

Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF)
Postdoctoral Research Fellow

Office Contact Information

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Barcelona, Spain

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Languages: Punjabi (native), English
(fluent), Hindi/Urdu (fluent), French
(basic)

Education:

B.S. Economics with distinction (valedictorian), University of Utrecht, The Netherlands

Thesis Title: “Macroeconomic Implications of Terrorism”

Year abroad at LUISS Guido Carli Rome, Italy

M.S. Economics with honors, University of Tilburg, The Netherlands

Thesis Title: “Access to External Finance and Innovation: A Macroeconomic Perspective”

M.S. Public Policy and Development, Paris School of Economics, France

Thesis Title: “Using Geopolitics to identify causal effect of Aid on Growth”

PhD in Economics, University of Paris-Dauphine, France

Completion Date: 15th October 2019

Thesis Title: “Essays on Judicial Independence and Development”

References:

Professor Thierry Verdier
Paris School of Economics
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verdier@pse.ens.fr

Professor Ekaterina Zhuravskaya
Paris School of Economics
+33(0)180521612
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Professor Thomas Piketty
Paris School of Economics
+33(0)143136250
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Professor Eric Brousseau
University of Paris Dauphine
+33144054697
eric@brousseau.info

Citizenship: Pakistani

Research Fields:

Development Economics, Political Economics, Law and Economics

Under Revision:

Judicial Independence and Development: Evidence from Pakistan - **Resubmitted to Review of Economic Studies**

Referee Service (selected):

World Development, The Economic Journal

Job Market Paper:

Judicial Independence and Development: Evidence from Pakistan (IOEA Best Paper Award 2018)

This paper provides causal evidence that the institution of Presidential appointment exerts considerable influence on judicial independence, decision quality and development in Pakistan. We find that a change in the selection procedure of judges from Presidential appointment to appointment by judge peers significantly reduces rulings in favour of the government and that this reduction reflects an improvement in the quality of judicial decisions and development outcomes. Using mandatory retirement age as an instrument for new appointments allows us to estimate the causal effect of the reform. We test for and provide evidence against potential threats to identification and alternative explanations to our findings. The analysis of mechanisms reveals that the results are explained by rulings in politically salient cases and by judges who are politically active prior to their appointments.

Working Papers:

Ramadan Spirit and Criminal Acquittals: Causal Evidence from Pakistan (with A. Seror)

We study the effect of religious practice on judicial behavior in the context of Ramadan fasting, in the second largest Muslim majority country in world. For identification, we rely on exogenous variation in the length of daily fasting due to the interaction between the rotating Islamic calendar and a district court's geographical latitude. Using unique case-level microdata on criminal cases spanning the entire history of Pakistan, we find that in contrast to the literature on physiological deprivation making judges more severe, more intense fasting increases acquittals. Religion appears to drive our results, since we find no effect of Ramadan on the judicial behavior of non-Muslim judges. We present evidence consistent with the channel whereby the physiological deprivation of Ramadan fasting interacts with a Ramadan Spirit of restraint to make judges more lenient. Taken together, our results indicate that religious practice can substantially influence high-stake decision-making.

Judicial Corruption, Favor Exchange and the Rule of Law (with B. Ali)

We provide the first systematic evidence of a quid pro quo favor exchange between the Judiciary and the government. We find that when the Pakistani government allotted houses to judges their rulings in favor of the government increased and quality of their judicial decisions decreased. The analysis of mechanisms reveal that incentives generated by the house allocation are key to explain these results. Using market value of allotted houses, we estimate that an average house of worth USD 400, 000 buys the government a 20-percentage point increase in pro-government rulings. That is, every percentage point increase in government victories costs the government USD 20, 000. Nevertheless, it buys the government additional favorable rulings in land expropriation and human rights abuse cases against the citizenry. Taken together, our results indicate that gift-giving can substantially impact Rule of Law and undermine the independence of the Judiciary, even in presence of life-time tenure for judges, by inducing a relationship of favor exchange between the government and the judges.

Publications:

Mehmood, S., 2014. Terrorism and the macroeconomy: Evidence from Pakistan. *Defence and Peace Economics*, 25(5), pp. 509-534.

Mehmood, S., (2020). Political Cleavages in Pakistan: Evidence from the Changing Structure of the Electorate. In *Political Cleavages, Party Systems and Social Inequalities: A study of Electoral Democracies 1948-2019*. Edited by Amory Gethin and Thomas Piketty. *Harvard University Press*.

Work in Progress:

Religious Leaders and Rule of Law (with A. Seror)

The Strike of the Righteous: The Impact of Hate Literature on Radicalization in Pakistan (with S. Asad)

Judicial Independence in the Shadow of Terrorism

An investigation into the causes of abolition of slavery: The Case of Uncle Tom's Cabin (with Ekaterina Zhuravskaya)

Government Advertisements and Media Self-Censorship: Evidence from a Regression Discontinuity Design

Are judges a jury of one? Evidence from Abolition of juries in India

Sultan Mehmood

<https://sites.google.com/view/sultan-mehmood/home>

mrsultanmehmood@hotmail.com

Research Experience:

2015-2016: Researcher at Institute for Research on Development (IRD), Paris, France

Projects at IRD:

1. Construction and compilation of electoral fraud dataset in Africa
2. Construction and compilation of dataset on citizen trust of state institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa

2012-2014: Researcher at Central Planning Bureau, Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs

Projects at CPB:

1. A macroeconomic analysis of the returns to public R&D investments (academic paper)
2. Science funding: international comparisons of science funding systems (policy brief)
3. Innovation and financial access in the subprime crisis (academic paper)

06-09.2010: Summer internship at Research Department, Central Bank of Pakistan (SBP)

Research on terrorism and its impact on the external sector of Pakistan

Teaching Experience:

Fall 2018: Statistical Reasoning at Sciences Po (Masters Level)

Spring 2019: Quantitative Methods at Sciences Po (Masters Level)

Awards and Honors:

2020 International Growth Centre Research Grant (\$ 50, 000)

2020 Ronald Coase Medal (Runner-up)

2019 EDI Grant “Judicial Independence in Pakistan” (\$ 32,000)

2018 Best Paper Award Institutional and Organizational Economics Academy

2017 University of Paris Student Research Award (\$ 2,000)

2017 Foundation Sarah Andrieux Exploratory Research Grant (\$ 1,200)

2016-2019 Doctoral Fellowship University of Paris Dauphine

2015-2016 Paris School of Economics Public Policy and Development Scholarship

2011-2012 Tilburg University Scholarship for Academic Excellence

2008-2011 Utrecht Excellence Scholarship

Conferences:

Annual Conference Economic Development and Institutions EDI 2020, Namur, Belgium

Annual Conference American Law and Economics Association ALEA 2019, New York, USA

Annual Meeting Midwest Political Science Association MPSA 2019, Chicago, USA

Annual Meeting American Political Science Association APSA 2019, Washington DC, USA

Annual Meeting Association for the Study of Religion, Economics, and Culture ASREC 2019, Boston, USA

Annual Conference Royal Economic Society RES 2019, Warwick, UK

Annual Conference Society for Institutional & Organizational Economics SIOE 2019, Stockholm, Sweden

Annual Conference in Public Economics, Journées LAGV 2019, Marseille, France

Annual Asian Meeting of the Econometric Society 2019, Xiamen, China

Annual Conference American Law and Economics Association ALEA 2018, Boston, USA

Annual Meeting Institutional and Organizational Economics Academy, IOEA 2018 Corsica, France (**Best Paper Award 2018**)

Annual Conference Centre for the Studies of African Economies CSAE 2018, Oxford, UK

Invited Seminars/Workshops/Conferences:

ETH Zurich Law and Economics Seminar, 2020
Bocconi University Applied Economics Seminar, 2020
World Bank South Asia Development Conference 2019, Washington DC, US
Economic Development and Institutions (EDI) General Conference 2019, Paris, France
Institute for the Study of Religion, Economics and Society (IRES) Workshop 2019, Los Angeles, US
Applied Economics Seminar 2019 Paris School of Economics, Paris, France
CRED Workshop 2019, University of Namur, Namur, Belgium
Graduate Student Workshop 2019, Institute for Study of Religion, Economics and Society, Boston, US
Brownback Seminar 2019 at the Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan
CREB Seminar 2019 at the Lahore School of Economics, Lahore, Pakistan
Casual Friday Development Seminar 2018, Paris School of Economics, Paris, France

Policy Writing:

“A cultural phenomenon”. [The International Herald Tribune](#), 2016.
“A discussion on death penalty” [Dawn Pakistan](#), 2015.
“Fallibility of Intuition and the Utility of Models”. [The International Herald Tribune](#), 2014.
“Public Funding of Science: An International Comparison” with Ryanne van Dalen, [CPB Policy Brief](#), 2014.
“The Power of the Situation”, [The International Herald Tribune](#), 2014.
“The roots of terrorism”. [Dawn Pakistan](#), 2013.

Affiliation(s):

Fellow, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (2020 to present)
Fellow, Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan (2019 to present)
Fellow, Governance and Regulation Chair, Paris Research University (2016 to present)

Computer Skills:

Stata, Eviews, Python, Latex, MS Office, ArcGIS