

SARTHAK JOSHI

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

Development Economics, Labour Economics, Experimental Economics, Economics of Gender

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics , University of Warwick, UK	2018-2024 (Expected)
Master of Arts (MA) in Economics , Delhi School of Economics	2013 - 2015
Bachelor of Arts (BA) Hons. in Economics , Hans Raj College, University of Delhi	2010 - 2013

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

- **Spatial Shocks and Gender Employment Gaps:** Job market paper [\[PDF\]](#)

Abstract: Labor demand shocks unfold unevenly across space. I show that the resulting spatial mismatch can disproportionately impact women's employment due to gender-based differences in propensity to commute. My empirical strategy uses rising Chinese import competition in the early 2000s to generate variation in the spatial distribution of work within commuting zones in India. Using municipality-level data containing the universe of non-farm jobs, I show that rising imports caused firms to expand in the urban core and contract in the rural periphery. In areas where firms reduced hiring, women's employment was significantly lower than men's after 10 years. I show that while men started commuting across the rural-urban boundary to take up jobs in expanding sectors, women either switched to locally available jobs in agriculture or dropped out of the labor force. In line with the fact that women rely more on public modes of transport, I find smaller gender gaps in commuting zones with better bus connectivity at baseline. I find similar negative impacts for women regardless of marital status and education level, suggesting that results are not driven by household-level constraints or increasing demand for skilled labor. My findings are consistent with the presence of gendered commuting frictions stemming from a lack of comfortable and safe commuting options for women in India. In the last part of the paper, I use a spatial general equilibrium model to show that relaxing such gendered commuting frictions would have mitigated the observed decline in female labor force participation in India between 2001 and 2011 by 30%, increasing total output by 0.4%.
- **Female Empowerment and Male Backlash: Experimental Evidence from India** (with Claire Cullen, Joe Vecci & Julia Tablot-Jones) IZA working paper [\[PDF\]](#)

Abstract: The unintended consequences of women's empowerment are rarely measured and remain poorly understood. We study the impact of female empowerment on male backlash through a series of experiments involving 1,007 households in rural India. We find that men pay to punish empowered women at double the rate of women in an otherwise identical control group. We find that backlash occurs regardless of how women are empowered, with social image concerns being a key driver. Finally, we test several policies to reduce backlash and find that reframing empowerment programs to emphasize broader community benefits can help mitigate backlash.
- **Has India's Learning Crisis Really Worsened?** Working paper [\[PDF\]](#)

Abstract: Despite near-universal enrolment and continuing progress across multiple input-based measures of learning, standardized test scores among Indian children show a large and permanent decline after 2010. I argue that this puzzling decline is partly an artefact of changing measurement error in

the main source of learning outcome data in the country. Using an external benchmark, I show that pre-2011 estimates are systematically biased upwards. Bias disappeared and data quality improved after robust survey procedures were introduced in 2011. Even if the real decline was smaller than previously thought, concerns around the declining productivity of the Indian education system remain.

- **Can Increasing Teacher Well-being Improve Student Outcomes in a Refugee Setting? Experiment Evidence from Jordan's Public Schools** Data collection completed (Draft coming soon)

Abstract: I experimentally evaluate the impact of a teacher professional development program aimed at improving occupational well-being and teaching practices in Jordan's public schools. Delivered in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the program combined in-person training with self-study and school-level teacher support groups. Using data from 1,600 teachers and 63,000 students across 166 schools, I find significant improvements in teaching quality and teacher well-being, resulting in a 0.13 standard deviation increase in student test scores after six months. However, I find no impacts in double-shift schools, which serve much of Jordan's large Syrian refugee population. While the program offers a scalable model for delivering teacher professional development in the region, complementary interventions are needed to address poor working conditions in more challenging settings.

POLICY WRITING

- **Conditional Cash Transfers to Improve Maternal and Child Nutrition Outcomes in Bihar, India** (with Oxford Policy Management) [Midline report](#); [Endline report](#)
- **Improving H.A.B.I.T: Households' Attitudes and Behaviours to Increase Toilet Use in rural India** (with Oxford Policy Management) [Report](#)

TEACHING

Microeconomics 1 (Undergraduate): Teaching evaluation 4.6/5 2020-2023
Advanced Econometric Theory (PhD level): Teaching evaluation 4.4/5 2019

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Consultant, Oxford Policy Management Limited, New Delhi (India) 2015-2018
Led, designed, and implemented large-scale data collection and impact evaluations using a range of experimental and quasi-experimental methods; undertook research communication and business development activities.

OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research assistant for Prof. Sonia Bhalotra (University of Warwick, UK) 2022-23
Research assistant for Prof. Stefano Caria (University of Warwick, UK) 2021
Research assistant for Prof. Chris Roth (University of Warwick, UK) 2019
Research assistant for Prof. Rohini Somanathan (Delhi School of Economics, India) 2017
Research assistant for Prof. Prof. Jean Dreze and Prof. Ritika Khera (IIT Delhi, India) 2014

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Graduate Teaching Assistant Award, Economics Department 2021, 2022, 2023
Warwick Departmental Scholarship 2018-2024
Commonwealth scholarship to attend City, University of London (subsequently declined) 2018

WORKSHOPS, SEMINARS, AND CONFERENCES

2024: STEG Annual Conference (Abu Dhabi); University of Gothenburg; Nottingham labour workshop; Workshop on Violence against Women, Warwick (Coventry); UPCOMING - University College London, Junior Research Day (London); 17th UniTo-CCA Ph.D. Workshop in Economics (Turin); CEPR Paris Symposium (Paris); Indian Statistical Institute (Delhi)

2023: Indian Statistical Institute (Delhi); STEG Gender Summer School (Florence); Warwick Business School (Coventry)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Co-Organiser, Warwick Economics PhD Conference	2021, 2022
Committee for liaising between faculty and teaching assistants	2022, 2023

SKILLS

Computing: STATA, QGIS, Python, L^AT_EX

Languages: English, Hindi

REFERENCES

Prof. Sonia Bhalotra

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Prof. Andreas Stegmann

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Last Updated: October 2024