

Dinsha Mistree

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EDUCATION

Stanford University

Postdoctoral Fellow, Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, 2015-16

Princeton University

Ph.D., Department of Politics, 2015

A.M., Department of Politics, 2011

- Comprehensive Fields: South Asian Politics, Comparative Politics, and Formal and Quantitative Methods

Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad

Visiting Scholar, Ravi J. Matthai Centre for Educational Innovation, 2011-12

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

S.M., Department of Political Science, 2006

S.B., Department of Political Science, 2005

BOOK PROJECT

Understanding Meritocracy: A Study of Higher Education Institutions in India

The quality of governance is uneven across much of the developing world: some government agencies struggle to perform simple tasks even as others are able to execute relatively ambitious mandates. What explains this variation? I posit that meritocracy—defined as a hiring and promotion system based on demonstrated ability and expected performance—is an important ingredient for effectiveness. In order to understand how meritocracy comes about, I analyze the origins and persistence of two of its core components: autonomy and an organizational culture supportive of merit. Through a comparison of government universities in India, I demonstrate why some universities start with more autonomy than others and I show that an organizational culture of merit is most likely to develop when faculty feel that they are accountable to other faculty in their professional networks. The findings are built upon extensive archival research, dozens of interviews, as well as a new survey of more than 1,100 faculty that I conducted in 2012. This research has implications for those who study development, state capacity, public administration, organizational behavior, and the state-business relations.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

States in the Developing World, Edited by Miguel Angel Centeno, Atul Kohli, and Deborah Yashar, with Dinsha Mistree, Cambridge University Press, Forthcoming, 2016.

Mapping Sustainability. Edited by Nazli Choucri, Dinsha Mistree, Toufic Mezher, Farnaz Haghesta, Wallace Baker, and Carlos Ortiz, Springer Press, 2007.

Journal Articles

“Party-Directed Corruption in the Developing World,” *Comparative Politics*, 47(3): 354-374, April 2015.

“Globalization, Migration, and New Challenges to Governance,” with Nazli Choucri, *Current History*, 108(717): 173-79, 2009.

“The House of Security: Stakeholder Perceptions of Security Assessment and Performance,” with Stuart Madnick, Wee Horng Ang, Yang Lee, Michael Siegel, Diane M. Strong, and Richard Wang, *FSTC Innovator: The Journal for Financial Services Technology Leaders*, 1(1): 19-24, 2007.

Book Chapters

In *Mapping Sustainability* (Springer Press, 2007):

- “Electronic Governance: Saliency, Trends, and Challenges.”
- “Globalization and International Trade – Insights from Graph Theory,” with Behram Mistree.
- “Global Agenda! Version 1.0,” with Christi Electris.

Other Publications

“A Tireless and Selfless Advocate of Education,” in *Pupils’ President: A.P.J. Abdul Kalam*, edited by Satyam Roychowdhury, Bee Books, 2015.

“Review of *The Role of Elites in Economic Development*, edited by Alice H. Amsden, Alicia H. DiCaprio, and James A. Robinson,” *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 48(35): 30-32, Aug. 31, 2013.

“[What Makes IITs Tick](#),” *The Hindu (Business Line)*, Jul. 1, 2013.

“[More Corrupt, More Accountable](#),” *The Indian Express*, Jan. 2, 2012.

CONFERENCES

Co-Host of “[India 2030: The Political Consequences of High Growth](#),” Held at Princeton in 2013.

- Organized a conference on the future of India’s political economy. Participants included senior scholars and policymakers, including the future Chief Economic Advisor to India and the Executive Director for India at the IMF.
- Raised \$21,000 for the conference.

Coordinator for the “[Princeton State-Building in the Developing World Workshops](#),” 2009-13.

- Organized workshops at Princeton (2009), the University of Cape Town (2010), the Centre for Policy Research in Delhi (2011), at the University of São Paulo (2012), and at Oxford University (2013).

Presentations & Conference Papers

“Lateral Accountability in an Indian Bureaucracy,” *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (Chicago)*, 2013.

- “Disaggregating Welfare Beyond Welfare Regimes: The Case of Health and Education in India,” with Poulomi Chakrabarti, *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (New Orleans)*, 2012. The paper was accepted, but the conference was canceled due to weather.
- “The Women’s Wave: Gendered Strategies in Electoral Politics,” with Thomas Scherer, *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (Seattle)*, 2011.
- “The Child and the State in India: Twenty Years Later,” *American Political Science Association Annual Meeting (Seattle)*, 2011.
- “Does Polygyny Hasten the Spread of HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa?” With Erin Lin, *Society for Political Methodology Poster Session and Working Paper* at the Center for the Study of Social Organizations, Princeton University, 2010.

Refereed Conference Papers

- “Using System Dynamics to Model and Better Understand State Stability,” with Nazli Choucri, Daniel Goldsmith, Stuart Madnick, Bradley Morrison, Michael Siegel, *Proceedings of the International Conference of the System Dynamics Society*, 2007.
- “Understanding and Modeling State Stability: Exploiting System Dynamics,” with Nazli Choucri, Christi Electris, Daniel Goldsmith, Stuart Madnick, Bradley Morrison, Michael Siegel, and Margaret Sweitzer-Hamilton, *Proceedings of the 2006 IEEE Aerospace Conference*, 2006.
- “House of Security: Locale, Roles, and Resources for Ensuring Information Security,” with Wee Horng Ang, Yang Lee, Stuart Madnick, Michael Siegel, Dianne Strong, Richard Wang, and Christy Yao, *Proceedings of the Twelfth Americas Conference on Information Systems*, 2006.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Governance in India, Department of Politics, Princeton, and CDDRL, Stanford, 2011-Present

Why are some agencies within the Indian government more effective than others?

- Examining internal processes of several agencies across India, including state-owned enterprises, constitutional institutions, health and education ministries, and public universities.
- Crafted and executed one of the largest academic surveys of Indian government officials (1,140 respondents), in addition to extensive archival work and dozens of interviews.
- Results suggest that agencies with procedural hiring and promotion systems (i.e., meritocracies) are more effective than other agencies, and that meritocracies only arise when certain political and organizational conditions are met.

DARPA/DoD Research Project, Political Science Department, MIT, 2004-08

- Created mathematical models to predict state stability for the US military, with broader implications for introducing social science and management science methods to military planning.
- Funded by the Department of Defense for four years; this project formed the basis for a Minerva Grant (\$10.4 million).

Global Labor Practices (Nike), Sloan School of Management, MIT, 2004-05

- Examined labor standards in a globalization context. Studied business consequences of sweatshops and suggested conditions that could ameliorate them for a global sports apparel firm.

- Analyzed business data across 700+ sourcing factories and conducted interviews with factory workers and managers in Turkey, and the global firm's European management headquartered in Holland.

TEACHING

Comparative Political Economy of Development (Fall 2013; Fall 2012), Graduate Politics and Public Policy Course, Princeton University. Course Assistant. Supervised by Deborah Yashar and Atul Kohli respectively.

Violent Politics (Fall 2012), Undergraduate Politics Course, Princeton University. Teaching Assistant. Supervised by Jacob Shapiro.

Special Topics in Entrepreneurship: Ventures to Address Global Challenges (Fall, 2010), Undergraduate Engineering Course, Princeton University. Teaching Assistant. Supervised by John Danner.

New Global Agenda: Exploring 21st Century Challenges through Innovations in Information Technologies (Jan. 2006), Undergraduate Political Science Course, MIT. Co-designed, co-taught, and graded the course. Supervised by Nazli Choucri.

Becoming an Entrepreneur (Fall 2005), Freshman Advising Seminar, Sloan School of Management, MIT. Associate Advisor. Supervised by Richard Locke.

AWARDS

Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies Graduate Writing Fellowship, 2014-15.

Princeton University Graduate Fellowship, 2008-13.

The Vakhshoori Scholarship, 2013.

Mehraban and Morvorid Kheradi Endowment Scholarship for Academic Excellence, 2012.

Center for the Study of Social Organization Graduate Student Research Award (Princeton), 2010.

Niehaus Center for Globalization and Governance Award (Princeton), 2008-10.

FEZANA Outstanding Young Zarathushti Award, presented every three years to one young Zoroastrian in North America for excellence in school, career, and Zoroastrian community affairs, 2007.

MIT Graduate Research Fellowship, 2005.

John Ely Burchard Scholar (MIT), 2004.

Eagle Scout, 1999.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Co-Founder of Jugmug Thela Artisanal Tea & Coffee, Established in India in 2013.

- Started a fast-growing tea and coffee company based in Delhi, India.
- Guest lectured at MIT-Sloan on first-hand experiences of entrepreneurship in India in 2014.

Co-Founder of Return to Roots (NGO), Created in 2012.

- Established a program that leads Zoroastrian youth on tours of India (and soon Iran), enabling them to experience their culture and reconnect with their tradition.
- Raised more than \$200,000 for the program so far, with much of this money cycling to support charities and small-scale businesses in rural India.

Co-Founder of Agiary Connect, Established in India in 2012.

- Designed and built a website where members of the Zoroastrian religious community can get services performed by priests at temples in India, providing money for priests and services for Zoroastrians outside of India.

REFERENCES

Atul Kohli (Dissertation committee chair)

David K. E. Bruce Professor of International Affairs
Princeton University, Department of Politics and the Woodrow Wilson School
kohli@princeton.edu

Ezra Suleiman (Dissertation committee member)

IBM Professor in International Studies
Princeton University, Department of Politics and the Woodrow Wilson School
suleiman@princeton.edu

Miguel Centeno (Dissertation committee member)

Musgrave Professor of Sociology and International Affairs
Princeton University, Department of Sociology and the Woodrow Wilson School
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