

Payal Hathi

CONTACT INFORMATION Department of Sociology and Institute of Behavioral Science
University of Colorado Boulder
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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS **Assistant Professor of Sociology**, August 2025-present
University of Colorado Boulder
Fellow, Institute of Behavioral Science (IBS)
Fellow, IBS Population Program
Faculty Affiliate, University of Colorado Population Center

EDUCATION Ph.D., Demography and Sociology, University of California, Berkeley (2025)
M.A., Sociology, University of California, Berkeley (2022)
M.A., Demography, University of California, Berkeley (2019)
M.P.A., Development Studies, Princeton University (2011)
B.A., Economics & Political Economy, University of California, Berkeley (2005)

RESEARCH INTERESTS Demography, gender, social inequality, health, environment, global studies, quantitative methods, qualitative methods.

PUBLICATIONS **Journal articles** (★ indicates all student co-authors)

19. **Hathi, Payal**, Diane Coffey, Amit Thorat, and Amanda Nagle. 2025. **Does matching interviewer and respondent gender improve data quality and reduce social desirability bias? Evidence from a mobile phone survey in India.** *Survey Methods: Insights from the Field*.
18. Gupta, Aashish, **Payal Hathi**, Murad Banaji, Prankur Gupta, Ridhi Kashyap, Vipul Paikra, Kanika Sharma, Anmol Somanchi, Nikkil Sudharsanan, and Sangita Vyas. 2024. **Large and unequal life expectancy declines associated with the COVID-19 pandemic in India in 2020.** *Science Advances*.
17. ★ Vyas, Sangita, **Payal Hathi**, and Aashish Gupta. 2022. **Social disadvantage, economic inequality, and life expectancy in nine Indian states.** *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 119(10), e2109226119.
Recognition: Winner of PAA's 2021 Dorothy S. Thomas Award.
Media: BBC, Hindustan Times, Deccan Herald, The Print, Telegraph India, and others.
16. **Hathi, Payal**, Diane Coffey, Amit Thorat, and Nazar Khalid. 2021. **When women eat last: discrimination at home and women's mental health.** *PLOS One*.

15. Coffey, Diane, **Payal Hathi**, Nazar Khalid, and Amit Thorat. 2021. **Measurement of population mental health: Evidence from a mobile phone survey in India**. *Health Policy and Planning*. 36(5):606-619.
14. Thorat, Amit, Nazar Khalid, Nikhil Srivastav, **Payal Hathi**, Dean Spears, and Diane Coffey. 2020. **Persisting prejudice: Measuring attitudes and outcomes by caste, religion, gender**. *CASTE, A Global Journal on Social Exclusion*. 1(2), 1-16.
13. Gupta, Aashish, Sangita Vyas, **Payal Hathi**, Nazar Khalid, Nikhil Srivastav, Dean Spears, and Diane Coffey. 2020. **Persistence of solid fuel use in rural north India**. *Economic & Political Weekly*. 55(3): 55-62.
Media: *Times of India*, *The Hindu*, *LiveMint*, *IndiaSpend*, *Counterview*, and others.
12. Gupta, Aashish, Nazar Khalid, Devashish Deshpande, **Payal Hathi**, Avani Kapur, Nikhil Srivastav, Sangita Vyas, Dean Spears, and Diane Coffey. 2020. **Revisiting open defecation: Evidence from a panel survey in rural north India, 2014-18**. *Economic & Political Weekly*. 55(21).
Media: *Hindustan Times*, *The Hindu*, *The Business Standard*, *LiveMint*, *IndiaSpend*, *Scroll.in*, *The Wire*, *First Post*, *Swaraj Magazine*, *Counterview*.
11. Coffey, Diane, **Payal Hathi**, and Dean Spears. 2020. **Assessing high-profile public messaging for sanitation behaviour change: evidence from a mobile phone survey in India**. *Waterlines*. 39(4).
10. * **Hathi, Payal** and Nikhil Srivastav. 2020. **Caste prejudice and infection why a dangerous lack of hygiene persists in government hospitals**. *Economic & Political Weekly*. 55(16).
9. Broussard, Kathleen, **Payal Hathi**, and Diane Coffey. 2019. **Assessing public awareness and use of medical abortion via mobile phone survey in India**. *Contraception*. 2019. 100(6): 457-463.
8. Coffey, Diane, **Payal Hathi**, Nidhi Khurana, and Amit Thorat. 2018. **Explicit prejudice: Evidence from a new survey of social attitudes**. *Economic & Political Weekly*. 53(1): 46-54.
7. **Hathi, Payal**, Sabrina Haque, Lovey Pant, Diane Coffey, and Dean Spears. 2017. **Place and Child Health: The Interaction of Population Density and Sanitation in Developing Countries**. *Demography*. 54:337-360.
6. Coffey, Diane, Aashish Gupta, **Payal Hathi**, Dean Spears, Nikhil Srivastav, and Sangita Vyas. 2017. **Understanding open defecation in rural India: Pollution, latrine pits, and untouchability**. *Economic & Political Weekly (special article in Review of Rural Affairs)*. 52(1):59-66.
Media: *The Economist*, major English-language Indian newspapers.
5. Coffey, Diane and **Payal Hathi**. 2016. **Underweight and pregnant: Maternity entitlements and weight gain during pregnancy**. *Indian Journal of Human Development*. 10(2):1-15.

4. **Hathi, Payal**, Diane Coffey, and Dean Spears. 2016. [Can collective action strategies motivate behavior change to reduce open defecation in rural India?](#). *Waterlines*. 35(2).

Recognition: Winner of Waterlines' 2016 Jeroen Ensink Memorial Prize.

3. Comfort, Alison, Slavea Chankova, Randall Juras, C. Natasha Hsi, Lauren Peterson, and **Payal Hathi**. 2016. [Providing free pregnancy test kits to community health workers increases distribution of contraceptives: results from an impact evaluation in Madagascar](#). *Contraception*. 93(1): 44-51.
2. Coffey, Diane, Aashish Gupta, **Payal Hathi**, Nidhi Khurana, Dean Spears, Nikhil Srivastav, and Sangita Vyas. 2014. [Revealed preference for open defecation: Evidence from a new survey in rural north India](#). *Economic & Political Weekly (special article section)*. 49(38). Reprinted in *Social Policy*, ed. Jean Drèze. 2016.

Media: *New York Times*, *National Public Radio*, *Voice of America*, major English-language Indian newspapers.

1. Comfort, Alison, Janneke van Dijk, Sungano Mharakurwa, Kathryn Stillman, Benjamin Johns, **Payal Hathi**, Sonali Korde, Allen Craig, Nancy Nachbar, Yann Derriennic, Rose Gabert, and Philip Thuma. 2014. [Association between malaria control and paediatric blood transfusions in rural Zambia: an interrupted time-series analysis](#). *Malaria Journal*. 13(1), 1-17.

Book chapters

1. * **Hathi, Payal** and Nikhil Srivastav. 2022. [The Role of Caste Prejudice in Hampering Infection Control Efforts in Government Hospitals..](#) *Caste, COVID-19, and Inequalities of Care: Lessons from South Asia*. Sanghmitra S. Acharya and Stephen Christopher (Eds.), Indian Institute for Advanced Studies.

Technical reports

1. **Hathi, Payal**, Amit Thorat, Nazar Khalid, Nidhi Khurana, and Diane Coffey. 2020. [Mobile Phone Survey Methods for Measuring Social Discrimination](#). Technical Report prepared for the National Centre for Data Innovation at the National Council for Applied Economic Research, New Delhi, India.

Under review

2. * **Hathi, Payal** and Kanika Sharma. *Swasthya: The hidden health burden. Viraam: Exploring subliminal and invisible gender-based violence. An anthology on gender and everyday life*. Priyadarshini Bhattacharya (Ed.), Indian Administrative Service.
1. Vyas, Sangita, **Payal Hathi**, and Aashish Gupta. Maternal mortality disparities in India. Invited to resubmit revised manuscript to *Demography*.

Works in progress

10. **Hathi, Payal.** Population science implications of the inclusion of stillbirths in demographic estimates of child mortality.
9. **Hathi, Payal.** Quantifying pregnancy and pregnancy loss in the demographic study of population health.
8. * **Hathi, Payal**, Aashish Gupta, Vipul Paikra, Aditi Priya, and Kanika Sharma. The state of stillbirth statistics in India.
7. **Hathi, Payal.** Examining the changing relationship between stillbirth and early neonatal mortality globally.
6. **Hathi, Payal.** Global patterns of disparities in stillbirth.
5. **Hathi, Payal.** The relationship between heat, humidity, and the prevalence of stillbirth in India.
4. **Hathi, Payal**, Monica Alexander, Amanda Nagle, Leslie Root, and Jonas Scholey. The demography of pregnancy loss.
3. Khalid, Nazar, **Payal Hathi**, Aashish Gupta, and Sangita Vyas. Hindu-Muslim mortality differences in India: 1990-2016.
2. Feehan, Dennis, **Payal Hathi**, Moinuddin Haider, Mamun Al Basher, and Nurul Alam. Death by network: Novel approaches to data collection for estimating adult mortality on a survey.
1. Paikra, Vipul, Apurva Bamezai, Murad Banaji, **Payal Hathi**, Aditi Priya, MR Sharan, Kanika Sharma, Chanchal Kumar Singh, Harsha Thirumurthy, Sangita Vyas, and Aashish Gupta. Pandemic excess deaths in rural Bihar.

News publications, commentaries, and other media

16. **What Prevents Indian Public Hospitals from Being Hygienic?** March 1, 2021. *Research Radio EPW*, with Nikhil Srivastav.
15. **Our Essential Workers Need Essential Care.** August 1, 2020. *Economic & Political Weekly (Commentary)*. with Nikhil Srivastav and Aditi Priya.
14. **The precarious condition of hospital cleaning staff.** July 3, 2020. *The Hindu*, with Nikhil Srivastav.
13. **Protecting health workers: Protective gear is not enough, infection control practices are critical.** April 18, 2020. *Times of India*, with Nikhil Srivastav.
12. **Coercion, construction, and 'ODF paper pe': Swachh Bharat according to local officials.** March 5, 2019. *India Forum* with Aashish Gupta, Sangita Vyas, Nazar Khalid, Nikhil Srivastav, and Diane Coffey.
11. **Using mobile phones to measure discrimination.** January 9, 2019. *Ideas for India*, with Diane Coffey, Nazar Khalid, Nidhi Khurana, and Amit Thorat.

10. Experiences and Perceptions of Discrimination among Dalits and Muslims. October 20, 2018. *Economic & Political Weekly (Commentary)*, with Diane Coffey, Nazar Khalid, Nidhi Khurana, and Amit Thorat.
9. Why we still need to measure open defecation in rural India. Oct. 1, 2018. *Ideas for India*, with Nikhil Srivastav.
8. A lose-lose proposition. January 10, 2018. *Indian Express*.
7. Population density interacts with sanitation to predict child health. May 22, 2017. *N-IUSSP*, with Diane Coffey.
6. Maternity entitlements for healthier babies. July 7, 2016. *Ideas for India*, with Diane Coffey.
5. The case for going universal. January 21, 2016. *The Hindu*, with Diane Coffey.
4. A sanitation sena for India. October 3, 2014. *The Indian Express*, with Aashish Gupta.
3. Why community toilets won't reduce open defecation in rural India. October 2, 2014. *Scroll*.
2. PM must say 'open defecation' and 'latrine use' out loud! October 1, 2014. *LiveMint*.
1. Toilets are urgently needed in rural India, but don't imagine they'll reduce rape. June 7, 2014. *Scroll*, with Diane Coffey, Aashish Gupta, Dean Spears, and Sangita Vyas.

AWARDS

First place in graduate student poster competition, 2024
 All - University of California Demography Conference
 For poster "Examining the changing relationship between stillbirth and early neonatal mortality"

First place in graduate student poster competition, 2023
 All - University of California Demography Conference
 For poster "Quantifying pregnancy and pregnancy loss in the demographic study of population health"

Best Poster Award, 2023
 Population Association of America (PAA)
 For poster "Examining the changing relationship between stillbirth and early neonatal mortality"

Dorothy S. Thomas Award for the best graduate student paper on the interrelationships among social, economic, and demographic variables, 2021
Population Association of America (PAA)

Shared with Sangita Vyas and Aashish Gupta, for our co-authored paper, ["Social disadvantage, economic inequality, and life expectancy in nine Indian states"](#)

Jeroen Ensink Memorial Prize for an original paper submitted by early career researcher, 2016

Waterlines journal

Shared with Dean Spears and Diane Coffey, for our co-authored paper, ["Can collective action strategies motivate behavior change to reduce open defecation in rural India?"](#)

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

CUPC Rapid Response Grant, 2025
University of Colorado Boulder, CU Population Center

University of California Dissertation-Year Fellowship, 2024-2025
University of California, Berkeley, Graduate Division

Summer Dissertation Writing Grants for Advanced Arts and Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences Students, 2024
University of California, Berkeley, Graduate Division

Dissertation Research Grant, 2022-2023
University of California, Berkeley, Center on Contemporary India

Junior Research Fellowship, 2022
American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS)

David and Aileen Wang Family Fellowship, 2021-2022
University of California, Berkeley

Catherine and William L. Magistretti Graduate Fellowship, 2020-2021
University of California, Berkeley

National Institute on Child Health and Human Development Training Grant, 2018-2023
Department of Demography, University of California, Berkeley

Pre-Dissertation Research Grant, 2020
Institute of International Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Maharaj Kaul Memorial Grant, 2020
The Institute of South Asia Studies, University of California, Berkeley

Regents Scholar, 2001-2005
University of California, Berkeley

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS "Examining the changing relationship between stillbirth and early neonatal mortality."

- All-University of California Demography Conference (poster). 2024.
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting (poster). 2023.

"Quantifying pregnancy and pregnancy loss in the demographic study of population health."

- TEXPOP, Session: Health and social consequences of pregnancy. 2024.
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Session: Population Processes. 2023.
- All-University of California Demography Conference (poster). 2023.
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting (poster). 2023.

"Examining trends and disparities in rates of stillbirth and first day mortality in India."

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting (poster). 2024.

"The relationship between heat, humidity, and the prevalence of stillbirth in India."

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Session - Age Dimensions of Environment, Morbidity, and Mortality. 2024.
- British Society of Population Studies Conference, Session: Demographic consequences of environment risks. 2022.
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting (poster). 2022.

"Population science implications of the inclusion of stillbirths in demographic estimates of child mortality."

- British Society of Population Studies Conference, Session: Early life health and mortality. 2022.
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Session: Morbidity and mortality. 2022.
- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Flash Session - Pathways to Infant and Child Health and Mortality. 2022.
- IUSSP International Population Conference, Session: Creating and using international or historical datasets. 2021.
- Sociology of Development Annual Conference, Session: Global Health and Pandemics. 2021.

"Narratives of stillbirth and the production of stillbirth statistics in India."

- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Session: Collective memory. 2024.
- Annual Conference of South Asia, Session: Science, Knowledge, and the Body in 20th and 21st Century South Asia, Panel: Counting Embodiment, Making Data. 2023.

"The state of stillbirth statistics in India."

- Stillbirth Association of India National Conference. 2023.

“Interviewer gender effects on social attitudes and survey outcomes in a mobile phone survey in India.”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting, Flash Session - Measurement of Concepts in Demographic Studies. 2022.

“Social disadvantage, economic inequality, and life expectancy in nine Indian states.”

- British Society for Population Studies Conference, Session: Social inequalities & mortality. 2021.
- American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, Roundtable: Health and Well-Being Across the Life Course. 2020.

“When women eat last: Discrimination and women’s mental health.”

- r.i.c.e. & IGC webinar on Gender and mental health in Bihar and India: Developing tools for effective measurement. 2020.

“Measurement of population mental health: Evidence from a mobile phone survey in India.”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting (poster). 2020.

“Can more education reduce opposition to intermarriage? Comparing India and the U.S.”

- Population Association of America Annual Meeting (poster). 2019.

“Population density and the effect of sanitation on early-life health.”

- Water and Health Conference. 2014.

“Confronting the challenge: latrines and latrine use in India.”

- Water and Health Conference. 2014.

“What’s so communal about communities in rural India? Social distance, village conflict, and open defecation.”

- Water and Health Conference (poster). 2014.

“What doesn’t kill you makes you shorter: Evidence from two decades of improving sanitation and infant mortality in Bangladesh.”

- Delhi School of Economics Conference on Sanitation. 2013.

“Using willingness to pay data to inform the design of health insurance for the poor: evidence from micro-lending clients in Lagos, Nigeria.”

- Global Symposium on Health Systems Research. 2012.

TEACHING &
ADVISING

Courses

- SOCY 4052 Social Inequalities in Health. University of Colorado Boulder. Spring 2026.
- DEMOG 110 Introduction to Population Analysis (Prof. Ayesha Mahmud). Graduate Student Instructor. University of California, Berkeley. Fall 2021.
- DEMOG 210 Demographic Methods: Rates and Structures (Prof. Ayesha Mahmud). Graduate Student Tutor. University of California, Berkeley. Fall 2021.
- Berkeley Formal Demography Workshop. Graduate Student Instructor. University of California, Berkeley. May 24-28, 2021.
- DEMOG / ECON C175 Economic Demography (Prof. Josh Goldstein). Graduate Student Instructor. University of California, Berkeley. Spring 2021.

Masters Theses

- Don Grant, Sociology 2025-2026
- Musabber Ali Chisty, Sociology 2025-2026

Comprehensive Exam

- Zhe Lin, Geography 2025-2026

Graduate Research Assistant Supervision

- Nisha Koppa, Environmental Studies 2025-2026.

SERVICE

Department

- Member, Sociology Speaker Series Committee (2025-2026)
- Participant and Discussant, Graduate Student Workshop - Sociology Works in Progress (2025-2026)

Discipline

- Session Organizer, "Maternal, infant, and reproductive health and mortality," Population Association of America Annual Meeting 2026.
- Session Organizer, "Disparities in fetal and child mortality," Population Association of America Annual Meeting 2026.
- Session Organizer, "Social and environmental stressors across the reproductive continuum," Population Association of America Annual Meeting 2026.
- Reviewer for IUSSP's International Population Conference 2025.
- Discussant, "Causes and Impacts of Reporting Issues in Population Research." Population Association of America Annual Meeting. 2025.
- Discussant, "Implications of long-term population change for environmental outcomes, economic development, and well-being." Population Association of America Annual Meeting. 2024.

- Chair, “Internal Migration, Reproductive Health, and Fertility.” Population Association of America Annual Meeting. 2024.
- Discussant, “Survey Data Quality in Low- and Middle-Income Countries.” Population Association of America Annual Meeting. 2023.
- Discussant, “Family Planning Policies and Politics.” Population Association of America Annual Meeting. 2022.

Mentorship

- Bahujan Economists Mentorship Program: mentored social sciences students from historically marginalized backgrounds in India applying for graduate school abroad (2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025, 2025-2026).
- UC Berkeley Social Science Research Pathways (SSRP) program: Graduate Student Mentor to two undergraduates each year (2022-2023, 2023-2024, 2024-2025).
- UC Berkeley Sociology Undergraduate Honors Thesis Mentoring Program: Program Coordinator (2022-2023); Graduate Student Mentor to one undergraduate each year on their senior thesis (2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2023-2024).

Guest lectures in courses:

- Researcher panel for PhD candidate Kanika Sharma’s course “Gender, Society, and Health: Global Perspectives” at Emory University. 2022.
- “Mobile Phone Survey Methods for Measuring Social Discrimination” for Professor Reetika Khera’s class on research methods at Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi for PhD and Master’s students. 2021.
- “COVID’s disproportionate effect on minority populations” for Summer Math and Science Honors (SMASH) Academy, a program engaging low-income students of color in STEM. with Vincent Fan. 2020.

Workshop organization:

- Co-organized UC Berkeley Department of Sociology’s Gender and Sexuality Workshop, 2021-2022.

Conference organization:

- Co-organized r.i.c.e. & IGC webinar on Gender and mental health in Bihar and India: Developing tools for effective measurement. 2020.

Journal refereeing:

- Demography, Population Studies, Population Research and Policy Review, Population & Environment, Scientific Reports, PLOS One, Journal of Population Ageing, Feminist Economics, Studies in Family Planning, PLOS Global Public Health, BMC Women’s Health, Journal of Development Studies, The Journal of Water, Sanitation & Hygiene for Development, Waterlines, Water Policy, Urban Studies, Indian Journal of Human Development, Institute for Development Studies Bulletin, Economic & Political Weekly.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE	<p>r.i.c.e., a research institute for compassionate economics. Research Fellow. September 2018 - present.</p> <p>r.i.c.e., a research institute for compassionate economics. Managing Director, Delhi, India. April 2014 - August 2018.</p> <p>World Bank Water & Sanitation Program. Knowledge Broker, South Asia Region, Delhi, India. March 2013 – April 2014.</p> <p>Abt Associates. Senior Analyst, International Health Division, Cambridge, MA. February 2012 – March 2013.</p> <p>Sakhi for South Asian Women, Economic Empowerment Coordinator. New York City, NY. May 2010 – September 2011.</p> <p>Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL). Research Assistant, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India. May 2006 – July 2008.</p>
FIELD AND SURVEY EXPERIENCE	<p><i>Narratives of stillbirth and the production of stillbirth statistics in India.</i> 2021-present. A qualitative exploration of stillbirth experiences and measurement, unpacking how women's experiences, health worker practices, and bureaucratic decisions interact to produce India's official and administrative stillbirth statistics.</p> <p><i>Testing survey-based methods for estimating mortality.</i> 2021-2023, with Professor Dennis Feehan. A pilot survey done in conjunction with the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) in Matlab, Bangladesh, testing network methods for mortality and stillbirth rate estimation.</p> <p><i>SARI (Social Attitudes Research for India).</i> 2015-2018, with r.i.c.e. A phone survey tracking social attitudes over time and experiences of discrimination on the basis of gender, caste, and religion in India. Data and documentation available for download here.</p> <p><i>Hygiene, infection, and caste in government hospitals.</i> 2016-2017, with r.i.c.e. A qualitative study of hygiene maintenance in maternity services in public sector hospitals in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar.</p> <p><i>SQUAT (Sanitation, Quality, Use, Access, and Trends).</i> 2013-2014, with r.i.c.e. A quantitative survey of sanitation beliefs and behaviors in 3,000 households in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Bihar. Data and documentation available for download here.</p> <p><i>Switching to sanitation.</i> 2013-2014, with r.i.c.e. A qualitative study of motivations towards latrine use and non-use in 100 households in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and southern Nepal.</p>

**PROFESSIONAL
MEMBERSHIPS** Population Association of America (PAA)
2018 – present

American Sociological Association (ASA)
2019 – present
 Section on Population
 Sociology of Sex & Gender Section
 Global and Transnational Sociology Section
 Section on Environmental Sociology

LANGUAGES English (native); Hindi (proficient); Gujarati (proficient).

DATA ANALYSIS Proficient in Stata, working knowledge of R.