



PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR STUDY OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION
AND INCLUSIVE POLICY

Invited Lecture

On

**Caste discrimination in contemporary Tamil Nadu:
evidence from the Tiruppur textile region**

By

Dr. Geert De Neve

Reader in Social Anthropology

University of Sussex

Date: 25th January 2016

Time: 10.30 am

Venue: Seminar Hall I- School of Social Sciences

Abstract

Caste discrimination in contemporary Tamil Nadu: evidence from the Tiruppur textile region

Grace Carswell, Geert De Neve and Judith Heyer

This paper examines the ways in which caste discrimination is shaping the livelihood opportunities, educational participation and political mobilisation of Dalit communities in western Tamil Nadu today. Based on long-term ethnographic and survey material from the Tiruppur region, the paper explores the changing nature of caste discrimination as well as the extent to which persistent forms of discrimination affect Dalits' ability to gain education, take part in new sectors of the region's economy and benefit from the impressive economic growth that the region has shown in the past few decades. Despite years of industrialisation, economic growth and political mobilisation, caste prejudice - and the practices of discrimination that it entails - remain deeply entrenched across this region of Tamil Nadu, affecting the most vulnerable community of Arunthathiyars the most.