

## **SHREE RAVI**

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### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D., Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, May 2018 (expected)  
Dissertation Title: *Essays On Place-based Development Policies*  
Dissertation Committee: Samuel Bazzi, Johannes Schmieder and Kehinde Ajayi

M.Sc., Economics, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain, 2013

B.Sc., Applied Mathematics, National University of Singapore, 2009

### **FIELDS OF INTEREST**

Development Economics, Urban Economics, Labor Economics

### **WORKING PAPERS**

“Evaluating the Effect of Place-based Development Policies: Evidence from Indian SEZs”  
(with Yeseul Hyun), Job Market Paper, September 2017.

### **WORK IN PROGRESS**

“Understanding the Effect of Indian SEZs: Why SEZs cause a Shift from the Informal Sector,”

“Skilling for Wage versus Self-Employment: Lessons for Targeting from India”  
(with Pratibha Joshi)

### **CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**

Centre for WTO Studies, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi, India, 2016  
University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France, 2016  
Asia Research Centre, Copenhagen Business School, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2016  
Department of Economics, Boston University, 2016, 2017

### **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

Dean’s Fellowship for Graduate Studies, Boston University, 2013-2018  
Summer Research Grant Award, Boston University, 2013-2018  
Singapore Airlines Undergraduate Scholarship, Singapore Airlines, 2005-2009  
University Scholars’ Honors Program, National University of Singapore, 2005-2009

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

*Research Fellow*, Institute for Financial and Management Research (IFMR), Chennai, India  
(July 2016-present, as associate)

*Research Assistant*, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Singapore Training Institute,  
Singapore (May 2009- May 2011)

**TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

*Teaching Fellow*, Microeconomic Theory, Department of Economics, Boston University, Fall 2014, Spring 2015

**LANGUAGES:** English (Native), Tamil (Native), Hindi (Fluent), German (Intermediate)

**COMPUTER SKILLS:** STATA, Python, MATLAB, LaTeX, Java

**CITIZENSHIP/VISA STATUS:** Indian national with F1-status,  
Resident of Germany with Work Permit for the EU

**REFERENCES**

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## SHREE RAVI

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### **Evaluating the Effect of Place-based Development Policies: Evidence from Indian SEZs** (Job Market Paper) *(with Yeseul Hyun)* [Draft](#)

We investigate the influence of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in India on the local economy. Using nighttime lights data and firm- and worker-level survey data, we find that SEZs create positive spill-overs: generally, there is a boost to economic activity around SEZs, firms grow in size and workers become more productive and earn higher wages. We also analyze the impact at a range of distances around the SEZs to show that these effects are not due to zero-sum relocations, but represent actual gains. This finding provides some evidence against the popular criticism of SEZs as “tax havens” that result in a relocation of resources with no aggregate benefits for the wider region. Our work also reveals an important structural transformation: SEZs cause a shift in economic activity in terms of the number of firms, output and employment from the informal sector to the formal sector. This evidence suggests that SEZs do have a positive effect on development, but raises concern about the inclusiveness of this development: workers at the higher end of the income and education distribution benefit, while those who remain in the informal sector fall behind.

### **Understanding the Effect of Indian SEZs: Why do SEZs cause a Shift from the Informal Sector?** (Draft in Progress)

I evaluate plausible channels through which SEZs induce structural transformation towards a more formal economy in India. My study, which relies on a difference-in-differences framework, reveals that the formal sector relies less on the informal sector for the supply of intermediate goods in areas treated with SEZs. I then verify if this is due to an increase in the demand for higher quality of goods. The paper also attempts to determine if the informal sector shrinks due to firms dying out or firms switching to the formal sector using a unique data-set on firm registrations in Tamil Nadu.