

# Aashish Gupta

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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🌐 <https://lekhajokha.github.io>

Department of Sociology  
Leverhulme Center for Demographic Science  
42-43, Park End Street  
Oxford OX1 1JD  
United Kingdom

## FORMAL EDUCATION

**PhD in Demography and Sociology, 2021**  
University of Pennsylvania  
Dissertation: [Health, environment, and inequality in India](#)  
Comprehensive exams: Demography, Environment (passed with distinction)  
  
**M.A. (5-year integrated programme) in Development Studies, 2011**  
Indian Institute of Technology Madras  
  
Exchange Semester: Hochschule Bremen, Germany, 2009  
Minor: Economics

## EMPLOYMENT

### Current and affiliations

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow  
Department of Sociology & Leverhulme Center for Demographic Science,  
University of Oxford  
2023 – 2024

Non-Stipendiary Research Fellow  
Nuffield College, University of Oxford  
2023 –

Research Affiliate  
Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania  
2023 –

Visiting Research Fellow  
research institute for compassionate economics  
2015 –

### Previous

David E. Bell Postdoctoral Fellow  
Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies  
Harvard University  
2021 – 2022

Research Fellow, research institute for compassionate economics  
2013 – 2015

Research Assistant, Planning and Development Unit, Department of Economics,  
University of Allahabad

2011 – 2013

INTERESTS	Development, Demography, Environment, Health, Inequality, Social policy
AWARDS & GRANTS	<p>CSR Grant, “Large-scale phone survey to measure excess mortality in Bihar”, with Harsha Thirumurthy, Apurva Bamezai, M.R. Sharan, and Vipul Paikra, 2021. University of Pennsylvania Institute for the Advanced Study of India.</p> <p><i>Dorothy S. Thomas Award for best graduate student paper, 2021</i> Population Association of America Shared with Sangita Vyas and Payal Hathi, for our co-authored paper, “<a href="#">Social disadvantage, economic inequality, and life expectancy in nine Indian states</a>”</p> <p><i>Marie Skodowska-Curie Individual Fellowship</i> European Commission: Horizon 2020 and Oxford University.</p> <p>FSR Incoming Post-Doc fellowship 2021, UCLouvain (Declined)</p> <p>COVID-19 emergency graduate funding extension, 2020-2021 University of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Gertrude and Otto Pollak Summer Research Fellowship, 2020 Department of Sociology, University of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Fellowship, 2019-21 International Union for the Scientific Study of Population.</p> <p>Summer Travel Funds for Research, 2019. Center for the Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Travel award and scholarship, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, for IDEM 182 Life Table and Decomposition Analysis for Population Health Research (using R). 2018.</p> <p>SAS travel subvention, University of Pennsylvania. 2018.</p> <p>Grant for student-run conference, “Health &amp; Society in South Asia,” 2017. Lauder Institute, University of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Benjamin Franklin Fellowship, 2015-2019. University of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Exchange program, Hochschule Bremen, 2009 Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD).</p>
RESEARCH	<p><b>Journal articles</b></p> <p>18. “<a href="#">Changing socioeconomic and geographic gradients in cardiovascular disease risk factors in India Evidence from nationally representative household surveys</a>”, 2023, with Sarah Wetzel, Pascal Geldsetzer, Sneha Sarah Mani, Kavita Singh, Mohammed K. Ali, Dorairaj Prabhakaran, Nikhil Tandon, and Nikhil Sudharsanan, <i>Lancet Regional Health – South East Asia</i>.</p> <p>17. “<a href="#">Large and persistent life expectancy disparities among Indias social groups</a>”,</p>

- 2022, with Nikkil Sudharsanan, *Population and Development Review*. [\[Pre-print\]](#) [\[Code\]](#)
16. [“Social disadvantage, economic inequality, and life expectancy in nine Indian states”](#), 2022, with Sangita Vyas and Payal Hathi. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. [\[Pre-print\]](#) [\[Data\]](#) [\[Code\]](#).
  15. [“Seasonal variation in infant mortality in India”](#), 2022, *Population Studies* [\[Pre-print\]](#).
  14. [“Estimates of pandemic excess mortality in India based on civil registration data”](#), 2022, with Murad Banaji, *PLOS-Global Public Health*. [\[Code\]](#)
  13. [“Can administrative health data be used to estimate population level birth and child mortality estimates? A comparison of India’s Health Information Management System data with nationally representative survey data”](#), 2022, with Pritha Chatterjee and SV Subramanian, *SSM-Population Health*.
  12. [“Assessing mortality registration in Kerala: The MARANAM Study”](#), 2022, with Sneha Mani, *Genus: A journal of population studies*. [\[Code\]](#)
  11. [“Gender, government intervention, and slow LPG adoption in rural north India”](#), 2021, with Sangita Vyas and Nazar Khalid, *World Development*.
  10. [“Premature adult mortality in India: What is the size of the matter?”](#) 2021, with Chalapati Rao, Mamta Gupta, and Ajit Kumar Yadav, *BMJ Global Health*.
  9. [“Caste, religion, and mental health in India”](#) 2020, with Diane Coffey, *Population Research & Policy Review*.
  8. [“Revisiting Open Defecation: Evidence from a Panel Survey in Rural North India, 2014–18”](#) 2020, with Nazar Khalid, Devashish Deshpande, Payal Hathi, Avani Kapur, Nikhil Srivastav, Sangita Vyas, Dean Spears, and Diane Coffey, *Economic & Political Weekly*.
  7. [“Persistence of solid fuel use despite increases in LPG ownership: New survey evidence from rural north India”](#) 2020, with Diane Coffey, Payal Hathi, Nazar Khalid, Dean Spears, Nikhil Srivastav, and Sangita Vyas, *Economic & Political Weekly*.
  6. [“Where there is smoke: Solid fuel externalities, gender, and adult respiratory health in India”](#) 2019, *Population & Environment*.
  5. [“Health externalities of India’s expansion of coal plants: Evidence from a national panel of 40,000 households”](#) 2017, with Dean Spears, *Journal of Environmental Economics & Management*.
  4. [“Understanding open defecation in rural India: Untouchability, pollution, & latrine pits”](#) 2017, with Diane Coffey, Payal Hathi, Dean Spears, Nikhil Srivastav, and Sangita Vyas, *Economic & Political Weekly*.
  3. [“Caste and the Power Elite in Allahabad”](#) 2015, with Ankita Aggarwal and Jean Drèze, *Economic & Political Weekly*.

2. [“Revealed preference for open defecation: Evidence from a new survey in rural North India”](#) 2014, with Diane Coffey, Payal Hathi, Nidhi Khurana, Dean Spears, Nikhil Srivastav, and Sangita Vyas, *Economic & Political Weekly*.
1. [“Old Age Pension Scheme in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh”](#) 2013. *Economic & Political Weekly*.

### **Working papers**

(Please email me for drafts of working papers not already posted online.)

10. “Indirect Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Cause-of-Death Analysis of Life-Expectancy Changes in Nine High-Income Countries, 2015–2021”, with José Manuel Aburto, Antonino Polizzi, Luyin Zhang, and Jennifer Dowd.
9. “New Approaches for Mortality Measurement Using Phone Surveys: An Adaptive Randomized Trial in India”, with Nikkil Sudharsanan, Jithin Jose, Sandra Jose, and Stéphane Helleringer.
8. “Hindu-Muslim differences in spousal violence in India: A research note”, with Kanika Sharma.
7. [“Large and unequal life expectancy declines associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in India in 2020”](#), with Murad Banaji, Prankur Gupta, Payal Hathi, Ridhi Kashyap, Vipul Paikra, Kanika Sharma, Anmol Sonmanchi, Nikkil Sudharsanan, and Sangita Vyas.
6. “Pandemic excess mortality in rural Bihar”, with Vipul Paikra, Apurva Bamezai, Murad Banaji, Payal Hathi, Aditi Priya, MR Sharan, Kanika Sharma, Chanchal Kumar Singh, Harsha Thirumurthy, and Sangita Vyas.
5. [“Uncertainty about maternal mortality in India: New, higher estimates from the National Family Health Survey”](#), with Nathan Franz, Dean Spears, and Diane Coffey.
4. “Household wealth and life expectancy in India: 1990–2016”
3. “Locating Public Services in Planned and Informal settlements in Delhi”, with Rajesh Veeraraghavan, Bob Bell, Hrid Bijoy, and Patrick Heller.
2. “Hindu Muslim mortality differences in India: 1990–2019”, with Nazar Khalid, Payal Hathi, and Sangita Vyas.
1. [“Widow and widower mortality in India”](#), with Babul Hossain, Megan N. Reed, Srinivas Goli, and KS James.

### **Invited essays, chapters, notes, opinion, & policy reports**

31. [“Is open defecation still prevalent in rural north India?”](#), 2022, with Sangita Vyas, *Ideas for India*.
30. [“Social disadvantage and child mortality in India: 1993–2019”](#), 2022, with Vipul Paikra and Kanika Sharma, *Social Scientist*.

29. [“Changes in Child Undernutrition and Overweight in India From 2006 to 2021: An Ecological Analysis of 36 States”](#), 2022, *Global Health: Science and Practice*, with Jithin Varghese, Rukshan Mehta, Aryeh Stein, and Shivani Patel [Code]
28. [“Survey evidence of excess mortality in Bihar in the second COVID-19 surge”](#), 2022, with Apurva Bamezai, Murad Banaji, Shivani Pandey, MR Sharan, Kanika Sharma, and Chanchal Kumar Singh.
27. [Mortality and Death Registration in India](#), 2022, with Murad Banaji and Vipul Paikra, *The India Forum*.
26. [The bitter dispute over India’s pandemic mortality](#), 2022, with Murad Banaji, *The Hindu*.
25. [“With COVID-19, India Experienced Its Greatest Mortality Crisis Since Independence”](#), 2021, with Murad Banaji, *The Wire Science*.
24. [“Lessons from India’s all-cause mortality data”](#), 2021, with Murad Banaji, 2021. *The Hindu*. Version with notes available at [SocArxiv](#). Background calculations and state-specific documents are available at [IndiaCOVIDmapping.org](#).
23. [“An analysis of reports on suspected COVID-19 deaths from rural North and Central India”](#), 2021, with Murad Banaji and Leena Kumarappan. Short version published in *Scroll.in*, *The Wire Science*, and *The Wire Hindi*.
22. [“The scale of Gujarat’s mortality crisis”](#), 2021, with Murad Banaji. *The Hindu*. Also available at [SocArxiv](#).
21. [“Indias COVID-19 Death Reporting is Broken But Heres How to Fix It”](#), with Rukmini S and Dhanya Rajendran. Published in *thewire.in*, *scroll.in*, *thequint.com*, and *newsminute.com*. 2021.
20. [“Pauses and reversals of infant mortality decline in India in 2017 and 2018,”](#) with Jean Drèze, Sai Ankit Parashar, and Kanika Sharma. *Economic and Political Weekly*. 2021.
19. [“Only 10% Indians believe they face Covid-19 risk – signalling that public messaging is key,”](#) with Seema Murthy, Arjun Rangarajan, and Shirley Yan. *Scroll.in.*, July 21, 2020.
18. [“Mental health disparities in India”](#), with Diane Coffey and Meghna Mungikar, *Ideas for India*. 2020.
17. [“COVID-19 and the Importance of Improving Civil Registration in India”](#), *India in Transition*, Center for Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania. Republished in *The Wire*, *The Print*, and *The Print Hindi*.
16. [“Measuring excess mortality during the COVID-19 pandemic in low- and lower-middle income countries: the need for mobile phone surveys”](#) 2020, commentary with Stéphane Helleringer et. al.

15. [“Communicating harms, reducing prices, and challenging inequality should be central to a redesign of the Ujjwala program”](#) 2019, in *Ujjwala 2.0: From Access to Sustained Usage*. Edited by Santosh Harish & Kirk Smith, CCAPC policy brief, with Sangita Vyas. Republished in *The Hindu* as [“Cooking with gas, not wood.”](#)
14. [“Construction, Coercion, and ODF Paper Pe: The Swachh Bharat Mission, according to local government officials”](#) 2019, with Nazar Khalid, Payal Hathi, Nikhil Srivastav, Sangita Vyas, and Diane Coffey, *The India Forum*.
13. [“Purity, pollution, and untouchability: Challenges affecting the adoption, use, and sustainability of sanitation programmes in rural India”](#) 2016, *Sustainable Sanitation for All: Experience, challenges and innovations*, with Diane Coffey & Dean Spears.
12. [Meet Kajubai, the health worker who has been saving Gadchiroli’s babies since 1994](#), with Kanika Sharma. *Scroll.in*. Aug 4, 2016.
11. [“Like its predecessors, Narendra Modi’s sanitation program is struggling,”](#) with Nikhil Srivastav. *LiveMint*. June 5, 2015.
10. [“When even rape is legal,”](#) with Kanika Sharma. *The Hindu*. June 10, 2015.
9. [“Why using patriarchal messaging to promote toilets is a bad idea,”](#) with Nikhil Srivastav. *TheWire.in* June 7, 2015.
8. [“More buses, fewer cars please,”](#) with Karthik Rao Cavale. *The Hindu*. April 16, 2015
7. [“A sanitation sena for India,”](#) with Payal Hathi. *The Indian Express*. October 3, 2014.
6. [“How Bangladesh brought about a dramatic toilet revolution,”](#) with Sangita Vyas. *The Business Standard*. March 17, 2014.
5. [“Reporting and incidence of violence against women in India.”](#), [riceinstitute.org](#).
4. [“Are Children in West Bengal Shorter Than Children in Bangladesh?”](#) 2013, with Arabinda Ghosh & Dean Spears, *Economic & Political Weekly*.
3. [“Is it Cast in the Mind?”](#) *The Hindu Businessline*. April 14, 2013.
2. [“Evaluation of NREGA wells in Jharkhand”](#) 2012, with Ankita Aggarwal & Ankit Kumar, *Economic & Political Weekly*.
1. [“Coupon Fiasco,”](#) with Sakina Dhorajiwala. *Frontline*. December 31, 2011.

ACADEMIC  
PRESENTATIONS

- 2023:** Population Health Research Group, University of St. Andrews, United Kingdom (invited seminar)
- Quetelet Seminar, Center for Demographic Research, UCLouvain (invited presentation)
- Conference on 'Cultural Contexts of Health: Organising the Emerging Field', Nuffield College, University of Oxford (presentation)
- Annual meeting of the Population association of America, New Orleans (discussion and presentations)
- Nuffield College Sociology Seminar, University of Oxford (long presentation)
- Comparative workshop on adult mortality determinants, USC/UCLA Center for Biodemography and Population Health and UC-Berkeley Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging, virtual (presentations)
- Donald J. Bogue Demography Seminar, University of Chicago (long presentation)
- Conference on Population Dynamics in India, NYU Abu Dhabi (invited presentation)
- [Summer Data Seminar Series, Center for Advanced Study of India, University of Pennsylvania](#) (long presentation)
- 2022:** Spring 2022 Maryland Population Research Center Seminar Series, virtual (long presentation)
- Fair February: Data Science for Social Good, Brown University, virtual (long presentation)
- [Comparative workshop on adult mortality determinants](#), USC/UCLA Center for Biodemography and Population Health and UC-Berkeley Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging, virtual (presentation)
- Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies Friday Luncheon Series, hybrid (long presentation)
- Annual meeting of the Population association of America, Atlanta (poster and presentation)
- Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Los Angeles (discussion, presentation)
- [UNDESA-WHO Technical Advisory Group on COVID-19 Mortality Assessment - Working Group 2](#) (virtual webinar)
- [Bahujan Economics discussion series on health and healthcare in India](#), virtual (long presentation)
- United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Innovative methods to measure the impact of COVID-19 on mortality through surveys and censuses, Abu Dhabi (presentations)



- Southern Economic Association 92nd Annual Meeting, Fort Lauderdale, FL (presentation, discussion)
- Population Research Exchange, Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies, Harvard University (long presentation)
- 2021:** PAA Applied Demography Conference 2021, online (poster)
- Annual meeting of the Population Association of America, 2021, online (poster)
- Right to food campaign webinar series on Pandemic and the Welfare State, session on Health for All (presentation)
- King's India Institute Graduate Conference (presentation)
- National Alliance for Peoples Movements, Grounded Voices Seminar Series (presentation)
- Annual meeting of the British Society of Population Studies (presentation)
- IUSSP International Population Conference (presentations)
- 2020:** Emory Global Diabetes Research Center, Emory University (Online, long presentation)
- [Population Studies Center Colloquium, University of Pennsylvania \(Online, long presentation\)](#)
- IUSSP CRVS Fellows Online Meeting II (Online, presentation)
- Annual meeting of the British Society for Population Studies (Online, presentation)
- Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, 2020 (round-table session)
- Workshop on Gender and mental health in Bihar and India (presentation, online, organized by IGC India and rice)
- Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington DC, 2020 (Canceled due to COVID-19: poster, presentation, chair)
- CASI Graduate Student Workshop (Online, long presentation, University of Pennsylvania).
- IUSSP CRVS Fellows Online Meeting I (Online, presentation)
- 2019:** Population Data for the 21st century: Advances in data collection methodologies, IUSSP & UNFPA, NEW York (poster)
- Sustainability and Development Conference 2019, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (presentation)
- Annual ASA Sociology of Development Conference, Notre Dame (presentation)
- Annual meeting of the Population Association of America, 2019, Austin (discussion, poster, presentation)



Economics Seminar Series, Azim Premji University, Bangalore (long presentation)

**2018:** IDEM 182 course, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock (short presentation)

Centre for Global Health Research, University of Toronto and St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto (long presentation)

University of Pennsylvania Institute of Aging Sylvan M. Cohen Annual Retreat (poster)

Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Denver (discussion, poster, presentation)

Unsettled Spaces, University of Pennsylvania (presentation)

Paper 360: Demography Club, Population Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania (presentation)

**2017:** Health and Society in South Asia Conference, University of Pennsylvania (presentation)

Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Chicago (poster)

**2016:** SEARCH Gadchiroli, Maharashtra (presentation)

Ambedkar Jayanti Seminar, University of Pennsylvania (presentation)

Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington DC (poster)

**2014:** Ambedkar University Delhi (presentation)

South Asia Conference on Policies and Practices to Improve Nutrition Security, Delhi (presentation)

#### TEACHING & SERVICE

**Instructor:** Demographic Analysis (M.Phil. program), Michaelmas Term 2023, University of Oxford.

**Teaching assistant:** SOCI / HSOC 111 Health of Populations (Prof. Irma Elo), University of Pennsylvania. 2018.

**Guest lectures in courses:** Allahabad University, City University of New York, Emory University, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, University of Oxford, University of Pennsylvania, Yale University.

**Journal refereeing (selected):** American Journal of Public Health; Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences; Demographic Research; Demography; Economic and Political Weekly; Energy Research and Social Science; Health Economics, Policy, and Law; Journal of Development Economics; Journal of Development Studies; Journal of Health and Social Behavior; Journal of Public Health; Nature Medicine; PLOS Global Public Health; Population and Environment; Population Studies; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences; Social and Cultural Geography; Review of Economics and Statistics; Social Sci-

ence and Medicine; World Development.

### **Conference organization**

Health & Society in South Asia, University of Pennsylvania, April 2017

Open defecation in rural north India, India Habitat Center, Delhi, January 2019

### **Session organization**

Environmental Influences on Mortality and Morbidity in Low- and Middle-Income Countries, Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Columbus, Ohio, April 2024 Environment and health in a global perspective, British Society for Population Studies, 2023

Round-tables, Development Sociology section of the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, 2021

Health Disparities in a Global Context, Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, St. Louis, Missouri, May 2021

Health & Disease in the Developing World, Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, Washington DC, April 2020

### **University Service**

Department of Sociology Academic Representative to Bodleian Social Science Library Committee on Library Provision and Strategy, University of Oxford 2023 -

### **FIELD AND SURVEY EXPERIENCE**

*Bihar Mortality Assessment Phone Survey (B-MAPS)*, 2022, with Apurva Bamezai, Vipul Paikra, MR Sharan, Chanchal Kumar Singh, and Harsha Thirumurthy.

*Mortality And Death Registration Assessment Survey (MADRAS 2019)*, with Neeraj Kumar Singh and Kanika Sharma; Madhya Pradesh.

*Solid fuel use and sanitation in rural north India*, with r.i.c.e, data and documentation available for download at [riceinstitute.org/data](https://riceinstitute.org/data)

*Research for Action* - Surveys on social security programs. Summer 2009, Summer 2010, Spring 2011, Summer 2011, Spring 2012, Summer 2013, Winter 2014, & Summer 2016.

*Sanitation Quality, Use, Access and Trends (SQUAT) Survey*; Bihar, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan & Uttar Pradesh, 2013-14.

Volunteer, 2013, *Aman Biradiri - Relief and Reconciliation in Assam*; Lower Assam.

### **LANGUAGES**

English, Hindi