

# Amen Jalal

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## Education

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**The London School of Economics**, London, UK.

Expected 2026

MRes/PhD in Economics

Fields: Development; Labor; Environmental; Gender

**Yale University**, New Haven, US.

August 2013–May 2017

B.A. in Economics (with Distinction), *cum laude*

Ronald Meltzer Prize for an Outstanding Senior Essay in Economics (Advisor: Christopher Udry)

## References

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**Nava Ashraf**  
Professor, LSE  
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**Oriana Bandiera**  
Professor, LSE  
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**Gharad Bryan**  
Associate Professor, LSE  
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**Robin Burgess**  
Professor, LSE  
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## Affiliations

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Hub for Equal Representation, LSE  
Economics of Environment and Energy Programme, LSE  
Center for Economic Research Pakistan

## Grants

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**Total funding as PI or co-PI: \$1,265,801**

€317,000	G <sup>2</sup> LM LIC (IZA)	Market Based Solutions to Gender Inequality in Pakistan's Labour Markets
\$253,000	JPAL K-CAI	Heat Insurance at Work
£5,000	LSE-HER	Rebuilding Lives: Integrating Mental Health in Climate Disaster Response
£190,000	IGC	Coping With Catastrophe: Pakistan's 2022 Floods
£5,000	LSE-STICERD	Coping With Catastrophe: Pakistan's 2022 Floods
£90,000	CEPR-STEG	Coping With Catastrophe: Pakistan's 2022 Floods
\$35,000	Harvard University	Coping With Catastrophe: Pakistan's 2022 Floods
\$160,586	IFPRI	What Happens When Cash Transfers Suddenly Stop?
\$50,000	IPA	What Happens When Cash Transfers Suddenly Stop?
£19,500	IGC	Equilibrium Effects of a Billion Trees: Evidence From Pakistan
£20,000	LSE-RISF	The Illusion of Time: Gender Gaps in Job Search and Employment
£5,000	LSE-STICERD	The Illusion of Time: Gender Gaps in Job Search and Employment

## Select works in progress

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**Screening Women Out? Pay Transparency in Job Search** (Job Market Paper)

*Outstanding Paper Award – The Discrimination and Diversity Workshop (2025) by Exeter University and European Economic Association.*

**Abstract:** Women sort into low-paying firms for otherwise similar jobs. Whether this reflects preferences or frictions is largely unknown. Using 29 million job applications from Pakistan's largest job search platform, and a discrete-choice experiment, I document that large, high-paying firms are more likely to omit salaries from job ads, and

less likely to offer flexibility – which women value more than men. When pay is disclosed, men and women respond similarly. Without disclosure, men search randomly while women sort negatively on pay. A search model rationalizes these facts, showing that non-disclosure transforms small gender differences in amenity preferences into large gender gaps in sorting. To test whether transparency closes the gaps, I field a large-scale experiment on the platform, randomizing mandatory vs. optional pay disclosure in 20,000 job ads across 8,900 firms. Large-firm pay and amenities remain unchanged by transparency. Yet, women’s applications to these firms increase 95%, and men’s by 59%, reversing the gender gap in directed search. Large firms also overestimate the costs of transparency; treatment raises their pay disclosure rate by 30% post-experiment. I conclude that women do not knowingly “buy” flexibility with pay. Rather, they turn to flexibility when its price is unknown.

## **Immediate Relief, Delayed Recovery: Labor Market Impacts of Natural Disasters**

with Pol Simpson

**Abstract:** Disaster response policies often focus on immediate relief or long-term reconstruction, but what happens in between? We examine how the impacts of Pakistan’s 2022 floods evolve over two years, by collecting panel data from 5,100 low-income households across six districts, and leveraging exogenous local variation in topography and rainfall to estimate causal effects. One year post-floods, a more severe flood shock depleted household assets and reduced labor demand, prompting households to sell assets, commute further for work, and turn to self-employment. They also received more formal and informal aid. As a result, they were able to sustain consumption levels on par with less affected households. However, by year two these patterns are reversed: more flooded households have returned to private employment, working similar hours as less flooded households, but doing so at lower wages. They are also more likely to report reducing consumption and health expenditure, taking new loans and drawing down savings to make ends meet. We also find that more intense floods have persistent negative impacts on physical and mental health - particularly women’s. These findings reveal a medium-run assistance gap: after emergency relief but before long-run reconstruction, households face income risks that standard disaster response overlooks, allowing the effects of climate shocks to persist through labor markets.

## **The Illusion of Time: Gender Gaps in Job Search and Employment**

with Oriana Bandiera and Nina Roussille

**Abstract:** In countries with low female employment, college-educated women often transition directly from education to homemaking. Does this reflect informed, forward-looking choices or unanticipated constraints? We study this question in Pakistan, where two-thirds of college-educated women remain out of the labor force. Tracking 2,400 college-graduating students, we document that men and women start their search with similar work aspirations, apply at similar rates, and receive comparable numbers of job offers. Yet a 27 pp employment gap emerges within six months post-graduation. This gap stems largely from timing: for women alone, there is a critical window, immediately post-graduation, during which job search is associated with much higher chances of employment. To test whether this relationship is causal, we randomize a modest incentive to apply early. By shifting search into the early window, the intervention raises women’s employment by 20% but leaves men’s employment unaffected, closing a third of the gender gap. Our evidence suggests that applying early enables women to start working before demands from the marriage market arise. Treatment effects are driven by women who underestimate how quickly these demands materialize, revealing an “illusion of time.” This illusion can be persistent since women in our sample recognize the barriers to employment faced by their female peers, but overestimate their own ability to overcome them.

## **Heat Insurance at Work**

with Ashley Pople, Pol Simpson, Eddy Zou and Oriana Bandiera

**Abstract:** Heatwaves, intensified by climate change, hit the poorest the hardest. Many are exposed to dangerous temperatures through outdoor work or limited access to adaptive resources. In 2024, 37 cities in India surpassed 45 C (113 F), and around 40,000 heat stroke cases were reported. How can social protection systems evolve to address the growing losses caused by extreme heat? We evaluate an innovative intervention in India that offers automatic daily wage payments to low-income workers when temperatures exceed a predetermined threshold. Developed by the Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) – a union representing over 3 million informal workers – the scheme is the world’s first parametric heat insurance product targeting earnings loss. We use a randomized encouragement design, incentivizing SEWA officers to promote enrollment in 2,821 treatment villages, while 2,821

control villages receive no targeted outreach. Panel survey data – combined with high-frequency measurement during the hot season – will allow us to estimate impacts on labor supply, financial decisions, health, consumption, and adaptive behavior. We also assess willingness to pay relative to actuarially fair pricing, providing evidence on the potential for commercial insurance-based heat protection.

## Can Market Competition Reduce Corruption?

with Muhammad Haseeb, Alex Quispe and Kate Vyborny

**Abstract:** Corruption remains a major obstacle to the delivery of public services in developing countries. We study whether competition between service delivery agents can mitigate corruption, leveraging exogenous changes to the market structure of agents responsible for delivering government cash transfers in Pakistan. A reform that increased the market power of these agents led to a 29.1 pp increase in the probability that a beneficiary had to pay an involuntary bribe to access the cash transfer. However, in areas with 1 standard deviation higher competition, this increase in bribe payments is almost completely eliminated. We rule out that mechanisms other than competition drive these results, such as strategic entry, changes in market access, and differences in monitoring efforts or cash recipient characteristics.

## Experience

**The London School of Economics**, London UK

September 2021-2025

Graduate Teaching Assistant:

Microeconomics I	Department of Economics	Bachelors
Macroeconomics I	Department of Economics	Bachelors
Microeconomics	School of Public Policy	Masters of Public Administration
Empirical Methods	School of Public Policy	Exec. Masters of Public Administration / Public Policy
Introduction to Statistics	School of Public Policy	Exec. Masters of Public Administration / Public Policy

**The World Bank**, Washington DC, US

July 2018–August 2020

Research Assistant, Development Impact Evaluation (DIME) and Identification for Development (ID4D)

**Yale University**, New Haven, US

May 2016–July 2018

Research Assistant for Ian Ayres (July 2017-18); Christopher Udry (May-July 2016)

## Presentations (\* scheduled)

<b>2025</b>	CEPR Development Economics Annual Symposium Stanford Institute for Theoretical Economics (SITE) - Gender Workshop in Labor Economics: Wages, Employment and Inequality Diversity and Human Capital Workshop IZA PhD Workshop in Labor and Behavioral Economics HEC Economics PhD Conference Warwick Economics PhD Conference Discrimination and Diversity Workshop Women's Employment and Empowerment Workshop European Association of Young Economists (EAYE) Annual Meeting Scotland and Northern England Conference in Applied Microeconomics The Canadian Labour Economics Forum Conference DevPEC G <sup>2</sup> LM LIC (IZA) Research Conference	Pompeu Fabra University* Stanford University Helsinki University of Exeter IZA HEC Paris Warwick University Virtual Royal Holloway University Kings College Crieff Toronto UC Berkeley London
<b>2024</b>	Pathways to Development Conference Inclusive Job Platforms Workshop	Lahore The World Bank
<b>2023</b>	Pathways to Development Conference Transport, Energy and Climate Economics Working Group Environment Camp	Lahore Paris Dauphine University London School of Economics

2022 CREB External Seminar Series  
Pathways to Development Conference

Virtual  
Lahore

### **Professional Service**

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**Refereeing:** American Economic Review; Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization; Economica

**Organizing Committee:** LSE Environment Week (2023, 2024); LSE Environment Camp (2023, 2024, 2025)

**Paper selection:** European Association of Young Economists (2025); Pathways to Development (2023)

**Mentoring:** LSE Application Mentoring Programme (2022, 2023)