

**HAE NIM (SUNNY) LEE**

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**WHARTON SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA**

Placement Director: Gilles Duranton  
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**Undergraduate Studies:**

B.A. in Economics, Minor in Mathematics, University of California Berkeley, with honors, 2013

**Graduate Studies:**

Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, 2015 to present

Thesis Title: “*Essays in Decentralization in Developing Countries*”

Expected Completion Date: May 2021

**Thesis Committee and References:**

Santosh Anagol  
Associate Professor of Business  
Economics and Public Policy  
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Shing-Yi Wang  
Associate Professor of Business  
Economics and Public Policy  
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**Teaching and Research Fields:**

Primary fields: Development Economics, Political Economy

Secondary fields: Applied Microeconomics

**Teaching Experience:**

Spring, 2018, Managerial Economics (Undergraduate), The Wharton School  
2019

**Research Experience and Other Employment**

2017-2019 Research Assistant to Shing-Yi Wang, Wharton  
2018 Research Assistant to Gilles Duranton, Wharton  
2016 Research Assistant to Maisy Wong, Jessie Handbury, and Fernando Ferreira,  
Wharton  
2014-2015 Research Assistant to John Beshears, HBS and Katy Milkman, Wharton  
2013-2014 Research Assistant to Dave Donaldson, MIT

2012-2013      Research Assistant to Edward Miguel, UC Berkeley

**Presentations:**

SWEET-2019 (Student Workshop in Experimental Economics Techniques)  
Health Policy/LDI CHIBE Work-in-Progress Seminar, 2015, University of Pennsylvania

**Honors, Scholarships, and Fellowships:**

2019              Economic History Association Exploratory Travel and Data Grant  
2015-2020       Wharton Doctoral Program Fellowship

**Publications:**

Beshears, J., **Lee, H**, Milkman, K.L., Mislavsky, R. “Creating Exercise Habits Through Incentives”  
*Management Science* (2020)

**Research Papers:**

*“Intergovernmental (Mis)alignment with Decentralization: Effects on Redistribution”* (Job Market Paper)

**Abstract:** Can political representation at the local level alone ensure effective public service delivery to the underprivileged? With most redistribution programs requiring more than one level of government for implementation, it is unclear what happens to allocation to minority groups when only certain levels of a government are represented by the minority. In this paper I ask whether (mis)alignment across local and intermediate level representatives affect redistribution to the poor in the context of India’s governmental workfare program, National Rural Employment Generation Scheme (NREGS). NREGS is the world’s largest social welfare scheme that provides subsidized rural jobs to rural households in India. Using India’s political caste reservation system, intended to promote the status of minority groups, I provide evidence that caste misalignment across local and intermediate level government representatives can *decrease* the number of monthly jobs allocated to the underprivileged compared to when there is minority representation at both levels. Finally, I show that my findings are driven by political motivations from the intermediate level representatives and taste for own caste at the local level and show evidence inconsistent with other mechanisms such as, information and demand.

*“Does Local Government Structure Matter? Investigation Through India”*

**Abstract:** Despite it being an ongoing debate, there is a lack of systematic investigation on the impact of local government structure on economic development and whether local government structure matters at all. In this paper, I present evidence of effects of local government structure on public goods provision by studying the differing structures between rural and urban local governments in India. Using a control strategy that includes daytime satellite data to control for urbanization and settlement-level fixed effects, I find positive and statistically significant effects of urban local governments on settlements’ access to public goods such as, treated tap water and closed drainage. I explore the mechanism of financial decentralization with novel local government-level budget data and find greater degree of financial autonomy as a channel through which urban local governments perform better. I also investigate the mechanism of community-level wealth and subsequent increased bargaining power as another channel. The findings have politically important implications given that I identify many “mismatches” in level of urbanization and type of local government. (Draft available upon request)

**Research Papers in Progress**

*“Path Dependence of Local Governance: Evidence from Colonial India”*

*“Did District Splits in Indonesia Lead to Deterioration in Education Quality?”*

**Languages:** English and Korean (bilingual)

**Skills:** Stata, Python, R, ArcGIS, LaTeX