

Reflections on Presenting My Job Market Paper at the European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society 2022

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With the support of the CIERP Travel Fund for Experiential Learning, I presented my job market paper at the European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society 2022 on December 16-18, 2022, in Berlin, Germany, hosted by the Berlin School of Economics at the Humboldt University Berlin. The European Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society was a conference designed to foster close interaction between young scholars (especially job market candidates like me) and more established academics in the field of economics.

I have benefited from attending this conference in two ways: (i) Receiving feedback on my job market paper from researchers outside Tufts that will help me incorporate new ideas in my paper, (ii) Networking with researchers in the same research field that will help me succeed in the job market that started this fall.

First, I made 30 minutes presentation on my job market paper "Unintended Consequences of Sanitation: Negative Externalities on Water Quality and Health in India" and received valuable feedback from professors and Ph.D. students from many universities. In this paper, I show the unintended negative consequences of latrine (toilet) construction. Latrine construction aims to reduce diarrheal diseases and mortality by reducing open defecation, and this positive health effect has been well-documented in past studies. However, little is known about the negative externalities of latrine construction: water pollution externalities that can offset the health benefit due to poor treatment of fecal sludge. I estimate these negative externalities on water quality and health in the context of India's policy, the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), which has subsidized the construction of over 100 million latrines. I find that latrine construction under the SBM increases river pollution by 72%. While the latrine construction reduces diarrheal mortality overall, this positive health effect is two-thirds smaller in areas with lower treatment capacities where a larger water pollution externality occurs. During my presentation, I received feedback that will be useful for revising this paper. Several comments include (i) I might want to think about how water pollution externality affects outcomes other than diarrheal mortality, (ii) I might want to think about the implications of bunching of monitoring stations in some areas in India, (iii) I might want to clarify how my results correspond to the negative externalities (displacement of pollution sources).

Second, I was able to network with professors and Ph.D. students in the same research field. This networking experience will help me succeed in the job market that started this fall and collaborate with researchers after obtaining a Ph.D. degree. I get to know many researchers who study various topics, including environment and development, the economics of religion, and international trade, by attending multiple presentation sessions. Also, I had many opportunities to talk with participants during coffee breaks, lunch, and receptions.

Lastly, I would like to thank CIERP for their kind support and for giving me this invaluable opportunity to present my paper at the conference.

