

# Rohini Somanathan

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## Education

1996 PH.D in Economics, Boston University  
1988 M.A. in Economics, Delhi School of Economics  
1986 B.A. (Honours) in Economics, Delhi University

## Current Position

2008- *Professor*, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi

## Previous Appointments

2015-2018 *Visiting Professor*, Visiting Professor Program (VPP), University of Gothenburg.  
2005-2007 *Reader*, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi  
1998-2005 *Assistant Professor*, University of Michigan  
2001-2004 *Assistant Professor*, Indian Statistical Institute  
1995-1998 *Visiting Assistant Professor*, Emory University  
1989-1990 *Lecturer*, St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi

## Research Interests

Economic Development • Political Economy • Public Economics • Inequality

## Awards & Fellowships

2018 Appointed International Economic Association (IEA) Fellow (life-time title).  
2017-2018 Visiting Fellow, Madras Institute of Development Studies  
2015-2016 Residential Fellowship, Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, Harvard University  
2010-2011 Leon Levy Foundation Member, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton  
2010 Podlich Distinguished Fellow, Claremont McKenna College

## Professional and Advisory Positions

### CURRENT POSITIONS

- 2012-2018-2015-2016-2017-2017-2017-2018-
- Member, Research Panel, India Policy Forum  
Chair, Board of Trustees, Srijan (Self-Reliant Initiatives through Joint Action)  
Member, Editorial Board, Journal of Demographic Economics,  
Member, Advisory Board, Centre for Development Economics and Sustainability (CDES) at Monash Business School  
Member, Research Advisory Committee, Presidency University.  
Member, Board of Management and the Finance Committee, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research (IGIDR)  
Member, Board of Governors, Institute for Economic Growth (IEG)  
Member, Research Committee, Environment for Development Initiative (EfD), University of Gothenburg.

### PAST POSITIONS

- 2011-2017  
2012-2014  
2014  
2013-2016  
2015-2018
- Member, Executive Committee, International Economic Association  
Member, Committee of Direction, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum  
Member, Steering Committee on Health related issues on Air Pollution, MOHFW.  
Member, Governing Board, Oxfam India  
Member, Board of Trustees, Srijan.

## Publications

### BOOKS AND EDITED VOLUMES

- Forthcoming*
- Difference without Domination: Pursuing Justice in Diverse Democracies* (co-edited with Danielle Allen), University of Chicago Press.  
*EPW Volume 1: Period- 1949-1965* (co-edited with Pranab Bardhan and Sudipto Mundle), Orient Blackswan.
- 2017 *Poverty and Income Distribution in India* (co-edited with Abhijit Banerjee, Pranab Bardhan and T.N. Srinivasan), Juggernaut.

### JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Forthcoming*
- “Child Labor and Schooling Decisions among Self-Help Groups Members in Rural India” (with Jean-Marie Baland, Timothee Demont and Michel Tenikue), *Economic Development and Cultural Change*.

- “Improving learning outcomes through information provision: Experimental evidence from Indian villages” (with Farzana Afridi and Bidisha Barooah), *Journal of Development Economics*, doi: 10.1016/j.jdeveco.2018.08.002.
- 2019 “Socially Disadvantaged Groups and Microfinance in India” (with Jean-Marie Baland and Lore Vandewalle), *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, February.
- 2018 “A behavior-based approach to the estimation of poverty in India”, (with Ingvild Almås and Anders Kjelsrud”, *Scandinavian Journal of Economics*, 121(1), 182-224. Editorial Introduction to Special Issue on “Gender, Family and Development”. *Journal of Demographic Economics*, 84(1), 1-2.
- 2017 “Creating Long Panels using Census Data: 1961-2001” (with Hemanshu Kumar), *Economic and Political Weekly*, July, 52(29): 105-109
- “Repayment and Exclusion in a Microfinance Experiment,” (with Jean-Marie Baland, Lata Gangadharan and Pushkar Maitra), *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 137 (May), 176-190.
- 2016 “Fuel Choices and Respiratory Health in India,” (with P.P. Krishnapriya), *Indian Journal of Economics*, Centennial Issue, XCVII, No. 384, 75-86.
- 2015 “Caste, corruption, and political competition in India,” (with John Roemer and Avidit Acharya), *Research in Economics*, September, 69(3), 336-352.
- 2014 “Aid and Agency in Africa: Explaining Food Disbursements Across Ethiopian Households, 1994-2004,” (with Nzinga Broussard and Stefan Dercon), *J. of Development Economics*, 108 (May): 128-137.
- 2013 “Repayment incentives and the distribution of gains from group lending” (with Jean-Marie Baland and Zaki Wahhaj), *J. of Development Economics*, 105 (November): 131-139.
- “Back on the Rails: Competition and Productivity Change in State-owned Industry” (with Sanghamitra Das, Kala Krishna and Sergey Lychagin), *AEJ: Applied Economics* 5(1): 136-62.
- 2011 “The application of nonparametric tests to poverty targeting” with Isha Dewan, *Economics Letters*, 113(1): 58-61.
- 2009 “Climate Change: Challenges Facing India’s Poor” with E. Somanathan, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44( 31): 51-58.
- “Racial Inequality and Segregation Measures: Some Evidence from the 2000 Census” with Rajiv Sethi, *The Review of Black Political Economy*, 36(2): 79-91.
- “Mapping Indian Districts Across Census Years, 1971-2001” with Hemanshu Kumar, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44(41): 69-73.
- 2008 “Micro-finance Lifespans: A Study of Attrition and Exclusion in Self-Help Groups in India” with Jean-Marie Baland and Lore Vandewalle, *India Policy Forum*.
- “Quantifying Misallocation in Centrally Provided Public Goods.” with Siva Athreya, *Economics Letters*, 98(2): 201-206.
- 2007 “The Political Economy of Public Goods: Some Evidence from India”, with Abhijit Banerjee, *J. of Development Economics*, 82( 2): 287-314.
- 2006 “Is Skill-Biased Technological Change Here Yet? Evidence from Indian Manufac-

- turing in the 1990s.” with Eli Berman and Hong Tan, *Annales d’Economie et de Statistique*, special issue in honor of Zvi Griliches, volume 79/80.
- “The assumptions and arithmetic of caste-based reservations, *Economic and Political Weekly*, 41(24): 2436-2438
- 2005 “History, social divisions and public goods in rural India” with Abhijit Banerjee and Lakshmi Iyer, *J. of the European Economic Association*, April-May, 3(2-3): 639-47
- 2004 “Inequality and Segregation”, with Rajiv Sethi, *J. of Political Economy*, 112(6): 1296-1321.
- 2001 “A Simple Model of Voice”, with Abhijit Banerjee, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 116(1): 189-227.
- 1998 “School Heterogeneity, Human Capital Accumulation, and Standards.” *J. of Public Economics*, 67(3): 369-397.

#### BOOK CHAPTERS

- Forthcoming*
- “Group Inequality in Democracies: Lessons from Cross-National Experiences” in Jean-Marie Baland, François Bourguignon, Jean-Philippe Platteau, and Thierry Verdier (ed.) *The Handbook of Economic Development and Institutions*, Princeton University Press.
- 2010 “The Demand for Disadvantage” in Jean-Philippe Platteau and Robert Peccoud (ed.) *Culture, Institutions, and Development: New Insights into an Old Debate*, (Routledge)
- 2008 “Public Action for Public Goods”, with Abhijit Banerjee, and Lakshmi Iyer, in T. Paul Schultz and John Strauss (ed), *Handbook of Development Economics* vol. IV, (North Holland)
- 2007 “Poverty and Exclusion” in *The Oxford Companion to Economics in India*, Kaushik Basu (ed.) Oxford University Press, February.

#### BOOK REVIEWS

- 2002 *Democracy and Development* by Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen, Oxford University Press, published in *The Book Review*, XXVII ( 11).
- 2004 *Distribution and Development: A New Look at the Developing World* by Gary S. Fields, MIT Press, *Economica*, 71(282).
- 2008 *Social Science Knowledge and Economic Development: An Institutional Design Perspective* by Vernon W. Ruttan, *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 90(2), 574-57.
- 2013 *The Service Sector in India’s Development* by Gaurav Nayyar, *Indian Journal of Labor Economics*, Volume 56, No. 3.

## MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

- 2017 “From being world leader in surveys, India is now facing a serious data problem”, *Economic Times Blogs*, April 4.  
“The Battle for Backwardness”, *India Today*, January 6.
- 2016 “Nobel Insights: When It Comes to Contracts, What’s Obvious May Not Be Optimal”, *The Wire*, October 11.
- 2015 “Cash vs. kind” (with Anders Kjelsrud), *Indian Express*, November 3.
- 2014 “In the greater scheme of things”, *Indian Express*, November 3.
- 2012 “Religion and relief in Muzzafarnagar”, *Hindu Business Line*, December 4.
- 2011 “Suresh Tendulkar and his Delhi School Family”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, August 6.
- 2007 “P.C. Mahalanobis: The Plan Man”, *India Today*, March 27.

## Selected Working Papers

- “The Impact of Temperature on Productivity and Labor Supply: Evidence from Indian Manufacturing” (joint with E. Somanathan, Anant Sudarshan and Meenu Tewari)
- “Caste connections and government transfers: The Mahadalits of Bihar” (with Hemanshu Kumar)
- “Repeated Voting and Policy Inefficiency” (with Parikshit Ghosh)
- “Patronage in Public Administration: Presidential Connections, Position Assignments and the Performance of the Korean Public Prosecutors, 1992-2000.” (with Nowook Park)
- “The Effects of Open Enrollment Plans on School Composition and Student Attainment: A Theoretical Analysis with Evidence from Massachusetts”

## Work in Progress

- “ Meritocracy in the face of Group Inequality” (with Rajiv Sethi)
- “ Identity Politics and Public Goods” (with Rajiv Sethi)
- “Public Goods Access and Juvenile Sex Ratios in Rural India: Evidence from the 1991 and 2001 Village Census Data” (with Anil B. Deolalikar and Rana Hasan)
- “Schools, Tutors and Child Learning in India” (with Michael Walton)
- “Community contracts: An experimental investigation of rule formation in Indian villages” (with Karla Hoff and Pontus Strimling)
- “The mixture as before? Student responses to the changing content of school meals in India” (with Farzana Afridi and Bidisha Barooah)
- “ Regulatory Policies to limit the use of Plastic Bags in Urban India” (with Kanupriya Gupta)

“Caste connections and government transfers: The Mahadalits of Bihar” (with Hemanshu Kumar)

“Affirmative action and long-run changes in group inequality in India” (with Hemanshu Kumar)

“Linguistic distance and educational achievement among the Scheduled Tribes in India” (with Tarun Jain and Hemanshu Kumar)