

# Pratik Mahajan

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**Research Interests:** Comparative Politics, Political Economy of Development, Tribal and Forest Governance, Democratic Backsliding, Political Candidacy and Representation, South Asia

## Education

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### Yale University

PHD POLITICAL SCIENCE

- Fields: Comparative Politics, Quantitative Methods, Political Economy

New Haven, CT

2025-current

### McGill University

MA POLITICAL SCIENCE (DEVELOPMENT STUDIES OPTION)

- Fields: Comparative Politics (Primary), Methods (Secondary)
- Committee: Dr. Narendra Subramanian, Dr. Aaron Erlich, and Dr. Dietlind Stolle

Montréal, QC

2022 - 2024

### McGill University

BA FIRST-CLASS HONOURS

- Honours Political Science, Minor Concentration Philosophy
- Allen Oliver Fellowship for Highest Departmental GPA

Montréal, QC

2019 - 2022

### UWC Mahindra College

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE

- 2-year Residential Program

Paud, India

2017 - 2019

## Research

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### TRIBAL AND FOREST GOVERNANCE

Property, Power, and Participation: How Land and Political Rights Transform Forest Governance in Tribal India

*Dissertation in Progress*

### DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING

How Discretion Shapes Civil Society–Opposition Party Alliances Against Democratic Backsliding

*(With Feyaad Allie) Working Paper*

When Civil Society Overreaches: Voter Aversion to Expansive Civil Society Electoral Mobilization

*(With Feyaad Allie) Working Paper*

Integrating Citizen Awareness into the Study of Democratic Backsliding

*(With Alyssa Heinze) Working Paper*

### POLITICAL CANDIDACY AND REPRESENTATION

Brokered Majoritarianism: Turncoat Minority Politicians and Mixed Returns to Ideological Transformation

*Working Paper*

Aspirational Tolerance: How Electoral Ambition Moderates Citizens' Perceptions of Dynastic Politicians

*(With Rahul Verma) Working Paper*

Ambition and Ascent: How Formal Positions Shape Party Worker Attitudes

*(With Feyaad Allie and Rahul Verma) Working Paper*

Disproportionate Vacancy: How Bias and Selective Mobilization Shape Politician Vacancies in India's Village Councils

*(With Alyssa Heinze) Work in Progress*

## Published Datasets

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Subdistricts of India by Scheduled Status: An Original Dataset Linked to SHRUG, Development Data Lab (2024)  
*Harvard Dataverse Link*

All India SHRUG Shrid (Villages and Towns) Matched to Corresponding Local Governance Bodies Using LGD Codes (2025)  
*Harvard Dataverse Link*

## Awards, Fellowships, & Grants

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### YALE

Sterling Prize Fellowship (Yale) *USD 7,000 (2025-2027)*

### MCGILL

CSDC Academic Travel Grant, *CAD 1,000 (2023-2024)*

CAnD3-CSDC Fellowship for Training in Data Science and Population Dynamics, *CAD 10,750 (2023-2024)*

CSDC Methods Training Grant for ICPSR Summer School at UMichigan, *CAD 3,000 (2023)*

McGill Faculty of Arts Graduate Mobility Award for Fieldwork in India, *CAD 3,000 (2023)*

ISID Entrance Fellowship, McGill University, *CAD 1,650 (2022-2023)*

Faculty of Arts Graduate Entrance Fellowship, McGill University, *CAD 8,350 (2022-2023)*

Allen Oliver Fellowship, *Highest departmental GPA (3.97) in Political Science, CAD 3,000 (2022)*

Dow-Hickson Scholarship by McGill's Department of Philosophy, *CAD 2,000 (2021-2022)*

Alexander McKenzie Scholarship by McGill's Department of Political Science, *CAD 1,000 (2021-2022)*

Arts Research Internship Award (ARIA), *CAD 5,000 (2021)*

James McGill Entrance Scholarship, *CAD 3,000 (2019-2020)*

### NON-MONETARY AWARDS

CAnD3 Data Visualization Dragon's Den Competition, *Third Prize with Bertram Melix and Megan Skowronski (2024)*

McGill University Faculty of Arts Dean's Honour's List, *3 consecutive academic years (2019-2022)*

Davis-Mahindra Scholar at UWC Mahindra College, *Outstanding Student Leadership (2018-2019)*

## Presentations

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### CONFERENCES

September 2025. American Political Science Association (APSA), Vancouver, BC (*Scheduled*)

June 2024. Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA), Montréal, QC

March 2024. Centre for the Study of Democratic Citizenship (CSDC) Graduate Conference, Québec City, QC

### INTERNAL

March 2023. Finalist at McGill's 3-Minute-Thesis Competition.

October 2021. Arts Research Internship Awards (ARIA) Project Presentations at McGill, Montréal, QC.

## Teaching Experience

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### INSTRUCTOR

Conjoint Analysis: Visual and Interview Approach (*CSDC Winter Methods School, Université de Montréal, Jan 2024*)

### TA FOR MCGILL COURSES

*Evaluations Available Upon Request*

POLI 311 Introduction to Quantitative Methods (*Prof. Aaron Erlich, Jan-Apr 2024*) **4.5/5.0**

POLI 210 Political Science Research Methods (*Profs. Dietlind Stolle and Aaron Erlich, Sep-Dec 2023*) **4.4/5.0**

POLI 435 Identity and Inequality (*Prof. Narendra Subramanian, Jan-Apr 2023*) **4.7/5.0**

POLI 349 Foreign Policy of Asia (*Dr. Jaeyoung Kim, Sep-Dec 2022*) **4.6/5.0**

## Research Assistance

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May – Jul 2021 & May- Jun 2022: Spinoza and Servitude (*For Prof. Hasana Sharp, Dept. of Philosophy, McGill*)

May - Jul 2020: Bio-Medical Ethics (*For Tammy Molina, Interior Health of British Columbia*)

## Select Media Contributions

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"Review or Retention." *The Times of India*, Dec 2024.

"Ladki, bahin...but ethnic groups, caste too." *The Times of India*, Oct 2024.

"Democracy's Slow March" *with Alyssa Heinze*. *The Times of India*, Oct 2024.

"Maha Questions From Opposition's Small Allies." *The Times of India*, Sept 2024.

"Maharashtra LS polls have never been muddier." *with Vikramaditya Thakur*. *The Times of India*, May 2024.

"Adivasi Agency and Environmental Jurisprudence in India" - interview with Dr. Geetanjay Sahu. *ISID Talk Series*, May 2023.

"Why India's Plan for A New Parliament May Spell A Challenging Future For Its Democracy." *The McGill International Review*, May 2021.

"Education in India: A Duty Forsaken During COVID-19." *The McGill International Review*, July 2021.

## Research Skills

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### QUANTITATIVE

- Conjoint and Vignette Experiments
- Causal Inference: DiD and RDD
- Multiple Linear Regression
- Spatial regression and mapping

### SOFTWARE

- R and R Markdown
- LaTeX and Overleaf
- GitHub
- Qualtrics
- GIS

### QUALITATIVE

- In-depth interviews
- Participant Observation and Shadowing
- Discourse Analysis
- Enumerator Recruitment and Training

### LANGUAGES

- English (Fluent)
- Marathi (Fluent)
- Hindi (Fluent)
- French (Reading and Oral Comprehension)
- *Bhil tribal language family* (Oral Comprehension)

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING

### McGill University

#### CONSORTIUM ON ANALYTICS FOR DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING (CAND3)

- 10-month-long training program in data analytics and application to population dynamics.

Montréal, QC

2023 - 2024

### University of Michigan

#### ICPSR SUMMER PROGRAM IN QUANTITATIVE METHODS OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

Ann Arbor, MI

2023

## Fieldwork

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### May 2025-July 2025: Maharashtra and Gujarat, India

- Interviews, observation of PESA gram sabhas, and fielding surveys on Tribal Forest Governance project in 6 districts.

### July 2024-April 2025: Across Maharashtra, India

- Participant observation, shadowing, interviews, administrative data collection, training enumerators and managing in-person survey data collection for projects on democratic backsliding and political candidacy and representation.

### September 2024: Haryana, India

- Observing collaboration between grassroots organizations and party workers during Haryana's state elections.

### May-July 2023: Nandurbar and Dhule Districts, Maharashtra, India

- Conjoint survey experiment and interviews in 40 villages, managing a team of 4 enumerators.

### May-June 2018: Jalgaon and Nandurbar Districts, Maharashtra, India

- Interviews in 5 tribal villages to study the implementation of the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act.

## References

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*Available upon request*