

Aakanksha Melkani

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58E Filley Hall, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE-68503

EMPLOYMENT

Post Doctoral Research Associate

Daugherty Water for Food Global Institute, University of Nebraska

National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Joint appointment) *October 2021 to present*

EDUCATION

Michigan State University, East Lansing, USA

Ph.D., Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics

September 2021

Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, India

M.Phil., Development Studies

2014-2016

Punjab Agricultural University, India

M.Sc., Agricultural Economics

2012-2014

G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, India

B.Sc., Agricultural Sciences

2008-2012

RESEARCH

Work in progress

Smallholder maize market participation and choice of marketing channel in the presence of liquidity constraints: Evidence from Zambian maize markets (with Nicole Mason-Wardell, David Mather, Brian Chisanga, and Thomas Jayne) | first author. Working paper available here

Does reducing import-related transaction costs increase fertilizer imports? Evidence from a cross-country panel analysis (with Nicole Mason-Wardell, Maria Wanzala, and Saweda Liverpool-Tasie) | first author

Incentive for price arbitrage under discretionary versus rules-based agricultural policy: A comparison of the Zambian and South African maize markets. (with Thomas Jayne and Nicole Mason-Wardell) | first author

Policy support for sustainable agricultural intensification in Africa: Where are we 20 years on? (with Saweda Liverpool-Tasie)

Peer-reviewed publications

Melkani, A., and Kataria, P. (2015). The development-conservation trade-off facing Indian agriculture: Carbon costs of Punjab agriculture. *Agricultural Economics Research Review*, 28, 219-228. Available here

Melkani, A. (2014). Intensive agricultural practices of rice-wheat system in Punjab: Implications on costs and productivity. *Indian Journal of Economics and Development*, 10(2), 132-139. Available here

ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

Paper presented at AAEA Annual Meeting, Chicago, 2017: Female labor supply in a household decision making context: Evidence from ICRISAT-VDSA villages in India. Available here

Poster presented at AAEA Annual Meeting, Washington D.C., 2019: Market participation and choice of marketing channel under liquidity constraints: Evidence from the Zambian maize market. Available here

Poster presented at AAEA Annual Meeting, 2020 (held online): Does reducing import-related transactions cost increase fertilizer imports? Evidence from a cross-country panel analysis

WORK EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Assistant

August 2016-present

- Studied agricultural input and output markets in various sub-Saharan Africa countries using **cross-sectional, panel, and time-series econometric methods**
- Assisted in **designing the survey instrument, data cleaning, and report preparation** for the baseline survey of a **randomized-controlled trial** on agricultural extension methods in Tanzania
- Conducted a **review of agricultural policy documents** from multiple sub-Saharan African countries using the **FAOLEX database** to analyse government support of sustainable agricultural intensification

Data Collection

- Worked as a **quality controller and master trainer** for the third wave of the national Rural Agricultural Livelihoods Survey (RALS) household panel data collection in Zambia.
- Designed, managed and conducted a **cost of cultivation** data collection exercise for 80 farm households in Punjab, India as a part of my Master's thesis

Grant Writing

- Wrote the concept note and developed associated budget for the **lab-in-the-field** component of several grant proposals submitted to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, OCP Foundation, USAID, and USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

Teaching

- **Teaching ABM 203 (Data Analysis for Agri-Food System)** at Michigan State University in Spring, 2021
- Held **weekly online office hours** for a class of >70 undergraduate students in fulfillment of my role as a **teaching assistant** for ABM 203 in Fall, 2020
- Graded homeworks, quizzes, and exams and gave **guest lectures** for classes of >70 undergraduate students, for ABM 203 (Fall 2017, Spring 2018, and Fall 2020) and EEM 260 World Food, Population and Poverty (Spring 2020). Used **D2L and TopHat** for sharing class material, grades, and feedback

HONORS AND AWARDS

Received an '**Honorable mention**' for the **best presentation/paper** during the **Graduate Research Symposium 2020** held by the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, MSU, for the paper, "Smallholder maize market participation and choice of marketing channel in the presence of liquidity constraints: Evidence from Zambia"

Winner of the **R.T. Doshi Foundation Award for Best Presentation** during the **23rd Annual Conference of Agricultural Economics Research Association** (Mumbai, 2016) for the paper, "The development-conservation trade-off facing Indian agriculture: Carbon cost of Punjab agriculture"

Recipient of the **National Junior Research Fellowship** for meritorious students from the **Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR-JRF)** for the academic years 2012-2014

SERVICE

Vice President - Graduate Student Organization and member of the **Graduate Policy Committee** at the Department of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics, Michigan State University (May, 2020 to present)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Technical skills: Proficient in STATA, L^AT_EX, and R; Intermediate knowledge of Matlab, SPSS, and GAMS
Languages: Hindi (native); English (fluent); Spanish (beginner); working knowledge of Punjabi and Bengali