

Ishita Ahmed

PhD Candidate. Economics
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Research Interests

Economics of Education, Public Policy, Labor Economics, Gender and Economic Development, Demography

Education

PhD in Economics

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Advisor: Professors John. E. Anderson

Aug 2018-May 2024 (Expected)

MA in Economics

University of Calgary

2015-2016

MSS in Economics

University of Dhaka

2008-2009

BSS in Economics

University of Dhaka

2004-2008

Job Market Paper

The Impact of School Entry Age on Student Achievement: Evidence from Nebraska

Using administrative data with exact date of birth from the Nebraska Department of Education, I assess the impact of waiting an additional year to start kindergarten on socio-economic achievement gap. Exploiting a fuzzy regression discontinuity design, I find a positive effect of waiting on test scores. However, the positive impact diminishes over time, and the diminishing effect is more pronounced for children from disadvantaged households. This suggests that the decision to delay kindergarten entry may worsen the socioeconomic achievement gap. However, using an exogenous change in the kindergarten entry policy in Nebraska, I find no impact of moving the kindergarten cutoff earlier on the achievement gap. A reduction in the practice of redshirting might drive that result.

Working Papers

Maternal Labor Supply and Change in Kindergarten Cutoff

This study investigates the impact of kindergarten enrollment eligibility on maternal labor market outcomes, focusing specifically on mothers with five year old children. Using a staggered triple difference model, I exploit variation in enrollment eligibility across children based on their birth quarter, state of residence, and the year of kindergarten enrollment. Using data from the American Community Survey (ACS), I find a decrease in labor supply among single mothers with a youngest child aged five, when the kindergarten eligibility of these children is impacted by the policy reform. For other groups of mothers, I could not find any significant impact.

English Proficiency and Occupational Sorting of U.S. Childhood Immigrants

Does English proficiency affect the labor market outcomes of US childhood immigrants? Do the outcomes vary across the gender and life-cycle? To explore these questions, I use Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) USA, the individual level public database. I explore how the English proficiency level of US childhood immigrants influences their preferences for jobs. Due to the concern for potential endogeneity of English proficiency, I have undertaken instrumental variable approach based on the critical period hypothesis of language acquisition. Following the IV approach

adopted by previous literature, I find that an increase in English proficiency makes the immigrants less likely to choose routine intensive jobs and more likely to choose non-routine analytic or social skill-intensive jobs. The results exhibit some degree of heterogeneity by gender and age-groups, especially up to 40.

Conferences

Midwest Economics Association Conference (Scheduled), AEF 49th Annual Conference (Scheduled)	2024
Midwest Economics Association Conference, Western Economics Association Conference, Second UNL Kansas K-State Economic Research Day, APPAM Fall Research Conference	2023
Southern Economics Association Conference	2022

Training and Workshops

Health Mentoring Workshop hosted by CSWEP and AEA	2021
Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): Basics and Applications organized by Faculty of Business Studies, University of Dhaka	2012
‘Proposal Writing Workshop’ organized by SANDEE and ERG in Bangladesh	2011
ARTNet/ ESCAP/ UNDP Workshop on ‘Trade and Gender Linkages’ in Bangkok, Thailand	2010

Honors and scholarships

McConnell Fellowship	2023–2024
Ogle Fellowship	2018-2019 & 2021-2024
Othmer Fellowship	2019–2021
Government of Bangladesh Merit-based Scholarship	2004–2009

Research experience

Graduate Research Assistant, Dr. Brenden Timpe <i>Reviewed research literature, Cleaned & manipulated large data set, Conducted descriptive analysis of data & created data visualizations</i>	2020–2023
Human Capital Premium <i>Worked as a team member in the Bureau of Business Research of UNL study</i>	2019-2020
Liberalising Health Services under the Proposed SAARC Framework Agreement on Trade in Services (SAFAS) <i>Worked as a team member in the CPD-SACEPS study</i>	2010-2011
Vulnerability to Climate Change: Adaptation Strategies and Layers of Resilience In Bangladesh <i>Worked as a team member in the CPD-ICRISAT Study</i>	2010-2011

Agricultural Trade between Bangladesh and India: An analysis of Trends and Trading Patterns

2010-2011

Worked as a team member in the CPD-CMI Study

Independent Review of Bangladesh's Development

2010

Worked as a team member in the CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue)

Teaching experience

Instructor, ECON:215: Statistics (UNL) 2022-2023

Teaching assistant, ECON: 917: Econometrics I (UNL) Spring 2022

Teaching assistant, ECON: 417: Introductory Econometrics (UNL) Fall 2021

Instructor, ECON:211: Principles of Macroeconomics (UNL) Summer 2020, Spring 2021, Summer 2021

Teaching assistant, ECON: 409: Applied Public Policy (UNL) Fall 2020

Teaching assistant, ECON: 211 (Hons): Principles of Microeconomics and Principles of Macroeconomics (UNL) Fall 2018

Faculty at Jagannath University, Bangladesh 2013-2018

Faculty at University of Barisal, Bangladesh 2011-2013

Technical Skills

Softwares STATA, R, Microsoft Office, L^AT_EX

Service

Graduate Student Representative (UNL) 2023-2024

Undergrad Committee Representative (UNL) 2023-2024

Chair at Midwest Economics Association Conference 2023

Judge at McNair 2023 Summer Research Colloquium 2023

Community Curriculum Council (Lincoln Public School) 2022-2023

Micro theory search committee (UNL) 2019

Departmental Student Advisor (University of Barisal, Bangladesh) 2012-2013

Professional memberships

American Economic Association (AEA), Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP), Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), Midwest Economics Association (MEA), Dhaka University Economics Department Alumni Association (DUEDEA), Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA)

Language proficiency

English (Fluent), Bengali (Native speaker), Hindi (Basic)

Miscellaneous

Special Sworn Status

References

John E. Anderson (Chair)
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln
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