

Kunal Mangal

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Visiting Fellow, Centre for Sustainable Employment at Azim Premji University 2021-
Supported by the Weiss Fund Postdoctoral Fellowship

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Public Policy, Harvard University 2021
Dissertation: "Essays in the Economics of Public Sector Recruitment in India"
Fields: Labor Economics, Development Economics

B.A in Economics, Mathematics, and International Studies, University of Arizona 2012
Honors: Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

WORKING PAPERS

"Chasing Government Jobs: How Aggregate Labor Supply Responds to Public Sector Hiring Policy in India"

Abstract: Many countries allocate civil service jobs through a system of highly competitive exams. For example, in India, civil service exams regularly attract over a half a million applications, with an acceptance rate of less than 0.1%. This paper studies whether the intense competition for these jobs affects aggregate labor supply. To answer this question, I study how the labor market responded to a civil service hiring freeze in the state of Tamil Nadu. I find that unemployment and exam participation increased in response to the hiring freeze, suggesting that candidates responded by spending more time studying, not less. A decade after the hiring freeze was lifted, the cohorts that were most impacted also have lower earnings, suggesting that participation in the exam process did not build human capital. Finally, I provide evidence that candidates learn about the probability of selection through the process of making attempts, which may explain part of the response we observe. Together, these results indicate that public sector hiring policy has the potential to move the whole labor market.

"How Much is a Civil Service Job in India Worth?"

Abstract: Government jobs in India are valuable, not just because they pay relatively higher wages, but also because they provide many valuable amenities, such as lifetime tenure, access to bribes, and prestige. Does the value of these amenities compete with the nominal wage itself? I use the observed search behavior of candidates preparing for highly structured competitive exams for government jobs to infer a lower bound on the total value of a government job, including amenities. Based on a sample of 120 male candidates preparing for state-level civil service exams in Pune, Maharashtra, I estimate a total value of at least 425,000 INR per month. This estimate implies that the amenity value of a government job is at least 81% of total compensation. The high amenity value is not driven by misinformed beliefs about the nominal wage, nor by a high value placed on the process of studying itself. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of these findings for policy and the questions it raises for future research.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“The Underrepresentation of Women in Competitive Careers: Evidence from the Indian Civil Services”
with Niharika Singh

“What Can Online Vacancies Tell Us About Labor Market Conditions in Lower-Income Countries?
Evidence from India” with Niharika Singh and Justin Bloesch

PUBLICATIONS

The following articles are non-peer-reviewed pieces written in commemoration of the *Review of Economics and Statistics* 100th anniversary:

Khwaja, Asim I., and Kunal Mangal. "Review of Economics and Statistics over the Past 100 Years: A Counting Exercise." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 100, no. 2 (2018a): i-v.

Khwaja, Asim I., and Kunal Mangal. "Review of Economics and Statistics over the Past 100 Years: Authorship." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 100, no. 3 (2018b): i-v.

Khwaja, Asim I., and Kunal Mangal. "Review of Economics and Statistics over the Past 100 Years: Content." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 100, no. 4 (2018c): i-vi.

Khwaja, Asim I., and Kunal Mangal. "Review of Economics and Statistics over the Past 100 Years: Content Explorer." *Review of Economics and Statistics* 101, no. 1 (2019): i-iii.

GRANTS

G2LM LIC Special Call on COVID-19 (\$19,360)	2020
Harvard GSAS Professional Development Grant (\$2,500)	2020
Weiss Fund for Development Economics (\$4,376)	2017
Harvard South Asia Institute Winter Session Grant (\$1,000)	2016

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Affiliations: American Economic Association

Presentations: Canadian Economic Association (2021); Society of Labor Economics (2021); University of Arizona, AREC Department (2020); NEUDC (2020)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Evidence for Policy Design, Research Fellow	2013-2015
Centre for Microfinance, Research Associate	2012-2013

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Citizenship: USA, Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)

Languages: English (native), Hindi (conversational), Spanish (conversational)

Last Updated: July 2021