

Vaibhav Rathi

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Education

- **Stockholm University** **Stockholm, Sweden**
○ *PhD Candidate (Economics), 3rd year*
- **University of Chicago, Harris School of Public Policy** **Chicago, USA**
○ *Master in Economics Research Methods*
- **The LNM Institute of Information Technology** **Jaipur, India**
○ *B.Tech in Computer and Communication Engineering*

Research Interest

I use design based research methods along with structural modeling to study topics belonging to political economics and labor economics. Ongoing projects includes effect of political overreach on firm dynamics; monopsony in informal labor market and effect of inequality in police funding on police performance and crime.

Publications

- Pullabhotla, Hemant K., Mustafa Zahid, Sam Heft-Neal, Vaibhav Rathi, and Marshall Burke. "Global biomass fires and infant mortality." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 120, no. 23 (2023): e2218210120.

Awards and Grants

- Wallander's & Hedelius Scholarship for economic research. **SEK 360000 (USD 36,000)**
- Research travel grant, Carl Mannerfelt Foundation. **SEK 25000 (USD 2500)**
- CEGA Development Economics Challenge Spring 2023 (w Simoni Jain). **USD 2800**

Pre-doctoral Experience

- **Stanford University** **Stanford**
○ *Research Data Associate with Marshall Burke*
2019-2021
Worked on construction of a novel global pollution exposure panel using variety of weather datasets, atmospheric modeling and machine learning techniques. This allowed us to investigate causal relationship between particulate matter exposure and health indicator in data scarce setting. Paper published.
- **University of Chicago** **Chicago**
○ *Research Apprentice with Amir Jina at EPIC*
2018-2019
- **Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL), South Asia** **India**
○ *Senior RA (field) with Paul Niehaus, Karthik Muralidharan, UC San Diego
Jeremy Magruder, UC Berkeley*
2014-2017

○ **Political overreach, state capacity and firm dynamics**

Political overreach into bureaucracy is a routine occurrence in India. How does this affect bureaucrat's ability and effectiveness? I investigate the effects of political overreach on local state capacity as well as on firm behaviour. Using the universe of bureaucratic postings and transfers and biographical data on state level politicians, I empirically document that politician's characteristics are associated with unusual transfer patterns. Using an Instrumental Variable that captures the shock to politicians willingness to overreach, I estimate the effect of political overreach on firm's entry and investment behaviour.

The goal with this project is to generate quantitative evidence of growth effects of distortions arising out of political frictions.

○ **Monopsony in informal labor market** (with Simoni Jain, University of California Berkeley)

We investigate a unique feature of the informal labor markets in India where, due to regulatory costs, most small firms hire workers through a third party subcontractor. A priori the subcontractors can potentially reduce the hiring search friction. However, as hiring costs for subcontractors tend to be convex in these settings, providing them enough incentives would be increasing hard for firms specially at an early stage of growth. In other words, firms are prone to be held up by subcontractor's lack of incentive even when it may be optimal for them to hire more. We experimentally vary support to subcontractors to manipulate their hiring cost and investigate its effect on both offered wages and firm productivity.

In this project, our aim is to shed light on frictions experienced by small firms and their effect on the growth trajectory.

○ **Police funding inequality and police performance in US** (with Mitch Downey, IIES, Stockholm University)

Police departments in USA draw majority of their funding from revenues generated by local governments. This means that funding for local police can be unequal within a metropolitan area among neighbouring cities. What are the consequences of this arrangement for the allocation of police officers, the quality of police representation in majority-minority communities, and aggregate crime and officer-involved violence? Using a shift share instrument, we estimate the effects of increasing income inequality in MSA's with high-levels of fiscal fragmentation (i.e., instances where the population is divided across many different legally and fiscally independent cities), both relative to increasing inequality when fragmentation is low, and relative to highly fragmented MSA's that do not see increasing inequality.