Priyadarshi Amar
Postdoctoral Researcher
Email: priyadarshi.amar@gmail.com
Website: priyadarshiamar.github.io

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Graduate School of Social Sciences
Hitotsubashi University

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I am writing to express my strong interest in the Lecturer position in Political Science at Hitotsubashi University. I am a postdoctoral fellow at Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, affiliated with the Institute Carlos III Juan March through the POLARCHATS ERC project. I received a joint Ph.D. in Political Science and Agricultural & Applied Economics from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, conferred in May 2025. I am a scholar of comparative political behavior and Indian politics, focusing on major institutional challenges such as political inequality and misinformation in an increasingly polarized world. My research has been recognized with the APSA Experimental Research Section Best Paper Award (2025) and received Honorable Mention for the APSA Comparative Politics Section Sage Best Paper Award (2025). Both my research agenda and teaching interests align closely with the department's interdisciplinary focus.

My dissertation, "Essays on Political Candidacy and Representation in India's Local Governments," investigates how electoral institutions shape political representation. Drawing on administrative data from over 20,000 village council elections in India's panchayat system, which governs over 600 million rural citizens, I examine when and why institutional reforms succeed or backfire.

My job market paper asks how caste quota affect women's descriptive political representation in India's village councils. Theoretically, the contribution of the paper centers on the concept of intersectional institutional effects—how quotas designed for one dimension of identity can have unintended consequences for another. I find that the likelihood of at least one woman candidate on the ballot is approximately 1.5 times higher in seats with caste quotas compared to seats without any quotas, and the likelihood of a woman winner is 2 times higher. My findings suggest two possible mechanisms: 1) different social norms for women in marginalized caste groups, as they do not face the purity-based restrictions that constrain privileged caste women's participation in activities outside the home, and 2) lower political competition in seats with caste quotas. This paper highlights how norms and political dynamics shape the effects of electoral quotas on political representation. My second paper provides a theoretical framework for understanding the norm-institution conflict, showing that fertility requirements, implemented as a population control measure, to contest village elections reduce the probability of a Muslim candidate by 7 percentage points, while having no statistically significant effects on other groups, as Muslim candidates face unique community pressures that create higher social costs for legal compliance. My third paper examines the consequences of executive selection method on non-executive politicians, showing that shifting from indirect to direct elections of village heads decreases candidate entry for council seats. The effect is strongest where caste quota differ between head and council seats and disproportionately reduce

women candidates in council member seats. Together, these papers establish that it is critical to account for institutional spillovers when assessing the effects of well-intentioned reforms.

Continuing with my focus on institutional challenges, my second research stream examines the role of digital misinformation in shaping political behavior. In a randomized controlled trial funded by the Social Science Research Council, my coauthors and I evaluated a media and information literacy intervention that focuses on health misinformation implemented in 583 villages in Bihar, India, involving more than 12,000 students. The intervention significantly improved the ability of students to distinguish true from false health information, with effects sustained months after treatment and extended to political misinformation. Additionally, we observe that parents of treated students also became more adept at discerning information. This work, forthcoming in the *American Political Science Review*, offers direct implications for policymaking as m. Another ongoing co-authored project uses a two-arm vignette experiment in rural Bihar to explore how attributes of information, such as social norms and the identity of the transmitter, affect the dissemination of misinformation.

My research combines experiments, administrative data, and fieldwork to study representation and information in contemporary democracies. Moving forward, I aim to (1) examine how information environments interact with local institutions to shape governance, (2) extend the institutional spillover framework through comparative analysis across democracies in the Global South, and (3) investigate how digital technologies affect political participation among marginalized groups. Since these projects rely on fieldwork, I plan to pursue KAKENHI funding, particularly the Young Researcher grant.

I am excited to contribute to Hitotsubashi's teaching mission through courses in comparative politics, political economy, political behavior, and quantitative research methods. My experience includes teaching mathematics, computation, microeconomics, and research methods, where I developed curricula and worked with diverse student groups. I also look forward to offering specialized courses on South Asian politics, political inequality, misinformation, causal inference, and experimental design. My approach combines analytical rigor with practical application, helping students use empirical tools to understand real-world political and economic phenomena, and through Wisconsin's peer mentor program I have guided undergraduate research and academic development.

Hitotsubashi's emphasis on empirical rigor, interdisciplinary inquiry, and global engagement aligns perfectly with my research on gender, institutions, and political behavior. My recent JSQPS conference visits revealed Japan's welcoming and vibrant academic community, inspiring my commitment to build a long-term career here. I am keen on learning Japanese to enrich my engagement with cultural life in Japan. With extensive fieldwork experience in India and working proficiency in Hindi, Urdu, and Bhojpuri, I bring regional expertise from South Asia that will contribute to and enrich Hitotsubashi's global academic community.

Thank you very much for considering my application. Please have attached my curriculum vitae and writing samples.

Sincerely,

Priyadarshi Amar