

**Title: Social networks and experienced inequality**

**Speaker: Prof. Anand Shrivastava, Azim Premji University, Bangalore**

**Area: Economics**

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**Abstract:**

Traditional measures of inequality, such as the Gini coefficient, involve pairwise comparisons across all members of a given population. But most people possess information about, and therefore experience inequality in comparison to, only a subset of the population. In this paper, we provide simple axioms to describe inequality as experienced in social networks. Consistent with these axioms, we propose an index to measure aggregate experienced inequality. We then compute the Gini coefficient and experienced inequality in 75 villages in Karnataka, India. We show that for a given wealth distribution, the social network could either accentuate or diminish experienced inequality. We show, first analytically and then empirically, how this can happen with respect to two network properties. Firstly, wealth-based homophily is negatively associated with experienced inequality. Secondly, caste-based homophily is negatively associated with experienced inequality when within-caste inequality is less than the overall Gini coefficient (and positively associated when the opposite is true).

**Speaker Profile:**



Anand Shrivastava teaches Economics at School of Arts and Sciences.

He completed his PhD at the University of Cambridge.

He also has an MPhil and a Graduate Diploma in Economics from the University of Cambridge and a BTech in Mechanical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.

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