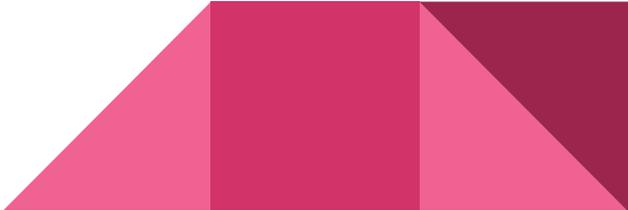


**Scrutinizing the applicability of the
dominant classification of occupations
into
self-care, productivity and leisure in the
context of the caste system in India**

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Introduction

- All Indian Occupational Therapists' Association (AIOTA) defined Occupational Therapy (OT) to include preventive health literacy, assessments and interventions in activities of daily living, work or productive activities, play, leisure and spiritual activities...”
 - Western system of classification of occupations needs to be scrutinized for validity with respect to the Indian context.
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- OT in India has developed by employing Western values.
- Therefore it is essential to critique these ideas to determine their relevance and applicability in cultural, social, economic and political contexts that are radically different



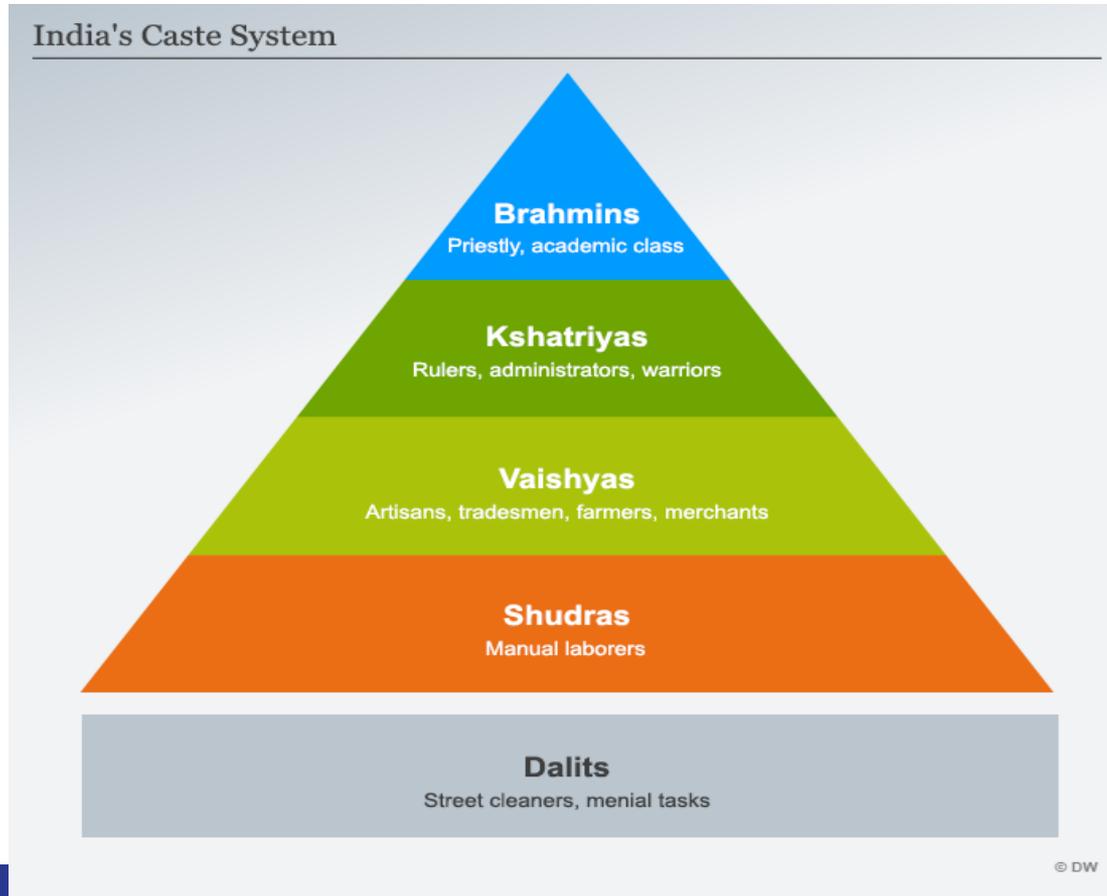
Aims of this presentation

- To explain the Indian caste system and to discuss the societal and cultural impact that caste has on occupations;
 - To critically analyse the caste system using the occupational categories of self-care, productivity and leisure;
 - To discuss the impact of incorporating these occupational categories in Indian OT practices.
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Origin of the caste system in India

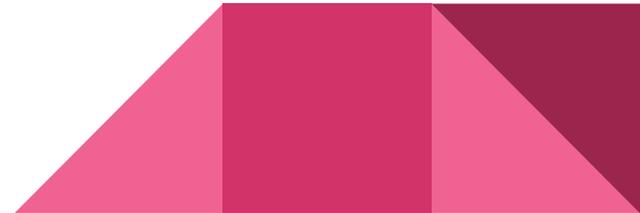
- A unique and distinct hierarchical system to classify society based on birth; a system known as '**caste**'.
 - Caste constitutes an intricate hierarchical system
 - of families and groups who share a similar name,
 - derive their origin from a common ancestor or spiritual being
 - possess an identical hereditary background
 - share specific occupation
 - preserved by marriage
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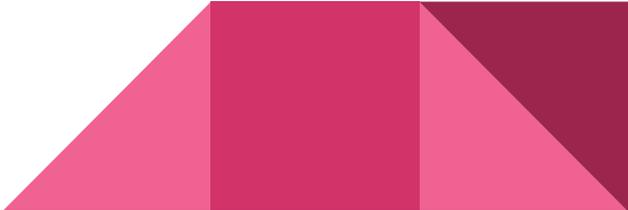
Picture: Jones (2017)



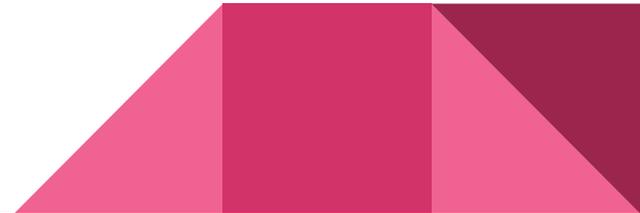
Scrutinizing the caste system using the three occupational categories

- Caste is grounded in religion and determined by 'purity'
- Dalits have no access to basic resources to meet self-care needs
- Caste dictates productive work opportunities as well
- Non-adherence leads to severe punishments and banishments

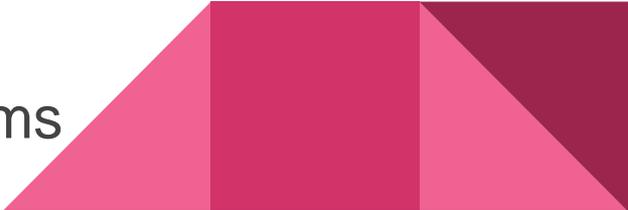


- Autonomy and independence to choose one's occupation is a privilege unavailable to lower caste members
 - Gender segregation also exists
 - Devalued statuses compound an individual's disadvantages
 - Shudras and Dalits coerced to perform menial vocations
 - Leisure is embedded in religion, caste, class and culture
 - Leisure pursuits involve collective pursuits usually by families
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- Pursuits like dance, drama and puppet shows are caste-driven
- Pilgrimage and travel are important leisure activities
- But visiting temples is also caste-driven
- Segregation is observed even during festivals and community prayers
- Leisure activities are also classified based on gender
- In-built patriarchy dictates choice of leisure activities



Conclusion

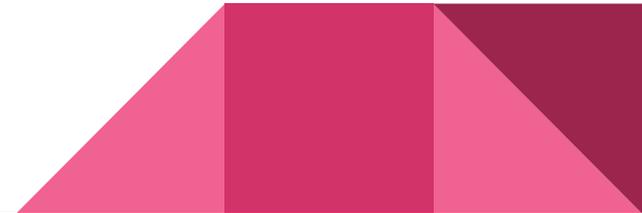
- Hegemonic categorization of occupations thus provides a challenge to occupational engagement in India
 - Application of Western values without scrutiny can result in OT being perceived as coercive
 - Power dynamics between therapists and clients exacerbated
 - However challenging dominant views and status quo is discouraged in India
 - Therapists challenging this are separated, shunned and lose credibility
 - Some therapists are challenging these norms
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