KAUTILYA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY

GITAM (Deemed to be University)

Rudraram, Patancheru Mandal

Hyderabad, Telangana 502329

Course Code: PPOL7071	**Course Title**: Behavioural Insights for Innovative Policy	
Trimester: 4	**Course Type**: Elective	**Credits**: 3
Home Program(s): MPP	**Batch/Academic Year**: 2022-2024	
Course Instructors: Dr. Pavan Mamidi, Dr. Sharon Barnhardt & Dr. Shagata Mukherjee.	**Assigned TA/RA:** Arushi Jha Thakur	

Course Description

Policymakers are increasingly adopting behavioral insights to tackle profound policy challenges. While traditional policy tools focus on financial resources, laws and incentives, a behavioral approach focuses on human biases, heuristics, social norms, and choice architecture. Borrowing from various long standing disciplines, including economics, psychology, sociology, and neuroscience, behavioral insights has helped tackle complex development challenges, such as improving education outcomes by enhancing student learning, raising savings rates, promoting energy and water conservation, improving sanitation practices, improving health and nutrition outcomes for women and children and strengthening institutions, among others.

The course seeks to develop the student's mindset and skills to solve complex social problems with a keen understanding of human behavior. In this course, participants will learn fundamental principles of applied behavioral and experimental economics and explore how these principles can be used for policy and programme implementation, and drive change in the

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broader social ecosystem through a set of in person lectures, case studies and field visits.

Course Instructors

Below is a short bio of the course instructors responsible for different modules of the course:-

Dr. Pavan Mamidi: *Director, Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University*

Dr. Pavan Mamidi is an empirically informed senior advisor in the policy space, and a social scientist. Substantively, he pursues two streams of professional work and scholarship - law/policy, and applied behavior science. He currently serves as the Director of the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change at Ashoka University, and also works closely with the NITI Aayog. He has led the initiative to set up India's first Nudge Unit, the Behavioural Insights Unit of India. He has also helped set up Behavioural Insights Units for the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. His main work focuses on development related issues in education, health, nutrition, and gender. He has a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) from the University of Oxford and a Master's (LL.M.)
from Harvard Law School.

Dr. Sharon Barnhardt: *Director - Research, Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University*

Dr. Sharon Barnhardt is the Director – Research at the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change at Ashoka University. She is an applied development economist and behavioral scientist who uses experiments to study policy-relevant topics in India. Her behavioral research focuses on sanitation and malnutrition. Dr Sharon is also active in Executive Education for the policy sector, having taught Behavioral Economics at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration and program evaluation with J-PAL South Asia and CLEAR. She is a Faculty Affiliate at the Jameel Abdul Latif Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA, Bonn). Her experience includes positions at the Centre for Experimental Social

Sciences (Nuffield College's lab in India), the Indian Institute of Management – Ahmedabad, IFMR Business School (at Krea University), the World Bank, and J.P. Morgan. Dr. Sharon's academic record comprises a Ph.D. from Harvard University, an M.P.A. from Princeton University, and a Bachelor's from NYU.

Dr. Shagata Mukherjee: *Deputy Director, Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University Academic Lead, Behavioural Insights Unit of India, NITI Aayog*

Dr. Shagata Mukherjee is the Lead - Behavioural Insights Unit of India, NITI Aayog and a Deputy Director at the Centre for Social and Behavioural Change at Ashoka University. Prior to this position, Dr Shagata was an Associate Professor of Economics and Public Policy at the Meghnad Desai Academy of Economics. He was also a Visiting Fellow at the Mumbai School of Economics and Public Policy at the University of Mumbai and an Affiliated Faculty at the Centre for Experimental Social Sciences (CESS) Nuffield -FLAME. He is the recipient of the Vernon L. Smith Young Talent Award in Experimental Finance for his research on gender and microfinance and is a co-founder of the Mumbai Behavioural Network. Dr Shagata holds a PhD in Behavioural and Experimental Economics from the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies at Georgia State University, a Master's degree in Economics from Jawaharlal Nehru University and a B.Sc. in Economics from Presidency College.

Jocelyn Joseph: *Senior Research Associate, Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University*

Jocelyn Joseph is a gender researcher who uses ethnography and behavioral design to best understand humans around her. She is passionate about working with adolescents and has spent a considerable amount of her professional life working with them on various topics under Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Menstruation Hygiene and Management (MHM). She strongly believes that a seemingly linear problem must always be tackled with a multi-pronged approach to yield holistic results. This principle leads her to combine HCD, Ethnography and Behavioural Science, leaving no research stone unturned! Outside of her 9-5 job, she conducts theater workshops with adolescents to question gender and understand one's

body. Alongside this, she's a co-founder of a creative agency and often trains start-ups on creating gender-sound technology and branding. Jocelyn has a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences and a Master's degree in Gender Studies from Ambedkar University. Here are a few authors that she suggests everyone reads - Roland Barthes, Zadie Smith, BR Ambedkar and Bama.

Learning Objectives

1. Gain an understanding of the big picture of behavioral insights.
2. Apply behavioral economic tools and concepts to understanding and analyzing policy problems.
3. Integrate an understanding of people's behavior into policy solutions to create more effective policy solutions.
4. Introduce experimental methods as a tool of gaining policy relevant information using behavioral diagnostic and design.

Course Objectives

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Conceptualize effective policy solutions by integrating insights from behavioral economics.
2. Predict how people may respond to a given policy intervention.
3. Apply learnings to evolving new, innovative approaches to development.
4. Use experimental methods to gain policy relevant information about behavior.
5. Critically evaluate development initiatives from a behavioral perspective.

Textbook and Course Material

Textbook

Banerjee, A. V., & Duflo, E. (2013). **Poor Economics: Rethinking Poverty and the Ways to End it**. Random House India.

Strassheim, H., & Beck, S. (Eds.). (2019). **Handbook of Behavioural Change and Public Policy**. Edward Elgar Publishing. Ch 2,3, 5, 14, 18, 19, 22, 24.

Sunstein, C. R., & Thaler, R. H. (2021). *Nudge: The Final Edition*. Allen Lane.

Note: These books are available in the library.

Suggestive Readings

Baldiga, K. (2014). Gender Differences in Willingness to Guess. *Management Science*, *60*(2), 434–448. http://www.jstor.org/stable/42919542

Buser, T., Niederle, M., & Oosterbeek, H. (2014). Gender, competitiveness, and career choices. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *129*(3), 1409-1447.

Coffman, Katherine Baldiga. "Evidence on self-stereotyping and the contribution of ideas." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129.4 (2014): 1625-1

Cullen, Z. B., & Perez-Truglia, R. (2019). *The old boys' club: Schmoozing and the gender gap* (No. w26530). National Bureau of Economic Research.

Corns, Allan, and Andrew Schotter. "Can affirmative action be cost effective? An experimental examination of price-preference auctions." *American Economic Review* 89.1 (1999): 291-305.

Garnelo, M., Bustin, C., Duryea, S., & Morrison, A. (2019). *Applying Behavioral Insights to Intimate Partner Violence: Improving Services for Survivors in Latin America and the Caribbean* (pp. 6-69). Inter-American Development Bank. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0001980

Gneezy, U., Meier, S., & Rey-Biel, P. (2011). When and why incentives (don't) work to modify behavior. *Journal of economic perspectives*, *25*(4), 191-210.

Gneezy, U., Niederle, M., & Rustichini, A. (2003). Performance in competitive environments: Gender differences. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *118*(3), 1049-1074.

Hamilton, S.H., Merritt, W.S., Carter, L. *et al.* Affecting behavioral change through empowerment: conceptual insights from theory and agricultural case studies in South Asia. *Reg Environ Change* 22, 85 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10113-022-01939-7

List, J. A. (2007). On the interpretation of giving in dictator games. *Journal of Political economy*, *115*(3), 482-493.

Tummers, L. (2019), Public Policy and Behavior Change. Public Administrative Review, 79: 925-930. Wiley Online Library. https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13109

For The Field Trip - Suggestive Readings

Srinivas, M.N. (2012). The Remembered Village, Second Edition. OUP India.

Hall, S., & Hall, S. M. (2013). City, Street and Citizen: The Measure of the Ordinary. Routledge.

Xaxa, V. (2014). *State, Society, and Tribes: Issues in Post-colonial India*. Pearson India.

Course Schedule

The course comprises of 24 sessions and following 7 modules :

Module : 1	Sessions: 4	The Big Picture of Behavioural Insights	Prof: Dr. Pavan Mamidi
- Session 1: Evolution and applicability of Behavioural Insights - Session 2 : Tools for influencing behaviors - Session 3: Role of formal and informal institutions in influencing behaviors			

Module: 2	Sessions: 4	Foundations of Evidence-based Policy	Prof: Sharon Barnhardt
● Role of evidence in effective behavioral interventions ● Causal inference and impact evaluation ● How to conduct experiments for impact evaluation ● Quasi-experimental methods for impact evaluation			
Module: 3	Sessions: 2	Foundations of Behavioural Insights	Prof: Shagata Mukherjee
● Session 4: Introduction to Behavioural Economics ● Session 5: Fundamentals of heuristics and biases			
Module : 4	Sessions: 2	Nudges for Behaviour Change	Prof: Shagata Mukherjee
● Introduction to Nudge theory and choice architecture ● Global application of nudges and nudge units ● Nudge units in India			
Module : 5	Sessions: 2	Behavioural Diagnostic	Prof: Pooja Haldea/Pavan
● Duct Qualitative Research ● Identifying barriers and levers for Behaviour Change			
Module : 6	Sessions: 2	Behavioural Design	Prof: Pooja Haldea/Pavan
● How to design interventions for behavior change ● How to design for social norm			
Module : 7	Sessions: 4	Applied Behavioural Insights for Policy	Prof: Joceyln Joseph

> - Case Studies for Application of behavioral insights for policy
>
> The **Last Module** will be conducted in the form of a two days field trip to nearby villages on the following topics for practical application of Behavioral concepts:
>
> 1. Diagnosing Domestic Violence
> 2. Diagnosing Financial Inclusion and Stashing among Low Income Women

Assessment/Evaluation

The following is the evaluation pattern for this course:-

Assessment Pattern	Weightage
Class Participation	15%
Class Attendance	15%
Assignments (three in total)	70%

Assignments (70%)

	Date	Weightage	Format
Assessment I	22.08.2023		Pen & Paper
Assessment II	05.09.2023		Pen & Paper
Assessment III	5.10.2023		Written Assessment

Note: Assessment I and II will be held during the free class hours from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Rules to Be Followed

1. Class punctuality will be factored into consideration when marking attendance. Therefore latecomers will be marked absent beyond 5 minutes into the commencement of the class.

2. The use of Mobile phones during class is prohibited. Violation of this rule will adversely impact the class participation marks.

3. Classroom Etiquettes such as punctuality, assignment submissions, maintaining classroom decorum, engagement with the professor and the course will be factored in while assessing class participation marks.