

Nishtha Sharma

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Education

Ph.D. in Economics, University of California, Irvine	2022 (Expected)
Master of Economics, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi	2014
Bachelor of Economics (Honors), University of Delhi	2011

Research Fields

Behavioral and Experimental Economics, Labor Economics, Political Economics, Applied Microeconomic theory

Work Experience

Ph.D. Intern, Fund Internship Program (FIP), Strategy, Policy and Review Department, International Monetary Fund	2021
Graduate Student Researcher for Professor John Duffy, UC Irvine	2021
Graduate Student Researcher for Professor Michael McBride, UC Irvine	2020
Graduate Student Researcher for Professor Jean-Paul Carvalho, Oxford University	2019

Working Papers

"Persistence of racial and gender discrimination: Theory and Experimental evidence" (JOB MARKET PAPER)

This paper explains the persistence of discrimination despite the evidence that bias against unfavored groups can be overcome after they succeed against the favored groups. I use dynamic contest theory and experimental evidence to show that when people compete with discrimination, the threat of losing privilege is more salient than the opportunity of overcoming bias. Unless the unfavored person cares sufficiently more about the future, they have a lower chance of success when bias can be overcome than when it cannot. Thus, discrimination persists even when bias can change, and there is no coordination failure and warrants policy intervention.

"The economics of street charity: evidence from India" (Under review)

In this paper, I use propensity score matching (PSM) on survey data from urban India to investigate if charitable giving differs towards beggars and street vendors who also offer a product while soliciting money. The results from the restricted sample where the money giver had no potential use for the product and stated charity as a reason for their purchase suggest that transfers to vendors are substantially larger than transfers to beggars. Based on the findings from the survey, I develop a signaling model of street charity, which considers the objectives of both the charity solicitor and giver, and show that in a separating equilibrium, the act of vending separates the involuntary unemployed from the voluntary unemployed, predicting larger charitable transfers to vendors compared to beggars.

Work in Progress

"Which gendered laws matter for women's economic empowerment?" (joint with Anna Fruttero and Diego Gomes)

"Gender norms and the partition of British India" (joint with Abhiroop Mukhopadhyay and Mahima Vasisht)

"Discontinuity of Gender discrimination: theory and experimental evidence from India"

"Behavioral traits and the underrepresentation of women in economic policymaking" (joint with Anna Fruttero)

Conference and Workshop Presentations

Association for Study of Religion Economics and Culture Graduate Student Conference	2021
Ahmedabad University's 2nd Annual Economics Conference	2021
Winter School, Delhi School of Economics & The Econometric Society	2020
Behavioral Research in Economics Workshop, IIM-A & IIM-B	2020
Southern Economic Association Conference	2020
Economic Science Association Global Virtual Conference	2020
Contests: Theory and Evidence Conference	2019, 2020

Workshop on India's Women, Work, and Development, Evidence for Policy and Design, Indian Statistical Institute	2019
Institute for Mathematics and Behavioral Science Graduate Student Workshop	2019
Women in Economics Spring Workshop, UC Irvine	2019
Graduate Student Workshop by the Association for the Study of Religion, Economics and Culture	2019

Research Grants & Fellowships

Experimental Social Science Laboratory Research Grant, UC Irvine (\$2400)	2021
Social Sciences Graduate Students Fellowship, UC Irvine (\$12500)	2021-2022
Graduate Division Completion Fellowship, UC Irvine (\$7500)	2021-2022
Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition Grant, UC Irvine (\$5000)	2022
Associate Dean's Dissertation Fellowship, UC Irvine (\$7500)	2020
Kugelman Citizen Peace-building Fellowship, UC Irvine (\$3000)	2020 - 2021
Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies Research Grant, UC Irvine (\$2800)	2020
Initiatives to End Family Violence Research Grant, UC Irvine (\$1000)	2019
Department of Economics Summer Research Fellowship, UC Irvine (\$8600)	2018-2021
Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies Travel Grant, UC Irvine (\$2000)	2019
Department of Economics Travel Grant, UC Irvine (\$500)	2019

Service and Leadership

Referee for Experimental Economics, Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control	
Organizer of the Theory, History, and Political Economy Workshop at UC Irvine	2020–Present
Graduate student mentor, UC Irvine	2019–Present

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, UC Irvine	
Graduate level: Microeconomic Theory 1	Fall 2018, 2019
Microeconomic Theory 2 (Game theory)	Winter 2019, 2020
Undergraduate level: Intermediate Microeconomics (Virtual)	Spring 2021
Probability Theory	Fall 2016, Spring 2018, Spring 2019
Managerial Economics	Winter 2018
Economics of Strategy	Fall 2017
Basic Macroeconomics	Spring 2017
Basic Microeconomics	Winter 2017

Assistant Professor, Indian School of Business and Finance, London School of Economics and Political Science - International Center, New Delhi, India	
Introduction to Economics (Undergraduate Microeconomics and Macroeconomics)	2015-16

References

Professor Stergios Skaperdas UC Irvine +1 949 824 4167 sskaperd@uci.edu → <i>Stergios' website</i>	Professor Michael McBride UC Irvine +61 2 9385 4700 mcbride@uci.edu → <i>Mike's website</i>	Professor John Duffy UC Irvine +1 949 824 8341 duffy@uci.edu → <i>John's website</i>	Professor Meera Mahadevan UC Irvine +1202 600 5172 meera.m@uci.edu → <i>Meera's website</i>
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Software Skills

Proficient in Python, STATA, oTree, LaTeX and MS Office