

SARAVANA RAVINDRAN

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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT & AFFILIATIONS

2020 - **National University of Singapore**
Assistant Professor (Tenure-track), Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy
2024 - Affiliated Professor, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab
2020 - 2023 Invited Researcher, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab South Asia
2019 - 2020 **University of California, Los Angeles**
Postdoctoral Fellow, Global Lab for Research in Action
Postdoctoral Affiliate, California Center for Population Research

EDUCATION

2013 - 2019 **New York University**
Ph.D. in Economics
M.Phil. in Economics
London School of Economics & Political Science
2012 - 2013 M.Sc. in Economics
2008 - 2011 B.Sc. in Econometrics and Mathematical Economics
(*First Class Honors with Economics Department Prize*)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Development Economics, Applied Microeconomics, Human Capital, Migration

EXTERNAL RESEARCH GRANTS

2025 - 2027 J-PAL Learning for All Initiative (USD 220,729): Co-PI.
2023 - 2024 J-PAL South Asia CaTCH Initiative (USD 79,995): PI.
2022 - 2023 Strategic Impact Evaluation Fund (USD 170,000): Co-PI.
2022 - 2023 Private Enterprise Development in Low-Income Countries (GBP 39,997): Co-PI.
2022 - 2023 J-PAL King Climate Action Initiative (USD 9,800): Co-PI.
2020 - 2021 J-PAL South Asia CaTCH Initiative (USD 37,492): Co-PI.
2019 - 2023 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (USD 1,996,120): Co-PI.

PUBLICATIONS

9. **“From Access to Achievement: The Primary-School-Age Impacts of an At-Scale Preschool Construction Program in Highly Deprived Communities,”** with Marina Bassi, Bruno Besbas, Lelys Dinarte-Diaz, and Ana Reynoso. *Forthcoming, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*. Additional Coverage: VoxDev.
8. **“Violent Discipline and Parental Behavior: Short- and Medium-term Effects of Virtual Parenting Support to Caregivers,”** with Lelys Dinarte-Diaz, Manisha Shah, Shawn Powers, and Helen Baker-Henningham. 2026. *Journal of Public Economics*, 256:105590. Additional Coverage: IPA Research Summary.
7. **“Disruptions to Early Childhood Preschool Services During a Pandemic: Evidence from India,”** with Manisha Shah. 2024. *Journal of Population Economics*, 37(48).

6. **“The Social Meaning of Mobile Money: Earmarking Reduces the Willingness to Spend in Migrant Households,”** with with Jean Lee, Jonathan Morduch, and Abu Shonchoy. 2024. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 221: 675-688. Additional Coverage: World Bank Development Impact Blog.
5. **“Early Childhood Human Capital Formation at Scale,”** with J. Bos, A. Khan and A. Shonchoy. 2024. *Journal of Public Economics*, 231:105046. Additional Coverage: VoxDev. Honorable Mention: Asian Development Bank - International Economic Association Innovative Policy Research Award 2024.
4. **“Unintended Consequences of Lockdowns, COVID-19, and the Shadow Pandemic in India,”** with Manisha Shah. 2023. *Nature Human Behaviour*. Additional Coverage: The Wall Street Journal, World Bank Development Impact Blog, Ideas For India, The Hindu, The Indian Express (Front Page), India Today, Quartz India, Deccan Herald, Livemint, Scroll, Nature Human Behaviour: News & Views, Nature: Behind the Paper.
3. **“Narrowing the Gender Gap in Mobile Banking,”** with J. Lee, J. Morduch, and A. Shonchoy. 2022. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 193: 276-293.
2. **“Poverty and Migration in the Digital Age: Experimental Evidence on Mobile Banking in Bangladesh,”** with J. Lee, J. Morduch, A. Shonchoy, and H. Zaman. 2021. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 13(1): 38-71. Additional Coverage: All About Finance Blog (World Bank), AEA Research Highlight, Gates Foundation Research Brief, VoxDev, J-PAL Policy Insight. Honorable Mention: Asian Development Bank - International Economic Association Innovative Policy Research Award 2022.
1. **“Migration, Externalities, and the Diffusion of COVID-19 in South Asia,”** with J. Lee, M. Mahmud, J. Morduch, and A. Shonchoy. 2021. *Journal of Public Economics*, 193:104312. Additional Coverage: People Move Blog (World Bank), South Asia Economic Focus: Spring 2020 (World Bank), Financial Access Initiative Blog.

WORKING PAPERS

1. **“Banking on Education: How Credit Access Promotes Human Capital Development,”** with Suzanne Chang. *Revise & Resubmit: Review of Economics & Statistics*.
2. **“Remitting Against Poverty,”** with Jean N. Lee, Mahreen Mahmud, Jonathan Morduch, Abu Shonchoy, and Shashank Sreedharan.
3. **“Selecting Experimental Sites for External Validity,”** with Michael Gechter, Keisuke Hirano, Jean N. Lee, Mahreen Mahmud, Orville Mondal, Jonathan Morduch, and Abu Shonchoy.
4. **“Worker Productivity Impacts of Climate Change Induced Salinization,”** with Nusrat Jimi and Abu S. Shonchoy.
5. **“Parental Investments and Early Childhood Development: Short and Long Run Evidence from India.”** Finalist: Human Capital and Economic Opportunity Dissertation Prize 2019, U Chicago. Additional Coverage: Ideas For India.

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

1. **“Intergenerational Impacts from the World’s Largest Early Childhood Program,”** with Manisha Shah.
2. **“Intergenerational Impacts of Malaria Campaigns: Evidence from 63 Countries,”** with Junhao Chen, Siddharth E. George, and Nikhitha M. Mathew.
3. **“Behavioral Interventions to Address Climate Change Induced Salinization in Bangladesh,”** with Nusrat Jimi and Abu S. Shonchoy.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO POLICY BRIEFS

1. “Asian Economic Integration Report 2026: Leveraging Regional Cooperation and Integration to Navigate Global Uncertainties.” 2026. Asian Development Bank. [Chapter 5: Movement of People.]
2. “South Asia Economic Focus, Spring 2020: The Cursed Blessing of Public Banks.” 2020. World Bank. [Chapter 1: An Unprecedented Crisis.]

RESEARCH AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

2024 - 2025	LKYSPP Writing Fellowship
2022	Singapore Teaching & Academic Research Talent Scheme (START) Award, Ministry of Education Singapore
2021	LKYSPP Research Honors List, National University of Singapore
2016 - 2017	Andrew Sauter Fellowship, New York University (x2)
2013 - 2018	Henry M. MacCracken Fellowship, New York University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE, GRANTS, & AWARDS

NUS 2025	Awarded: LKYSPP Dean’s Commendation for Teaching Excellence
NUS 2022-25	Awarded: Enriching Educational Experience in the Classroom Grant (x7)
NUS 2021	Awarded: LKYSPP Digital Teaching Excellence Award
NUS 2021 -	Instructor: PP5801 Economic Analysis (Masters)
NUS 2020 -	Instructor: PP5234 Economics of Developing Countries (Masters)
NUS 2021-25	Instructor: PP6704 The Economics of Public Policy - Microeconomics (PhD)
NYU 2015-16	Teaching Assistant: Topics in Econometrics, Introduction to Econometrics, Statistics (Undergraduate) <i>Twice Nominated for the College of Arts & Science Outstanding Teaching Award (2015-2016)</i>

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Referee: *American Journal of Health Economics, Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics, Demography, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Economics and Human Biology, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization, Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Public Economics, Labour Economics, PLOS One, Review of Economics and Statistics, Review of Economics of the Household, World Bank Economic Review*

Co-Organizer: NUS-SMU Development Economics Workshop, LKYSPP Economics Brownbag, LKYSPP Festival of Ideas 2024

Singapore Ministry of Education Dialogues: Meeting with Minister for Education Mr. Chan Chun Sing (Oct 2022), Dialogue with Second Minister for Education Dr. Maliki Osman (Nov 2022)

Conference Scientific Committee: Bureau for Research and Economic Analysis of Development (BREAD) Asia 2024 (Singapore), Society of Economics of the Household 2024 (Singapore), International Economic Association World Congress 2023 (Colombia)

Academic Peer Review for Grants: J-PAL Learning for All Initiative 2026

International Mentorship: Association for Mentoring and Inclusion in Economics (2023-2024)

University: LKYSPP Faculty Teaching Excellence Committee (Co-Chair; 2022-2025), LKYSPP Economics Faculty Junior Hiring Committee (2020-2021), LKYSPP Festival of Ideas Taskforce - Economics Lead (2024), MPP Policy Analysis Exercise Faculty Advisor (2021-2022), LKYSPP Case Writing Competition Faculty Advisor (2021-2022), PhD Thesis Examiner (Dr. Talitha Chairunissa, Dr. Niharika Rustagi, & Dr. Panchali Guha), PhD Independent Study Module Faculty Advisor (Chitra Pratap & Niken Sakina), PhD Advisor (Chitra Pratap, Kaushambi Bagchi, Niken Sakina, Nikhitha Mathew, & Ahsan Joy), Grader for PhD Economics Track Qualifying Exam, LKYSPP

Faculty Advisor for Bridging GAP (Gender and Policy) Student Group, Guest Lecturer (PP5105 Cost-Benefit Analysis in Public Policy, PP6706 Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Research, PP5015-PP5018 Mitigating Risk and Building Resilience)

SEMINARS & CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (Excluding coauthor presentations)

2026: International Symposium on Social Responses to Crisis and Change (National Taiwan U). Scheduled: Western Economic Association International (Bangkok), Y-RISE International Conference on Migration and Development (Yonsei U, Seoul).

2025: Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics (World Bank, Washington D.C.), Asian Economic Integration Report Workshop (Asian Development Bank), Spanish Workshop in Development Economics (Fundación Ramón Areces, Madrid), Workshop on Immigration, Health, and Wellbeing (Oxford U), Southern Economic Association Meetings (Tampa, Florida)

2024: Midwest Finance Association Meeting (Chicago), Royal Economic Society Conference (Queen's U, Belfast), Midwest International Economic Development Conference (U Chicago), Society of Economics of the Household (Singapore Management U), NOVAFRICA Conference on Economic Development (Nova SBE, Portugal), LKYSPP Festival of Ideas, Monash U-World Bank-ADB Conference on Sustainable Development (Jakarta), Southern Economic Association Meetings, Global Labor Organization-Journal of Population Economics Conference, Asian and Australasian Society of Labour Economics Conference (Bangkok)

2023: American Economic Association Annual Meeting (New Orleans), University of Western Australia, Australian Gender Economics Workshop (Perth, Australia), World Bank, NBER Spring Children's Meetings, Atlanta Workshop on Public Policy and Child Well-Being (Georgia Tech), Pacific Conference for Development Economics (University of Washington), Economic Demography Workshop (New Orleans), International Food Policy Research Institute, Southern Economic Association Meetings

2022: J-PAL CaTCH Initiative COVID-19 Webinar, Australasian Development Economics Workshop (U Sydney), American Society of Health Economists Conference (Austin), Western Economic Association International Conference (Portland), ADB Asian Economic Development Conference (Tokyo), National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies Economics Seminar (Tokyo), Applied Development Economics Conference (Lahore School of Economics), 100 Years of Economic Development Conference (Cornell U), LKYSPP Festival of Ideas, University of Exeter UK, Asian and Australasian Society of Labour Economics Conference (Tokyo)

2021: Singapore Management University, NUS-LSE Gender & Public Policy Conference, NUS-SMU Development Economics Workshop, Korea University Applied Microeconomics Conference, Japan Empirical Economics Seminar, NBER Summer Institute Children's Meetings, Australia/NZ Labour Econometrics Workshop, ISI Delhi Economics Seminar, Southern Economic Association Meetings, ISI Delhi Conference on Economic Growth and Development

2020: National University of Singapore (Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Economics Department, Workshop on Gender & the COVID-19 Pandemic), Eastern Economic Association Conference (Boston), UCLA Applied Micro Tea, Midwest International Economic Development Conference (Purdue), EALE SOLE AASLE World Conference, Hong Kong University of Science & Technology, IUSSP Population, Poverty, and Inequality Research Conference, Applied Economics Workshop (UTokyo-NUS-HKUST-Nat Taiwan U)

2019: UCLA Applied Micro Tea, Missouri Valley Economic Association Conference (Kansas City), Southwestern Social Science Association Meetings (San Diego), Southern Economic Association Meetings (Fort Lauderdale), UPenn Population Health Science Workshop, ISI Delhi Conference on Economic Growth and Development

Last Updated: March 2026.