

Nishtha Sharma

nishtha.sharma@nyu.edu | +971-50-647-4669 | www.sharmanishtha.com

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Fields: Behavioral Economics, Organizational Economics, Labor Economics, Political Economy

RESEARCH POSITIONS

Postdoctoral Research Associate (2022–2025)

Social Science Division, New York University Abu Dhabi

Fund Intern (2021)

Fund Internship Program (FIP), International Monetary Fund

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics University of California, Irvine (2022)

Master of Economics Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi (2014)

Bachelor of Economics (Honors) University of Delhi (2011)

REFERENCES

- John Duffy, University of California Irvine, duffy@uci.edu
- Ernesto Reuben, New York University Abu Dhabi, ereuben@nyu.edu
- Stergios Skaperdas, University of California Irvine, sskaperd@uci.edu

JOB MARKET PAPER

The Economics of Begging (*with Samreen Malik*)

Develops a conceptual framework to study begging as an alternative to formal labor markets. Designs novel experimental methods to elicit incentivized measures of economic preferences and perceptions among beggars and donors in India. Demonstrates the robustness of meritocratic preferences and systematic misperceptions in evaluating merit, even in small-stakes redistribution decisions toward street beggars.

Award: The Econometric Society's Award for Best Paper in Applied Economics (Sharma, 2022)

Invited Seminars (2024): Harvard University, University of Chicago, Boston University, Brown University, Boston College, Tufts University

Conferences: ASSA-AEA Annual Meeting (2025), North East Universities Development Consortium (2024), Economic Science Association North America Meeting (2024), Theoretical Research in Economic Development (2024), Advances in Field Experiments (2024), Indian Statistical Institute Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (2023, 2024), Asian Meeting of the Econometric Society (2022, 2023)

Media: International Growth Center - Ideas for India, December 2024

OTHER WORKING PAPERS

The Persistence of Disadvantages: Theory and Experiment (*Revise and Resubmit at Games and Economic Behavior*)

Combines theory and lab experimental data on repeated contests to show that the possibility of overcoming initial disadvantages paradoxically increases the persistence of inequality, as advantaged competitors exert even greater effort to maintain their lead, reducing the disadvantaged competitor's chances of success despite higher effort.

Invited Seminars: Monash University (2023), Bilkent University (2021)

Conferences: Behavioral Research in Economics - Economic Science Association Workshop (2022), Delhi School of Economics Winter School (2022), Indian Statistical Institute Annual Conference on Economic Growth and Development (2022), Economic Science Association Global Meetings (2021), Southern Economic Association Meeting (2021), Contests: Theory and Evidence Conference (2020, 2021), Association for the Study of Religion Economics and Culture Conference (2019)

Can't Agree to Disagree: Fairness Concerns and Conflict (*with Ernesto Reuben*)

Shows that disagreements over fairness in source of income disparities escalate conflict over resource allocation and compensation schemes at the workplace, using theoretical and experimental evidence.

Lawful Progress: Unveiling the Laws That Reshape Women's Work Decisions (*with Anna Fruttero and Diego Gomes*)

Uses panel data from 170 countries across 50 years to show that gender equality in workplace and civil society related laws matter for female labor force participation decision after gender equality in household related laws is achieved.

Conference: International Economic Association-World Bank Conference 2024

Fairness Perceptions of AI-Produced Output

Examines how AI use affects perceptions of merit and deservingness in academic and workplace settings.

Privilege Loss Aversion

Shows that status quo of advantage shifts perceptions of fairness such that privileged people's response to the threat of losing advantage dominates the disadvantaged people's opportunity of overcoming disadvantage even in non-competitive settings.

The Formation of Fairness Beliefs and Preferences for Charity and Redistribution

Investigates how increasing inequality influences meritocratic beliefs and demand for redistribution.

Gender De-biasing (*with Ashwini Deshpande, Kanika Mahajan and Nandhini S*)

Studies the effectiveness of gender-debiasing training with hiring managers in improving women's call back rates and mitigating gender based discrimination.

Reducing the Gender Confidence Gap through English Education and Sports
(with Nitin Kumar Bharti, Imrul Kayes and Aniruddha Taukdar)
Evaluates field interventions to boost confidence and competitiveness among young girls in India.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

New York University Abu Dhabi (2022-2024)

Development Cluster Research Grant, Culture and Diversity Cluster Research Grant, Inequality Cluster Research Grant, Experimental Research Grant

University of California, Irvine (2017-2022)

Experimental Social Science Laboratory Research Grant, Associate Dean's Dissertation Fellowship, Kugelman Citizen Peace-building Fellowship

RESEARCH VISITS

Department of Economics New York University (2024)

Department of Economics Tufts University (2024)

Questrom School of Business Boston University (2024)

Department of Economics Monash University (2023)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant (2016-2020)

Department of Economics, University of California, Irvine

Graduate Level: Microeconomic Theory I, Microeconomic Theory II: Game Theory, Experimental Economics (oTree programming)

Undergraduate Level: Intermediate Microeconomics (Virtual), Probability Theory, Managerial Economics, Economics of Strategy, Basic Macroeconomics, Basic Microeconomics

Instructor (2015–2016)

Indian School of Business and Finance, London School of Economics and Political Science, International Center, New Delhi, India

Undergraduate Level: Introduction to Economics: Microeconomics and Macroeconomics

SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP

Referee: Experimental Economics, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, Journal of Economic Dynamics and Control, Frontiers in Behavioral Economics

Organizer: Theory, History, and Political Economy Workshop UC Irvine (2020)

Graduate Student Mentor UC Irvine (2019)