

Atul Kumar

PHD STUDENT · ECONOMICS

Colorado State University

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Research Interests

Behavioral Economics · Development Economics · Discrimination · Experimental Methods

Education

Colorado State University

PHD IN ECONOMICS

Fort Collins, CO, US

2025 - Present

Jawaharlal Nehru University

MPhil IN ECONOMICS

New Delhi, India

2020 - 2022

- **Dissertation topic:** Evolution of Behavioural Economics and Its Impact on Public Policy in the Global South – A Literature Review

Central University of South Bihar

MA IN ECONOMICS

Gaya, India

2018 - 2020

- **Gold Medallist**
- **Field Report Title:** Socio-Economic Indicators and Financial Literacy: A State-Level Analysis in India

Patna University

BA IN ECONOMICS

Patna, India

2015 - 2018

Work Experience

IMAGO Global Grassroots

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Patna, India

2023 - 2025

- Working under **Michael Walton** on the "MLE Convergence" project.
- Spearheading state-level planning and execution of the project and maintaining robust relationships with the govt stakeholders (**JEEVIKA, PRI**) and partner organizations (**PCI, TRIF**).
- Contributing to the development of theories of change, Evidence Maps, Process tracing for project activities by reviewing program documents and relevant literature. Additionally, playing a vital role in knowledge production through collaboration on publications.
- Facilitating data collection, cleaning, and preliminary analysis processes, ensuring data quality and productivity. Assisting in drafting comprehensive documents and presentations for the dissemination of project findings to relevant stakeholders and the broader community.

A.N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies

RESEARCH OFFICER

Patna, India

2023

- Worked under **Dr Sandhya Mahapatro** on the project "Dalit Development Index: Why Is Growth and Status Uneven Across Indian States?"
- Designed survey instruments, conducted sample selection, and carried out primary field data collection.
- Performed data analysis and visualization; synthesized findings through structured literature reviews and technical reports.

Publications

Gender-Based Violence and COVID-19: The Indian Scenario

2022

ATUL KUMAR, NITISH NIGAM, SNEH SHRIVASTAVA

- Published as a chapter in the book "COVID-19 & Socioeconomic Challenges in India Through the Lens of Migration, Health & Gender"
- This paper provides a review of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and establishes a linkage between the COVID-19 pandemic and GBV in India. Using secondary data sources, crime reports, and National Commission for Women newsletters, the paper finds that with the onset of the lockdown in India, there has been a rise in total complaints regarding GBV.

Pre-Prints

Dynamic Structural Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak on the Stock Market and the Exchange Rate: A Cross-country Analysis Among BRICS Nations

RUPAM BHATTACHARYA, SHEO RAMA, ATUL KUMAR AND INDRAJIT BANERJEE

- The study uses an SVAR model to identify the dynamic associations across the COVID-19 cases, recovery, and death counts, with those of the exchange rate, and stock market indices, using data over 203 days. Using impulse response analyses, the COVID-19 shock to the growth of exchange rate was seen to persist for more than 10 days, and that for stock exchange was seen to be around 15 days.

Examining the Effect of COVID-19 on Foreign Exchange Rate and Stock Market – An Applied Insight into the Variable Effects of Lockdown on Indian Economy

INDRAJIT BANERJEE, ATUL KUMAR AND RUPAM BHATTACHARYA

- This work attempts to examine the effect of COVID-19 on the foreign exchange rates and stock market performances of India using secondary data over a span of 112 days using the VAR models. The study finds that an increase in the COVID-19 cases causes no significant change in the exchange rate and SENSEX index. Nuanced and sensible interpretations of the numeric results indicate significant variability across time in terms of the relation between the variables of interest.

Working Papers

Do Women Prefer Working with Women? Evidence from Bihar, India

ATUL KUMAR, NITISH NIGAM

- This study investigates low female labor force participation in India's MGNREGA, focusing on Bihar. It evaluates the Mahila Mate initiative, which appoints women as worksite supervisors. Analysis of block-level panel data from Bihar shows that the registration of Mahila Mates is positively and significantly associated with higher female worker participation. The findings suggest female supervisors create a more inclusive work environment, making the initiative a scalable, cost-effective way to boost gender equity in public programs.

Purity vs Prestige: Caste and Conspicuous Consumption in India

ATUL KUMAR

- This study analyzes how the interplay of caste and class shapes conspicuous consumption in urban India, focusing on hiring domestic workers. Although a marker of elite status (class), this labor is often performed by marginalized castes (like Dalits), creating a purity paradox. Affluent households mitigate this tension using spatial segregation. The research demonstrates that conspicuous consumption in India is fundamentally structured by caste hierarchy, extending Veblen's framework.

Caste, Climate, and the Commons: Resource Scarcity as a Driver of Caste-Based Violence in India

ATUL KUMAR, ALEXANDER HEGG

- This study analyzes how climate change disproportionately affects Scheduled Castes and Tribes (SC/ST) in Bihar, India. It argues that resource scarcity, driven by environmental stress like low rainfall, escalates caste-based crimes. Dominant groups use violence to control dwindling resources, excluding SC/ST populations. A Fixed Effects model confirms a negative correlation between rainfall and crimes against SC/ST, showing how environmental stress reinforces hierarchical power dynamics and social dominance.

Conference Presentations

Western States Graduate Workshop in Economics

Fort Collins, US

PAPER TITLE - **DO WOMEN PREFER WORKING WITH WOMEN? EVIDENCE FROM BIHAR, INDIA**

2025

- The study analyses the connection between democratic political regimes and human development around the world by examining two research questions the relationship between UNDP's Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index and EIU's Democracy Index. The findings of the research offer support to the idea that there is a positive link between the levels of Democracy and human development.

National Conference on Appropriate Technologies for Rural India

Patna, India

PAPER TITLE - **DOES DEMOCRACY IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE? A CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS**

2022

- The study analyses the connection between democratic political regimes and human development around the world by examining two research questions the relationship between UNDP's Inequality-adjusted Human Development Index and EIU's Democracy Index. The findings of the research offer support to the idea that there is a positive link between the levels of Democracy and human development.

National Seminar on COVID-19 in India & Sustainable Development Goals: Challenges, Responses & Way forward

Patna, India

PAPER TITLE - **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND COVID-19: THE INDIAN SCENARIO**

2021

- The paper establishes a clear connection between the COVID-19 pandemic and Gender-based Violence (GBV) in India through a comprehensive review. It highlights a significant increase in GBV complaints following the imposition of lockdown measures; attributable to economic challenges, social dynamics and psychological stress.