

Malik Altaf Hussain

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Education

George Mason University , Fairfax, VA	<i>2020 – Present</i>
Ph.D. in Economics	
Primary Fields: Law and Economics, Economics of Religion	
Secondary Fields: Historical Political Economy, Culture and Economics	
Research Assistant to Prof. Noel D. Johnson	<i>2020 – 2023</i>
Jawaharlal Nehru University , New Delhi, India	<i>2014 – 2017</i>
M.Phil. in Economics	
South Asian University , New Delhi, India	<i>2010 – 2012</i>
M.A. in Development Economics	
Aligarh Muslim University , Aligarh, India	<i>2007 – 2010</i>
B.A. in Economics	

Research Interests

Historical Political Economy, Economics of Religion, Culture and Economics, Long Run Economic Growth and Applied Econometrics.

Job Market Paper

Pox, Piety, and Paradox: The Economics of Vaccination in British India

Draft available upon request

This paper presents new historical evidence on the cultural roots of vaccine hesitancy and its medium-term effects. Using variation in Hindu population shares across districts in colonial India, this paper analyzes the impact of religious beliefs on smallpox vaccination rates from 1868 to 1878. An instrumental variables approach based on desecration of historical Hindu religious sites reveals that Hindu-majority districts had significantly lower vaccination rates than Muslim-majority districts. Additionally, lower vaccination rates are linked to higher widowhood and a greater proportion of unmarried individuals in subsequent decades. The findings highlight the societal impact of culturally-driven vaccine hesitancy and guide culturally sensitive health policies.

Publications

Hussain, M.A. and M. Tyagi (2024). “Political Connections and Credit Access: Evidence from Small Businesses and Microenterprises in India.” *Small Business Economics*.

Hussain, M.A. and M. Tyagi (2024). “Political Connections of Firms and Access to Credit: Evidence from the Indian Corporate Sector.” *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics*, vol. 69.

Hussain, M.A. and M. Tyagi (2020). “Role of Political Connections in Land Investment: Evidence from Rural India.” *Constitutional Political Economy*.

Working Papers

Mistrust and Vaccination in Colonial India: 1870-1926 (with Noel D. Johnson)

Religion and Consumption of Drugs in Colonial India (With Noel D. Johnson and Shruti Rajagopalan)

Colonization in a Network of Allies

Railways and Health Outcomes in Colonial India

Fellowships and Awards

Emergent Ventures India Fellowship	2024 – 2025
Public Choice Fellowship	2023 – 2025
Bradley Fellowship	2021 – 2024
Mercatus Center Ph.D. Fellowship	2020 – 2023

Conferences and Presentations

Markets and Society Conference, Mercatus Center	2024
International Conference on Indian Business and Economic History, IIM Ahmedabad	2023
ACES Political Economy Summer School, UC Berkeley	2023
PPE Summer School, Chapman University	2023
International Institute of Public Finance Congress, University of Linz	2022
ASREC Graduate Workshop on Economics of Religion, Chapman University	2022

Skills and Languages

Skills: R (Intermediate), Stata (Proficient), QGIS (Geospatial Analysis); LaTeX (Document Preparation)

Languages: Kashmiri (Native), Urdu (Native), English (Fluent)

Referee

Constitutional Political Economy, International Tax and Public Finance, Review of Development Economics, Small Business Economics, European Financial Management

References

Prof. Noel D. Johnson – PhD advisor

Professor of Economics, George Mason University
Email: njohnsol@gmu.edu

Prof. Mark Koyama

Professor of Economics, George Mason University
Email: Mark.Koyama@gmail.com

Prof. Alex T. Tabarrok

Bartley J. Madden Chair in Economics, George Mason University
Director, Center for Study of Public Choice
Email: atabarro@gmu.edu

Prof. Vincent Geloso

Assistant Professor of Economics, George Mason University
Email: vincentgeloso@hotmail.com