

## **Unintended Trade-Offs of Inclusivity: How Gender Policies Reshape Bureaucratic Careers**

Dr. Shaheen Naseer (University of Oxford)

This paper investigates the unintended trade-offs of identity-based policies on diversity, regional equity, and institutional cohesion in the All-Pakistan Service. Exploiting a gender-sensitive policy introduced in 2000 as a natural experiment, I analyse a panel dataset of deputy ministers' postings and career trajectories from 1985 to 2020. Using Triple Differences designs, I show that while the policy successfully increased women's participation in leadership positions, it diminished representation from minority provinces and deepened regional imbalances. By shifting cross-regional mobility patterns and consolidating provincial dominance, the policy converted inclusivity into a zero-sum game, undermining the integrative objectives of the All-Pakistan Service. These findings reveal the structural challenges of crafting representation policies that achieve equity without sacrificing cohesion, providing empirical evidence of the delicate balance required in designing inclusive institutions.