

Rama Devi
PhD (Sociology)
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I am a sociologist with research interests broadly in the domains of social stratification; discrimination, exclusion, and inequality; urban sociology; and qualitative research methods. My doctorate thesis is entitled “Caste in City: A Study of a Residential Settlement in Delhi”. It focuses on how the ascriptive identity of caste interacts and constitutes city spaces and the role it plays in shaping urban stratification in Indian cities, specifically focusing on the metropolitan city of Delhi. Broadly, the thesis explores three intersecting dimensions: inter-caste interactions, intergenerational mobility, and political engagements of members of different castes to understand modes through which caste reappears, and reinforces socio-economic inequality in the urban landscape.

My current work focuses on the interaction between caste and space, exploring how disadvantaged groups relate to and remake city spaces. I engage with urban Dalit youth aspirations under the new economic order, specifically their educational, occupational, and political proclivities. Intersectionality of gender, caste, and labour market are crucial dimensions that I am keen to explore, particularly how Dalit women negotiate to enter and remain in the labour market. I am also interested in studying the nature and scope of Dalit politics in urban India.

Employment

September 1, 2024:	Post-doctoral Fellow , Centre de Sciences Humaines (CSH), Delhi, India
July 3, 2023-July 2024:	Visiting Assistant Professor , KREA University, Sri City, India
August 29, 2022-July 2023:	Visiting Faculty at KREA University, Sri City, India
August 2021-August 2022:	Teaching Fellow at KREA University, Sri City, India
January 2021 – April 2021: Project Title:	Research Associate at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, Assam, India “Women’s Life in Legal Pluralism” funded by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) Mentor- Prof. Sawmya Ray
April 2020-December 2020: Project Title:	Consultant at Institute for Human Development, Delhi, India “Caste in Urban India: Manifestations and Inequalities”

funded by ICSSR
P.I- Dr. Bhim Reddy

Research

Publications

Journal Publications

- Rama Devi & Sawmya Ray (2024). *We know what is good for her: Hunar, work and respectable work for women*, Sociological Bulletin: Journal of Indian Sociological Society, Sage.
- Rama Devi & Sawmya Ray (2022). *Mahaul and Mazboori: Educational Aspirations and Realities of Dalit Youth in Delhi*, International Journal for Qualitative Studies in Education. DOI, 37 (1): 294-313 Routledge.
- Rama Devi & Sawmya Ray (2021). *Negotiating Exclusion and Precarity: Marginalized Urban Youth, Education, and Employment in Delhi*, The Indian Journal of Labour Economics, 64 (4): 923-941, Springer.

Web Exclusives and blogs

- Rama Devi and Bhim Reddy (2017). *A Misplaced Trial: Delhi Municipal Elections 2017*. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 52 (18), Sameeksha
- Deepshikha Sharma and Rama Devi (2023). *Democracy Denied: The Fraught Realities of Higher Education for Dalits*, LSE South Asia Center, July 10, 2023.

Book Reviews

- Rama Devi (2024). *Review of “Dalits in the New Millenium” edited by Sudha Pai, D. Shyam Babu, and Rahul Verma*. Indian Journal of Human Development, Sage.
- Rama Devi (2023). *Review of “The Right to Sex: Feminism in the Twenty-First Century” by Amia Srinivasan*. *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 17 (1): 210-212, Sage.
- Rama Devi (2021). *Review of “Outcaste Bombay: City Making and the Politics of the Urban Poor” by Juned Shaikh*. *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 15 (3): 579-582, Sage.
- Rama Devi (2016), *Review of “On Pauperism in Present and Past” by Jan Breman*. *Indian Journal of Human Development*, 10 (1): 124-126, Sage.

Project Report

- Co-authoring an Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR) funded project report titled “**Caste in Urban India: Manifestations and Inequalities.**”

Work in progress

- Rama Devi. (under review and screening) a monograph titled “**Caste and Emancipatory Quest in Urbanity**” based on my doctoral research (by Palgrave McMillan)
- Rama Devi and Kamna Tiwary. *Representation of Dalits in Indian Foreign Services: Caste as a challenge to Diversity and Inclusion*, Hague Journal of Diplomacy (special issue paper: under review)

Conferences/Workshops

1. Rama Devi (2024). *Dalit Politics in Time of Precarity: Aspirations, Anxieties and Dalit Youths in Delhi* to be presented virtually at **South Asia Forum Conference**, University of Melbourne, May 23-24, 2024.
2. Rama Devi (2023). *Negotiating Caste in Educational Spaces: Trials of Dalit Youths in Higher Education in Delhi* presented virtually at **ISA World Congress of Sociology of Education** in Melbourne, June 25-July 1, 2023.
3. Rama Devi & Kamna Tiwary (2023). *Representation of Dalits in Indian Foreign Services: Caste a Challenge to Inclusion and Diversity in Diplomacy* presented at **The Institute of History, Leiden University**, May 22-23, 2023
4. Rama Devi (2023). *Mapping Socio-Economic Mobility and Urban Inequalities through Spatial Histories and Biographies: Trajectories of Dalit Life in a Metropolitan City, Delhi* presented (virtually) at **International Sociological Association Annual Conference** in Melbourne, June 25-July 1, 2023
5. Rama Devi (2022). “*We Know What is Good for Her: Women, Education and Work*” presented at the **62nd annual conference of the Indian Society of Labour Economics** at the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, 11-13 April 2022.
6. Rama Devi (2021). “*Constitutional Promise and Compulsory Inclusion: Politics of Representation in a Dalit Reserved Constituency in Delhi*” presented virtually at **4th Ireland India Institute Annual South Asian Studies Conference** at Dublin City University, 28–30 April 2021.

7. Rama Devi (2019). “*Negotiating Relations in the Neighborhood and the City: A Study of Caste and Social Interactions in a Delhi Settlement*” presented at the **International Sociological Association Annual Conference** in New Delhi, 18-21 September 2019.
8. Rama Devi (2018). “*Intergenerational Mobility: Mapping Aspirations, Education and Employment of Youths in a Resettlement Colony in Delhi*” presented at **44th All India Sociological Conference**, Mysore, 27–29 December 2018
9. Rama Devi (2015). “*Caste in Indian Cities: Contemporary Meanings and Manifestations*” presented at **Graduate Research Meet, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati**, 28–30 October 2015

Invited Talks/Lectures

- Rama Devi (2023). *Writing in Social Research: Title, Abstract, and Conclusion* at **Graduate Research Meet Workshop**, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati.
- Rama Devi (2024). *Between Impositions and Autonomy: Dalit Women, Education, Skill and Employment in Delhi Settlement* at **South Asia Forum Education Transformations and Youth**, University of Melbourne.
- Rama Devi (2024). *Domesticity and Autonomy: Occupational Imageries and Skill Acquisition of Urban Dalit Women*” at **Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**, Saveetha School of Law, Chennai.
- Rama Devi and Sawmya Ray (2024). “*Not Just Any Work, but a Respectable Work*”: *Caste, Gender, and Employment* delivered at International Conference **Celebrating 100 Years of Sociology in India**, University of Hyderabad.

Teaching and Assistance

- Exploring Social and Historical
- Communities and Identities in India (Co-taught)
- Researching the Social, Political and Historical (Co-taught)
- Ethics
- Design Thinking

Training, workshops, and seminars attended

- 2020. Virtual panel discussion on “Covid-19 and Violence against Women and Girls” organized by Centre for Gender Studies,

Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, India

- 6 April – 25 May 2020, Completed AuthorAid in collaboration with RGS-IGB online course on **Research Writing in the Social Sciences**
- 3–4 October 2019, attended workshop entitled “From Caste Patriotism to Caste Activism: Caste Associations and Political Intermediaries in India” conducted by CSH-JNU, New Delhi, India
- 14–23 March 2016, attended—sponsored **Ten-Day Research Methodology Programme** funded by ICSSR at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, Assam, India
- 6–30 May 2015, attended **Social Research Methods Training Programme** conducted by Institute for Human Development, New Delhi, India
- 2014. Graduate Research Meet held at Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, Assam, India

Internship

December 2012: Prayatn Sanstha, Dholpur, Rajasthan, India
Project Title: **Enhancing Access to Justice among Marginalized Community** in collaboration with the Department of Justice, Government of India and United Nations Development Programme

Education

2020: **PhD Sociology**, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, India
Dissertation Title: **Caste in City: A Study of a Residential Settlement in Delhi**
Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Sawmya Ray

2014: **Master in development studies**, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, India
Dissertation Title: **Representation of “Development” in Popular Culture: A Study of Hindi Cinema**
Dissertation Supervisor: Dr. Sawmya Ray

2008: Bachelor in Zoology, Faculty of Science, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, India

Academic Responsibilities

- Core member of the organizing committee of the 58th annual conference of The Indian Society of Labour Economics held at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, 24–26 November 2016
- Core member of the National Level Graduate Research Meet 2015 organized by the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, 28–30 October 2015
- Core member of the organizing committee of the National Level Graduate Research Meet 2014 organized by the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati, 31 October – 01 November 2014
- External member of the Doctoral Advisory Committee at Vellore Institute of Technology, Chennai (2024).

Fellowships/ grants and Membership

- Merit scholarship from the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, for conducting research at IIT Guwahati, India, July 2014 – June 2019
- University Grants Commission (UGC) National Eligibility Test (NET-JRF) in Sociology, 2016
- International travel and accommodation fully funded by Leiden University to attend a workshop at the Institute of History, Leiden University, May 2023
- Member of the International Sociological Association (ISA)
- Member of 'Researchers Collective- South Asia Forum Education Transformations and Youth' (SAFETY)

References

Dr. Sawmya Ray

Dr. Sumitra Ranganathan

Dr. Bhim Reddy

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(Sociology)
Department of
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Sciences, IIT Guwahati
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Associate Professor (Music)
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Fellow
(Anthropology)
Institute for Human
Development, New
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Personal Information

Date of Birth 4 June 1987
Citizenship Indian
Languages Mother tongue- Awadhi
Read and speak- English and Hindi
Partially understand: Gujarati, Bengali, Assamese, and Urdu