CENTRE FOR STUDIES IN SOCIAL SCIENCES, CALCUTTA

R-1 BAISHNABGHATA PATULI, KOLKATA 700094

ECONOMICS STUDY GROUP SEMINAR

Rajabrata Banerjee

shall present

Unemployment and Crime: Does Economic Activity Matter? A District-level Analysis from India

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University of South Australia	Monash University	RMIT University	Monash University	RMIT University

Abstract

Using nationally representative data at the district level from India in the period 2014-2019, this study examines how economic activity can influence the incidence of crime in society. Whilst greater economic activity can reduce crime rates by lowering unemployment and providing more economic opportunities, greater economic activity can increase crime rates by widening social and economic disparities. We examine how these negative and positive measures of economic activity interplay and jointly influence crime rates by considering two specific types of crimes, namely crimes against women and property crimes. We find that both economic activity and youth unemployment have a positive impact on crime rates at the district level; however, the joint effect is negative, showing the marginal impact of unemployment on crime rates reduces when economic activity increases in society. These effects are particularly prominent for rapes and assaults in crimes against women and for burglary and theft, among different types of property crimes. Our results are robust to endogeneity biases, alternative estimation techniques, and heterogeneity analyses. Findings from this study have substantial policy implications for developing countries like India, where both the incidence of crime and youth unemployment are increasing over time. We show that increased economic activity in aggregate can foster criminal activities, but higher economic opportunities and better infrastructure can mitigate the adverse effects of unemployment on crime.

Date: 20th December 2023 (Wednesday)

Time: 3 P.M.

Venue: CSSSC's Seminar Room, Patuli Campus

All are welcome to attend

Dr. Sattwik Santra

(Co-Convener, Seminar Sub-Committee)