

An Indian-Australian research partnership

Project Title: **Caste, Technology and Social Reproduction of Labour: A View from the Margins**

Project Number **HSS1180**

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Research Clusters:

Research Themes:

Highlight which of the Academy's CLUSTERS this project will address? (Please nominate JUST <u>one</u> . For more information, see www.iitbmonash.org)		Highlight which of the Academy's Theme(s) this project will address? (Feel free to nominate more than one. For more information, see www.iitbmonash.org)	
1	Material Science/Engineering (including Nano, Metallurgy)	1	Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Computational Modelling
2	Energy, Green Chem, Chemistry, Catalysis, Reaction Eng	2	Circular Economy
3	Math, CFD, Modelling, Manufacturing	3	Clean Energy
4	CSE, IT, Optimisation, Data, Sensors, Systems, Signal Processing, Control	4	Health Sciences
5	Earth Sciences and Civil Engineering (Geo, Water, Climate)	5	Smart Materials
6	Bio, Stem Cells, Bio Chem, Pharma, Food	6	Sustainable Societies
7	Semi-Conductors, Optics, Photonics, Networks, Telecomm, Power Eng	7	Infrastructure
8	HSS , Design, Management		

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The research problem

Since the turn of this century, the usage of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has become increasingly crucial for citizens to actively take part in economic, political and social life ([Roztocki et al., 2019](#)). A wide spread application of ICTs in everyday life enables societal progress, economic development and sustainability that assures improvement in governance, generate new economic opportunities for socially marginalised communities and allows unfettered access to public services([Atchoarena et al., 2017](#), [Kelly et al., 2018](#)). It is argued that technology also transforms the economic as well as social process that allow individual to have social entitlements and opportunities to lead dignified life. Thus, it is believed that technology has neutral and equitable impact on having access and entitlement to resources. Notably, when we looked into the impact of technological transformation on caste based occupational distribution, we find that rather than dissipating the effect of “dirt work”, it reproduces caste-based occupations without impacting the social structure of the industry. This project aims to examine the role of technology on dissipating the humiliation associated with caste-based occupations and the determinants of social reproduction process using the Braverman’s labour process theory. Secondly it will engage with the policy questions on how to bring in the “the dirt work” under ILO’s Decent Work Framework. The focus will be on four core occupations: 1) Mortuary workers, 2) Leather and Tannery Workers, 3) Rag Pickers and 4) Manual Scavengers.

Project aims

This project aims to examine the role of technology on dissipating the humiliation associated with caste-based occupations and the determinants of social reproduction process using the Braverman’s labour process theory. It will also engage with the policy questions of how to bring in the “the dirt work” under Decent Work Framework of ILO. The focus will be on four core occupations: 1) Mortuary workers, 2) Leather and Tannery Workers, 3) Rag Pickers and 4) Manual Scavengers.

What is expected of the student when at IITB and when at Monash?

Highlight how the project will gain from the students stay at IITB and at Monash

IITB will enable the student to conduct extensive field work and documenting case studies on dirt work that shall contribute towards the PhD thesis. The student will also benefit from the coursework offered in year 1.

At Monash the student will conduct analysis of data, work closely with and mentored by the Monash supervisor. Monash will also provide extensive opportunity to interact with scholars working in similar

areas and also the student cohort; will participate in and contribute towards seminars, PhD student conference and workshops

Expected outcomes

Highlight the expected outcomes of the project

The project will generate new knowledge on the connection between technology, society and social reproduction with a particular focus on 4 low-prestige occupations. A PhD thesis, journal articles and conference presentations will be generated. There will also be a policy brief.

How will the project address the Goals of the above Themes?

Describe how the project will address the goals of one or more of the 6 Themes listed above.

This project perfectly aligns with the themes of sustainable societies and circular economy. Since we are exploring the role of technology on the caste-based occupations we are expecting to see technology neutral and equitable impact on human lives.

Capabilities and Degrees Required

List the ideal set of capabilities that a student should have for this project. Feel free to be as specific or as general as you like. These capabilities will be input into the online application form and students who opt for this project will be required to show that they can demonstrate these capabilities.

Masters in Social Sciences/ Passion for Fieldwork/ Aptitude for Secondary data analysis; knowledge of Indian society, culture and economy is desirable

Necessary Courses

Name three tentative courses relevant to the project that the student should complete during his/her coursework at IITB (the student will require to secure 8 point in these courses)

All ADCPS mandatory course

Keywords relating to this project to make it easier for the students to apply.

Caste, Labour, Social Reproduction, Labour Process, Technology, Dirt Work