

## **Dr. Shaoni Shabnam, MA, M.Phil, PhD**

### **Areas of Research Interest:**

Indian middle class, Bengali middle class, class and culture, class and consumption, class and religion

### **Areas of Teaching Interest:**

Social Stratification: Class, Caste, Gender, Globalization and Consumption, Indian Society

### **Academic Research experience:**

**PhD:** Worked as a full-time PhD Research Scholar at the department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay. PhD thesis titled as “Fashioning Self, Constructing Hegemony: A Study of the Contemporary Bengali Middle Class”, is on the self-making of the Bengali middle class in the two cities of Kolkata and Durgapur in West Bengal. The thesis has looked at how middle class-ness is being constructed by a social group having a close relationship with the state, often identified as the “old middle class” that is, public sector employees and academics, located in West Bengal. The study has implications for understanding and theorizing the contemporary Indian middle class in relation to the changing socio-economic context, viz. economic liberalization.

**MPhil:** As part of the MPhil program, with specialization on Planning and Development, at IIT Bombay did one year of interdisciplinary course work on the theme of ‘development and planning’ and an MPhil dissertation titled “Alternative Socialization for Underprivileged Children: A Study of Three NGOs in Kolkata”, which is a critique of the model of socialization followed by NGOs for ‘mainstreaming’ the underprivileged children.

### **Other research experience:**

- Worked as Research Officer in Adecco-TISS Labour Market Research Initiative (ATLMRI), Dept of Management & Labour Studies in Tata Institute of Social Sciences from 2007 to 2009. As part of the work, co-authored and contributed to a number of conceptual and empirical papers broadly in the area of Indian labour market research.
- Worked as a Research Associate in the department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay from January 2016 to July 2016.

### **Publications:**

#### *Articles in journals:*

- Shabnam S. (2018) ‘In Defence of *Sustho Sanskriti* (Healthy Culture): Understanding Bengali Middle Classness in Neoliberal India’ in *History and Sociology of South Asia*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 48--64. DOI: 10.1177/2230807517741794
- Shabnam S. (2012) ‘The Indian Middle Class, the State and Development: An enquiry into the broad claims of shifts in Neo-liberal India’ in *Inclusive*, Issue 1.  
<[www.theinclusive.org](http://www.theinclusive.org)>
- Shabnam S. (with Bino Paul GD & Sony Pellissery *et al*) (2008). ‘Educational Attainment of Youth and Implications for Indian Labour Market: An Exploration through Data’ in *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, Conference issue, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp.813—830.

#### *Articles in edited book:*

- Shabnam S. (2015) “Claiming ‘Bengali Middle Class-ness’ through ‘Social Sensitivity’: The Case of the Durgapur Steel Plant Township, West Bengal” in Lancy Lobo & Jayesh Shah (Eds.) *The Trajectory of India’s Middle Class: Economy, Ethics and Etiquette*, Cambridge Scholars Publication, U.K.
- Shabnam S. (with Pellissery S.), (2008). ‘Microfinance and Globalization’ in Reddy V. & Charyulu Y.(Ed.) *Indian Agriculture: Challenges of Globalization*, New Delhi: New Century Publications.

### **Conference/Seminar papers:**

- *Doing Good, Being Political: Understanding the 'Old Middle Class' in Contemporary Bengal* presented at the National Seminar on "Experiences, Aspirations and Struggles: New Middle Class in Indian Cities" held at TISS, Mumbai on 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.
- *In Defence of Sustho Sanskriti (Healthy Culture): Understanding Bengali Middle Class-ness in Neoliberal India* presented at the international seminar on 'The Middle Class in World Society' held at ISEC (Institute of Social and Economic Change), Bangalore, on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.
- *Middle class Hegemony and Distinction: An Ethnographic Exploration in West Bengal, India* presented at the 'How Class Works' 2014 Conference held at State University of New York at Stony Brook, USA from 5-7 June, 2014.
- *'Bengali Middle Class' and its Political-ideological Standpoint in a Neo-liberal Developing Nation: Voices from two cities in West Bengal, India* selected for presentation at the Second International Conference on Middle Class titled 'The Middle Class as the Precondition for Stability of Society: Fifteen Years Later' organized by Bulgarian Sociological Society at Sofia, Bulgaria on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2013.
- *The Making of the Contemporary Bengali 'Middle class' and the Ideological Lineages of 'Bhadralok'* presented at the colloquium on "Middle Class" organized by the department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Bombay on 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2012.
- *Towards Re-thinking the 'Middle Class': an exploration*, presented at the national conference on Literary and Cultural Studies, Researchers at Work Conference, 2011 at Hyderabad Central University, on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2011.
- *Finishing school in retail*, coauthored with ATLMRI research team, presented at conference on "Finishing school: A solution to Employability?" at TISS, Mumbai on July 11, 2008.
- *Is the 'social' in microfinance washed away with Globalization*, co-authored with Dr Sony Pellissery, presented at national conference on Emerging Trends in Global Economy: Post-Globalization Dimensions at Kakatiya University, Andhra Pradesh on 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2007.

### **Invited papers/talks/teaching:**

- **Invited talk:**  
*Fashioning Self, Building Hegemony: The Curious Case of the Bengali Middle Class*, talk based on PhD research work, presented at the National Law School of India University, Bangalore as part of CSSEIP Special Lecture Series on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2016.
- **Invited paper presentation:**  
*Claiming "Bengali Middle Class-ness" through Social Sensitivity: The Case of Durgapur Steel Plant Township, West Bengal* presented at the National Conference on Middle class titled 'Tracking the Growth of India's Middle Classes' organized by the Centre for Culture and Development at Vadodara, Gujarat on the 27<sup>th</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

### **Awards /Achievements:**

- National Scholarship by Govt. of India for B.A. (Hons.) result
- 2<sup>nd</sup> rank in Calcutta University in B.A. (Hons.)
- 1<sup>st</sup> rank in University of Pune in M.A.
- Teaching Assistant scholarship for M.Phil in the Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT, Bombay for the period 2005-7
- Teaching Assistant scholarship for PhD in the Dept of Humanities & Social Sciences, IIT, Bombay for the period 2009-2013
- Qualified for JRF and Eligibility for Lectureship in the UGC NET held on December 2013

**Academic Record:**

<b>Degree</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Year of passing</b>	<b>Subject/s</b>	<b>Division/Class</b>	<b>%of marks/CPI</b>
<b>Graduation:</b> B.A. (Hons. in Sociology)	Lady Brabourne College under Calcutta University	2003	Sociology, Political Science, Philosophy	First class (Rank 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	62.75%
<b>Post-graduation:</b> M.A.	University of Pune	2005	Sociology	First class (Rank 1 <sup>st</sup> )	71.25%
M.Phil. (Specialization in Planning and Development)	IIT, Bombay	2007	Sociology		9.34 (CPI)
PhD	IIT, Bombay	Awarded degree in August, 2016	Sociology		

**Other current academic engagements:**

Reviewer at *Irish Journal of South Asian Studies*, an online peer-reviewed journal since 2018.