically with the discourse around educational practice in India.

Brief description of modules/ Main modules:

The course is organised in four compulsory units.

Unit 1: Modern State and School as an Institution

- The purpose of the unit is to explicate how education is tied closely to the social-political project of the State. This will be addressed by exploring how the idea of education takes root in the imagination of a liberal welfare state, entwined with the ideas of rights, citizenship, equality, social opportunity, meeting the 'manpower' requirements, as a well as emergence of the idea of a secular school. We will try to look closely at the industrial revolution context of institutionalisation of education and in particular mass schooling in the West, its rationale, its forms in the imperial setting as well as in the sites of colonial domination (like India) ¹. We begin to explore thus the question of "What purposes have the school served?" in varied contexts as well as in its contemporary form.

Unit 2: Knowledge, Ideology and Education

- The focus of this unit is broadly upon how *ideology* implicates educational practice. We engage with the ways in which it shapes our worldview, on how consensus gets created at a given point of time around seminal questions like what knowledge is of worth or what is worth teaching, to other 'mundane' queries about the institutional practices such as streaming, labeling of students, examinations, achievement tests, talent examinations and therein the construct of intelligence used in everyday discourse in schools. How does this lead to schools becoming complicit and the extent to which they become instrumental in the reproduction of social inequalities, is a question that we will engage with through this unit. We also begin to reflect, in this context, on the different

¹ This will be dealt in significant detail in the History of Education course. Here the emphasis will be more of the nature of problematizing the "given-ness" of the structure and purposes of the schooling and institutionalized education.

socio-political contingencies that have shaped the contours of the education system in India.

Unit 3: Education, Inequality and Exclusion: (6-7 classes)

- This module will engage with the social context of education in India. We engage with the major debates in the Indian context (over affirmative action, meritocracy and reservations in educational institutions; the common school system debate, expansion of private schooling, EWS reservation in context of RTE) to make visible the contested terrain of education in India. We engage with inequality at two levels. At one level we engage with the asymmetries in the provision of education across the rural/urban context (the context of Operation Blackboard-its success/failure; the PROBE reports-- to explicate these asymmetries.) At another level, but related to the first, we engage with the social structures and inequality: its forms, bases and critically examine how issues of access and equity within the education policy discourse are implicated by structures of inequality such as caste, class, gender, religion and ethnicity, across the rural and urban contexts. This will enable conceptualization of overlapping axes of social exclusion engendered through education in Indian context.

Unit 4: Education and the Political Economy (7 classes)

- We examine here questions of education finance and privatisation—provision, choices, state's financial commitment to the social sector of education. We see how the dynamics of public funding is linked to the idea of public good. How do notions of 'quality', 'efficiency', and universal access, for instance, hold through together with concerns of secular, just and democratic education? How do these get impacted in the context of globalisation and ascendancy of a neoliberal State? We explore this aspect by engaging with specific reform initiatives like, DPEP, SSA; debates over state control over education, role of international agencies like, UNICEF, OECD, World Bank etc. in the reform initiatives.

Assessment Details with weights:

- End term exam (40%). (November end)
- Reading-Based Summary Submissions (At least two)- (10 + 10) 20% (1st submission August end and second by October end)
- Class-Based presentation on one of the summary submissions 10%
- Take home essay assignment (30%) (September end)

Reading List:

Unit 1

Essential Readings:

- Harrison, B & Dye, T. *Power and Society: An introduction to social sciences*. Thomson, Wadsworth. Chapter 3, "Power and Ideology", pp. 41-65
- Jyotirao Phule. "A statement for the information of Hunter Commission (1884)". In *Selected Writings of Jyoti Rao Phule*. New Delhi: Leftword Books. A submission to the Hunter Commission, arguing about need for state to support primary schooling for masses
- Krishna Kumar, (1989) 'Colonial Citizen as an Educational Ideal', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Jan. 28, 1989) / Introduction of *Political Agenda of Education*.
- Pathak, A. (2002). Education as an arena of struggle. In *Social Implications of Schooling: Knowledge, Pedagogy and Consciousness*, Chapter 1, 57-108 (excerpts would be given from this section for discussion in class on secularisation of schooling, the Indian context...).

Unit 2

Essential Readings

- Tagore, R.. The parrot's training. Excerpted from: V. Bhatia (ed.) 1994. *Rabindranath Tagore : Pioneer in Education*. Sahitya Chayan : New Delhi.
- Althusser, Louis. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses." *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*. Trans. Ben Brewster. London: New Left Books, 1971. 127-188.
- Velaskar, Padma. (1992). Unequal schooling as a factor in the reproduction of social inequality. *Sociological Bulletin*, Vol. 39, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 131-146.
- Kumar, K. (1989). Learning to be backward. In *Social Character of Learning*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Bourdieu, P. (1976). The school as a conservative force: scholastic and cultural inequalities. In *Schooling and Capitalism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Other Suggested Readings and texts:

- Marx and Engels. The German Ideology, excerpted from <http://cwanderson.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/The-German-Ideology.pdf> (25 pages) (<http://cwanderson.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/The-German-Ideology.pdf>)

- Anyon, Jean. (1981). Social class and social knowledge. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 11, 1-42.
- Gramsci, A. On Ideology/State/Civil Society. In *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, 704-707/524-535.
- Holt, J. (2003). 'How children fail'. A summary in James Arthur and Ian Davis (ed.) *Education Studies Reader*, 319-326. London: Routledge.
- Apple, M., Oliver, Anita (1998). Becoming Right: Education and the formations of conservative movements. In Torres, C.A. and T.R. Mitchell (ed.) *Sociology of Education: Emerging Perspectives*, 91-120. New York: SUNY Press
- Harris, K. (1979). 'Education (as political manipulation)'. In *Education and Knowledge: A Structured Misrepresentation of Reality*, 128-163. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Unit 3

- Deshpande, Satish, and Yogendra Yadav. (2006). Redesigning affirmative action. *Economic & Political Weekly* 41:2419-2424.
- Vasavi, A.R. (2003). Schooling for a new society? The social and political bases of education deprivation in India, in Ramya Subrahmanian, et. Al. Education inclusion and exclusion: India and South African perspectives, *IDS Bulletin*, Vol. 34, No.1, pp.72-80.
- Talib, Mohammad. (1998). Educating the oppressed: Observations from a school in a working class settlement in Delhi, in Sureshchandra Shukla and Rekha Kaul(ed.) *Education, Development and Underdevelopment*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Manjrekar, N. (2003). Contemporary Challenges to Women's Education: Towards an Elusive Goal? *Economic and Political Weekly*, 38(43), 4577-4582.

Unit 4 Essential Readings

- Sainath, P. The globalisation of inequality. *Seminar* issue 533
- Cole, Mike. (2008). Chapter 7, Globalisation, Neo-liberalism, and environmental destruction in *Marxism and Educational Theory*. Routledge.
- Kamat, S. (2004). Postcolonial Aporias, or What Does Fundamentalism Have to Do with Globalization? The Contradictory Consequences of Education Reform in India. *Comparative Education*, 40 (2), Special Issue (28), pp. 267-287
- Krishna Kumar, Manisha Priyam, Sadhna Saxena (2001). Looking beyond the Smokescreen: DPEP and Primary Education in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 36 (7), pp. 560-568.

- Tilak, J.B.G. (2004). Public subsidies in education in India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 39 (4), 343-359.