

Title: Shaping Minds: The Transformative Effects of Theater-Based Learning

Speaker: Prof. Shantanu Khanna, Northeastern University

Area: Economics

Date: 14.08.2025, Venue: P22 @ 4PM

Abstract:

Despite progress in addressing barriers to human capital in the last two decades, significant learning gaps persist. A new line of research suggests that holistic skills are associated with positive impacts on later life outcomes. However, there is little evidence supporting the effectiveness of existing traditional classroom-based instructional strategies in improving non-cognitive and socio-emotional skills. In this study, we conduct a randomized control trial in 96 schools in Uttarakhand, India to estimate the causal impacts of an experiential learning pedagogy in secondary schools. The curriculum consists of a total of 15 hours of arts and theater-based instruction delivered over 10 sessions during a six-month period. We measure the impacts on range of socio-emotional skills, cognitive abilities, and learning outcomes.

Speaker Profile:



Shantanu Khanna is an Assistant Professor at the School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs and the Department of Economics. Shantanu is an applied microeconomist with research interests in labor, development, and public economics. His research explores issues like inequality, hiring and wage discrimination, women's empowerment, and the impacts of public policies (especially place-based policies) on firms and workers.

Webpage Link: <https://www.shantanukhanna.com/>