

ASHOK DANAVATH

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EDUCATION

University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), Amsterdam, Netherlands

PhD in Social Sciences, Department of Anthropology, September 2025 – August 2029

Program Group: *Moving Matters: People, Goods, Power and Ideas*

Committee: Dr L.J. (Luisa) Steur, Dr. O.K. (Olga) Sooudi

Erasmus University Rotterdam, International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands

MA, Development Studies, 2022

MA Thesis: *“Exploring vulnerability of Dalit-Adivasi tenant farmers in Telangana in the context of Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bima schemes”* | Committee: Dr. Richard Hemraj Toppo, Dr. Helena Pérez Niño

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

BA, Social Sciences (History, Political Science & International Relations), Specialization: Social Movements & Education, 2019

BA Thesis: *“School Dropouts after RTE Act 2009: A Study of Rural Schools in Mulugu Mandal (Telangana State)”* |

Committee: Dr. Murali Krishna Mallepaku

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Politics of Knowledge; Indigenous Education; Social Inequality & Poverty; Public Health Policy, Politics of Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Identity; Politics of Indigeneity; Indigenous Studies; Sociology and anthropology of Education; Agrarian & Rural Welfare; Social Anthropology; Ethnography; Public Policy & Governance; Globalization & Development; South Asia & Global South; Social Movements; Critical Caste Studies; Adivasi in India and South Asia

RESEARCH & WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Projects

National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights (NCDHR), Delhi, India

Senior Researcher, June 2022 – Present

- Designed and implemented survey instruments to evaluate educational welfare policies for marginalized students.
- Conducted in-depth interviews to identify systemic gaps and barriers in policy implementation.
- Analyzed qualitative and quantitative data to provide actionable recommendations for policy reforms.

LibTech India, Vishakhapatnam, India

Researcher, July 2020 – June 2021

- Conducted a year-long policy analysis of different national welfare schemes through fieldwork
- Analyzed survey data using tools like Kobo Toolbox and R to evaluate policy impacts.
- Conducted ethnographic interviews to complement quantitative findings.

Krishi Integrated Rural Development Society, Telangana, India

Program Coordinator, May 2019 - January 2020

- Addressed early education challenges for Indigenous students in rural Telangana.
- Conducted semi-structured interviews with families and educators to identify barriers.

Wildlife Conservation Society, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Lead Researcher, January 2019 – April 2019

- Investigated the socio-economic conditions of Chenchu Adivasis in the Nallamalla forest.
- Conducted focus group discussions and participant observation, collaborating with State-Union governments.

Tata Institute of Social Sciences, School of Gender Studies, Hyderabad, India

Research Assistant, October 2018 – December 2018

- Analyzed the impact of Conditional Cash Transfer Schemes on child marriage reduction in low-income families in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Independent Current Research Projects

Co-researcher, June 2023 - Present

- The Government of Telangana Overseas Scholarship: A Review of the Decade Long Policy Revision and Persisting Challenges

Other Work Experience

Good Samaritans India Trust, Hyderabad, India

Operational Manager, March 2020 - June 2020

- Reviewing & Advocating for Strengthening State Level Policy for the Homeless

Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Gandhinagar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

Teaching Assistant, August 2019 – April 2020

- Supporting undergraduate students in engaging with foundational social science curricula

Stanford University, All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) & World Bank

Enumerator, October 2017 – December 2017

- Learning Assessment Outcomes of the Engineering Students across India Study Project

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles & Special Issue

Danavath, A., Marwaha, R., Thapliyal, N. (October 23, 2024). Anti-caste Activism in US Higher Education: Beyond Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. *NORRAG Special Issue 10: Education for Societal Transformation: Alternatives for a Just Future*, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, Switzerland. <https://resources.norrag.org/resource/900/education-for-societal-transformation-alternatives-for-a-just-future>

Danavath, A. (September 01, 2023). A discriminatory education policy that further excludes the oppressed from academia: the case of the National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) for SC-ST scholars in India. *The Bernard & Audre Rapoport Center Human Rights Working Paper Series 8(2023)*, The University of Texas at Austin. <https://law.utexas.edu/humanrights/projects/a-discriminatory-education-policy-that-further-excludes-the-oppressed-from-academia-the-case-of-the-national-overseas-scholarship-nos-for-sc-st-scholars-in-india/>

Book Chapters

Danavath, A. (2022). Vaikunthadhamam: The Political Hinduisation of Marginalised Identities in Telangana. In Dharavath, M. & A, Achuth (Eds.), *Reimagining Marginality: Exploitation, Experience, Expression*, Authors Press

Manuscripts under Review

Danavath, A. (2023) Invisible Victims: Caste, Indirect Discrimination, and Landless Tenant Farmers in Telangana's Agrarian Legislation. *CASTE: A Global Journal on Social Exclusion*. Brandeis University, Massachusetts, United States

Danavath, A. (2024) Covid Pandemic and Challenges of Marginalized Students in Higher Education Institutions in India, *Economic and Political Weekly*

Manuscript in Preparation

Danavath, A., Marwaha, R. (2024). Institutionalized Discrimination in the Mother Tongue-based -Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) Program: An Ethnographic Study of Indigenous (Adivasi) Trainers in Andhra Pradesh, India. *Oxford Human Rights Hub Journal Special Issue: Unearthing eco-casteism: A sociolegal exploration of caste and the environment in international law*, University of Oxford, Oxford, England.

Editorial & Opinion Essays

Danavath, A. (September 11, 2024) Electoral-Promised Fellowship Support is Essential for Graduate Students in Telangana. *Disha Daily*. <https://www.dishadaily.com/editpage/students-need-reassurance-from-government-363805>

Danavath, A. & Kolluguri, K. (July 25, 2024). Caste Beyond Borders: How Neoliberalism Accelerates Oppression by Indian Elites Overseas. *The Wire*. <https://staging.thewire.in/caste/caste-beyond-borders-how-neoliberalism-accelerates-oppression-by-indian-elites-overseas>

Danavath, A. (January 04, 2024). What 'Praja Palana' Mean for Women of Telangana. *NEWS Click*, <https://www.newsclick.in/what-praja-palana-mean-women-telangana>

Danavath, A. (October 12, 2023). Educational Equity: Is Fundraising the Answer to Caste-Oppressed Students?. *NEWS Click*, <https://www.newsclick.in/educational-equity-fundraising-answer-caste-oppressed-students>

Pangi, P., Korra, R., **Danavath, A.**, Vidya., Marwaha, R. (August 17, 2023). Adivasi Students in AP Struggle in Mother Tongue-Based Education Initiative. *NEWS Click*. <https://www.newsclick.in/adivasi-students-ap-struggle-mother-tongue-based-education-initiative>

Danavath, A. (November 17, 2022). Schools in Telangana Lack Proper Infrastructure. *Sakshi Telugu Newspaper*, <https://m.sakshi.com/telugu-news/guest-columns/schools-telangana-do-not-have-proper-infrastructure-1502592>

Danavath, A. (September 09, 2022). Is Union Govt. Doing Enough to Address the Low Percentage of ST Teachers in Universities? *NEWS Click*. <https://www.newsclick.in/is-union-govt-enough-address-low-percentage-ST-teachers-universities%3F>

Danavath, A. and Gumpenapalli, S. (July 7, 2022). Statue of Ramanuja: An ironic Thread in Telangana's Anti-caste Social Fabric. *South Asian Today*, <https://southasiatoday.com.au/article-10247-statue-of-ramanuja-an-ironic-thread-in-telanganas-anti-caste-social-fabric-details.aspx>

Danavath, A. (June 1, 2022). KCR Sympathises with Farmers' Protest, Ignores Plight of Telangana Tenant Peasants. *NEWS Click*, <https://www.newsclick.in/KCR-sympathises-farmers-potest-ignores-plight-tangana-tenant-peasants>

Danavath, A. (April 27, 2022). Telangana's Backward Caste Overseas Scholarship Hampered by Inclusion of EWS Reservation Policy. *NEWS Click*, <https://www.newsclick.in/Telangana-Backward-Caste-Overseas-Scholarship-Hampered-Inclusion-EWS-Reservation-Policy>

Danavath, A., Pranav, J.P. and Singha, L. (April 6, 2022). Caste rules censor research and deny scholarships to marginalized students in India. *Asian Currents Asian Studies Association of Australia* <https://asaa.asn.au/caste-rules-censor-research-and-deny-scholarships-to-marginalised-students-in-india/>

Awards and Fellowships

- Richard Sutch Graduate Student Travel Grant, Social Science History Association (SSHA), 50th Annual Meeting, Chicago, USA, November 2025
- Social Justice Research Paper Grants, ISS Development Studies, Erasmus University Rotterdam (2022)
- National Overseas Scholarship (NOS), Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India (2020)
- Undergraduate Thesis Travel Awards, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), India (2019)
- Scholarship for Dalit-Adivasi Students, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), India (2016)

PRESENTATIONS

Refereed Conference Proceedings

Danavath, A. (July 2025) *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Educational Access for Dalit-Adivasi Students in Indian Universities* [Oral Presentation], The Role of Education in the Epoch of Anthropocene, 5th International

Sociological Association (ISA) Forum of Sociology, Rabat, Morocco

Danavath, A. (October 2023) *Invisible Victims: Caste, Indirect Discrimination, and Landless Tenant Farmers in Telangana's Agrarian Legislation* [Paper Presentation] CASTE: A Global Journal on Social Exclusion: The 6th International Conference on the Unfinished Legacy of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, Brandeis University, Massachusetts, United States

Danavath, A. (September 2023) *Agrarian Change: Gender, Caste, Indigenous People, Class and Neoliberalism* [Panel Presentation] 13th Annual IIPPE Conference in Political Economy, Madrid, Spain

Danavath, A. (February 2023) *A Discriminatory Educational Policy that Further Excludes the Excluded from Academia: A Case of National Overseas Scholarship (NOS) for SC-ST Scholars in India* [Paper Presentation] Eastern Sociological Society Conference (ESS) 2023, Baltimore, United States

Danavath, A. (July 2020) *A School Dropouts After the 'Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education' (RTE) Act 2009: A Study of Rural Schools in Mulugu Mandal* [Panel Presentation] National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), India

Panel Organized

Vithayathil, T. F., **Danavath, A.**, (July 2025) *Social Justice Reform and the State* [Panel Organizer] RC09 Social Transformations and Sociology of Development Research Committee, 5th International Sociological Association (ISA) Forum of Sociology, Rabat, Morocco

Danavath, A. (May 2023) *Shifting Notions of Custodianship: Internalization of Mainstream Cultures by Indigenous Communities* [Panel Presentation] Bridging Epistemic Divides in Cultural Heritage Protection, European University Institute, Florence, Italy

Invited Talks/Panels/Podcast Discussant Roles

Danavath, A. (November 2025). *Author Meets Critics session on Counting Caste: Census Politics, Bureaucratic Deflection, and Brahmanical Power in India by Trina Vithayathil.* Social Science History Association (SSHA) 50th Annual Meeting, The Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, USA.

Danavath, A. (November 2024). *Solidarity in Ambedkarite Politics: Centering Margins in India*, Ambedkarite Buddhist Association of Texas, Austin, Texas, United States

Danavath, A. (November 2024). *Political Hinduization of Tribal Identity in South India: Telangana as a Case Study*, Native American and Indigenous Peoples Association (NAIPA), Native American and Indigenous Studies, College of Liberal Arts, UT Austin, Texas, United States

Danavath, A. (October 2023). *Caste, Academia, and Bureaucracy: Unveiling Marginalization in Global Education*, South Asian Cultural Exchange (SACE), Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, United States

Danavath, A. (March 2023). *Indigenous Issues and Internal Colonialism*, Ethnic Studies Department, The University of California San Diego, California, United States

Danavath, A. (March 2023). *Higher Education Abroad: Indigenous Students' Representation in Foreign Universities*, Native American & Indigenous Studies, University of Texas, Austin, United States

Danavath, A. (March 2023). *Where are Indigenous Scholars in Indian Academia? Who writes and Speaks About the Indigenous People of India?* Tufts South Asian Regional Committee and Tufts South Asian Political Action Community, Tufts University, United States

Danavath, A. (February 2023). *Academic Casteism: Case of National Overseas Scholarship*, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, United States

Danavath, A. (February 2023). *Academic Freedom & Dalit-Adivasi Students Abroad*, Brown University, Providence, RI, United States

Danavath, A. (February 2023). *Where are the Indigenous Scholars in Indian Academy? Who Writes and Speaks about the Indigenous People of India?* Race & Resistance Studies Department, San Francisco State University, and Center for South Asia, Stanford University, San Francisco, United States

Viyas, M. and **Danavath, A.** (November 23, 2021). *Roots with Ashok: Institutionalised Casteism - Overseas scholarships are a bureaucratic nightmare for Indian Tribal students: Roots with South Asian Today Podcast Season 2 Episode 3.* South Asian Today. <https://www.southasiantoday.com.au/article-10199-roots-with-south-asian-today-overseas-scholarships-are-a-bureaucratic-nightmare-for-indian-tribal-students-details.aspx>

Campus and Departmental Talks

Danavath, A. (March 2023). *Caste and Inequality Lab*. Department of Global Studies, Providence College, RI, United States

Danavath, A. (January 2023). *Sharing Experience of Academia in India & Abroad with First-Generation Students*. Azim Premji University, Karnataka, India

Danavath, A. (July 2022) *Social Justice Issues in Telangana and Opportunities with Higher Education*. Department of Social Work, Mahatma Gandhi University, Nalgonda, India

Danavath, A. (April 2022). *Caste Realities in India*. International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, The Netherlands

STUDENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

- **Vice President**, ISS Student Council Executive Board SCHOLAS, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2021-22
- **Organizer**, *Lessons of Indigeneity Adivasi and Samis*, ISS, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2022
- **Resident Assistant**, TISS Student Dormitory, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, 2016-19

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Volunteer, *Dutch Black Scholars and Experts Conference Celebrating Black Achievement Month*, October 2022
- Mentor, Eklavya Global Scholars Program for First-Generation Learners, India, 2022
- Mentor, Adivasi Mentorship Network (2021- Present), Remote Innovative Teaching Summer Institute

APPEARANCE IN MEDIA

- Expert Commentator, *Higher Education and SC-ST Issues: Right Wing Hindutva Govt. Restricting Dalit-Adivasi Scholars' Access to Higher Education*, T10 News Telugu, India, January 2023
- Personal Testimony. [Boy from remote tribal hamlet gets chance at foreign education](#). *The New Indian Express*. 2020

OTHER SKILLS

- **Organizational:** Project Management, Academic Advising, Interpersonal Communication, Resource Referral, Student Development
- **Languages:** Native Lambadi, Fluent English, Fluent Telugu, Fluent Hindi, Intermediate Marathi, Intermediate Haryanvi, Intermediate Punjabi, Beginner Tamil, Beginner Kannada, Beginner Dutch
- **Software:** G Suit, Office 365, SPSS (*Advanced*); STATA (*Intermediary*); R (*Beginner*)