

Short bio:

Meenakshi Thapan, is Professor of Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics, and Co-ordinator of the European Studies Programme (funded by the European Union, 2010-2011), University of Delhi. Her publications include *Life at School. An Ethnographic Study* (Oxford University Press, 1991, 2006); (edited) *Embodiment. Essays on Gender and Identity* (Oxford University Press, 1997); (edited) *Anthropological Journeys. Reflections on Fieldwork* (Orient Longman, 1998); (edited) *Transnational Migration and the Politics of Identity* (Sage, 2005); (co-edited with Roland Lardinois) *Reading Pierre Bourdieu in a Dual Context: Essays from India and France* (Routledge, Taylor and Francis, 2006). Her most recent publications are *Living the Body: Embodiment, Womanhood and Identity in Contemporary India*. (Sage, 2009) and (edited) *Contested Spaces. Citizenship and Belonging in Contemporary Times*. (Orient Blackswan, 2010). She is also Series Editor of a five volume series on *Women and Migration in Asia* (Sage, 2005-2008).

Title:

Waiting for Change: enduring educational outcomes

Abstract:

The key to understanding the relationship between education and transformation lies in perceiving the ways in which it is possible for youth around the world to make sense of their everyday lives in a rapidly changing world. Taking the view that education is not only about what it does but who it addresses, it is imperative to understand the lived experience of young people. This is possible on two registers: the experience of 'locality' as it is produced on the edge of what it means to be 'modern' in contemporary society and through the contradictions, cleavages and dilemmas that characterize the lives of young people everywhere. How do young people reflect on themselves and their futures? What forms do these reflections take? On what social forces and personal dilemmas are these based? And how are these grounded in the local as much as in the global both in the nature of the experience as well as in the articulation of it? The underlying premise of my talk is that the experience of persistent inequalities as a consequence of personal trajectories and social institutions is central to the experience of youth as is their participation in an increasingly changing global scenario. I focus not so much on the promise that education holds out but on the outcome of education for young people in the spaces that they inhabit in diverse societies.