

An Indian-Australian research partnership

**Project Title:** **Examining disparity in health outcomes within the socioeconomically weaker sections in India**

**Project Number** HSS1065

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### Research Clusters:

### Research Themes:

Highlight which of the Academy's CLUSTERS this project will address? <i>(Please nominate JUST <u>one</u>. For more information, see <a href="http://www.iitbmonash.org">www.iitbmonash.org</a>)</i>		Highlight which of the Academy's Theme(s) this project will address? <i>(Feel free to nominate more than one. For more information, see <a href="http://www.iitbmonash.org">www.iitbmonash.org</a>)</i>	
1	Material Science/Engineering (including Nano, Metallurgy)	1	Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Computational Modelling
2	Energy, Green Chem, Chemistry, Catalysis, Reaction Eng	2	Circular Economy
3	Math, CFD, Modelling, Manufacturing	3	Clean Energy
4	CSE, IT, Optimisation, Data, Sensors, Systems, Signal Processing, Control	4	<b>Health Sciences</b>
5	Earth Sciences and Civil Engineering (Geo, Water, Climate)	5	Smart Materials
6	Bio, Stem Cells, Bio Chem, Pharma, Food	6	<b>Sustainable Societies</b>
7	Semi-Conductors, Optics, Photonics, Networks, Telecomm, Power Eng	7	Infrastructure
8	<b>HSS, Design, Management</b>		

## The research problem

### *Define the problem*

Scholars typically examine the disparity (in economic and non-economic outcomes) between the caste groups or between the different religious groups in India. But within group variation in life experiences and outcomes is equally important for a sound understanding and policy and programme interventions. This assumes particular importance since the Indian government introduced far-reaching economic reforms in the early 1990s. The reforms of the 1990s and following decades have had mixed socio-economic outcomes for different social groups in India. Yet, there are no comprehensive studies on how disparities in health outcomes within Indian caste or religious minorities (e.g., Scheduled caste and Muslim communities) have evolved since the early 1990s. This research will examine the within group disparities in health outcomes among the socioeconomically weaker sections in India over the last three decades. In terms of health outcomes, the research will focus on, among others, "full immunization" and "minimum nutrition". The study. The data would be taken from NFHS various rounds (1991 to till date). Some qualitative exploration involving in-depth interviews with stakeholders would also likely be conducted.

## Project aims

The project has two broad aims: 1) what are the trends and patterns in within group disparities in health outcomes among the socioeconomically weaker sections (Scheduled caste groups and Muslim community)? and (2) what are the socio-economic and cultural drivers of within group differences in health disparities?

## What is expected of the student when at IITB and when at Monash?

The student will complete the course work requirement at IITB. The student will engage with the quantitative analysis at IITB and with the sociological and anthropological perspective (framework) at Monash. The student will combine the qualitative and quantitative approaches while at Monash. The student, if required, will also do further quantitative analysis at Monash.

## Expected outcomes

The PhD project will generate new knowledge on within group differentials in health outcomes among the two marginalised groups in India: the scheduled caste and Muslim communities. The findings of the study will help inform the development of appropriate policies and programmes. In addition to a high-quality PhD thesis, the project will generate at least three co-authored publications in high impact international journals and a policy brief.

## How will the project address the Goals of the above Themes?

To achieve the project aims the study will employ a mixed-method. The first research question will be addressed by using the 5 waves of data from the National Family Health Survey (NFHS). The NFHS is a large nationally representative survey: NFHS-1 was conducted in 1991-92 and NFHS-5 in 2019-21. The second research question will be addressed through a qualitative approach involving in-depth interviews from the two minority groups. The findings will be presented in a series of papers at conferences and published in high impact international journals and as policy briefs at IITB.

## Potential RPCs from IITB and Monash

Potential RPC members from IITB (any one will finally be onboard):

Prof. Sarthak Gaurav (SJMSOM); Prof. Rahul Sakpal (CPS); Prof. Arnab Jana (CUSE)

They work on issues related to this project.

Associate Professor Narelle Warren or Dr Steve Zech at Monash

## Capabilities and Degrees Required

Masters (MSc, MA, MBA, M Tech, MPP [Masters in Public Policy], MPS [Masters in Population Sciences/Studies]) with good statistical and quantitative skills. Should also be capable with dealing with large scale datasets and surveys like NFHS. Ability and experience with qualitative methods is also desirable.

## Necessary Courses

- 1) SOM612: Research Methods or MGT805: Survey Research & Experimentation
- 2) SOM710: Economics of Development in India
- 3) PS619: Health Policy: An Introduction

## Potential Collaborators

Please visit the IITB website [www.iitb.ac.in](http://www.iitb.ac.in) OR Monash Website [www.monash.edu](http://www.monash.edu) to highlight some potential collaborators that would be best suited for the area of research you are intending to float.

Select up to **(4)** keywords from the Academy's approved keyword list (**available at <http://www.iitbmonash.org/becoming-a-research-supervisor/>**) relating to this project to make it easier for the students to apply.

**Health outcomes, socio-economic determinants, minority/marginalised groups, quantitative and qualitative skills**