

Economics Seminar, Indian Statistical Institute, New Delhi.

SPEAKER: Surendrakumar Bagde, Dept. of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Govt. of India

TITLE: Dismantling the Legacy of Caste: Affirmative Action in Indian Higher Education

TIME: 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM.

DAY & DATE: Friday, 18th November, 2011

PLACE: Seminar Room 2

Abstract:

Public policy in modern India features affirmative action-policies intended to reduce persistent inequality stemming from a centuries-old caste structure. We study the effects of one such affirmative action program. Specifically, we examine the consequences of an admissions policy to engineering colleges that fixes percentage quotas, common across 214 colleges, for each of six disadvantaged castes. We have obtained access to exceptionally rich data for study of this affirmative action program-data that include the test scores that were used to administer admissions decision rules, as well as detailed independent ability metrics. Our analysis indicates that for targeted students the program has significant and substantial positive effects both on college attendance and first-year academic achievement.

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