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Current Appointment:

Postdoctoral Fellow, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University, 2015-present

Undergraduate Studies:

A.B., Brown University, Economics (with honors), 2009

Graduate Studies:

Harvard University, 2010-2015
Ph.D. in Business Economics
Thesis Title: "On the Demand for Human Capital in India"

Teaching and Research Fields:

Primary fields: Development Economics

Secondary fields: Public Economics, Labor Economics, Health Economics

Teaching Experience:

Spring, 2013 EC 970, Harvard, "The Economics of Health and Education"

Other Employment:

2009-2010 Becker Center, University of Chicago, Research Professional

Professional Activities:

Referee for: *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Urban Economics, Quarterly Journal of Economics*

Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:

2013-2015 Bradley Foundation Fellowship

Publications:

"Do IT Service Centers Promote School Enrollment? Evidence from India", *Journal of*

Development Economics, 104: p. 123-135 (September, 2013). (with Emily Oster)

Job Market Papers:

“Drought of Opportunities: Contemporaneous and Long-Term Impacts of Rainfall Shocks on Human Capital”, *Revise and Resubmit, Journal of Political Economy*, November 2013 (with Manisha Shah)

Higher wages are generally thought to increase human capital production, particularly in the developing world. We introduce a simple model of human capital production which predicts that higher wages can negatively impact human capital of school-aged children under reasonable assumptions. Using data on test scores and schooling from rural India, we show that human capital investment is procyclical in early life (in utero to age 3) but then becomes countercyclical. We argue that, consistent with our model, this countercyclical effect is caused by families investing more time in schooling when outside options are worse. In addition, we find long term impacts of these shocks: adults who experienced more positive rainfall shocks during school years have fewer total years of schooling. These results suggest that the opportunity cost of schooling, even for fairly young children, is an important factor in determining overall human capital investment.

“Could Workfare Programs Decrease Human Capital? Evidence from NREGA in India” (with Manisha Shah)

Workfare programs have become an important anti-poverty tool, but if they raise local wages, they can increase the opportunity cost of schooling for children. In this paper, we examine the effect of the largest anti-poverty workfare program in world: NREGA in India. We exploit the staged rollout of the program across districts to causally identify its effects on human capital investment. Using a household survey of test scores and schooling outcomes for almost 3 million rural children in India, we show that the introduction of NREGA resulted in decreased school enrollment, test scores, and achievement particularly amongst children ages 13-16. In addition, we show that while the impacts of NREGA on human capital are similar for boys and girls, boys are primarily substituting into market work when they leave school while girls are substituting into unpaid domestic work. We conclude that anti-poverty programs which raise wages could have the perverse effect of lowering human capital investment in the developing world.

Other Working Papers:

“Water, Health, and Wealth” (with Nava Ashraf, Edward Glaeser, and Abraham Holland)