

Title: Justice for all? Evaluating the impact of legal aid clinics in India

Speaker: Nitin Kumar Bharti, NYU Abu Dhabi

Area: Economics

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Abstract:

We study the effect of legal aid in Indian prisons. We evaluate a national policy to establish legal aid clinics in every prison in India by collecting the exact opening dates of over 700 prisons and matching this to data on over 23 million criminal cases and prisoner population. Our empirical strategy exploits the staggered roll-out of legal aid clinics in a difference-in-differences design. Preliminary results suggest that defendants with access to a jail legal aid clinic are more likely to receive a definitive judgment and more likely to be acquitted. Furthermore, prisons show a decline in undertrial prisoner share by about 10%, 5 years after the establishment of clinics.

Speaker Profile:



Nitin Bharti is a postdoctoral scholar in the Economics department of the New York University-Abu Dhabi. He received his Ph.D. from the Paris School of Economics and the University of Namur in 2022. Before that, he earned his bachelor's degree from IIT-Kharagpur and has two years of experience working in the corporate sector. He is an applied micro-economist, and his research interests lie in understanding the development of educational systems and their linkage with economic growth and inequality. He is also interested in studying the long-term evolution of economic inequalities in the South Asia region.

Webpage Link: <https://nyuad.nyu.edu/en/research/postdoctoral-research/researchers/research-bios/nitin-kumar-bharti.html>