



Notice for the PhD Viva-Voce Examination

Ms Ritika Srivastava (Registration Number: 1850072), PhD Scholar at the School of Social Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore Central Campus will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 4 April 2025 at 11.00 am in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka, India.

Title of the Thesis	:	Women's Bodies and Gendered Violence: The Site of Sugarcane Fields in Maharashtra
Discipline	:	Sociology
External Examiner - I	:	Dr Divya Vaid Associate Professor Centre for the Study of Social Systems School of Social Sciences, Room No 26, SSS-II Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Mehrauli Road New Delhi - 110067
External Examiner - II	:	Dr C Aruna Professor Department of Sociology Puducherry University R Venkat Raman Nagar, Kalapet - 605 014, Pondicherry
Supervisor	:	Dr Suparna Majumdar Kar Professor Department of Sociology and Social Work School of Social Sciences CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru - 560029, Karnataka

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 18 March 2025


Registrar (Academics)

ABSTRACT

This study is an exploratory ethnographic work that looks at gender-based violence among migrant sugarcane-cutting women in the Satara district of Maharashtra. It discusses the negotiations of these women cane cutters for survival in the labour market within neoliberal forms of agriculture, in the framework of a patriarchal structure and their agency over their bodies. This research examines how motherhood becomes a prerequisite rather than a hindrance, for entering the labour market of sugarcane fields in India, as widely discussed in the literature on Women and Labour.

The study explores the invisibility of violence in the form of hysterectomies or body mutilation, which are reproduced through the structures built on social inequalities, injustices, and coercion legitimised and seeming to appear as 'natural' medical solutions. It also attempts to unravel such structured violence that consistently operates behind and normalises hysterectomies widely practised in India's sugar fields of Maharashtra. By documenting the unknown perpetrators', silences and denial; this study attempts to show that violence remains invisible.

The work also delves into medical sociology to understand how a socio-economic issue and dehumanisation are tackled through medical fixations, leading to the Medicalisation of women's bodies. The study examines illnesses' social construction, internalisation, and legitimization while theorising Medicalisation and Professional dominance. It also observes that the magnitude of this internalisation carries much more weight beyond the individualising effect commonly discussed in literature on the Sociology of Health and Medicine. Challenging the dominant narrative of the medical professionals in which the information comes from incontestable and authentic sources to these women who are already voiceless is understood through the study. The research proposes that this internalisation process involves complex questions concerning the agency of subaltern women and the violence they undergo.

Keywords: *Migrant agricultural labourers, Hysterectomy, gender-based violence and Medicalisation.*

Publication:

1. **Srivastava, R., & Kumramkandath, R. (2023).** An ethnographic study of women agricultural migrant labourers. *Third Concept: An International Journal of Ideas*, 37(436), 121–123. ISSN 0970-7247