

OPINDER KAUR
ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, University of California, Riverside (expected completion June 2023)
M.A. in Economics, University of California, Riverside, 2018
M.A. in Economics (World Economy), Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2014
B.A. in Economics (Honors), University of Delhi, 2012

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Primary: Labor Economics, Development Economics
Secondary: Economics of Education, Health Economics

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Intergenerational Health Effects of Adult Learning Programs: Evidence from India”

I estimate the impact of a large-scale adult learning program on child health. Beginning in 2009, the government of India phased in an education campaign targeting rural women in districts with an adult female literacy rate of 50 percent or below. I exploit this eligibility threshold in a regression discontinuity design. Using variation around the cutoff, I find that children whose mothers are eligible for the program are less malnourished. The results are likely driven by a diverse diet intake for children and increased labor force participation of mothers. I do not find evidence for changes in fertility behavior and utilization of healthcare services. The results translate to a large social gain due to a fall in disease burden induced by favorable child health outcomes.

WORKING PAPERS

“Teacher Value-Added Spillovers: How Far They Transcend?”

Good teachers affect both the short- and long-term achievements of their students. Apart from influencing their own students, teachers may also have broader impacts by increasing the performance of future peers of their students. I quantify teacher effects on such spillovers. The identification comes from the natural transitions of students from multiple elementary schools into a single middle school. I find that the positive impact of teachers on their students spills over to affect their students’ future peers with improved cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes in middle school and long-run outcomes in high school. Such unaccounted spillovers underestimate the actual effectiveness of a teacher.

“Does Signaling College Quality Matter? An Experimental Study in India” with Sarojini Hirshleifer and Deepshikha Batheja

We measure the impact of two main signals of tertiary-level human capital accumulation, college quality, and certification, on the first stage of the hiring process in India. We send 18,000 resumes to 1500 job postings for recent engineering graduates across eight major cities. We find no impact on callbacks of having graduated from a mid-tier college ranked in the top 300 relative to one outside of the top 1000. There is also no impact of scoring in the highest as opposed to the lowest quartile of a widely-used certification test. We do not find evidence of gender discrimination or heterogeneity by company characteristics.

Funded by: J-PAL Post-Primary Education Fund

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“Curriculum Reforms, Adult Health, and Mortality” with Bahadir Dursun, Ozkan Eren, and Erdal Tekin

GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

2022: HEERF Dissertation Year Fellowship, UC Riverside; Travel Grant Western Economic Association International Graduate Student Workshop (WEAI-GSW)

2021: Graduate Dean’s Dissertation Research Grant; Conference Travel Grant, GSA-UC Riverside; Conference Travel Grant, Economics Department, UC Riverside

2020: J-PAL Post-Primary Education Fund Grant (co-PI with Sarojini Hirshleifer and Deepshikha Batheja)

2019: Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award in Economics Department; Travel Grant Mentoring Workshop for 3rd Year Female Economics Students (NSF & Stanford University)

2017: Dean’s Distinguished Fellowship Award, UC Riverside (2017–2022)

TEACHING AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Instructor, UC Riverside, Summer 2020 – Summer 2021

- Labor Economics (Upper Division)
- Intermediate Microeconomics Theory I (Upper Division)
- Intermediate Microeconomics Theory II (Upper Division)

Teaching Assistant, UC Riverside, Fall 2018 – Summer 2022

- Intermediate Microeconomics Theory I (Upper Division)
- Introductory Econometrics (Upper Division)
- Introduction to Microeconomics (Lower Division)
- Introduction to Macroeconomics (Lower Division)

Research Assistant, UC Riverside, Winter 2020 – Summer 2022

- Research Assistant, Prof. Ozkan Eren and Prof. Sharon Oselin
- Research Assistant, Prof. Anil Deolalikar

RELEVANT POSITIONS HELD

- Research Assistant, ASEAN- India Centre at RIS, Ministry of External Affairs, India, 2015 – 2017
- Research Assistant, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, India, 2015
- Analyst – Knowledge Services, Infosys India Private Limited, India, 2014 – 2015
- Intern, Planning Commission, India, 2013

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Presentations

- 2022: Western Economic Association International Graduate Student Workshop (WEAI-GSW), All-California Labor Economics Conference (ACLEC) (poster)
- 2021: American Society of Health Economics (ASHEcon), CEGA-Berkeley, Western Economic Association International (WEAI), Eastern Economic Association (EEA), Midwestern Economic Association (MEA), Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP), Hawaii International Conference on Education (HICE), University of California Riverside Applied Economics Seminar (UCR), and University of California Riverside Brown Bag Seminar (UCR).
- 2020: Successfully Navigating Your Economics Ph.D., CSWEP, American Economic Association (AEA)
- 2019: Mentoring Workshop for 3rd Year Female Economics Students, NSF & Stanford University

Referee Service

Journal of Quantitative Economics; Journal of Labor Research; Pakistan Journal of Applied Economics

Volunteer Service

- All-California Labor Economics Conference Volunteer (ACLEC 2022)
- International Students' Volunteer (Fall 2018)
- International Student Orientation Leader at UC Riverside (Fall 2018)

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Stata, LaTeX, R, SAS, HPCC

REFERENCES

Ozkan Eren (Chair) Department of Economics (951) 827-1592 ozkane@ucr.edu	Anil B Deolalikar School of Public Policy & Department of Economics (951) 827-2310 anild@ucr.edu
Sarojini Hirshleifer Department of Economics (951) 827-1574 sarojini.hirshleifer@ucr.edu	Michael Bates Department of Economics (951) 827-1585 mbates@ucr.edu