

**RC 24: Sociology Of Childhood And Youth**  
**ABSTRACTS SELECTED**

**NOTE: ALL THOSE WHO HAVE NOT PAID ISS MEMBERSHIP, RC MEMBERSHIP & CONFERENCE  
REGISTRATION FEES SHOULD DO IMMEDIATELY (Last Date 20 December 2016)**

**Locating Children and Childhood In Indian Sociological Tradition: A Critical Appraisal**

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Introduction: The concern to study children and childhood has been largely absent in the intellectual endeavours that had circumscribed Indian sociological thinking in the past, and continues to do so even today. That is to say, the experiences of childhood and the potentials of children as social actors have not been considered as subjects of sociological scrutiny by majority Indian sociologists. moreover, there is not a single sociology department in India of any university which offers a course on sociology of child and/or childhood and, at best only, a few lectures are delivered on the problem of child labour or on child abuse as a part of social problems course.(Bhadra,2013:xxxvi) Against this backdrop, the paper attempts to explore critically the extent to which the scenario regarding marginalization of children and childhood as an area of research, has changed within the ambits of Indian sociological imagination. This has been done with special reference to issues of sociological bulletin of last 5 years.

Methodology: Content analysis of children/childhood related articles, published in the issues of sociological bulletin from 2011 to 2015, has been done using qualitative approach.

Findings and conclusion: Only 2 (child marriage and orphan-schooling) out of 87 articles that had seen the light of the day, through sociological bulletin in last 5 years are based on children. This proves that sociology of childhood is still a much neglected domain, and the stereotypical tradition of confining children's' issues to accounts of social evils is still prevalent. Also, the authors have concentrated mostly on representing the views of "significant others" of children and not on that of the latter primarily. Therefore in the process of production of knowledge regarding children, they were never allowed to become the "agency" in true sense.

**Fast food and consumption practices among youth in Kolkata**

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Introduction: Surveys across culture suggest that teenagers and young adults do consume fast food and foods high in fat in greater quantities than older adults (Henderson et al. 2002; joint health surveys unit et al. 2003). The marketing white book 2012-13 reported that fast food items like burgers, samosas and sandwiches were consumed the most.

#### Objectives

- Unravel the connections between consumption of fast food, friendship and social network
- Address the impact of current health discourse on youths' decision to consume fast food

Methodology: A sample of 20 individuals was selected through purposive snow-ball sampling. The participants were aged between 18 to 25 years and residing in Kolkata metropolitan area. Data was collected through in-depth interviews. Narrative analysis has been used as the tool for analysis.

Findings & conclusions: Attitudes to food are formed early in childhood with the help of family, peers group, economic condition etc. as they move through their secondary education, for example, children are afforded more freedom during the school day, with many (though not all) and schools in Kolkata allowing students to buy their food from the school canteen during the lunchtime. Whilst buying, or not buying, food in high street fast food outlets displays adolescents' choices to others, such choices also reflect the social and cultural values that children have been subjected to throughout their lives so far.

#### **Vernacular networking: usage of Bengali keypads in face book by the youth of kolkata**

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Preamble: The surfacing of a cultural paradigm or 'cultural phenomenon' (Brown, 1940; McNeill, 2012) of vernacular networking among the youth has emerged in face book which is a significant dimension of social media usage using vernacular. This paper focuses on the trend among the Bengali youth of Kolkata on the use of Bangla in face book updates and posts.

Objectives: The paper has studied the usage of vernacular among the Bengali youth while interacting with their online friends on face book. It has analyzed the frequency of the usage of the Bengali language by these youth and has explored the presence of the community pages that promotes Bengali language and culture fostering solidarity among the Bengali youth.

Method: The present study has applied mixed methods. The sample size is 20 Bengali youth into three age groups 15-20 years, 20-25 years and 25-30 years from the middle class background in Kolkata.

Findings and conclusion: with the advent of software like 'language as a service platform' (Laas), it is evident that the age group of 20-25 years and 25-30 years use Bengali keypads more than the age group of 15-20 years.

**Impact of peer group in the construction of masculinity**  
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Introduction: Peer group plays a significant role in the construction of masculine identity. The impact of peer group culture increases as boys step into their adolescence where boys construct their notions of masculinity by their participation in peer group culture.

Objectives: The present paper explores how adolescent boys construct their notions of masculinity by interaction with their peers at a school in south Kolkata.

Methodology: the present paper studies **thirty** adolescent boys (aged 16-17 years) who belong to both upper and middle classes and study in english medium school (class xi and xii) of Kolkata by using the technique of '*mixed methods*'.

Major findings: Majority of the adolescent boys affirmed that they interact and mix with both male and female friends based on certain grounds. They tend to interact with those peers who do conform to heterosexual hegemonic masculinity. They mix with those male friends who are straight, strong, capable, masculine and powerful but ostracize those peers who do not conform to notions of hegemonic masculinity and are regarded as '*effeminate*'. Adolescent boys' rapport with their female peers helps them to attain greater status and reputation among their peer group since women are mostly treated as objects of sexual pleasure and entertainment by men.

**Utilizing Social Media In Incidents Of Rape: Voices Of The Youth**  
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Preamble: Media refers to different forms of communication in the world. Yet in several instances media has worked towards belabouring or understating crimes mainly sexual assaults. Distorted pictures of crime painted by news media reflect "news" as social construct, the outcome of a social process in which potential stories are selected and others are rejected.

Objective: This paper explores the perception of youth on projection of rape incidents by print and electronic media.

Method: A mixed method research analysis has been conducted with non-probability purposive and snowball sampling technique. Interview was conducted amongst 30 youths (aged 18-32 yrs).

Findings: This paper exhibits that larger part of youth considers “hyperbole” to be an indispensable organ of media. They speculated that the inflating role and its portrayal of women as objects of sexual commodities act as an impetus in intensifying the incidents of crime in the society.

Conclusion: media gives a distorted image of crime. the victims of rape often are portrayed as secretly enjoying their victimization. movie images often present the woman as resisting only initially and eventually becoming overwhelmed by sexual desire despite her original protests. the images themselves represent women as victims rather than agents in their own sexuality.

### **Homework- A Realm Of New Form Of Child Labour**

Moumita Bhattacharjee, LMI 3975

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Preamble: The apparition of homework does not leave a new day child free even after 6 (average) hours of school. This pressure of homework is rather a dilemma under the fear of being punished at school and in private tuitions.

Objectives: This paper turns a mill to highlight the outcomes of monumental home tasks thrown at students under private school at their young years.

Method: The data was collected using qualitative methodology. In-depth interview has been conducted amongst 25 young students from class ii to viii, under reputed private educational institutions, within the age group of 7-13 years.

Findings: Following is the gist of the study: 1) Every student at school is given mandatory homework on at the least 4 subjects for the very next day. 2) The students get a sleep of 5 to 6 hours, insufficient for a growing child. 3) Most of the students fear the subject and the teacher who gives regular homework. 4) They prefer teachers who explain the content of the subjects.

Conclusion: Homework consumes the free time that children have for themselves well before the final years of school. The current volume of homework at the taken age not only takes away the comprehension power of the child, but they also lose their agency and mechanically complete homework to avoid being penalized.

### **Gauging the Experience of Mothering: Lived Experiences Of Mothers with Children Of Special Needs**

Preamble: Mothering has often been conceptualized in literature by the lens of 'intensive mothering' or sometimes by 'the gaze of others'. In all such perspectives, though critical, the discussion revolved around mothers being central to child-nurturance, care-provider and disciplining agent. The experience of mothering and the role of a mother become far more complicated while raising children with special needs especially with learning disability (Id).

Objectives: the paper has investigated

- i. the contribution of mothers and hard care-work involved in raising children
- ii. whether the mothers undergo an experience of marginalization within and outside familial context.
- iii. contribution and assistance from other family members and institutions.

Methodology: Mixed methods research design has been employed, collecting data from amongst 50 mothers engaged in paid-labor work having children with learning disability, focussing on interviews

Findings: The hard care-work involved in raising children with Id demands dissolution of their professional front and consistent role expectation in raising the children alienates them mothering.

Conclusion: To cope with the role of both being a mother and a professional, the mothers have switched to new alternative institutions like special schools or specially trained child-care provider in bringing up the children.

**Imi-**

**Schools As Carceral Organization: A Study On Upcoming Surveillance Technology In Schools Of Kolkata**

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Introduction: With the growing urgency of digital tracking and surveillance on school going children, schools in India are adopting a variety of different tools to monitor students both inside and outside school campus. Among these tools are rfid (radio frequency identification device) tags embedded in school ID cards whereby a student's ID card has rfid chip implanted in it. This records the entry and exit time of a student in school and sends the record to their parents every single day. Interestingly, however appealing such technologies may seem at first, they could have negative effects on the very children they aim to protect.

**Objective:** Against the aforesaid backdrop, this paper assesses the consequences of the emergence of rfid child tracking system in schools of India with special reference to Kolkata.

**Methodology:** The present study is based on data from newspaper articles (The Times of India), using the method of content analysis.

**Conclusion:** Like any new technology, the rfid implementation in id cards of school children too has its negatives consequences. It reduces children to mere subjects of surveillance. The continuous monitoring not only poses a threat to privacy of children but also condition them to accept this kind of treatment as routine thus transforming schools into a total institution.

### **Bollywood Item Numbers: Reinforcing Beauty Syndrome Among Youth**

Sreeparna Mitra LMI – 3802

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**Preamble:** body is seen as a social construct in the realm of sociology of body. With respect to feminine body, body has been controlled by the social norms and value system which are embedded in patriarchal ideology especially the conception of beauty.

**Objectives:** this study aims to understand how a particular feminine beauty ideal is maintained through hindi bollywood item numbers and its massive impact on youth.

**Methodology:** content analysis as a method is applied to look at the audio visuals of hindi bollywood item numbers among a group of 30 youth (15 men and 15 women) aged between 19- 24 and their opinion was sought through telephone interviews in Kolkata.

**Summary of findings and conclusion:** the Hindi item numbers like ‘munni badnaam’, ‘sheila ki jawaani’, ‘fevicol se’, ‘kaddu katega’, to name a few through its vivacious dance and a surround of erotic and immanent exuberance are creating a particular imagery of feminine body as well as beauty. in a patriarchal society like India these songs are hummed, sung and even performed by the youth actually of both gender .thus the present study elucidates how Hindi Bollywood item numbers are serving to legitimize the dominant gender system and stereotypes by emphasizing a kind of feminine beauty alluding prominence to sexed body aspects among young men and women thus reinforcing subversively body beauty syndrome. Interestingly but not surprisingly, young women also are fond of these songs.

### **Interpreting Body And Sexuality Through Everyday Rituals: A Study On Adolescent Santhali Girls In Jharkhand**

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**Preamble:** Adolescence is the period when young people begin to explore concepts on sexuality, gender, puberty, attraction, body change etc. the understanding of the dominant culture intertwined within these concepts and its reflections and negotiations through body as contested sites is a necessary arena to explore lived realities among adolescents. In this context this research is an understanding of sexuality, femininities and body among adolescent Santali girls.

**Objective:** The research explores the process of how Santhali girls go through everyday mundane rituals and performances during different rites of passages and festivities experience a socially constructed body.

**Methodology:** This is based on qualitative method with an ethnographic approach on 50 Santhali adolescents aged 15-18 years of age.

**Findings:** My initial findings suggest that the embodied self, represented through the body is an effect of the constant negotiations, resistance and acceptance in everyday life with the available agencies e.g. Ngos, educational and medical institutions, workplaces, art and beauty realms one interact with. for example, the concept of accepting tattoo as a cultural emblem, dance as a performance, etc. has a constant interplay undergoing between the body and self, generate a newer form of social construction of body, sexuality and femininity among these Santhali girls.

Towards Sociology Of Children's Leisure: A Theoretical Intervention

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Though the image of a child engaged in leisure activities has been central to the cultural politics of modern childhood (Frønes, i. 2011), its theorisation has remained restricted to either aspects of leisure such as play, peer culture or structured lessons or to children's time use patterns. These attempts have fallen short of scanning the broader field of leisure. Leisure researchers have begun to analyse family leisure from children's perspective (Schänzel, H. and Carr, N. 2016) at a time scholars of childhood studies are revisiting long critiqued concepts such as socialisation (James, a. 2013; Frønes, i.2016) and re-appraising questions of agency (Oswell, d. 2013, 2016; Esser, f. 2016). Situated in this critical intellectual moment, this paper argues that engaging with the entire spectrum of children's out-of-school leisure repertoire can offer valuable insights into important aspects of children's negotiation of space, identity and agency and unravel how contemporary ideals of childhoods are being sculpted in response to the exigencies of polity, economy and culture. Through a dialogic synthesis of ideas emerging from the sociology of leisure and the 'new' sociology of childhood, it will propose a theoretical framework for studying children's leisure alongside methodological suggestions. The paper will

conclude by laying down its theoretical implications for the sociological study of childhoods in India.