Aakriti Saraswat

Department of Economics, Fordham University, Bronx, New York 10458
+1 (646)-244-0358 | asaraswat1@fordham.edu | aakritisaraswat.github.io

Education

Fordham University — New York, NY
Ph.D. Candidate in Economics (ABD) — *Expected May 2027*
Dissertation Title: Essays in Development Economics
Committee: Subha Mani (Chair), Sophie Mitra, Andrew Simons

Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics — Pune, India
M.Sc. in Agribusiness Economics — *2016 – 2018*

University of Delhi — Delhi, India
B.A. (Honors) in Economics — *2013–2016*

Research Interests

Primary: Development Economics, Gender, Applied Microeconomics
Secondary: Public Economics, Health, Applied Econometrics

Working Papers & Projects

Job Market Paper: *Paving the Path to Safety: Rural Roads and Intimate Partner Violence in India*

- Programs to enhance rural connectivity are often driven by the goal of promoting economic growth and improving access to markets and services. However, their potential social externalities, particularly those operating within households, remain underexplored. Using a regression discontinuity design, I show that in India rural road construction reduced intimate partner violence against women. I find improved rural connectivity leads to a significant decline in the likelihood of both sexual and physical violence against women in connected villages by 6 and 5.9 percentage points respectively. I find rural roads improve women's mobility, educational attainment, financial autonomy, and intra-household agency, which strengthens women's bargaining power within the household. At the same time, improved connectivity enhances men's economic status by shifting toward more skilled occupations and increasing educational attainment. These findings do not provide support to a male backlash. In this way, roads affect both women and men through distinct but mutually reinforcing pathways, jointly contributing to a less violent and more cooperative and equitable household environment.

Does Performance-Based Funding Improve Training Outcomes? Evidence from India's STRIVE Program with Subha Mani and Pradyumna Bhattacharjee

- Evaluates the effects of performance-based funding on vocational training capacity, inclusion, and employment outcomes in India using two-stage least squares and a fuzzy regression discontinuity design.

Experimenter Demand Effects and Gender Attitudes in India with Subha Mani and Aanchal Bagga

- Analyzes how experimenter demand influences reported gender attitudes in India using a randomized survey experiment across five domains of gender roles and behavior.

Credit Flows and Agricultural Investment Decisions with Vidhya Soundararjan and Aayushi Khera

- Examines how access to agricultural credit and the adoption of high-yielding varieties affect investment in agricultural mechanization in India using VDSA panel data and a two-way fixed-effects design.

Publications

Sundaram, R., Sharma, V., & **Saraswat, A.** (2020). Anthropometric Measurements for Children in Nuclear and Joint Families. *The Indian Journal of Economics*, 100(399).

Research Experience

World Bank India
Short Term Consultant *2024*

- Evaluated the Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) program conducted by India's Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

National Council of Applied Economic Research India
Research Intern under Dr. Sonalde Desai *2022*

- Cleaned and analyzed data from the India Human Development Survey-II (2011–2012).

Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore India
Research Assistant to Dr. Vidhya Soundararjan *2019 – 2021*

- Analyzed India's manufacturing sector using Annual Survey of Industries data from 2009 to 2015.
- Conducted literature reviews, cleaned and analyzed data, supported field visits, and prepared research summaries for multiple projects.
- Helped organize a workshop on panel-data econometrics led by Dr. Jaya Krishnakumar, Professor at the University of Geneva.

Conferences, Presentations & Workshops

CSWEP "Successfully Navigating Your Economics PhD" Mentoring Workshop (November 2026)

Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting (SEA) (November 2026)

North American Meetings of the Regional Science Association International (NARSC) (November 2026)

New York State Economics Association Annual Conference (NYSEA) (October 2026)

International Conference on Empirical Economics (ICEE PSU Altoona) (2026)

Fordham University Three Minute Thesis Competition (2025)

Fordham University Economics Department Brown Bag Series (2025)

Fordham University Research Day Poster Session (2024, 2025)

Fordham University Economics Department Applied Microeconomics Workshop (2024, 2025, 2026)

Fordham University Economics Department Research and Writing Poster Session (2023)

Teaching Experience

Fordham University New York, NY
Teaching Fellow (Instructor) *2023 – 2025*

- Taught three sections of Principles of Microeconomics.

Teaching Assistant *2022*

- Led workshops for a Ph.D.-level course in Mathematical Methods in Economics II.

Tutor *2021 – 2023*

- Tutored undergraduate students in microeconomics, macroeconomics, econometrics, and statistics.

Johns Hopkins University Baltimore, MD
Instructor *2023*

- Taught two sections of Mathematics of Competitive Behavior (Game Theory).

Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore India
Academic Associate (Teaching Assistant) *2019 – 2021*

- Conducted Managerial Economics tutorials for three sections of MBA students.

University of Delhi India
Instructor *2018 – 2019*

- Taught six sections of Introductory Microeconomics and Macroeconomics.

Fellowships, Honors & Awards

Finalist, Graduate Student-Authored Paper Competition, NARSC (2026)
Alumni Dissertation Fellowship, Fordham University (2026–2027)
Research Fellowship, Fordham University (2025–2026)
Jesuit Pedagogy Seminar Award, Fordham University (2025)
Donna Smolens Summer Research Fellowship, Fordham University (2024)
Teaching Fellowship, Fordham University (2023–2025)
Student Support Grant, Fordham University (2023, 2024, 2025)
GSAS Graduate Teaching Assistantship, Fordham University (2022–2023)
GSAS Graduate Centennial Scholarship, Fordham University (2021–2022)

Professional Service & Development

Mentee, Association for Mentoring and Inclusion in Economics (2025–2026)
Participant, Jesuit Pedagogy Seminar, Fordham University (2025)
Member, Econometrics Reading Group, Department of Economics, Fordham University (2024–Present)
Trainee, Preparing Future Faculty Intensive Program, Fordham University (2024–2025)
Economics Representative, Graduate Student Council, Fordham University (2023–2024)
Volunteer, SHEWings Foundation (2018–2019)

Skills

Statistical Software and Programming: Stata, R, Python, LaTeX, and Microsoft Office
Languages: Hindi (native) and English (fluent)

References

Dr. Subha Mani
Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
Fordham University
smani@fordham.edu

Dr. Sophie Mitra
Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
Fordham University
mitra@fordham.edu

Dr. Andrew Simons
Associate Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
Fordham University
asimons5@fordham.edu

Dr. Johanna Francis
Associate Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
Fordham University
ajofrancis@fordham.edu