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Waseda Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies Colloquium Series

Efficiency consequences of affirmative action in politics: Evidence from India

June 20, 2025

Friday | 13:10 - 14:40

Building 19, Room 710, Waseda University

Join us for an insightful talk on how affirmative action in elections, restricting candidates to one group, affects public goods provision. This study shows that when group identities are strong, such restrictions may increase electoral competition, especially when group sizes are unequal. In open elections, dominant-group candidates facing minority opponents may underperform due to moral hazard. Affirmative action eliminates this, boosting within-group competition and efficiency. Using randomized caste quotas in Indian village elections, we find that quotas for OBCs led to more public goods in villages with large OBC populations. Our findings suggest that concerns about affirmative action reducing efficiency may be overstated.



Moderator:

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Language: English

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