

Palaash Bhargava

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Academic Employment

Senior Research Fellow, Max Planck Institute for Behavioral Economics	2026 –
Postdoctoral Scholar, Department of Economics, University of Chicago	2025 – 2026
Visiting Postdoctoral Scholar, Behavioral Insights and Parenting Lab, University of Chicago	2025 – 2026
Assistant Instructor of Economics, New York University Abu Dhabi	2017 – 2019
Assistant Instructor of Mathematics, New York University Shanghai	2018

Research Fields

Primary: Applied Microeconomics (Development and Labour), Economics of Education, Social Networks
Secondary: Economic History and Cultural Economics

Education

Ph.D in Economics, Columbia University	2019 – 2025
M.A in Economics, Delhi School of Economics	2014 – 2016
B.A. (Honors) in Economics, Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi	2011 – 2014

Research

Publications

A Cross-verified Database of Notable People (3500 BC - 2018 AD), Nature Sci Data, June 9; 9(1):290
(with Morgane Laouenan, Olivier Gergaud, Jean-Benoît Eyméoud, Guillaume Plique and Etienne Wasmer)
Coverage: DailyMail UK, NY Post, Metro UK, +175 others

Working Papers

Popularity, Social Networks and Student Outcomes: Trade-offs in Resolving Social Isolation through Deskmate Assignments

Coverage: WorldBank Development Impact Blog

A Family Affair: The Effects of College on Parent and Student Finances (with Sandra Black, Jeff Denning, Robert Fairlie and Oded Gurantz)

Ancestral Origins of Attention to Environmental Issues (with César Barilla)

Homophily of Behavioral Traits is Strong in Social Networks, but Depends on Demographics and Increases Segregation *(with Daniel Chen, Matthias Sutter and Camille Terrier)*

Learning from Peers, at Scale: Experimental Evidence from a Peer Tutoring Intervention in Bihar *(with Dashleen Kaur, Nikhil Kumar, Madhavi Jha and Tarang Tripathi)*

(Phase 2 Recently Concluded)

Selected Works in Progress

Trajectories of notable individuals: A cross verified database of locations *(with Minda Belete, Morgane Laouenan, Olivier Gergaud and Etienne Wasmer)*

(Final Data Verification in Process)

Historical elite social networks and the escape from the Malthusian trap

(Data Construction in Process)

Percolation of Wildfire related Credit Shocks through Family Networks *(with Shreya Chandra)*

(Data Construction in Process)

TeachAide – Improving teacher agency and student outcomes through hypercontextualized generative AI chatbots *(with Poorvi Goel, Tushar Kundu, Chandraditya Raj and Tarang Tripathi)*

(Second Round of Pilot and Scoping Ongoing)

Increasing Parent and Teacher Investments to Improve Student Outcomes - A Kingdom wide reform in Saudi Arabia *(with Faisal Kattan, John List and Karen Ye)*

(Pilot Ongoing)

Improving Organ Donation rates in Saudi Arabia using Religious Messaging and Simplified Choice Architecture *(with Faisal Kattan, John List and Mike Price)*

(Pilot and Scoping Ongoing)

Using Family, Network and Individual nudges to reduce Social Media Use amongst Adolescents and Improve Mental Health Outcomes *(with Faisal Kattan, Paul Kirch, John List and Lena Song)*

(Pilot and Scoping Ongoing)

Awards and Honors

Dissertation Fellowship, Columbia University	2024 – 2025
Dean's Fellowship, Columbia University	2019 – 2024
PER Economics Department Fellowship, Columbia University	2019 – 2024
PER Summer Research Fellowship, Columbia University	2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
California Policy Lab, Graduate Fellowship <i>(with Shreya Chandra)</i>	2023
Winner, Vickrey Award for the best 3 rd year paper, Columbia University	2022
Runners up, Wueller Teaching Award for PhD courses, Columbia University	2021
Runners up, Harriss Award for the best 2 nd year paper, Columbia University	2021
EXIM Bank Scholarship, Delhi School of Economics	2015 – 2016
Sri Bodhiswar Rai Scholarship, Delhi School of Economics	2014 – 2015

Research Grants

Program for Economic Research at Columbia University Experimental Grant, PI (\$20,700)	2022-2024
The Weiss Fund at University of Chicago, PI (\$25,325)	2023-2026
Center for Development and Economic Policy, Columbia University, PI (\$10,000)	2023-2026
Center for Effective Global Action - PEP Initiative, PI (\$9,200 <i>in conjunction with InvolveEDU</i>)	2024
The Agency Fund, co-PI (\$350,000 <i>in conjunction with InvolveEDU</i>)	2024-2026
Schmidt Sciences - <i>Proposal Development Grant</i> , PI (\$10,000)	2025
Provost Global Faculty Awards, University of Chicago, co-PI (\$10,000)	2026

Other Employment and Affiliations

Affiliated Fellow, Center for Development and Economic Policy, Columbia University	2025 –
Research Director and Co-Founder, Aawaaz	2025 –
Analyst, Investment Banking Division, Nomura Services Pvt. Ltd.	2016 – 2017

Service

Referee Services: Quarterly Journal of Economics, Journal of Political Economy, JPE Microeconomics, AER Insights, Review of Economics and Statistics, Economic Journal, Journal of Public Economics, Economics of Education Review, Economic Modelling

Panels and Conference Organization: AEFPP Panelist – *How to conduct research in low- and middle-income settings?* (2026), Co-organizer – Max Planck / EconTribute Workshop on Human Capital and Education (2026)

Teaching Experience

Economic Growth and Development, Instructor (Undergraduate level), Columbia University	2022, 2023
PhD Math Camp Primary Instructor, Department of Economics, Columbia University	2020, 2021
Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, Columbia University	2022 – 2023
Intermediate Microeconomics (Undergraduate level), Spring 2023; Math Methods (Graduate level), Fall 2020	
Recitation and Lab Instructor (Undergraduate level), NYU Abu Dhabi	2017 – 2019
Markets, Spring 2019; 5000 Years of Notable lives, Fall 2018; Economic Dynamics, Fall 2018; Intermediate Micro-Economics, Fall 2017, Spring 2018; Calculus with Applications in Economics, Fall 2017, Spring 2018, Summer 2018, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Summer 2019	
Recitation Instructor (Undergraduate level), NYU Shanghai	2018
Integral Calculus, January 2018	

Conferences and Seminars (*) Scheduled

2026: NCDE Workshop (Vaxjo)*, GDE Workshop (Kiel)*, CESifo Area Conference on Labour Economics, Lakes Economics and Development Workshop (URochester), SUNY Binghamton, Applied Young Economists Webinar, University of Alabama (Culverhouse College of Business), CESifo Junior Workshop on the Economics of Education

2025: ISI Winter School, Development Innovation Lab (UChicago), CEPR Labour Symposium, NEUDC, Behavioral Insights and Parenting Lab (UChicago), MPI-NHH FAIR Workshop, Advances in Field Experiments, World Congress of the Econometric Society, Junior Applied Microeconomics Workshop (University of Milan), Workshop on Networks and Development, AEFP Education Working Group, MZW Text as Data Workshop, Network Science and Economics Conference (Stanford), Lakes Development Workshop, Midwest International Economic Development Consortium, Danish Historical Political Economy Workshop, Peking HSBC Business School, JILAEE (U Chicago + UCEMA), Max Planck Institute, INSEAD Singapore, Public University of Navarre, New Economic School, Ohio State University, NYU Abu Dhabi

2024: North East Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC), Southern Economic Association (SEA) Annual Meeting, Interdisciplinary PhD Workshop in Sustainable Development (Columbia University)

2023 and before: NBER Innovation Research Bootcamp, Network Science in Management (IIM Ahmedabad), Young Scholars Matchmaking Workshop (CEPR - PEDL and NYU Abu Dhabi), Regional and Urban Economics Workshop - "Urban Economics and History" (Paris School of Economics), Development Graduate Summer School (Paris School of Economics), The Frontiers of Network Science (NYU Abu Dhabi), 10th South Asian Economics' Students' Meet (Lahore University of Management Sciences)

Languages known

English (Fluent), Hindi (Native), Oriya (Intermediate), French (Beginner)

Software

Python, STATA, R, MATLAB, Mathematica, L^AT_EX, SQL