

## **Intergenerational Effects of Improving Women's Property Rights: Evidence**

**Nayana Bose  
Scripps College**

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### **Abstract**

This paper analyzes the intergenerational effects following from the positive changes in women's inheritance rights. The amendment to the Hindu Succession Act, the law governing inheritance for Hindus, empowered unmarried daughters at the time of the reform to have equal rights to inherit ancestral property as their brothers. We employ a difference-in-differences strategy and exploit the state level variation in a woman's exposure to the reform. Using the Indian Human Development Survey data for rural India, our results indicate that the property rights reform significantly increased women's education between 0.40 and 0.50 years. We find no impact on the education of daughters of women exposed to the reform. On the contrary, we find a negative impact on sons' education. This impact is more prevalent in households where the father is less educated than the mother where we see a 0.27 standard deviation significant decrease in sons' education. For families where husbands are either equally or more educated than their wives, the sons are not negatively affected. We further explore the role of birth order and the gender composition of children to assess the intergenerational impact of this more gender equal inheritance law.

### **Speaker Profile**

<http://www.scrippscollege.edu/academics/faculty/profile/nayana-bose>