

"A man is
great by
deeds, not by
birth"

-Chanakya

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Class-divide in the evolution of career schemas and occupational mandates in the institutionalization of imported occupations: The case of Stand-up Comedy in India

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Abstract:

The key objective of this research is to understand how new careers emerge and develop in emerging markets when imported from advanced economies. The main aspect of consideration here is the importing of and local response to foreign occupational mandates (Fayard, Stigliani & Bechky, 2016; Nelsen & Barley, 1997), or what the occupation stands for, and career schemas (Nigam & Dokko, 2019), or what makes for good and fulfilling careers. The motivation behind this study is to understand how the flowering of new extra-organizational protean (self-managed, Greenhaus & Kossek, 2014) career opportunities (such as stand-up comedy, YouTuber, startup founder) for the youth today interacts with the social and moral fabric of India. Career schemas and ethos play a central role in the emergence and institutionalization of new occupations and professions (Fayard, Stigliani & Bechky, 2016; Nigam & Dokko, 2019). What a good and meaningful career consists of and what the occupation stands for, both guide career actions in nascent occupations. However, what is “good” in one cultural context may not be valued as worthy in another. With this in mind, our study's key question concerns the moral consequences of foreign occupational mandates for the local emergence of an occupational field and community (Van Maanen & Barley, 1982) post occupational importation from advanced to emerging economies. Our study contributes to the sociology of work literature exploring the changing nature of work and occupations (Barley, Bechky & Milliken, 2017) in general, and to the interaction between occupational mandates and career schemas (Nigam & Dokko, 2019) in particular.

Keywords: institutionalization of imported careers, class divide, career schema, imported careers. stand-up comedy, India

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