



Azim Premji University Faculty Seminar Series

presents a talk on

"Losing labour: what does loss of work mean for women workers?"

Speaker

Madhumita Dutta

Date: 24 February, 2016 (Wednesday)

Time: 09:00 am to 10:30 am

Venue: Seminar Hall, 10th Floor, Pixel A, Azim Premji University

About the Topic

In 2014, an electronics factory announced closure near Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The workforce was predominantly young women who had migrated from different districts of Tamil Nadu to work in the factory for the past six to eight years. In the everyday relations of production and work, a 'web of relationship' got formed on the shopfloor of a hyper efficient global manufacturing site. I have tried to explore this 'relationship', how did women look at work, how was it linked to their lives outside the factory and what would loss of work mean to them? Is it only about wages and livelihoods or do the women see the 'loss' beyond these? I look at the complex social relations that are formed by the everyday practices around 'work' -place identity, community, way of being, where work means 'more than just a job', emphasizing the relationality of space and 'emotional' attachment that workers develop towards work and workspace. Labour's 'attachment' to this space is not necessarily unproblematic, and can become an impediment in the larger politics of labour. However, I argue that emotions do not 'depoliticize' the process but give a sense of the complexity of relations in a community (Butler 2004). I foreground the importance of 'emotions' (Bondi, 2007) in 'spatial class analysis' (Herod, 1998) of labour.

About the Speaker

Madhumita Dutta is a Chennai based activist and a member of Vettiver Collective, working on social justice issues. She has also worked as a journalist with *Down To Earth*, a science, environment and development fortnightly magazine published by the Delhi-based organization Centre for Science and Environment. At present she is pursuing a doctoral degree in Labour Geography from the University of Durham.