



Children and Work Research Series: Session 20

‘Labour Class’ Children’s Work and Schooling: Unpacking a Framework and a Reality

Wednesday 3 April 2024 – 4pm (CET)

Zoom - Register [here](#)

Dr. Reva Yunus (University of York)

Abstract

My presentation is based on my new book [‘Labour Class’ Children’s Schooling in Urban India: A Sociological Account](#) (Routledge, 2024). It is not a surprise to find that urban Indian children in families with low parental incomes tend to be engaged in paid and unpaid work, often alongside schooling. So, what does my book add to our existing understanding of children’s work? One, it develops a theoretical framework which draws upon primarily feminist critiques of global capitalism, caste patriarchy and informal work to locate children’s work and schooling within broader social and economic relations and processes, especially through the use of the term, ‘labour class’. This framework enables a historically specific account of childhood which also challenges development discourses centring on the ‘labour/school’ binary and ‘girl effect’ narratives. Two, the book offers insights into some of the small changes on the ground which capture the limitations on, and possibilities for larger changes in social relations: shifts in gendered division of work within households, new kinds of gendered and classed labour in which school-going teenage boys engage, and the link between the gendered nature of ‘labour class’ children’s work and the gendered place of schooling in their life.

Speaker Bio

I am a Lecturer in Education and Social Justice at the Department of Education, University of York. I am a sociologist and an ethnographer interested in the impact of economic change and marginalization, especially, increasingly precarious work on families and young people’s education, work, and strategies of mobility in urban India and England. My long-term theoretical interests include rethinking agency in relation to coercive forces; shifts in the nature of the state and its relationship with global capital; and social class inequalities in the context of precarious/informal work.

reva.yunus@york.ac.uk