

Asian Law Schools Association (ALSA) Empirical Legal Scholarship Workshop for Junior Scholars (22 June 2021)

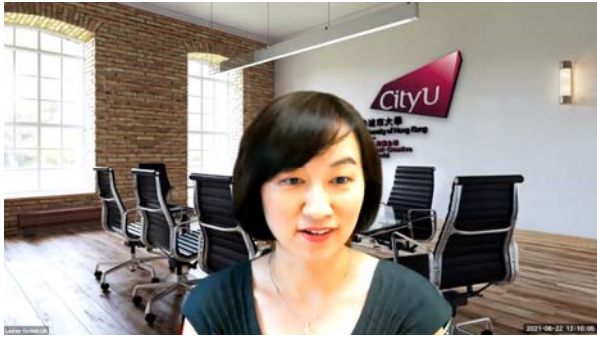
25 June 2021

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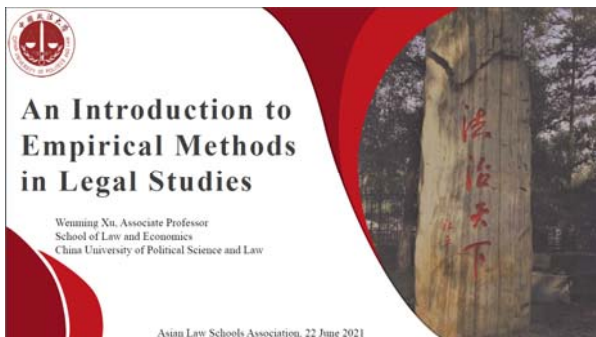
In order to promote empirical legal studies, nurture junior scholars (including post-doctoral fellows and PhD students) who are interested in empirical methodology and provide a platform for them to learn about the new developments in empirical legal studies, the inaugural Asian Law Schools Association (ALSA) Empirical Legal Scholarship Workshop for Junior Scholars hosted by School of Law of City University of Hong Kong (CityU SLW) was held on 22 June 2021. The Forum also hopes to increase the sense of community among legal scholars in empirical studies and to promote the application of social science research methods in legal research.

The organiser of the Workshop, **Dr Lauren Yu-Hsin Lin** (Associate Professor, CityU SLW) welcomed all participants to the event. She introduced the two speakers who are experienced in empirical legal studies, and also **Prof Shen Weixing** (Vice-President, ALSA; Dean, School of Law, Tsinghua University), who was going to deliver the opening remarks.



Organiser of the Workshop, Dr Lauren Yu-Hsin Lin (left) and opening remarks by Prof Shen Weixing (right)

Prof Shen Weixing first expressed his great thanks to the speakers who were presenting at the Workshop on behalf of ALSA and the President of ALSA, Prof Tan Cheng-Han. He believed that their contribution would make the Workshop meaningful not only to ALSA but also to all of the young scholars who joined the event. He also expressed his thanks to the colleagues from ALSA especially Dr Lin, who has put in a lot of efforts and time in organizing the event under the on-going pandemic. ALSA aims to build a platform for legal talents and to provide more opportunities for junior scholars to communicate and to share new ideas with peers. Given that empirical study is a trend in legal research and has drawn the attention of many legal scholars, Prof Shen hoped that the workshop can increase the sense of community among legal scholars and promote application of social science research methods in the legal field. At the end, he mentioned that he looked forward to some creative ideas and discussion from brilliant young scholars, and thanked all participants again for their attendance which would make the Workshop a great success.



Presentation by Dr Xu Wenming

Following the welcoming remarks, **Dr Xu Wenming** (Associate Dean and Associate Professor, School of Law and Economics, China University of Political Science and Law) gave a talk on the topic of “Introduction to Empirical Methods in Legal Studies.” He started his session by expressing his thanks to ALSA for inviting him. The session covered the basics of empirical legal research, including framing research questions and hypothesis, data collection, ensuring integrity of data, data cleaning, two-sample t-test and regression analysis. Dr Xu introduced what scholars can do with empirical methods, and gave a very good introduction to the concept of causal inference. The attendees found this lecture useful and that they benefited a lot from the lecture, especially from Dr Xu’s advice on how to get started with empirical studies.



Presentation by Prof Chang Yun-chien

In the afternoon session, **Prof Chang Yun-chien** (Research Professor & Director of Center for Empirical Legal Studies, Institutum Iurisprudentiae, Academia Sinica) delivered a lecture on “Big Data, Machine Learning, and Empirical Legal Studies”. During the session, he discussed the new developments in empirical legal studies in relation to the use of big data and application of artificial intelligence. Many attendees raised questions during the presentation and engaged in lively discussions with the speaker. With the detailed explanation of Prof Chang, participants gained a deeper understanding on the potential use of big data and artificial intelligence in empirical studies.



Closing remarks by Prof Wan Wai Yee

The Symposium ended with the closing remarks of **Prof Wan Wai Yee** (Associate Dean, CityU SLW). She thanked Prof Shen for giving the opening remarks, Dr Lin for organising the event, as well as the two speakers for giving the excellent talks. She found the presentations interesting and she also personally learnt a lot from them. She mentioned that Dr Xu’s introduction to the concept of causal inference is very helpful in empirical legal studies. Prof Wan also expressed thanks to Prof Chang for giving us an overview on the new developments in empirical legal studies. She also mentioned that we can think about the potential implications of these new developments in legal scholarship. One of the goals of ALSA is to build a community of scholars through a series of workshops and events; as such, Prof Wan considered that the event is very successful and hoped that the participants can keep a lookout for future ALSA events.