

# 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- Member, Research Panel, India Policy Forum  
2015- Member, Board of Trustees, Srijan.  
2015- Member, Editorial Board, Journal of Demographic Economics,  
2016- Member, Advisory Board, Centre for Development Economics and Sustainability  
(CDES) at Monash Business School  
2017- Member, Research Advisory Committee, Presidency University.  
2017- Member, Board of Governors, Institute for Economic Growth (IEG)  
2018- Member, Research Committee, Environment for Development Initiative (EfD), Uni-  
versity of Gothenburg.

### PAST POSITIONS

- 2011-2017 Member, Executive Committee, International Economic Association  
2012-2014 Member, Committee of Direction, Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum  
2013 Member, Visiting Advisory Committee, BITS Pilani.  
2014 Member, Steering Committee on Health related issues on Air Pollution, MOHFW.  
2013-2016 Member, Governing Board, Oxfam India  
2017-2020 Member, Board of Management and the Finance Committee, Indira Gandhi Insti-  
tute of Development Research (IGIDR)  
2018-2020 Chair, Board of Trustees, Srijan (Self-Reliant Initiatives through Joint Action)

## Publications

### BOOKS AND EDITED VOLUMES

- 2020 *Difference without Domination: Pursuing Justice in Diverse Democracies* (co-edited  
with Danielle Allen), University of Chicago Press.  
2019 *Reading India: Selections from the Economic Weekly, Volume 1, 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*

“The Impact of Temperature on Productivity and Labor Supply: Evidence from In-  
dian Manufacturing” (with Anant Sudarshan, E. Somanathan and Meenu Tiwari),

- Journal of Political Economy*.
- 2020 “Child Labor and Schooling Decisions among Self-Help Groups Members in Rural India” (with Jean-Marie Baland, Timothee Demont and and Michel Tenikue), *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 69(1), 73-105 (October).  
 “Improving learning outcomes through information provision: Experimental evidence from Indian villages” (with Farzana Afridi and Bidisha Barooah), *J. of Development Economics*, 146 (September).  
 “Designing effective transfers: Lessons from India’s school meal program” (with Farzana Afridi and Bidisha Barooah), *Review of Development Economics*, 24(1), 45-61.
- 2019 “Estimating the Welfare Gains from Public Schools in Rural India” (with Debopam Bhattacharya and Anders Kjelsrud), *Sankhya B: The Indian Journal of Statistics*, 1-14.  
 “Socially Disadvantaged Groups and Microfinance in India” (with Jean-Marie Baland and Lore Vandewalle), *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 67(3), 537-569.  
 “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.  
 “Fields on Fire: Alternatives to crop residue burning in India”, (multiple authors, first author: Priya Shyamsundar), *Science*, 365 (6453), 536-538. August 9.
- 2018 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 Manufacturing 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

- 2020 “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

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

## MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS

- 2020 "The cost of stifling voices", *The Hindu*, August 17.  
"Being vocal on the right local", *The Hindu*, June 10.  
"A tailor's journey home", *The Hindu*, May 10.
- 2018 "T.N., fondly remembered", a tribute to T.N. Srinivasan, *Ideas for India*, November 19.
- 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.