

Mukesh Eswaran

Talk 1: Why Gender Matters in Economics: Nature, Nurture, Gendered Preferences and their Consequences

This lecture will discuss the extent to which outcomes differ by gender because of differences in women's and men's altruism, attitudes towards risk and towards competition. The extent to which these putative differences in preferences are shaped by nature and by socialization and the role played by observer bias in determining gendered outcomes will be discussed. Gender differences in political preferences and what women's suffrage has implied for resource allocation will be discussed. Finally, a recent theory outlining the importance of gender in the caste system of India and why it requires the oppression of women will be discussed.

Talk 2: Why Gender Matters in Economics: Women's Autonomy (or its Lack Thereof) and its Consequences

This lecture will attempt to bring out the importance of women's autonomy in various aspects of their economic lives. It will examine activities of women that contribute to their autonomy and how the effect of earned income compares with that of unearned income. Evidence on the consequences of greater female autonomy will be drawn from across many countries. Recent research on how female autonomy can contain the spread of HIV/AIDS will be discussed. The role of domestic violence in undermining women's autonomy in India will be analyzed. How birth control technologies impinge on women's autonomy will be examined. Finally, the lecture will end with a discussion of the paradoxical findings in the developed world on the trends in women's happiness in the face of rising autonomy.