



INDIA HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

June 2017

Welcome to the India Human Development Survey Forum

A monthly update of socio-economic developments in India by the IHDS research team.

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- **“Village Transportation Infrastructure and Women’s Non-agricultural Employment in India”**, Paper by Lei Lei, Sonalde Desai and Reeve Vanneman examines the spill-over effect of road construction on non-farm work.
- **“Dominant or Backward? Political Economy of Demand for Quotas by Jats, Patels and Marathas”**: Ashwini Deshpande and Rajesh Ramachandran analyse the legitimacy of these claims.
- Media Mentions

A closer look...

Does Economic Development Empower Women? Village Transportation Infrastructure and Women’s Non-agricultural Employment in India

By **Lei Lei, Sonalde Desai** and **Reeve Vanneman**

Low female labor force participation rate in India, particularly in non-farm employment, has been well recognized. However, whether this is due to supply or demand factors is not clear. This paper argues that when employment opportunities expand due to improvements in road conditions and transportation network, it leads to increase in non-farm work. Using longitudinal data from the India Human Development Survey (IHDS) collected in 2005 and 2012, respectively, this paper examines the effect of village-level transportation conditions on the participation of rural women and men in non-agricultural work. Person fixed-effect logit models show that gaining access by paved or unpaved roads and increased frequency of bus services lead to higher participation in non-agricultural work for both women and men. However, the rate of increase in non-farm work for women depends on gender norms in the community. In areas where cultural norms restrict women’s physical mobility, the improvement in transportation systems has a lower impact than in areas with greater autonomy for women.

Effect of Road Access on Women's and Men's Non-farm Employment, by Different Community Gender Context



[Full paper here](#)



Lei Lei is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Maryland Population Research Center. She received a Ph.D. in sociology and a MS in Biostatistics from the University at Albany-SUNY in 2016. Dr. Lei is a social demographer, whose work lies in the areas of family, gender, health, child development, community effect, and migration. She has studied the changes in family behaviors in China, India and the U.S. as a result of social, economic, and demographic transitions. Her recent work examined the impact of community environment on children's health and educational outcomes.

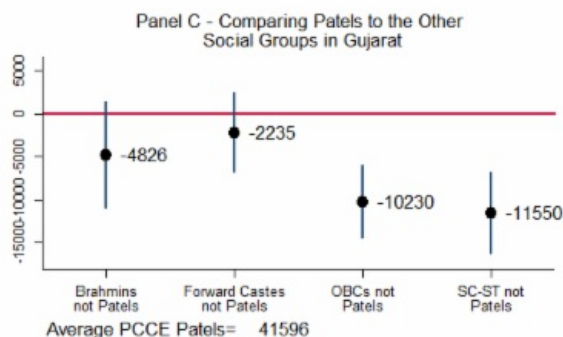
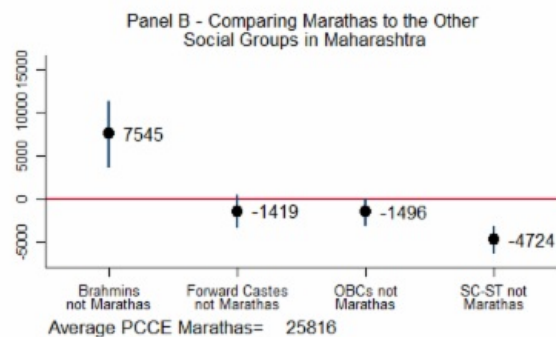
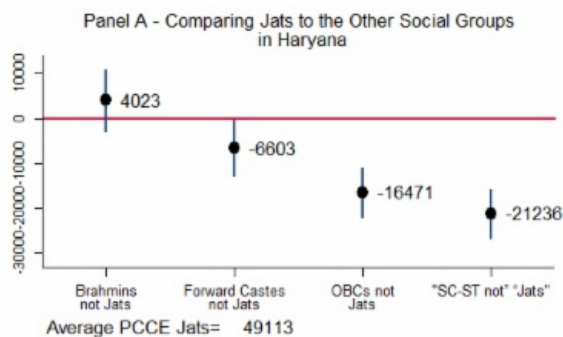
User Paper

Dominant or Backward? Political Economy of Demand for Quotas by Jats, Patels and Marathas

By **Ashwini Deshpande** and **Rajesh Ramachandran**

Using data from the IHDS, this paper examines the demands of Jats (Haryana), Patels (Gujarat), and Marathas (Maharashtra) to be classified as Other Backward Classes to access reservations. Compared to the major caste groups (Brahmins, other forward castes, existing OBCs, and Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) in their respective states, based on several socio-economic factors, they are closer to dominant than disadvantaged groups. Their claim to backwardness is empirically unjustified. The paper examines the material basis of their anxieties in the context of structural changes in the Indian agricultural economy. It investigates networks and political connections that explain their success in mobilizing large numbers in support of their demands.

Comparison of Groups on per Capita Consumption Expenditure



The circles represent the mean difference, and the bars show the 95 percent confidence intervals. A negative mean effect means the Jats, Marathas and Patels in Panel A, B and C, respectively, do worse than the social group they are being compared to and positive mean effect implies the opposite.

Full Paper here



Ashwini Deshpande is Professor of Economics, Delhi School of Economics. She works on the economics of discrimination and affirmative action, with a special focus on caste and gender in India. Her Ph.D. and

early publications have been on the international debt crisis of the 1980s. Subsequently, she has been working on the economics of discrimination and affirmative action issues, with a focus on caste and gender in India, as well as on aspects of the Chinese economy: role of FDI in the reform process, regional disparities and gender discrimination. She has published extensively in leading scholarly journals.



Rajesh Ramachandran is a post-doctoral researcher at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration at Goethe University, Frankfurt, and a research fellow on the project AFRASO

(Africa's Asian Options) supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). He obtained his Ph.D. in Economics from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. His main area of research is at the intersection of development economics and its political economy. His principal interests include language policy, economics of discrimination and institutional economics.

Recent Publications and Media Articles Using IHDS

- Aleksandrowicz, L., M. Tak, R. Green, S. Kinra and A. Haines. (2017). "Comparison of Food Consumption in Indian Adults between National and Sub-national Dietary Data Sources". *British Journal of Nutrition*. pp. 1-7. [Link](#)
- Bharadwaj, Ananthi Shankar. (2017). "Private Participation in India's Water Sector: Impact on Water Access and Service Quality Indicators". A Master's Thesis in Public Policy at the Georgetown University. Accessed online May 17, 2017. [Link](#)
- Christophe Jaffrelot & Kalaiyarasa A. (2017). "Quotals the Wrong Answer". *The Indian Express*, May 3. [Link](#).

- Corno, L.,N. Hildebrandt and A. Voena (2017). “Child Marriage, Weather Shocks, and the Direction of Marriage Payments”. Accessed online May 4, 2017. [Link](#)
- Holla, Chinmaya U. (2017). “Welfare Implications of Regional Parties and National Parties in India: A Comparative Analysis”. A Master’s Thesis in Public Policy at the Georgetown University. Accessed online May 17, 2017. [Link](#)
- Thampi, Anjana. (2017). “The Impact of the Public Distribution System in India”. *Indian Journal of Human Development*. May. [Link](#).

About IHDS

The India Human Development Survey (IHDS) is a nationally representative, multi-topic survey of 41,554 households in 1503 villages and 971 urban neighbourhoods across India. The first round of interviews was completed in 2004-05; data are publicly available through ICPSR. A second round of IHDS re-interviewed most of these households in 2011-12 (N=42,152) and data for these can be found here.

IHDS has been jointly organised by researchers from the University of Maryland and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi. Funding for the second round of this survey is provided by the National Institutes of Health, grants R01HD041455 and R01HD061048. Additional funding is provided by The Ford Foundation, IDRC and DFID.



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