

AKHIL ALHA
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CURRENT POSITION

Assistant Professor, Council for Social Development (appointed June 2, 2014)

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Social Inequality and Labour Markets, Political Economy of Development, Development and Public Policy, Field Methods, Agrarian Structures

EDUCATION

PhD in Economics, Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
Thesis: *Labour Market Dynamics and Well-being of Workers in India from the Early 1980s to the Present*.
Supervisor: Prof Praveen Jha

MPhil in Economics, CESP, JNU, New Delhi
Dissertation: *On some Aspects of Remittances and International Labour Migration from South Asia with Special Emphasis on India: 1980-2005*.
Supervisor: Prof Praveen Jha

MA in Economics, Barkatullah University, Bhopal, MP

BA, Barkatullah University, Bhopal, MP

PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

Akhil Alha and Krishna Ram (forthcoming). From Promise to Precarity: A Critical Review of SC/ST Scholarship Schemes in India. *Contemporary Education Dialogue* (Sage, Scopus Indexed) revised manuscript (with incorporation of comments of reviewers) sent on 13th October, 2025.

Akhil Alha and K B Saxena. 2025. Dalit Entrepreneurship in Public Policy: What Does the Evidence Suggest?. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol 60 (51). pp. 66-72. Dec. 20.

Akhil Alha and Savita Garwa. 2025. A Tale of Two Sub- Plans: Status, Issues and the Way Forward for SCSP and TSP. *Economic and Political Weekly*. 60(24). pp.66-72. June 14.

Krishna Ram and Akhil Alha. 2025. What Explains High Incidence of Poverty Among Dalits in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh?. *The Indian Economic Journal*. 73(5). 887-902. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00194662251334796>.

Akhil Alha. 2024. Shrinking Government Jobs and Trivialising Reservation: What Does Data Tell Us?. *Economic and Political Weekly*. 59 (34). pp. 17-21.

Akhil Alha. 2024. Dissecting General Election Results in Sikar and Bharatpur in Rajasthan. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Volume 59 (41). pp-27-29.

Akhil Alha. 2023. Land Leasing in Kerala: Evidences from a Field Survey. *Social Change*. 53 (3).

Akhil Alha. 2020. A Story of a peasant Struggle in Jiwandesar, Rajasthan: Origin, Evolution and the Current Status. *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol. 55 (40). October 3. pp. 19-21.

Akhil Alha. 2020. Non-farm Diversification and Agrarian Change: A Story of a Semi-arid Village in Rajasthan. *Social Change*. 50 (2). pp 254-271.

Akhil Alha. 2020. Features of the Agrarian Market in Odisha: Insights from a Field Survey. *Man & Development*, Vol. XLII No. 1, March.

Akhil Alha. 2019. Production Organisation and Capitalist Labour Process: Timber-based Industry in Rajasthan. *Man & Development*. 41 (1).

Akhil Alha. 2018. The Other Side of Caste as Social Capital. *Social Change*, 48 (4).

Akhil Alha. 2017. Impact of MGNREGA on a Tightened Labour Market. *Social Change*. 47 (4).

Akhil Alha. 2012. On some Aspects of Labour Migration and Remittances Inflow: An Indian Experience. *Manpower*, Vol. XLVII (2-4).

Akhil Alha and Bijoyata Yonzon. 2011. Recent Development in Farm labour Availability in India and Reasons for its Short Supply. *Agricultural Economics Research Review*. Vol. 24.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Akhil Alha and Krishna Ram. *Have Caste-based Wage Inequalities Reduced in Post-COVID 19 Era? Insights from PLFS Data*. Forthcoming in the book honouring golden jubilee celebrations of CESP, JNU New Delhi, Routledge India.

BOOK REVIEWS/ REVIEW ESSAYS/ WORKING PAPERS

A Journey of India's Agriculture and Rural Development through Gilbert Etienne's Work (review essay of five books of Prof Gilbert Etienne). *Shodh Mimamsa*. October-December 2017.

Remembering India's Villages by Santosh K Singh (edited). *Social Change*. September 2023.

Limits of Bargaining: Capital, Labour and the State in Contemporary India by Achin Chakraborty, Subhanil Chowdhary, Suparna Banerjee and Zaad Mahmood. *Contemporary South Asia*, 28(4). pp. 527-528, December 2020.

Uncertain Journeys: Labour Migration from South Asia by A.S. Panneerselvan (edited). *Social Change*, Vol. 50 (3). 2020, pp 491-493.

Contesting Marginalisations: Conversations on Ambedkarism and Social Justice by Vidya Bhushan Rawat. *Social Change*. Vol. 49 (4). 2019.

Rhetoric versus Reality: Budgetary Allocations to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Union Budgets (co-authored with Savita Garwa). *Working paper* CSD 1/2023. Council for Social Development. November 2023.

OP-ED PIECES

1. 'No Indian Institution is free from Caste-based Discrimination in Interviews and Viva-voce', *thewire.com*, December 18, 2021.
2. 'Barking up the Wrong Tree: Scrapping Labour Laws to Combat Economic Slowdown in Corona Times', online edition of *Outlook* (www.outlookindia.com), May 16, 2020.
3. 'Why there is a rise in farm labour suicides', online edition of *Outlook* (www.outlookindia.com), July 31, 2018.

MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED

Akhil Alha and K B Saxena. 'Caste at Work: Labour Recruitment and Homophily in Dalit-Owned Enterprises'. *Economic and Political Weekly* on 24th December, 2025.

Krishna Ram and Akhil Alha. 'Evaluation of Subsidised and Free Food Distribution in Ensuring Nutritional Security in India: Entropy Balance Matching'. *Millennial Asia* on 10th January 2026.

Akhil Alha. 'Caste and Cultural Capital: Mapping Dalit Marginalisation in Bollywood's Labour Market'. *Economic and Political Weekly* on 13th October 2025.

Akhil Alha and Krishna Ram. 'How has Entrepreneurship fared Across Social Groups in Neo-Liberal Period: Insights from Economic Census Data'. *Economic and Political Weekly* on 7th October, 2025.

Akhil Alha and K B Saxena. 'Caste, Credit, and Social Capital: Constraints on Dalit Entrepreneurship in India's Leather Industry'. *Journal of Government and Economics*, revised manuscript submitted on 15th February 2026.

GRANTS

Project Director, *Transformations in Agrarian Relations in the Times of Agrarian Crisis in India and Well-being of Small-Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers in India: A study of Four States* (Feb 2015-September 2018, a grant of Rs, 40 lakhs from Indian Council for Social Science Research).

The study explores the changes in employment contracts in agriculture, wage rates, tenancy relations, emerging non-farm opportunities during the period of agrarian crisis and their impact along with that of MGNREGA in mitigating the adverse impact of the agrarian crisis on rural livelihoods.

Co-Principle Director, *Challenges and Constraints to Scheduled Castes Entrepreneurship in India: A study of three States in India* (Jan 2018-August 2020, a grant of Rs. 25 lakhs from Indian Council for Social Science Research).

The study explores the role of market, civil society and entrepreneurs from upper castes in the market in supporting or constraining the growth of Dalit entrepreneurs. It also examines the role of public policies targeted at promoting entrepreneurship among them.

Team Leader, *Status and Pathways for enhancing Portability in Cash and In-Kind Transfers in India (December 2021-November 2022, a grant of Rs. 1.24 crores from KFW Bank, Germany).*

The study captures the experiences of migrant workers in accessing the benefits of social protection schemes at their destination places and how can portability in these schemes be enhanced using the existing technological and IT infrastructure in the country.

Team Leader, *Evaluating the performance of the Scheme for the Implementation of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes Prevention of Atrocities Act and National Helpline Against Atrocities (May 2024-June 2025, a grant of 51.13 lakhs from Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, GoI).*

The evaluation study explores the performance of Police and judiciary in the implementation of the Act, and the challenges faced by them in the enforcement of the Act. It also looks at the challenges faced by over 2200 respondents in either availing relief or incentive amount provisioned under the Act.

Project Director, *Contextualizing the Role of Caste and Gender in defining Employment and Earning Outcomes in the Gig Economy in India (January 2023-ongoing, a grant of Rs. 20 lakhs from Indian Council for Social Science Research).*

The study examines whether algorithm-based platform economy has obfuscated the role of social and gender markers in influencing outcomes in employment or earnings as visible in the traditional labour market.

PAPERS PRESENTATIONS IN CONFERENCES/ SEMINARS

1. *Evolving tenurial relations and agrarian change: Evidences from four villages in Rajasthan*, National Seminar on the state of Agriculture and Allied Activities, Dept of Economics, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, 20-21 February 2026.
2. *Platform and Gig based workers and social protection deficit: Lessons from the Union and State level initiatives*, 66th Annual Conference of Indian Society of Labour Economics, Symbiosis International University, Pune, (19-21 January 2026).
3. *The Missing Link between Self-employment and Entrepreneurship among Dalits*, 65th Annual Conference of Indian Society of Labour Economics, Institute of Social and Economic Change, Bengaluru, Karnataka, (9-11 January 2025).
4. *The Role of Caste and Gender in Defining Outcomes in the Gig Economy*, 64th Annual Conference of Indian Society of Labour Economics, Central University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, Telangana (29-31 March 2024).
5. *Dalit Entrepreneurship in Neo-Liberal Times: Experiences from the Ground*, National Seminar on Manufacturing in the Unorganised Sector, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur (21-22 March 2024).
6. *Agrarian Distress Induced Rural Transformation: A Study of Bundelkhand region in Central India*, 63rd Annual Conference of Indian Society of Labour Economics, Rajeev Gandhi University, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh (1-3 March 2023).
7. *Status and Pathways for Portability in Cash and In-kind Transfers in India*, Dissemination-cum-consultation Workshop, CSD and KFW Development Bank, Hotel Claridges Delhi (5th December 2022).

8. *Persistent Social Inequalities and their Impact on the Ownership of Private Enterprises in India with a particular focus on scheduled caste entrepreneurship*, 3rd International Conference on Frontiers in Discourse Studies, Shanghai University, China (24th September 2022).
9. *Fund Allocation to MGNREGA in the Relief Package: How Adequate are They?*, in *International Webinar on COVID-19 and Reverse Migration in India*, organized by A S College, Khanna, Punjab (29th June 2020).
10. *Adequacy of Fund Allocation to MGNREGA in the Relief Package*, in *International Webinar on Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan and Indian Economy under Covid-19: Road Ahead*, organized by S.G. Govt Degree and PG College, Piler, Andhra Pradesh (10th June 2020).
11. *Agrarian Crisis and Land Leasing in Kerala*, in *27th Annual Conference of Agricultural Economics Research Association*, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (18th December 2019).
12. *Agrarian Transformations in Rajasthan*, in *National Conference on Changing Rural Landscape*, Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research, Ahmadabad (4th July 2019).
13. *Incidence and Forms of, and Recent Changes in Land Leasing in Kerala*, in *National Conference on Economic Theory and Policy*, Ambedkar University Delhi (31st March 2019).
14. *Non-Farm Diversification and Changing Agrarian Relations in Madhya Pradesh*, in *National Seminar on Status of Rural Poverty and Migration: Impact on Agriculture*, Madhya Pradesh Institute of Social Science Research, Ujjain, MP (13th March 2019).
15. *Continuity amidst Change: Agrarian Relations, Non-Farm Diversification and Migration in Rural Rajasthan* in *National Seminar on 'Poverty and Social Exclusion: A Life Course Perspective*, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi, India, (13th April 2018).
16. *Public Intervention and Dynamics of Rural Poverty Alleviation in Rajasthan in Pre and Post-Reforms Period* in *International Conference on Development Challenges in India after 25 Years of Economic Reforms*, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi (UP), India (16th March 2018).
17. *Land-Leasing Arrangements Amidst Changing Agrarian Relations in Rural Odisha*, in *Sam Moyo Memorial International Conference*, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India (22nd Feb 2018).
18. *Employment, Migration and Segmentation In Urban Labour Market: A Case Study of an Industrial Township in Rajasthan* in *Third ICSSR Northern Region Congress*, Doon University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, India (28th February 2015).
19. *The Trajectory of India's Rural Development through the Lens of Gilbert Etienne's Work* in *National Seminar on Agrarian Distress in India*, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, India (11th November 2014).
20. *Recent Development in Farm labour Availability in India and Reasons behind its Short Supply* in *19th Annual Conference of Agricultural Economics Research Association (AERA)*, Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Assam, India (28th November 2011).

21. *On some Aspects of Labour Migration and Remittances Inflow in Indian Experience in International Conference on Diaspora and Development: Prospects and Implications for Nation States*, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, India (8th September, 2011).

INVITED TALKS

1. 'High-Trust Networks and Low-Yield Access: Understanding Inequality in Indian Cinema', Ashank Desai Centre for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai, 16th January 2026.
2. *The Question of Caste and Gender in Political Economy of Gig Work in India*, Motilal Nehru College, University of Delhi, 11th April 2025.
3. *The Political Economy of Gig Work in India*, RV University, Bengaluru, 22nd January 2025.
4. *The Idea of Field and Field Research*, Dr B R Ambedkar School of Economics University, Bengaluru, 16th January 2025.
5. *The Idea of Field and Field Research*, St Xaviers College, Jaipur, 30th September 2024.
6. *Shrinking Government Jobs and Trivialization of Reservation Policy: What Does Data Tell Us*, Social Development Forum, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 30th May 2024.
10. *Dalit Entrepreneurship in Neo-Liberal Times: Evidences from the Ground*, Atma Ram Sanatan Dharma College, University of Delhi, 23rd March, 2024.
11. *The Caste Question in Hindi Cinema: Where are Dalits in Bollywood?* Social Development Forum, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 25th November 2022.
12. *Beyond the Question of Budgetary Allocations for Marginalised Sections* (online webinar on 'What is in Union Budget 2022-23 for Poor and Marginalised?'), conducted by Academics for Equity, 12th February 2022.
13. *Dalit Entrepreneurship in Neo-liberal Era: Contested Reality, False Claims* (webinar on 'Dalits in Contemporary India: Examining through a Prism of Educational Inequality, Poverty Incidence and Entrepreneurship among them'), Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 24th June 2021.
14. *A Story of a Farmers' Struggle: Six Decades without Success*, Social Development Forum, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 31st January 2019.
15. *Gandhian Economics and its Relevance in Contemporary Indian Economy*, Janaki Devi Memorial College, Delhi University, 18th February 2014.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

1. *Allocations for the Welfare of Scheduled Castes in Union Budget* (hybrid mode), Union Budget 2026-27 through the Prism of Inclusive Growth, Centre for Social Justice and Equity, Madras School of Social Work, 16th February, 2026.
2. *Few Reflections on Social Sector Expenditure in Union Budget 2026-27*, Panel Discussion on Union Budget 2026-27, Dyal Singh College, University of Delhi, 5th February 2026.

3. *Challenges and Pathways for Successful Implementation of Deendayal Jan Aajivika Yojana-Shehari*, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 27th November 2025.
4. *Emerging Labour Market: Issues and challenges for marginalized social groups*, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, 14th February, 2025
5. *Union Budget 2025-26*, Apparel Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Textile, Apparel House, Sector 44, Gurgaon, 3rd February 2025.
6. *Socially Inclusive Development: A Pathway to Viksit Bharat*, Dyal Singh College, University of Delhi, 31st January 2025.
7. *Empowering Women through Financial Inclusion, Innovation and Technology*, Pepsico's RevolutioNari Conference and Awards 2024 - Celebrating Women in Agriculture, Hotel the Grand, Delhi, 17th December, 2024.
8. *Emerging Challenges before Unorganised Manufacturing Sectors in India*, Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur, 22nd March, 2024.
9. *Rhetoric Versus Reality: Budgetary Allocations to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Union Budgets* in SDF webinar on 'The Missing Welfare of Dalits and Adivasis in the Welfare Measures of the State', Social Development Forum, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 20th August 2021.

LECTURES IN CAPACITY BUILDING/ RESEARCH METHODOLOGY COURSES

1. 'State led Legislations for Gig and Platform Workers-I', Training Programme on Gig and Platform Workers, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 13th February, 2026.
2. 'State led Legislations for Gig and Platform Workers-II', Training Programme on Gig and Platform Workers, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 13th February, 2026.
3. 'Introduction to Gender Disaggregated Data Sets: PLFS-I', in Research Methods Programme on Gender and Labour Issues, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 1st December, 2025.
4. 'Introduction to Gender Disaggregated Data Sets: PLFS-II', in Research Methods Programme on Gender and Labour Issues, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 1st December, 2025.
5. *Social Security Code 2020 with reference to Gig and Platform workers-I*, Training Programme on understanding the Social Security Issues for Gig and Platform Workers, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 19th August 2025.
6. *Social Security Code 2020 with reference to Gig and Platform workers-II*, Training Programme on understanding the Social Security Issues for Gig and Platform Workers, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 19th August 2025.
7. *Social Security for Gig and Platform workers*, Capacity Building Programme on Social Security, VV Giri National Labour Institute, NOIDA, 4th July 2025.
8. *Data Management using STATA*, Research Methodology Course, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad, 8th July, 2024 (1.5 hours).

9. *Data Analysis using STATA*, Research Methodology Course, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad, 8th July, 2024 (1.5 hours).
10. *Introduction to data Analysis in STATA-I*, Department for East Asian Studies, University of Delhi, 14th May 2024 (2 hours).
11. *Introduction to data Analysis in STATA-II*, Department for East Asian Studies, University of Delhi, 14th May 2024 (2 hours).
12. *Introduction to STATA*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 2nd March 2-2024.
13. *Introduction to STATA and Data handling-I*, Department for East Asian Studies, University of Delhi, 15 June, 2023 (2 hours).
14. *Introduction to STATA and Data handling-II*, Department for East Asian Studies, University of Delhi, 15 June, 2023 (2 hours).
15. *The Idea of Field and Field Survey*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 12 May 2023 (1.5 hours).
16. *Introduction to Research Design*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 13 April 2021 (1.5 hours).
17. *Writing Academic Reports, Dissertation and Thesis*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 16 December 2019 (1.5 hours).
18. *Writing Academic Reports, Dissertation and Thesis*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 21 December 2018 (1.5 hours).
19. *Introduction to STATA for data Analysis-I*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 16 December, 2015.
20. *Introduction to STATA for data Analysis-II*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 16 December, 2015.
21. *Field Survey Based Research: What, Why and Pre-requisites*, Research Methodology Course in Social Sciences, Council for Social Development, New Delhi, 26 September 2014 (1.5 hours).

CHAIR OF TECHNICAL SESSIONS / PANEL DISCUSSIONS

1. Seminar on the State of Agriculture and Allied Activities of the Indian Economy, Dept of Economics, BHU, 20-21 Feb 2026
2. Labor Markets, Finance, and Strategy in Winter School 2024, Delhi School of Economics, 13 Dec, 2024.

Teaching Experience

Since 2014, taking lectures in Research Methodology course of CSD on:

- Research Design with a Special focus on field surveys

- Data Handling in STATA
- Academic Writing (thesis, reports and other forms of publication).
- Questionnaire Building
- Coordinator of the CSD's Research Methodology Course in Social Science from October 2022 to July 2024.

REFERENCES: On request

23 Feb 2026