

# SONALDE DESAI

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## CURRENT POSITIONS:

### Senior Fellow

National Council of Applied Economics  
Research New Delhi  
sdesai@ncaer.org

### Professor of Sociology

University of Maryland  
College Park  
sdesai@umd.edu

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

Health and Education Policy, Human Development, Labor Force Behaviour, Poverty and Social Inequality, Demography, Gender and Development, Adolescence

## EDUCATION

- 1987 Ph.D. Sociology, Stanford University, Stanford, California.  
1980 M.A. Sociology, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.  
1978 B.A. Sociology and Political Science, University of Bombay, India.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 1994-- Assistant to Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Maryland.  
Coordinator Demography Program in Sociology Department, 2009-Present.  
2009-- Senior Fellow, National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi.  
2007--2008 Visiting Scholar, The World Bank Development Research Group (DEC-RG)  
2000-2001 Visiting Scholar, National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi  
1989-1994 Associate, Research Division, The Population Council, New York.  
1987-1989 Post-Doctoral Fellow, Labor and Population Program, The RAND Corporation.  
1986-1987 Post-Doctoral Fellow, Population Research Center, University of Chicago.  
Sum. 1986 Visiting Scholar, Max Planck Institute for Human Development and Education, West Berlin.

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

### Books/Monographs:

Desai, Sonalde, Amaresh Dubey, B.L. Joshi, Mitali Sen, Abusaleh Shariff and Reeve Vanneman. 2010. *India Human Development in India: Challenges for a Society in Transition*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. Pp. 234.

Desai, Sonalde. 1994. *Gender Inequality and Demographic Behavior: India*. New York: The Population Council. Pp. 75.

### Articles and Book Chapters:

\*Forth. Andrist, Lester, Banerji, Manjistha and Sonalde Desai. "Negotiating Marriage: Examining the Gap between Marriage and Cohabitation in India", in . Editors: Ravinder Kaur and Rajni Palriwala edited, *Marrying in South Asia: Shifting concepts, changing practices in a globalising world*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan.

\*Vikram, Kriti, Reeve Vanneman and Sonalde Desai. 2012. Linkages between maternal education and childhood immunization in India, *Social Science and Medicine*, 75(2): 331-339.

Desai, Sonalde and Amaresh Dubey. 2011. "Caste in 21<sup>st</sup> Century India: Competing Narratives," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 46(11): 40-49.

Desai, Sonalde. 2010. "The Other Half of the Demographic Dividend," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 45(40): 12-14.

\* Desai, Sonalde and Lijuan Wu. 2010. "Structured Inequalities: Spatial Disparities in maternity Care in India," *Margin: A Journal of Applied Economics*, 4(3): 293-320.

\* Desai, Sonalde and Lester Andrist. 2010. "Gender Scripts and Age at Marriage in India," *Demography*. 47(3):667-687.

Desai, Sonalde. "Caste and Census: A Forward Looking Strategy." *Economic and Political Weekly*, 45(9):10-13.

\* Desai, Sonalde and Veena Kulkarni. 2009. "Unequal Playing Field: Socio-Religious Inequalities in Educational Attainment in India" in Rakesh Basant and Abusaleh Shariff (Ed.) *Muslims of India: Empirical Perspectives*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

\* Desai, Sonalde, Cecily Adams and Amaresh Dubey. 2009. "Segmented Schooling: Inequalities in Primary Education." In Sukhdeo Thorat and Katherine Newman (Eds.) *Blocked by Caste: Discrimination and Social Exclusion in Modern India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press

Desai, Sonalde, Amaresh Dubey, Reeve Vanneman and Rukmini Banerji. 2009. "Private Schooling in India: A New Landscape," *India Policy Forum Vol. 5. Pp. 1-58*, Bery, Suman, Barry Bosworth and Arvind Panagariya (Editors). New Delhi: Sage

Desai, Sonalde. 2009. "Soldiers of Saffron, Sonal Shah and Secularism," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44(7):25-27. (Opinion)

\* Desai, Sonalde and Manjistha Banerji. 2008. "Negotiated Identities: Male Migration and Left Behind Wives in India." *Journal of Population Research*, 25(3):337-355.

\* Desai, Sonalde and Veena Kulkarni. 2008. "Changing Educational Inequalities in India in the Context of Affirmative Action," *Demography*, 45(2): 245-270

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- Desai, Sonalde. 2008. "Obama, Indian Americans and a Conversation about Race," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 43(14):23-26 (Opinion)
- Desai, Sonalde. 2008. "Review of Gender Trouble Makers: Education and Empowerment in Nepal," *Contemporary Sociology*, 37(2):83-84.
- Desai, Sonalde. 2007. "Indian Middle Class" in Basu, Kaushik (Ed.) *Oxford Companion to Economics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press
- \* Desai, Sonalde and Kiersten Johnson. 2005. "Women's Decisionmaking and Child Health: Familial and Social Hierarchies," in Kishor, Sunita (Edited) *A Focus on Gender*. Calverton, Maryland: ORC Macro.
- Bloch, Francis, Vijayendra Rao and Sonalde Desai. "Wedding Celebrations as Conspicuous Consumption: Signaling Social Status in Rural India," *Journal of Human Resources*. 39:675-695.
- \* Desai, Sonalde B and Maitreyi Bordia Das. 2004. "Is Employment Driving India's Growth Surge?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, 39:345-351.
- Desai, Sonalde and Rahul Kanakia. 2004. "Indian Americans: Portrait of a Diasporic Community." *Seminar*, 538:48-52.
- Desai, Sonalde B. 2004. "Population Change," in Ritzer, George (Ed.) *Handbook of Social Problems: A Comparative International Perspective*. Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage.
- \* Das, Maitreyi Bordia and Sonalde Desai. 2004. "Why are Educated Women Less Likely to be Employed in India? Testing Competing Hypotheses." *Social Protection Discussion Paper Series No. 0313*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.
- Desai, Sonalde B. 2001. "A Tale of Two Middle Classes," in proceedings of National Sample Survey 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Proceedings, New Delhi, India.
- Sathar, Zeba and Sonalde Desai. 2000. "Class and Gender in Rural Pakistan: Differentials in Economic Activity." In Garcia, Brigida (Ed.) *Women, Poverty and Demographic Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Desai, Sonalde. 2000. "Maternal Education and Child Health: A Feminist Dilemma," *Feminist Studies*, 26(2):425-446.
- Desai, Sonalde. 2000. "Maternal Education and Child Health: Evidence and Ideology". In Garcia, Brigida (Ed.) *Women, Poverty and Demographic Change*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Desai, Sonalde and Katharine Sreedhar. 1999. "India: Growth and Inequity," in Harrison, Selig, Paul H. Kreisberg and Dennis Kux (Ed.) *India and Pakistan: The First Fifty Years*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- \* Desai, Sonalde and Soumya Alva. 1998. "Maternal Education and Child Health: Is there a Strong Causal Relationship?" *Demography*, 35: 71-81.
- \* Desai, Sonalde and Soumya Alva. 1998. "Land Redistribution: A Population Stabilisation Strategy?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, 33:533-536
- \* Desai, Sonalde and Samia Ahmad. 1998. "Female Headed Households," in Nelly Stromquist (Ed.) *Women in the Third World*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Desai, Sonalde. 1998. "Engendering Population Policy," in Krishnaraj, M., R. Sudarshan and A. Shariff (Eds.) *Gender, Population and Development*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Sathar, Zeba and Sonalde Desai. 1996. "Work Patterns in Rural Pakistan: Intersections between Gender, Family and Class." *The Population Council Research Division Working Paper*
- Desai

No. 90.

- Desai, Sonalde. 1995. "When Are Children In Large Families Disadvantaged? Evidence from Cross-National Analysis," *Population Studies*, 49:195-210.
- Desai, Sonalde and Devaki Jain. 1994. "Maternal Employment and Changes in Family Dynamics: The Social Context of Women's Work in Rural South India," *Population and Development Review*, 20, 115-136.
- Desai, Sonalde. 1994. "Health and Equity: Refocusing on Basic Needs and Livelihood Strategies," *Research Division Working Paper No. 56. The Population Council, New York*.
- Desai, Sonalde. 1994. "Women's Burdens: Easing the Structural Constraints." In Sen, Gita, Adrienne Germain and Lincoln Chen (Ed.) *Population Re-Considered: Health, Empowerment, and Rights*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Desai, Sonalde. 1993. "The Impact of Family Size on Children's Nutritional Status: Insights from a Comparative Perspective," in Cynthia B. Lloyd (Ed.) 1993. *Fertility, Family Size, and Structure: Consequences for Families and Children*. New York: The Population Council.
- Desai, Sonalde. 1992. "Children at Risk: The Role of Family Structure in Latin America and West Africa," *Population and Development Review*, 18:689-717.  
A preliminary version included in *Conference Proceedings of The Demographic and Health Surveys World Conference*.
- Cynthia Lloyd and Sonalde Desai. 1992. "Children's Living Arrangements in Developing Countries." *Population Research and Policy Review*, 11:193-216.
- P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, Robert T. Michael and Sonalde Desai. 1992. "L'Effet De L'Emploi Chez Les Meres D'Enfants En Bas Age: Le Role De L'Environnement Familial". In B. Pierrehumbert (Ed.) *L'Accueil Du Jeune Enfant: Politiques et Recherches dan les Differents Pays*. Paris: ESF Editeur.
- Desai, Sonalde and Linda Waite. 1991. "Women's Employment During Pregnancy and After the First Birth: Occupational Characteristics and Work Commitment." *American Sociological Review*, 56:551-566.
- P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale, Robert T. Michael and Sonalde Desai. 1991. "Maternal Employment During Infancy: An Analysis of "Children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY)". In J. Lerner and N. Galamobs (eds.) *Employed Mothers and their Children*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Lloyd, Cynthia B. and Sonalde Desai. 1991. "Children's Living Arrangements in Comparative Perspective." *Conference Proceedings of The Demographic and Health Surveys World Conference*. A substantially revised version published in *Population Research and Policy Review*, 1992 and listed above.
- Desai, Sonalde, Robert T. Michael, and P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale. 1990. "The Home Environment: A Mechanism Through Which Maternal Employment Affects Child Development." *Population Council Working Paper No. 20*.
- Desai, Sonalde, P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale and Robert T. Michael 1989. "Mother or Market? Effects of Maternal Employment on Intellectual Development of Four-Year-Old Children." *Demography*, 26:545-562.

\* One or more student coauthors.

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## SELECTED OP-EDS:

**Getting Out of the Quota Quagmire.** Business Standard, June 16, 2012.  
**Health care needs a booster does.** Business Standard, May 11, 2012.  
**The Great Indian Poverty Game.** Business Standard, March 29, 2012.  
**Sons of the Soil.** Business Standard, February 17, 2012.  
**Indian Think Tanks - Time to Look Within.** Business Standard, February 7, 2012.  
**After the Demographic Dividend.** Business Standard, December 29, 2011.  
**India's Hidden Transformation.** Business Standard, November 29, 2011.  
**Indian Education, Employment Sector: A Study in Contrasts.** Economic Times, November 26, 2011.  
**Universal PDS Can Fix the Problem of Malnutrition.** Economic Times, September 29, 2011.  
**Jobless Growth is Focused Largely in the Female Half of the Population.** Economic Times, June 28, 2011.  
**For Growth Focus on Remote Villages.** Economic Times August 3, 2010.  
**Recasting Census 2011.** Economic Times (New Delhi) May 14, 2010.  
**Women's Share in Demographic Dividend.** Economic Times (New Delhi) February 25, 2010.  
**Challenges for Sixth Pay Commission.** Economic Times (New Delhi) March 19, 2008  
**AIDS Education: Beyond Sound Bites.** Economic Times (New Delhi) January 9, 2008.  
**Language of Division,** Economic Times (New Delhi) October 30, 2007.  
**Baniya, Babu and Borrowing: Household Debt is Concerning,** Economic Times (New Delhi), October 3, 2007.  
**Myths about Private Schooling in India,** Economic Times (New Delhi), June 27, 2007.

## RESEARCH GRANTS:

### ACTIVE:

Principal Investigator. Under Nutrition and Public Policy in India. International Development Research Centre, July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2014.  
Principal Investigator. Transition to Adulthood in India. National Institute of Child Health and Development. May 1, 2009 to April 30, 2014.  
Principal Investigator. India Human Development Survey. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Sept 27, 2010-Sept 26, 2015.  
Principal Investigator, India Human Development Survey. The Ford Foundation grant to National Council of Applied Economic Research. April 1, 2011-March 31, 2014.

### COMPLETED RESEARCH GRANTS

Principal Investigator. Parental Education and Child Outcomes. National Institute of Child Health and Development. 5-1-2004 to 4-30-2009.  
Principal Investigator. Determinants of Maternal and Child Health in India. National Institute of Child Health and Development. 7-1-2003 to 6-30-2009.  
Principal Investigator. Minority Supplement to support Cecily Darden. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. 7-1-2004 to 6-30-2007.

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Principal Investigator, Grant from The World Bank South Asia Human Development Division to International Union for Scientific Study of the Population, to organize a conference on Gender and Access in South Asia. 6-1-2006 to 6-30-2007.

Co-Principal Investigator with Reeve Vanneman. Health, Environment and Social Structure in India. National Institute on Aging. 3-15-2004 to 3-14-2006.

Principal Investigator. Grant from National Institute on Aging. Immigration and Living Arrangements of the Elderly.

Principal Investigator with Michael Paolisso. Grant from A.W. Mellon Foundation to develop a training seminar for Maryland graduate students interested in doing fieldwork in India.

Principal Investigator. In collaboration with Reeve Vanneman and Anju Malhotra. Funded by Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for establishing an international research network on unequal partnerships between men and women at the initiation of sexual activity.

Principal Investigator. Grant from The Rockefeller Foundation for research on social context of fertility behavior with emphasis on household level negotiations surround contraceptive use decisions in rural India.

Principal Investigator. Grant from the A.W. Mellon Foundation for collaborative research with an anthropologist, Dr. Smriti Srinivas.

Principal Investigator. Grant from The MacArthur Foundation for research on Poverty, Gender Inequality and Reproductive Choice in India, in collaboration with Devaki Jain, Institute of Social Studies Trust, New Delhi, and National Council for Applied Economic Research, New Delhi.

Co-Principal Investigator. Grant from the William T. Grant Foundation for research on Effect of Maternal Employment on Child Development in the United States, in collaboration with P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale and Robert T. Michael.

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS**

Morris Rosenberg Award for Mentoring Graduate Students, Dept. of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park.

University of Maryland Semester Research Award 2009-10.

University of Maryland Summer Research Award 1995 and 1996

NICHD Post-Doctoral Fellowship 1987-89

Hewlett Post-Doctoral Fellowship 1986-87

The Population Council Doctoral Fellowship 1984-86

Steven Beaver Memorial Fellowship in Population, Stanford University, 1982-83.

## **SELECTED PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION SERVICE**

Co-Chair, IUSSP Committee on Gender and Population. 2004-2008.

Publications Committee, Population Association of America, 2003-2005.

Board of Directors, Population Association of America, 1997-1999.

Chair, PAA Committee for IUSSP Travel, 1996-97.

Member, Committee on Reproductive Health, International Union for Scientific Study of Population, 1995-1999.

## **SELECTED CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION**

Program Committee, Annual Meeting of Population Association of America, 2010.

Chair, Session on Gender and Population. General conference of International Union for the Scientific of Population, Morocco. October 2009.

Organizer, Sessions on Fertility, American Sociological Association's Annual Meeting, 2009.

Program Organizer, Population Association of America's Annual Meeting, 2008.

Co-Organizer, Seminar on Gender and Access in South Asia, Organized by International Union for Scientific Study of Population and Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, November 14-18, 2006, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Organizer, Annual Meeting of the Population Association of America, 2007. China and India: The Demographic Billionaires.

Organizer. Annual Meeting of Population Association of America, 2004. Three sessions, Families and Households in Developing Countries, Understanding Domestic Violence in Developing Countries and Gender and Patriarchy in India and Bangladesh.

## **RESEARCH/PROGRAM REVIEW**

- Member, Technical Advisory Committee on Household Surveys, Reserve Bank of India.
- Member, Expert Group on Second Employment-Unemployment Survey, Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India. 2011.
- Research Advisory Committee, Indian Institute of Dalit Studies, New Delhi.
- Advisory Panel, Luxembourg Income Study.
- Member, Population Sciences Subcommittee, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2008-2009.
- Review Panel Member, National Institute of Health, Study Section on Social Sciences and Population Studies, 1994-98.
- Member, NIH - Fogarty International Center special review committee for RFA on International Research and Training in Population and Health, 1995.
- Member, NIH Special review committee for RFA on Methodological Studies to Enhance Demographic Research. 1993.
- Member, NIH Special Review Committee for RFA on After School Care and Its Effects on Children, 1992.
- Program Review, A.W. Mellon Foundation. International Center for Research on Women, many Population Center Proposals.
- Occasional Grant Proposal Review for NSF Sociology Program, Spencer Foundation, Agency for Health Care Research, Wellcome Trust.
- Tenure and Promotion Review for faculty from the University of Michigan, Brown University, Hebrew University etc.

## **JOURNAL EDITORIAL AND REVIEW**

Member, Editorial Board, Journal of South Asian Development, 2012- Present

Member, Editorial Board, Margin-A Journal of Applied Economics, 2007-present.

Member, Editorial Advisory Board, Studies in Family Planning, 1995-Present.

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Member, Editorial Board, Demography, 2004-2007

Journal Reviews for American Economic Review, American Sociological Review, American Journal of Sociology, Demography, Population and Development Review, Comparative Education Review, Social Forces, Journal of Marriage and the Family, International Family Planning Perspectives, World Development, Studies in Family Planning, Sociological Forum, Sex Roles, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Science.