# Ashutosh Bhuradia


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**Education**

**Harvard Graduate School of Education, Harvard University**
Ph.D. Candidate, Education Policy and Program Evaluation — *Expected*: 2026

**Stanford University**
M.A., International & Comparative Education — 2015 - 2016

**San Francisco State University**
M.A., Creative Writing — 2009 - 2012

**University of Technology of Madhya Pradesh, India**
B.E., Electrical & Electronics Engineering — 2005 - 2009

**Research Interests**

Fields: Development Economics, Labor Economics
Topics: Education Policy, Program Evaluation, Field Experiments

**References**

| **Professor Peter Blair** | **Professor Susan Dynarski** | **Professor Nishith Prakash** |
|---|---|---|
| Harvard Education School | Harvard Education School | Northeastern University |
| peter_blair@gse.harvard.edu | susan_dynarski@harvard.edu | n.prakash@northeastern.edu |

**Job Market Paper**

***How Leaders Emerge: Gender Composition, Leadership Selection, and Team Performance***

College students entering the workforce are increasingly expected to collaborate and lead mixed-gender teams. Yet we know little about the interplay of gender, teamwork, and leadership especially in settings that are traditionally gender segregated. This paper examines this interplay through a 2x2 randomized field experiment involving 203 mixed gender teams in a project-based competition at an engineering college in rural India. Students are first randomly assigned to male-majority or female-majority teams and further into one of two leadership conditions: leaders assigned based on a baseline measure of emotional intelligence or chosen by their own teammates. I find that female-majority teams that choose their own leaders outperform other groups by 0.38-0.51$\sigma$, driven by greater teamwork and more effective leadership. In contrast, male-majority teams that choose their own leaders have the lowest performance—driven by free-riding, coordination failures, and ineffective leadership—while teams with leaders assigned based on emotional intelligence, regardless of gender composition, fall somewhere in between. These results imply that leadership development and team performance must account for the differing dynamics across gender groups in contexts where gender norms remain strong.

**Papers in Progress**

***Misperceptions about Caste and Attitudes toward Affirmative Action: Evidence from India***

Caste remains a salient dimension of inequality in India and a key target of redistributive policies. I study how misperceptions about caste disparities influence attitudes toward caste and support for redistribution through affirmative action in higher education. I first survey 774 college-aged respondents, both beneficiaries (lower caste youth) and non-beneficiaries (upper caste youth) of affirmative action. I find that while upper- and lower-caste youth both underestimate caste disparities, upper-caste youth underestimate disparities to a larger extent. I then randomly assign these respondents to an online intervention that provides them with factual information about caste disparities. I find that correcting misperceptions through this information improves attitudes toward lower-caste groups by 0.13$\sigma$ but does not alter support for affirmative action. The results suggest that correcting misperceptions can shift social attitudes but may be insufficient to alter preferences for redistribution.

***The Impact of COVID-19 on School Choice and Household Education Expenditures: Evidence from India*** *(with Emmerich Davies & Fei Yuan)*

In October 2021, the Government of India opened most government schools across the country, ending world's second longest school closures as a result of COVID. What effects did these school closures have on school attendance and household expenditure on education? We use a long-run high-frequency panel from 2014 to 2022 matched to district-level data on changes in mobility, and staggered school re-openings across states to estimate the effects of COVID related school closures on school attendance and household expenditure on education. Descriptively, we find a sustained decrease in private school attendance and an increase in public school attendance. We also find that COVID severity decreased total household expenditures and expenditures on education. Finally, school re-openings led to a large and sustained shift in students from private schools to public schools and dropping out of school completely. Our findings have implications for understanding the effects of large economic shocks on inequalities in human capital attainment.

## Work in Progress

***Going All In: Simultaneously Breaking Down Barriers for Women in the STEM Workforce*** *(with Saloni Gupta)*

This research evaluates an 18-month STEM training initiative for first-generation women engineering students in India. Deployed nationwide by an education start-up, the program combines a women-only environment, fully online access, self-directed learning, and mentoring to address cultural, institutional, and psychological barriers to success in STEM. We assess impacts on technical and higher-order skills and longer-run labor-market outcomes. Given persistent underrepresentation of women in STEM, the study informs how targeted initiatives can break down barriers and foster inclusion in STEM education and careers.

***Can Climate Change Interventions Promote Climate-Friendly Attitudes and Behaviors in School Children?*** *(with Raisa Sherif)*

Climate education may shape pro-environmental preferences and behaviors where children face high exposure to climate risks but few means to adapt. We test an arts-based curriculum that integrates social-emotional learning with climate education through poetry, theatre, and storytelling in a randomized trial across 110 classrooms in low-income Indian schools. The curriculum centers on air pollution as a locally salient issue and aims to make climate change personally relevant while fostering collective engagement. We estimate effects on knowledge, attitudes, individual protective actions, classroom-level public-good contributions, prosocial donations, and information-seeking about air quality, providing experimental evidence on how school-based interventions can influence environmental behavior in developing-country settings.

## Publications

Loyalka, P., Shi, Z., Li, G., Kardanova, E., Chirikov, I., Yu, N., Hu, S., Wang, H., Ma, L., Guo, F., Liu, O. L., **Bhuradia, A.**, Khanna, S., Li, Y., & Murray, A. (2022). *Educational Researcher, 51*(4), 265-273.

Mistree, D., Loyalka, P., Fairlie, R., **Bhuradia, A.**, Angrish, M., Lin, J., Karoshi, A., Yen, S.J., Mistri, J., & Bayat, V. (2021). Instructional interventions for improving COVID-19 knowledge, attitudes, behaviors: Evidence from a large-scale RCT in India. *Social Science & Medicine 276*, 113846.

Loyalka, P., Liu, O.L., Li, G., Kardanova, E., Chirikov, I., Hu, S., Yu, N., Ma, L., Guo, F., Beteille, T., Tognatta, N., Gu, L., Ling, G., Federiakin, D., Wang, H., Khanna, S., **Bhuradia, A.**, Shi, Z., & Li, Y. (2021). Skill levels and gains in university STEM education in China, India, Russia, and the United States. *Nature Human Behaviour 5*(7), 892-904.

Béteille, T., **Bhuradia, A**., & Loyalka, P. (2021). Political Economy of Producing Skilled College Graduates in South Asia. In *Handbook of Education Systems in South Asia* (pp. 1107-1126). Singapore: Springer Singapore.

Li, G., Shcheglova, I., **Bhuradia, A.**, Li, Y., Loyalka, P., Zhou, O., Hu, S., Yu, N., Ma, L., Guo, F., & Chirikov, I.. (2020). Large-scale international assessments of learning outcomes: balancing the interests of multiple stakeholders. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management 43*(2), 198-213.

Loyalka, P., Liu, O.L., Li, G., Chirikov, I., Kardanova, E., Gu, L., Ling, G., Yu, N., Guo, F., Ma, L., Hu, S., Johnson, A.S., **Bhuradia, A.**, Khanna, S., Froumin, I., Shi, J., Choudhury, P.K., Béteille, T., Marmolejo, F., & Tognatta, N.. (2019). Computer science skills across China, India, Russia, and the United States. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 116*(14), 6732-6736.

## Fellowships and Awards

| | |
|---|---|
| Ph.D. Affiliate of Centre for International Development, Harvard Kennedy School | 2023 |
| Stone PhD Scholar in Inequality, Harvard University ($34,000) | 2022 |
| Graduate Student Associate, The Mittal South Asia Institute, Harvard University | 2021 |
| Presidential Scholar, Harvard University ($4,000) | 2020 |
| Graduate School of Education Tuition Fellowship, Stanford University ($9,000) | 2015 |

## Grants

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| Max Planck Society (EUR 30,000) | 2025 |
| HGSE Doctoral Research Grant ($2,000) | 2024 |
| The Weiss Fund at University of Chicago ($15,000) | 2024 |
| Fast Grant, Digital Harbor Foundation ($75,000) | 2023 |
| Stone Research Grant, Harvard University ($5,000) | 2023 |
| Mittal Institute Summer Grant, Harvard University ($3,000) | 2023 |

## Teaching Experience

**Harvard University (Undergraduate & Masters' level)**

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|---|---|
| TF to Gregory Bruich, Using Big Data to Solve Econ & Social Problems | 2025 |
| TF to Susan Dynarski, Research Partnerships for Improving Ed | 2023, 2024 |
| TF to Andrew Ho, Intermediate & Advanced Statistics | 2023 |
| TF to Joseph McIntyre, Introductory & Intermediate Statistics | 2022, 2023 |
| TF to Fernando Reimers, Education Policy Analysis | 2022 |

**Harvard University (PhD level)**

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|---|---|
| TF to Susan Dynarski, Design & Analysis of Field Experiments | 2023. 2024 |
| TF to Eric Taylor, Applied Causal Inference in Education Research | 2024 |

**Teach For India, New Delhi, India**

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|---|---|
| Primary School Teacher | 2013-2015 |

## Employment

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|---|---|
| **The World Bank, New Delhi, India** | |
| Consultant, Tertiary Education | 2021 |
| **Stanford University, Stanford, California** | |
| Consultant, Digital Literacy Program | 2019 - 2020 |
| **Freeman Spogli Institute, Stanford University, California** | |
| Project Manager, Rural Education Action Program (REAP) | 2016 - 2019 |
| **Teach For India, New Delhi, India** | |
| Primary School Teacher | 2013 - 2015 |
| **Rupa Publication & Aleph Book Company, New Delhi, India** | |
| Marketing Executive | 2012 - 2013 |

## Conferences

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|---|---|
| Advances in Field Experiments | 2024 |
| Comparative & International Education Society (CIES) | 2015, 2024 |
| Research on Improving Systems of Education (RISE) | 2023 |

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|---|---|---|
| | American Education Finance & Policy (AEFP) | 2023 |
| Referee Services | Economics of Education Review | |
| Software | R, Stata, Git, LaTeX, Qualtrics | |
| Language | English, Hindi (native), Spanish (beginner) | |

Last Updated: December 17, 2025