

Akshay Moorthy

PhD Candidate, Department of Economics and FAIR, Norwegian School of Economics

✉ akshay.moorthy@gmail.com ☎ +47 98440608

🌐 akshaymoorthy.net | Updated: Oct. 18, 2023

Placement coordinator: Prof. Katrine Loken, Department of Economics, Norwegian School of Economics. ✉ E-mail: Katrine.Loken@nhh.no

Education

Ph.D. Economics, Norwegian School of Economics/FAIR, Bergen, Norway	2019 – 2024
Visiting Fellow, Harvard University, Cambridge MA, USA	2023
M.S. Economics, Norwegian School of Economics, Bergen, Norway	2017 – 2019
M.S. Marketing, Institute of Management Technology, Ghaziabad, India	2009 – 2011
B.Tech. Information and Communication Technology, DA-IICT, Gandhingar, India	2003 – 2007

References

Bertil Tungodden

Professor, Norwegian School of Economics
bertil.tungodden@nhh.no

Erik Sørensen

Professor, Norwegian School of Economics
erik.sorensen@nhh.no

Benjamin Enke

Professor, Harvard University
enke@fas.harvard.edu

Research Fields

Behavioural and experimental economics

Development economics

Teaching Experience

Econometrics	Fall 2018, 2020, Spring 2022
Behavioural Economics	Fall 2021, 2022
Petroleum Economics	Spring 2021

Research

WORK IN PROGRESS

Beliefs, preferences, and identity in social learning. (job market paper)

Theories of information acquisition suggest that when the quality of information is known and unambiguous, information demand is unaffected by preferences for the social identity of the source of information. I test this assumption through online survey experiments designed to separately identify the influence of beliefs about quality and preferences for the identity of an information source. The results show that both underlying and exogenously manipulated beliefs correlate with learning. However, there is no strong evidence for the existence of preferences over the religion and caste of the information source (in an Indian sample), or for experimentally assigned in-groups (in a US/EU sample). Heterogeneity analyses show evidence of preferences for some overlaps of religion and caste identity. Additionally, people are more likely to learn when the same information comes from a computer algorithm than when it comes from another person. Taken together, the results show limited support for a preference channel in whom people choose to learn from. This has implications for how we think about expert advice, policy communication, and decision making in teams.

Paternalistic preferences and beliefs across the world. (with Bartling, Cappelen, Hermes, Skivenes and Tungodden)

The paper presents evidence from a global survey experiment with $\approx 65,000$ participants from 60 countries on the heterogeneity in paternalistic preferences within and across countries, and maps these preferences to the support for specific types of paternalistic policies. Globally, support for soft interventions greatly exceeds the support for hard interventions. There is striking variation in the difference in levels of support for hard and soft interventions, which we attribute to differences in preferences. The paper also studies how people's preferences for paternalistic policies of various types relate to various cultural and country-level characteristics.

Macro-economic shocks and preferences for inequality acceptance. (with Ålmas, Cappelen, Sørensen and Tungodden)

This paper studies how people's economic experiences shape their preferences for inequality acceptance both during their lifetimes, and through cultural transmission. We combine data from a global survey experiment where individuals from 60 countries make real redistributive decisions with macroeconomic indicators and ethnographic data. The results show that an increased exposure to poor economic growth causes people to become substantially more meritocratic. Further, people whose ancestors came from a more volatile environment are also likely to be more meritocratic, and there is suggestive evidence that the two are correlated in a society's folklore.

PUBLISHED ARTICLES

The effect of rainfall shocks on early childhood development in Uganda. Moorthy, Akshay. *Economics Letters* (2021): 109764.

Barnehage for utvikling (Kindergartens for Development). Moorthy, Akshay and Nasgowitz, Arne. *Magma* (6/2019)

Employment

RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Global Universalism (Cappelen, Enke, and Tungodden)

May 2021 – Jan 2023

Child care for development (Bjorvatn, Somville) 2019

NON-ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

The Walt Disney Company 2015 – 2016

MakeMyTrip Group 2011 – 15

Professional Activities

PRESENTATIONS AND CONFERENCES

2023: Copenhagen Business School, ESA Europe meeting (University of Exeter), ESA online seminar, Political Economy meeting (Harvard University)

2022: Summer School in Behavioural Economics (UC San Diego), FAIR–Max Planck Institute Online Workshop, FAIR Midway Conference

2020: FAIR Development workshop (NHH Bergen),

GRANTS

Research grant from Centre for Ethics, Norwegian School of Economics – 2022

Mobility grant from Statistics Norway (SSB) – 2022

REFEREEING

PLoS One

Technical skills

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

C/C++, Java, Javascript, Python, SQL

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS/EXPERIMENTATION

R, STATA, OTree

Personal Information

Citizenship: India

Languages: English, Hindi (fluent), Tamil (native), Norwegian (basic)