

Inclusion and Sustainability



**Annual Research
Symposium**

IFMR GSB, Krea University

Friday 11th December, 2020

Message from Research Symposium Committee

Welcome to Krea University! The theme for the Annual Research Symposium 2020 at IFMR GSB is Inclusion and Sustainability. The inequalities and exclusion that surfaced during the ongoing pandemic, and the recent widespread protests from the BLM movement have served as a wake-up call globally and put a spotlight on how inclusive our societies really are. This symposium aims to highlight evidence-based research towards answering some pertinent questions on inclusion and sustainability. It promises to be an impact packed day with a range of relevant themes and practice experts from across the world. We have an excellent line-up of sessions combining various formats (seminars, distinguished lectures, showcase events) on diverse themes (Digital Inclusion, Financial Inclusion, Social Inclusion and Sustainable Finance). Globally reputed academics, social entrepreneurs from industry, representatives from the government and experts housed in our own cutting-edge research centres that work at the grass-root level for the betterment of the bottom of the pyramid, have offered their valuable time to be a part of this initiative. We hope your experience of this virtual symposium will be enriching and memorable. We look forward to hosting you.

Research Symposium Committee

Prof. Ashay Kadam, Chair

Prof. Amit Das

Prof. Jyoti Prasad Mukhopadhyay

Prof. Praveen Bhagwan

Prof. Sumit Mishra



SCHEDULE

Sessions

Page no

○ 7:15 am-7:20 am

Welcome remarks

Prof. Shobha Das

Dean, IFMR GSB
Krea University

○ 7:20am-7:30am

Introduction

Prof. Ashay Kadam

Chair, Research Symposium Committee,
Krea University

○ 7:30am-8:00am

Inaugural address

Prof. Sunder Ramaswamy

Vice-Chancellor,
Krea University

○ 8:00am-9:00am

Keynote address

***An Inclusive Growth Dividend: Reframing
the Role of Income Transfers in India's
Development Strategy***

Prof. Karthik Muralidharan

Tata Chancellor's Professor of Economics,
University of California, San Diego

○ 9:00am-9:45am

Research Seminar

Perspectives on Digital Inclusion

Prof. Harminder Singh

Auckland University of Technology

○ 9:45am-10:30am

Research Seminar

Social Enterprise and Digital Transformation

Prof. Atreyi Kankanhalli

Provost's Chair Professor and Deputy Head,
Department of Information Systems and Analytics,
National University of Singapore

○ 10:30am-11:00am

Showcase : Research Databases

***India Data Portal : a valuable data source
for academic research on inclusion***

Dr. Avik Sarkar

Senior Research Fellow, Bharti Institute of Public Policy,
Indian School of Business

○ 11:00am-11:45am

Showcase : J-PAL South Asia Research

***Embedding the graduation approach in
Bihar's formal social protection system***

Dr. Shagun Sabarwal

Director of Policy, Training, and Communications
at J-PAL South Asia, Director of CLEAR South Asia

○ 11:45am-12:30pm

Research Seminar

***Access to Banking, Savings and
Consumption Smoothing in Rural India***

Prof. Lore Vandewalle

Graduate Institute of International and
Development Studies, Geneva

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SCHEDULE

Sessions

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○ 12:30pm-1:30 pm

Distinguished Lecture

FinTech for the Bottom of the Pyramid

Prof. Bhagwan Chowdhry

Professor of Finance, Executive Director,
Digital Identity Research Initiative (DIRI),
Indian School of Business

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○ 1:30pm-2:30pm

Showcase : LEAD Research

**Scoping meso-level insurance in
Agricultural sector in India**

Dr. Shailender Swaminathan,

Principal Economist, LEAD

Dr. Sabina Yasmin,

Research Fellow, LEAD

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○ 2:30pm-3:00 pm

Showcase : Government initiatives

Fintech for Agriculture

Suniti Nanda

Fintech Officer, Government of Maharashtra

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○ 3:00pm-4:00 pm

Distinguished Lecture

**Covid 19 Impact on Employment and
Welfare, and the Way Forward**

Prof. Amit Basole

Head, Centre for Sustainable Employment,
Azim Premji University

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○ 4:00pm-4:30 pm

Showcase : Industry best practices

Inclusive employment for speech and hearing impaired

Raja Sekhar Reddy

Founder, Ekalavya Foundation

Founder, Squaremeal Foods

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○ 4:30pm-5:30pm

Distinguished Lecture

**How Great Companies Deliver Both
Purpose and Profit**

Prof. Alex Edmans

Academic Director, Centre for Corporate Governance,
London Business School

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○ 5:30pm-6:00pm

Showcase : Government initiatives

Technology and Inclusion

Rama Devi Lanka

Director, Emerging Technologies,
Officer on Special Duty, ITE&C Dept,
Government of Telangana

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○ 6:00pm-7:00pm

Distinguished Lecture

**On Her Own Account :
How Strengthening Women's Financial
Control Impacts Labor Supply and
Gender Norms**

Dr. Charity Troyer Moore

Director, South Asia Economics Research,
MacMillan Center, Yale University

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Inaugural address



Prof. Sunder Ramaswamy

Vice-Chancellor, Krea University

Sunder Ramaswamy is a professional economist, an educator, and an academic administrator with extensive experience both in India and the United States. He is currently the Vice Chancellor of Krea University, an exciting new university initiative.

He is on leave from Middlebury College, one of the top ranked liberal arts institutions in the US, where he is a Distinguished College Professor of International Economics. From 2009 - 2015, he was the President of the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, California (MIIS); He has been a faculty & administrator at Middlebury since 1990, and has had sabbaticals at the World Bank, Vanderbilt University, IFMR, & the Madras School of Economics (including 2 stints as Director).

He has co-authored and co-edited 4 books, written scores of articles, and delivered over 175 lectures all over the world on Globalization, Economic Development, Indian Economic Reforms and Economic Literacy; His research has been supported by Ford Foundation, SW Davis Foundation and USAID. He has also been a consultant to UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNU and the World Bank.

His passion for teaching, his academic work, and his administrative accomplishments have been recognized with numerous honors and awards both in India and in the United States.

An Inclusive Growth Dividend: Reframing the Role of Income Transfers in India's Development Strategy

Abstract

Both theory and evidence suggest that unconditional universal income transfers can not only reduce poverty, but also improve productivity and achieve development goals more broadly. Given recent policy initiatives in India to support farmers with income transfers (at an estimated cost of around 0.4% of GDP), we propose an expansion of this approach to cover all citizens, as one component of India's portfolio of social protection programs. Specifically, we propose that India implement an Inclusive Growth Dividend (IGD), pegged at 1% of GDP per capita, which reaches all citizens and grows equally for all with the country's growth. This will be both fiscally feasible and practically implementable and would be a powerful practical and symbolic commitment to universally shared prosperity. We review global evidence on the impact of income transfer schemes and argue that an IGD would be a highly cost-effective way of directly reducing poverty, with limited administrative costs of targeting, reduced risk of exclusion errors, lower leakage of benefits, and lower disincentives for work compared to most targeted programs. It would also improve financial inclusion and formal savings, relax borrowing constraints for productive investments, and improve female empowerment. Further, successfully delivering an IGD would augment the capacity and credibility of the Indian state. Over time, it could create an attainable benchmark against which to evaluate (and improve) the quality of public expenditure. Finally, we note that an IGD could be a powerful tool for the Government of India to promote the objectives of equity and efficiency given the vast differences in income levels and state capacity among Indian states.



Prof. Karthik Muralidharan

Tata Chancellor's Professor of Economics,
University of California, San Diego

Speaker Bio:

Karthik Muralidharan is the Tata Chancellor's Professor of economics at the University of California, San Diego.

Born and raised in India, he earned an A.B. in economics (summa cum laude) from Harvard, an M.Phil. in economics from Cambridge (UK), and a Ph.D. in economics from Harvard. He is a Research Associate of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), a Fellow and Board Member of the Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD), a Board member and co-chair of the Education program at the Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), an Affiliate at the Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA), and a Research Affiliate with Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA).

Prof. Muralidharan's primary research interests include development, public, and labor economics. Specific topics of interest include education, health, and social protection; measuring quality of public service delivery; program evaluation; and improving the effectiveness of public spending (with a focus on developing countries). Courses taught include undergraduate and graduate classes in development economics, program evaluation, the economics of education, and the Indian Economy.

Perspectives on Digital Inclusion

Abstract

Digital inclusion means that all of us should be able to participate in digitally-enabled platforms, whether for economic, social, entertainment or other purposes. Traditional concerns over the digital divide, which focused on access to technology, has expanded to cover issues such as digital literacy, digital rights, and digital regulation. Another dimension of digital inclusion is that it can be understood at many different levels, from providing accessibility for disabled and underprivileged individuals to helping countries, communities, or societies not to be left behind from the digital economy. Understanding digital inclusion is important because the flip-side- digitally-excluded individuals and societies- do not foretell positive outcomes for the world. The talk will explore the different facets of digital inclusion, examine its role in improving equity and equality in societies, and suggest ways that businesses can participate in strengthening it.



Prof. Harminder Singh

Auckland University of Technology

Speaker Bio:

Harminder Singh is an Associate Professor in Business Information Systems in the AUT Business School at the Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. He received his PhD from Michigan State University. He teaches courses in information systems strategy, risk, and analytics. Harminder's research examines the governance of IT-enabled work environments and information systems ethics

Social Enterprise and Digital Transformation

Abstract

This talk will address the problem of how social enterprises can undergo digital transformation. Digital technology presents unique challenges and opportunities for social enterprises, with their social aims and values. Extending prior research on digital maturity models, we will discuss how such models can be applied to social enterprises to drive their digital transformation and build their digital capabilities. Examples will be drawn from various social enterprises and government initiatives around the world. The talk will conclude by outlining future research directions in this area.



Prof. Atreyi Kankanhalli

Provost's Chair Professor and Deputy Head,
Department of Information Systems and
Analytics, National University of Singapore

Speaker Bio:

Atreyi Kankanhalli is Provost's Chair Professor and Deputy Head (Research and Administration) in the Department of Information Systems and Analytics at the National University of Singapore. She has had visiting stints at UC Berkeley, London School of Economics, and ESSEC Business School. Her research interests are in the areas of online communities and digital collaboration (including man-machine collaboration), digital transformation and innovation (particularly in government and healthcare sectors), and IT policy and governance. Her work has appeared in premium journals, such as MIS Quarterly, Information Systems Research, Research Policy, and Journal of Management Information Systems. She has over 160 publications which have been highly cited. She has received the ACM-SIGMIS Best Doctoral Dissertation award, IBM Faculty Award, and several best paper awards. She is serving or has served on the boards of ISR (Associate Editor), MISQ (Senior Editor, Associate Editor), JAIS (Senior Editor) and Information and Management (Associate Editor), as well as been Program Chair for ICEGOV 2018, PACIS 2015, and BDAH 2014. She is currently serving as Program Chair for ICIS 2021.

India Data Portal : a valuable data source for academic research on inclusion

Abstract

The “India Data Portal” is a one-stop open-access portal for search, analysis and visualization of data related to agriculture and financial inclusion, for the benefit of researchers, journalists, students, policy makers, administrators, NGOs, and entrepreneurs. The session would provide an overview of how this portal can help researchers can use this site for their research purpose along with overview on tracking economic activity through high frequency indicators. Details: www.indiadataportal.com



Dr. Avik Sarkar

Senior Research Fellow, Bharti Institute of Public Policy, Indian School of Business

Speaker Bio:

Dr. Avik Sarkar is Faculty at Indian School of Business working in the areas of Data, Emerging Technology and Public Policy. At ISB, Dr Sarkar is heading the development of India Data Portal (www.indiadataportal.com), one stop portal for analysis and visualization of government data. Dr. Sarkar was the former Head of Data Analytics Cell and Officer on Special Duty (OSD) at NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India Aayog) premier policy think-tank of Government of India. At NITI Aayog, Dr. Sarkar helped in developing roadmap for use of data, analytics and artificial intelligence for Governance, Policy making across various sectors for India's inclusive growth and led efforts towards setting up the first High Performance Computing based Data Analytics Lab and Energy Modeling Unit at NITI Aayog.

Dr. Sarkar is multiple TEDx speaker and has been nominated among the “Top 10 Data Scientists in India” in 2017 by the Analytics India Magazine and nominated as “LinkedIn Influencer” in the Technology space in 2015 for contribution and engaging discussions on the LinkedIn platform in areas related of Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, Data Science, etc. Dr Sarkar is involved as an Advisor at various government committees like the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) committee for setting standard for “Artificial Intelligence”, Analytics Advisory committee for Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of Census 2021 and Advisor towards setting up Data Analytics Center of Excellence by Government of Assam. Dr. Sarkar serves on the Academic advisory board of Aegis School of Business and on the Entrepreneurship/Academic advisory board of Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Delhi.

Dr Sarkar has over 18 years of experience across different aspects of artificial intelligence, data science, analytics, statistical modelling, text mining, network analysis across companies like Accenture, IBM, Nokia, NASA, Persistent Systems, Zycus, etc. At Accenture Consulting in Singapore, he contributed to various data and analytics related engagements with the Singapore Government like efficient reporting and resolution of municipal issues, evaluation and monitoring of secondary school education, improving operational efficiency in immigration and customs. While at IBM, Dr Sarkar made significant contributions towards developing the Monte Carlo Simulation of SPSS and the Predictive Maintenance and Quality solution for the manufacturing sector. Dr Sarkar holds a PhD from The Open University, UK, Masters from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and Bachelors from Calcutta University. Dr Sarkar has authored several technical publications and technology patents. Further details: <https://in.linkedin.com/in/aviksarkar>

Embedding the graduation approach in Bihar's formal social protection system

Abstract

Overview of J-PAL SA C-19 RESEARCH: The social science research landscape has transformed and adapted to respond to the most pressing questions pertaining to COVID-19. In the face of this pandemic, J-PAL South Asia has been quick to pivot to meet the shifting demands of research on the ground with rapid research conducted with the goal of testing policy solutions in order to share actionable insights with decision-makers to inform their response to the pandemic and its socioeconomic ramifications. J-PAL affiliates have undertaken more than 25 research projects (conducted remotely) in South Asia to understand the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown on the region's most vulnerable populations, covering nine Indian states and union territories, with over 110,000 respondents. The presenter will showcase a quick overview of the C-19 research conducted during this time.

Covid19 Research to be highlighted: Embedding the graduation approach in Bihar's formal social protection system. The presenter will highlight in depth the learning from the first government scale-up of the Graduation Approach, the Satat Jeevikoparjan Yojana (SJY) scheme in Bihar, India. The SJY program is being implemented by JEEViKA (Government of Bihar) and scaled up to 100,000 households in Bihar. This presentation will share learnings in two areas. First, we will share lessons from the evolution of the SJY scheme in Bihar, including two policy pilots and the early stages of the scale-up, that led to the development of a scalable implementation model of different program stages: identification of the ultra-poor, enterprise selection and the handholding support. Second, we will share findings from a survey with SJY beneficiaries during Covid-19 crisis that assessed their Covid-19 health knowledge, enterprise savings and sales, and their access to relief measures. Despite challenges posed by Covid-19, our results show that the Graduation Approach offers a viable and holistic economic inclusion pathway to help households build resilience even during economic crises.



Dr. Shagun Sabarwal

Director of Policy, Training, and Communications
at J-PAL South Asia, Director of CLEAR South Asia

The presenter will also briefly touch upon the findings from a large scale randomised trial in West Bengal which found that Messages on COVID-19 Prevention in India Increased Symptoms Reporting and Adherence to Preventive Behaviors Among 25 Million Recipients with Similar Effects on Non-recipient Members of Their Communities. During such health crises, like COVID-19, individuals are inundated with messages promoting health preserving behaviour. A study during this pandemic by researchers including Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo among others, conducted a large-scale messaging campaign reaching 25 million people in West Bengal between April and May 2020 - to look at whether additional light-touch messaging by a credible individual changes behaviour.

Speaker Bio:

Shagun Sabarwal is Director of Policy, Training, and Communications at J-PAL South Asia and Director of CLEAR South Asia.

She leads J-PAL South Asia's engagements with governments, donors, and civil society organizations to initiate new research, disseminate policy lessons, and scale up evidence-based programs. She provides direct advisory to J-PAL SA's health, agriculture, climate action, and gender sectors.

Shagun provides technical and strategic direction to J-PAL South Asia's partnerships with state and central governments, including the Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO) at NITI Aayog, the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), and the State Governments of Odisha, Tamil Nadu, and Punjab.

She advances J-PAL South Asia's work as a catalyst for government scale-ups of evidence-based programs and as a technical and knowledge partner for building monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure quality at scale. She is currently leading J-PAL South Asia's role as a knowledge partner to the Government of Bihar for the scale-up of the Graduation approach.

Before joining J-PAL, Shagun was an Evaluation Specialist with 3ie and a Postdoctoral Fellow at Population Council. She completed her doctorate in public health at Harvard University.

Access to Banking, Savings and Consumption Smoothing in Rural India

Abstract

This is joint work with Vincent Somville. Banking is spreading across the world and may transform households' finances. We report from a field experiment that randomly provides access to a bank account and that gathered detailed information during weekly interviews. There is no change in the household's stock of savings, expenditures and income, but there is an important change in the ability to smooth consumption. While control households only partially smooth consumption and nutrition through informal transfers, treated households do better thanks to pro-cyclical saving on the account. The latter result provides an important new insight into the role of banking in low and middle-income countries.



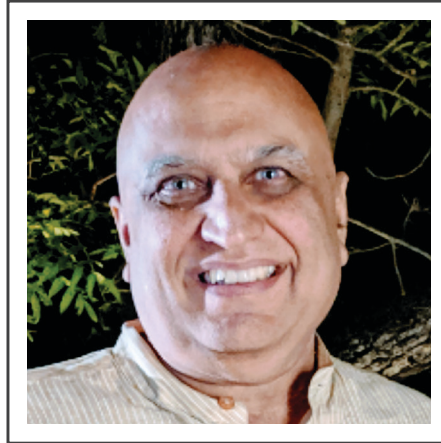
Prof. Lore Vandewalle

Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva

Speaker Bio:

Lore Vandewalle is an Associate Professor in the Department of Economics at the Graduate Institute in Geneva, where she holds the Pictet chair for finance and development. She is an applied micro-economist, specialized in development and political economics. Her research mainly focuses on financial inclusion and micro-enterprise development in India, Bangladesh and Uganda. She also has been working on political reservations and public good provision in India.

FinTech for the Bottom of the Pyramid



Bhagwan Chowdhry

Professor of Finance, Executive Director, Digital Identity Research Initiative (DIRI), Indian School of Business

Speaker Bio:

Bhagwan Chowdhry is a Professor of Finance at the Indian School of Business and Research Professor at UCLA Anderson where he has held an appointment since 1988. He is the Executive Director, Digital Identity Research Initiative (DIRI) at ISB.

Professor Chowdhry has also taught at the University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. He has an M.B.A. in Finance from the University of Iowa and a B.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur.

His research interests, on which he has published several papers in finance and economics journals, are in International Finance, Corporate Finance, Impact Investing, and FinTech. Professor Chowdhry is an Advisor to several FinTech start-ups.

Scoping meso-level insurance in Agricultural sector in India

Abstract

LEAD, an action-oriented research centre of IFMR Society (a not-for-profit society registered under the Societies Act), leverages the power of research, innovation and co-creation to solve complex and pressing challenges in development. LEAD has strategic oversight and brand support from Krea University (sponsored by IFMR Society) to enable synergies between academia and the research centre.

LEAD specializes in developing in-depth granular understanding of socio-economic contexts and harnessing actionable insights that have a wide range of applications in industry, policy and academia. LEAD is a collaborative hub that brings experts from diverse disciplines and sectors together to develop innovative solutions by harnessing innovation, technology and analytics. Through its capacity building and immersive learning initiatives, LEAD equips aspiring researchers and potential leaders with the tools to solve problems analytically and create lasting socio-economic impact.

LEAD has extensive institutional experience in cultivating strategic research partnerships, creating knowledge platforms, and managing complex programs in its areas of expertise - financial inclusion, MSME & entrepreneurship development, governance, and health systems. Since 2005, the centre has been at the forefront of development research and programming in India, and has managed a portfolio of over 200 projects in collaboration with over 300 academics, governments, NGOs and private sector organizations from across the globe.

In this webinar, researchers from LEAD at Krea University will share insights from an ongoing study on scoping meso-level insurance in agriculture and will be discussing the topic with sector experts and practitioners. Meso-level distribution provides insurance based on an index to the 'risk aggregators' such as the financial institutions, farmer producer organisations, non-government organisations or agri-businesses, for risk management purposes. The key objective of the study is to understand the market as well as the feasibility for a meso-level product in the agricultural insurance sector in India. The study explores the attitude of various stakeholders from the demand to the supply side of meso-level insurance. It further looks into what could be the best design principles and components of the meso-level insurance product and the distribution channel. This will contribute to improve our understanding of the current agricultural insurance products, the performance of the agricultural insurance scheme, and the potential of meso-level insurance in addressing the insurance needs in the agricultural sector. The COVID-19 pandemic has only amplified the need for adequate risk mitigation mechanisms. In the road map to finding a cure for the COVID-19 crisis, we may end up opening greater opportunities and discovering innovative products to cure the long prevailing agrarian crisis

Scoping meso-level insurance in Agricultural sector in India

Speaker Bio:



Dr. Shailender Swaminathan,

Principal Economist, LEAD

Shailender Swaminathan provides strategic and thought leadership to shape LEAD's research direction and agenda. He works closely with the research team to discuss new research ideas, recent and relevant sector trends and brainstorm on creative ideas to take forward.

Shailender's broad research interests are in the formulation and application of credible research designs to examine questions of relevance to public policy. In recent work, he has worked on understanding the impact of health insurance expansions on utilization and health in both the United States and India.

In 2015, Shailender returned to India with family after spending about two decades in the United States holding diverse academic and research positions. He has previously held academic and research positions at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor, the University of Alabama, Birmingham, and Brown University. Upon his return to India, he initially worked at the Public Health Foundation of India and got the opportunity to spend several weeks in India's villages to oversee data collection efforts, and also generally interact with households. After two decades in academia, he observed, for the first time, the incredible value in understanding the context in which households live and make decisions.

Shailender has a PhD in Economics from University of Southern California and is an adjunct faculty member in Brown University's Department of Health Policy and an Investigator at the Providence Veterans Administration (VA). His work has been published in several journals including the Journal of Health Economics, Health Affairs, Economic Development and Cultural Change, and the Journal of the American Medical Association. One of the previous papers received the Academy Health Article of the Year award in 2009.



Dr. Sabina Yasmin,

Research Fellow, LEAD

Sabina Yasmin is a Research Fellow at LEAD and currently also serves as a Bharat Inclusion Fellow. Her research interests include agricultural economics, rural finance, development economics and applied microeconomics. Sabina is immensely passionate about using her work for the upliftment of marginalised people.

Prior to joining LEAD, she was a faculty in the Department of Economics at SRM University-Amravati where she taught economics to engineering and social science students.

Sabina received her PhD in agricultural insurance from Gauhati University where her doctorate research focused on addressing the issue related to implementation and adaptability of the crop insurance program in India. She has also been a MANF research fellow during her doctorate research. Pursuit of her growing interest in behavioral economics led her to attend a summer school in Tinbergen Institute-University of Amsterdam in Netherlands, where she conducted experiments in the CREED Lab on the effect of appearance on a person's memory.

Fintech for Agriculture

Abstract

How multiple FinTech companies are gearing up to build businesses supporting Agriculture sector alongside Government.



Suniti Nanda,

Fintech Officer, Government of Maharashtra

Speaker Bio:

A leader, executor, innovation evangelist: Now A Change Agent – Suniti, Fintech Officer for Government of Maharashtra, is currently acting as the change agent for Fintech sector in India. She is working towards a firm vision to “Make Mumbai (Financial Capital of India) one of the Global Fintech Hubs”.

In the current role she focusses on operationalizing the Fintech Policy launched by Government of Maharashtra. She liaises with the vibrant fintech ecosystem in India and fostering accelerated co-creation/ experimentation to drive innovation in solving problems and create impact at large.

A strong believer of Financial Inclusion, Suniti is associated with Rang De as a Social investor and works as a catalyst for change. In personal capacity, she is writing a book on the struggle of Urban Poor community.

Before joining Government of Maharashtra, Suniti was working with Barclays India as Director – Innovation. She was instrumental in establishing Rise Mumbai – Barclay’s global Open Innovation program in India.

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/suniti-nanda-67999ba/>

Twitter - @sunitinanda

Covid 19 Impact on Employment and Welfare, and the Way Forward

Abstract

I will present evidence on the nature and extent of impact caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and its associated containment measures on employment and incomes in India. I will also discuss how the existing social safety net performed during the crisis, particularly for informal workers. Finally, I will present some policy options for the short-, medium- and long-run to promote a more inclusive growth agenda.



Amit Basole,

Head, Centre for Sustainable Employment,
Azim Premji University

Speaker Bio:

Amit Basole is Associate Professor of Economics at Azim Premji University where he also heads the Centre for Sustainable Employment.

Inclusive employment for speech and hearing impaired



Raja Sekhar Reddy,

Founder, Ekalavya Foundation
Founder, Squaremeal Foods

Speaker Bio:

Raja Sekhar Reddy is a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (1994), and holds a Bachelor's Degree from Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur (1990), in Computer Science & Engineering. He has a varied experience of 30 years, ranging from Business Creation, Incubation & Growth, Corporate & Strategic Planning, Organisation Development, Hospitality, HR Operations, Knowledge Management, Training, Business Process Reengineering, Information Technology, Marketing, Entrepreneurship and Project Management, apart from a Teaching experience of 2 years.

He founded Innovsource in 2004, and in 14 years, he grew the company to be India's 4th largest staffing company, with over 50 location presence, 200 client-base, and over 70,000 temp staff and successfully exited the business, where Innovsource was acquired by a PE consortium. He has played an instrumental role in the founding of Indian Staffing Federation – an industry body for the staffing industry.

In 2015, along with his partner, both first generation entrepreneurs founded Squaremeal Foods, and set up their first restaurant, Mirchi & Mime – a fine-dine serving contemporary Indian cuisine in Oct 2015 served exclusively by speech & hearing impaired (SHI) wait staff. Within less than a year they opened Madeira & Mime - a resto-bar, serving Multi cuisine food. The Company plans to expand the chain to 20 restaurants across the country thereby providing employment to 500 SHIs.

He also founded a non-profit Company in 2019, Ekalavya Education & Research Foundation that works towards sustainable employment of speech & hearing impaired through vocational training. The Foundation works primarily to bridge the gap between employment opportunities, skills required, and corporate readiness to employ speech & hearing impaired. Ekalavya Foundation funds its programs through donations. (Ekalavya.Foundation)

Through BizSR, his consulting arm, he also helps incubate start-ups and promotes entrepreneurship, and has created an incubation platform that curates start-ups for early stage seed-funding from angel investors and is further groomed through their growth.

How Great Companies Deliver Both Purpose and Profit

Abstract

Purpose is one of the corporate buzzwords of 2020, with the politicians, the public, and even investors themselves calling on businesses to serve wider society. But it seems unrealistic to think about purpose in a pandemic when companies are strapped for cash, and companies also have a responsibility to their shareholders. Is there a trade-off between purpose and profit, or is it possible for companies to achieve both? This talk will critically examine the case for purposeful business, using rigorous evidence and real-life examples to show what works – and, importantly, what doesn't. It will discuss practical ways for businesses of all sizes to put purpose into practice, and how investors and citizens can play their part. Professor Alex Edmans will draw on his new book, "Grow the Pie: How Great Companies Deliver Both Purpose and Profit", which was named to the Financial Times Business Books of the Year for 2020.



Prof. Alex Edmans,

Academic Director, Centre for Corporate Governance, London Business School

Speaker Bio:

Alex Edmans is Professor of Finance at London Business School. Alex has a PhD from MIT as a Fulbright Scholar, and was previously a tenured professor at Wharton and an investment banker at Morgan Stanley. Alex has spoken at the World Economic Forum in Davos, testified in the UK Parliament, and given the TED talk "What to Trust in a Post-Truth World" and the TEDx talk "The Social Responsibility of Business" with a combined 2 million views. He has appeared on Bloomberg, BBC, CNBC, CNN, ITV, Sky News and Sky Sports, and written for the Financial Times, Harvard Business Review, and Wall Street Journal. At Wharton, he won 14 teaching awards in 6 years; at LBS, he won the Excellence in Teaching award for best professor across all programmes. He has been named to Poets and Quants Best 40 Professors Under 40 and Thinkers50 Radar.

Technology and Inclusion



Rama Devi Lanka,

Director, Emerging Technologies,
Officer on Special Duty, ITE & C Dept,
Government of Telangana

Speaker Bio:

Rama Devi Lanka is currently Director, Emerging Technologies & Officer on Special

Duty, at Information Technology and Communications Department (ITE&C), Govt of Telangana. Her role is to develop and implement a strategy for the State that would create a conducive ecosystem for the growth of emerging technologies and also help the State in leveraging emerging technologies for better governance. In a short time, she has been successful in positioning Telangana State as a pioneer in terms of adopting emerging technologies such as blockchain, AI, drones, Cloud, IoT, Cyber Security and also in fostering the ecosystem in the State making it as a favourable destination for investment.

In the past she has worked in Centre for Good Governance (CGG) (An organization set up by Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP) in collaboration with the Department for International Development (DFID) and the World Bank to Transform Governance) and was involved in several State level IT initiatives that helped the government in implementing various schemes benefitting the targeted beneficiaries.

Later she moved to National Institute for Smart Government (NISG) and was involved in conceptualization and design of a number of e-Governance projects that are crucial in bringing in reforms and transformation in various domains such as Health, Visalmmigration, Civil Aviation, Atomic Energy, Education and Urban Local Bodies.

She was involved in the implementation strategy of the Meghraj policy of cloud for Government of India. She developed a strategy, toolkit and procurement guidelines to enable cloud adoption by various state and central government departments.

On Her Own Account :

How Strengthening Women's Financial Control Impacts Labor Supply and Gender Norms

Abstract

Despite recent growth, increases in female education and fertility reductions, India's female labor force participation rate continues to decline. Gender norms are frequently mentioned as a driver of women's low labor force participation. Can increasing women's control over her own earnings incentivize her to work, and thereby influence norms around gender roles? We explore this question through an at-scale randomized control trial that varied whether rural Indian women received bank accounts, training on how to use the account, and direct deposit of public sector MGNREGS wages into their own, instead of their husbands', accounts. Relative to locations where women were only supported to open bank accounts - a typical focus of financial inclusion initiatives - women who also received direct deposit and training worked more in both public and private sector jobs. The increase in women's work in the private sector, where wages were never deposited, is inconsistent with standard efficient household models but can be rationalized through incorporating costs to violating norms around gender roles into our framework of household decision making. The results were both affected by, and affected, gender norms around women's work: Three years after the initial intervention, direct deposit and training increased women's approval of female work, and both genders perceived fewer social costs to female employment.



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Speaker Bio:

Charity Troyer Moore is Director for South Asia Economics Research at Yale University's MacMillan Center, where she provides strategic direction and oversight of research, policy and capacity building engagements in India and other countries in South Asia for a portfolio of research co-led with faculty at Yale University. Charity's research examines public service delivery and governance in the bureaucracy; the drivers and potential solutions to India's low female labor force participation, with a focus on the ways in which current policy initiatives can put women on better footing as economic agents; land rights; and social protection programs, notably public works and cash transfer programs. Prior to her current position at Yale, she held multiple roles at Harvard Kennedy School's Evidence for Policy Design, most recently as India Research Director, where she co-founded EPoD India at IFMR. Charity holds an M.A. in Economics and Ph.D. in Agricultural, Environmental, and Development Economics from The Ohio State University.



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