

VIKAS PD GAWAI

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EDUCATION

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Ph.D., Ag and Applied Economics (AAE)	2018-2024
University of Wisconsin-Madison, Masters of Economics	2016-18
University of Mumbai, India, Bachelor of Technology, Civil Engineering	2004-08

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Health, Aging, Social Security, Public Policy, Human Capital, Caste (Race), Gender, Agriculture, Broadband

PUBLICATIONS

- Early-Life Economic Conditions and Old-Age Mortality: Evidence from Historical County-Level Bank Deposit Data, *with Valentina Duque, Jason Fletcher, Hamid Noghanibehambari, Lauren Schmitz*- (***Journal of Population Economics*, January 2024**)
- Discrimination in Science: Salaries of Foreign and US Born Land-Grant University Scientists *with Jeremy Foltz* (**Conditionally Accepted at *American Journal of Agricultural Economics (AJAE)*, July 2024**)

JOB MARKET PAPER

- Does High-Speed Internet (Broadband) Technology Affect the Mental Health of Older Adults? (*Presentations* - MEA '23, American University '23, SEA '23, APPAM '23); *Media Highlight: GROW MAGAZINE cover story*

Abstract- Recent research has shown the negative effects of the internet on younger people's mental health. Yet, we do not know whether the same effects are present among the older population, who are especially vulnerable to certain mental health conditions and more likely to fall victim to online deception. I estimate the effect of broadband availability on the mental health of the 50+ age group in the United States from 2010 to 2018. I use individual panel data and exploit quasi-experimental variation induced by the staggered rollout of broadband at the census tract level using the latest difference-in-differences (DID) framework. Despite evidence of the internet's harmful effects on younger populations, I show that broadband rollout significantly improves older adults' mental health, reducing depression symptoms by 5.7%. Key mechanisms driving these positive gains include a decline in feelings of social isolation and loneliness and an increase in the quality of virtual social connections. Whites, rural dwellers, women, and married individuals appear to be the biggest beneficiaries of broadband's positive effects on mental health. This work highlights broadband's unmeasured additional benefits to public investments, given the recent allocation of over \$65 billion to broadband expansion.

WORKING PAPERS

- Effect of Early Life Exposure to the Green Revolution on Aging Outcomes in India *with Lauren Schmitz, Valentina Duque, Jinkook Lee, Hunter Green* (*presented at APPAM '22*)
- Does Broadband Technology Affect Social Security Applications? (*Award from Retirement and Disability Research Center (RDRC) Center for Financial Security (CFS), Social Security Administration (SSA)*)
- Is there a Link between Access to Broadband and Health Outcomes? A spatial econometrics approach using County Health Rankings data *with Steven Deller* (**under review**)
- Spillover Effects of a Bicycle Policy on Girls' Enrollment in Middle Schools (*Recognition under Best Paper Scholarship (Honorable mention), Dept. of Economics, UW-Madison, 2018*)

SELECTED WORK IN PROGRESS

Spatially Varying Gender and Caste Inequalities in Cognition and the Contribution of Individual and State-level Characteristics Across India *with Lauren Schmitz, Kanika Arora, and Shubhashrita Basu* (selected at a Workshop on Determinants of Adult Mortality, Morbidity, and Healthy Aging in LMICs at UC, Berkeley)

Effects of Teacher Hiring Policy on Student Test Scores in Rural India: A Multiple Regression Discontinuity Design Approach for one of the Largest Public School Systems in the World (selected at American Education Finance and Policy conference (AEFP))

Effects of Rural Hospital Closures on Mortality in Severe Weather Conditions (selected at Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (AERE))

Effect of Green Revolution on the Intergenerational Human Capital *with Valentina Duque, Lauren Schmitz* (presented at PAA '22)

COMPETITIVE HONORS

-**Diversity Fellow**, School of Public Affairs, American University 2023-
 -**Research Fellow**, Retirement and Disability Research Center (**RDRC**) Center for Financial Security (CFS), Social Security Administration (**SSA**) 2022-
 -**DEI- Diversity Scholarship** American Society of Health Economics (ASHEcon) 2021
 -**Best Research Paper Scholarship (Honorable mention)** Dept. of Economics, UW Madison 2018

COMPETITIVE GRANTS AND AWARDS

Center for Demography of Health and Aging **Research Travel** Award- \$2,000 2023
 RDRC - Junior Scholar **Research Competition** Award- \$5,000 2022-23
 Prof. Jeremy Foltz **Research Travel** Award- \$1,100 2023
 Deborah and David Penn Fund - **Research Presentation** Award- \$500, \$1000 2022, 23
 UW-Madison- Graduate School - **Research Presentation** Award- \$2,500, \$1,500 2022, 23
 UW-Madison- CDE **Research Presentation** Award- \$950 2022
 UW-Madison- Traisman Agribusiness **Graduate Fellowship**- \$750 2021
 UW-Madison Student Research Grants Competition **Research Travel**- \$1,500 2020
 UW Madison Graduate Student **Summer Fieldwork** Award- \$3,000 2019
 Indian State Government Scholarship for Masters in Economics- \$100,000 2016-18

ACADEMIC AFFILIATIONS

-Graduate Student, Center for Demography of Health and Aging (**CDHA**), and Center for Demography and Ecology(**CDE**) 2019–Current
 -Graduate Student, Institute of Research on Poverty (**IRP**) 2021-2022
 -Graduate Student, Center for South Asia, (**CSA**) 2020–

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Midwest Economics Association (MEA) 2023
 Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) 2022
 Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM) 2022, 23
 Population Association of America (PAA) 2022
 Southern Economics Association (SEA) 2023

LEADERSHIP, MENTORSHIP

Mentor for two undergrad students on a class project under Prof. Foltz 2022
 Mentor for three FirstGen undergrad student 2022
 UW-Madison First Generation (**FirstGen**), Member 2021–
 UW-Madison CHDA NextGen Population, Mentor for 18 students on research development 2022
 UW-Madison, AAE, Faculty Hiring Committee, Student Representative 2022
 UW-Madison, AAE, Ph.D. Admission Committee, Student Representative 2021

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM), *Abstract Reviewer* 2023
Journal- Economics of Education Review, *Reviewer* 2022–23
American Society for Health Economists (AshEcon), *Abstract Reviewer* 2022
Agriculture and Applied Economics (AAEA), *Abstract Reviewer* 2022, 2023
AAEA-Health Economics Section (Chair- Prof. Di Fang) *Official Twitter Manager (with Lei Pan)* 2022–23

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant to Prof. Lauren Schmitz (UW Madison, School of Public Affairs) and Prof. Valentina Duque (University of Sydney, Princeton University, American University) 2020–
Research Assistant to Prof. Jeremy Foltz and Prof. Bradford Barham (UW Madison, AAE) 2018–2020
Research Assistant to Prof. Andra Ghent (UW Madison, Wisconsin School of Business) May–Sept (2018)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Lecturer: **Agricultural & Economic Development of Africa (Health)**, (Instructor- Osaretin Olurotimi) UW-Madison, AAE 477 Spring 2022
Guest Lecturer: **International Studies (Gender Gap and Economics Development in Developing Countries)**, (Instructor- Prof. Jeremy Foltz) UW-Madison, AAE 374 Spring 2022, 2023
Guest Lecturer: **The Economics of Race and Gender** (Gender Gap in Developing Countries), (Instructor- Prof. Meghan I. Esson) Bentley University, EC 298 Spring 2022

TECHNICAL SKILLS

STATA, R(basic), Python(basic), Latex

REFERENCES

Jeremy Foltz (advisor)

Professor, Agricultural and Applied Economics
University of Wisconsin-Madison
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Lauren Schmitz

Assistant Professor, La Follette School of Public Affairs
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