

# AMRIT THAPA

Graduate School of Education  
University of Pennsylvania  
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## EDUCATION

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<b>Columbia University</b> , Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, New York, NY Ph.D., Economics and Education Advisor: Professor Henry M. Levin	2011
<b>Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts &amp; Sciences</b> , New York, NY M.Phil., Economics and Education	2010
<b>Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning</b> , Andhra Pradesh, India <i>MA, Economics</i> (Gold Medalist)	2005
<b>Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning</b> , Andhra Pradesh, India <i>BSc, with honors, Economics</i> (Distinction)	2003

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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<b>University of Pennsylvania</b> , Philadelphia, PA Senior Lecturer (full time), Graduate School of Education, Literacy, Culture and International Education Division, July 2020 – Present	
Lecturer (full time), Graduate School of Education, Literacy, Culture and International Education Division, Aug 2016 – June 2020	
Instructor, Graduate School of Education, Teaching, Learning and Leadership Division, Jan 2019 -May 2019	
Adjunct Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Education, Literacy, Culture and International Education Division, Aug 2015 – May 2016	
<b>Columbia University</b> , New York, NY Adjunct Assistant Professor, Teachers College, Department of Education Policy & Social Analysis, Jan 2015 – May 2015	
Teaching Fellow, School of International and Public Affairs, Program in Economic Policy Management, Jan 2009 – May 2011	
Teaching Assistant, Teachers College, Department of Education Policy & Social Analysis, Aug 2010 – Dec 2010	
<b>City University of New York</b> , New York, NY Adjunct Lecturer, Queens College, Economics Department, Aug 2008 – Dec 2008	
<b>Kathmandu University</b> , Lalitpur, Nepal Lecturer, Little Angles College of Management, Aug 2005 – July 2006	

## RESEARCH AFFILIATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

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**National School Climate Center**, New York, NY  
Research Director (full time), Oct 2011 – Aug 2016

**Schott Foundation for Public Education**, Boston, MA  
Research Assistant, May 2008 – Aug 2008

**Center for Benefit-Cost Studies of Education**, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA  
Affiliated Researcher, Jan 2014 – Present

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

**Thapa, A.**, Ramdass, J. V., Cardillo, R., & Cohen, J. (2018). School climate improvement process: Lessons and findings from New York City schools, *International Journal of School Climate and Violence Prevention*, 4, 90–116.

**Thapa, A.**, & Cohen, J. (2017). School climate community scale: Report on construct validity and internal consistency. *School Community Journal*, 27(2), 303–320.

Cohen, J., **Thapa, A.**, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2017). School climate/social emotional learning measurement systems: Trends, contributions, challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies*. Inaugural special issue on the Gordon Paradigm of Inquiry and Practice.

Cohen, J. & **Thapa, A.** (2017). School climate improvement: What do U.S. educators believe, need and want? *International Journal of School Climate and Violence Prevention*, 2(1), 90–116.

Martinez, A, Coker, C., McMahon, S. D., Cohen, J. & **Thapa, A.** (2016). Involvement in extracurricular activities: Identifying differences in perceptions of school climate. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, 33(1), 70–84.

**Thapa, A.** (2015). Public and private school performance in Nepal: An analysis using SLC examination. *Education Economics*, 23(1), 47–62.

Ice, M., **Thapa, A.**, & Cohen, J. (2015). Recognizing community voice and a youth-led school–community partnership in the school climate improvement process. *School Community Journal*, 25(1), 9–28.

**Thapa, A.**, Cohen, J., Guffey, S., & Higgins-D'Alessandro, A. (2013). A Review of school climate research. *Review of Educational Research*, 83(3), 357–385.

**Thapa, A.** (2013). Does private school competition improve public school performance: The case of Nepal. *International Journal of Education Development*, 33(4), 358–366.

**Thapa, A.** (2013). A case study on workers' perceptions of psychological capital on their earnings. *International Journal of Applied Behavioral Economics*, 2(3), 27–42.

## Invited Book Chapters

**Thapa, A.** & Maharjan, U. (2019). Higher education and economic development in Nepal. In K. Bista, S. Sharma, & R. Raby (Eds.), *Higher Education in Nepal: Policies and Perspectives*. New York: Routledge.

**Thapa, A.** (2019). School climate. In G. Ritzer & C. Rojek (Eds.), *Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*. Wiley Blackwell.

Coker, C., Martinez, A, McMahon, S. D., Cohen, J. & **Thapa, A.** (2018). Perceptions of school climate: The role of extracurricular activities. In K. Allen & C. Boyle (Eds.), *Pathways to Belonging: Contemporary Research in School Belonging*. Boston: Brill Sense.

## RESEARCH GRANTS

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Global Engagement Fund (along with Graduate School of Education & Population Studies Center), University of Pennsylvania, **Primary Investigator**, *Marketization of higher education in Peru: Economic and equity implications*, July, 2018- June, 2019, \$14,000.00 (Co-PI: Dr. Jere Behrman).

Special Olympics International, **Co-Primary Investigator**, *Reliability and validity study of Social Inclusion Scale and Characteristics of Socially Inclusive Rubrics, and a comparative study of school climate and social inclusion in schools with and without Project UNIFY programming*, 2014- 2016, \$314,899.00 (Co-PI: Dr. Jonathan Cohen).

Winston Preparatory School, **Co-Primary Investigator**, *A study of lives over time and developing the Winston Quality of Sustainable and Independent Learner (QSIL) Scales-Phase II*, 2014- 2016, \$203,946.00 (Co-PI: Dr. Jonathan Cohen).

Special Olympics, **Co-Primary Investigator**, *School climate pilot research project- Development of social inclusion metrics and a comparative study of school climate and social inclusion in schools with and without Project UNIFY programming*, 2013- 2014, \$70,000.00 (Co-PI: Dr. Jonathan Cohen).

Winston Preparatory School, **Co-Primary Investigator**, *A study of lives over time and developing the Winston Quality of Sustainable and Independent Learner (QSIL) Scales*, 2012- 2014, \$130,000.00 (Co-PI: Dr. Jonathan Cohen).

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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**Penn GSE Excellence in Teaching Award:** Graduate School of Education, University of Pennsylvania, May, 2019.

**Best Field Initiative:** Nepal online English language and basic computer application project. South Asia SIG-Comparative and International Education Society Conference, Mexico City, Mexico, March, 2018.

**Scholarship:** Summer Course in *Innovative Financing in Education* at Central European University: Open Society Foundations, July, 2015.

**Honorable Mention for Best Published Paper Award:** South Asia SIG-Comparative and International Education Society Conference, New Orleans, March, 2013.

**Dissertation Fellowship Award:** National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, May 2011

**Travel Grant**, New Scholar's Workshop at CIES Conference, Montreal, May 2011

**Teaching Assistant Fellowship:** Program in Economic Policy Management, School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, January 2009 – May 2011

**University Gold Medal in MA (Economics):** Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, India, November 2005

## SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

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**Thapa, A.** (2019, March). *Exploring the Trends in Higher Education and Economic Development in Nepal*. Round-table discussion presented at the 63rd annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, San Francisco, CA.

**Thapa, A.** (2018, March). *Marketization of higher education in Peru: Economic and equity implications*. Paper presented at the 62nd annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, Mexico City, Mexico.

**Thapa, A.** (2017, March). *Education and economic development: A comparative snapshot of South Asian countries*. Paper presented at the 61<sup>st</sup> annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, Atlanta, GA.

**Thapa, A. & Mendelsohn, E.** (2016, October). *Assessment and development of social emotional learning capacities*. Paper presented at the 38<sup>th</sup> international conference on Learning Disabilities, San Antonio, TX.

**Thapa, A.** (2016, July). *Private school performance and public school performance in Nepal*. Paper presented at the 25<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Association of Education Economics, Badajoz, Spain.

**Thapa, A.** (2016, March). *The role of education in economic development: The case of Nepal*. Paper presented at the 60<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, Vancouver, Canada.

**Thapa, A.** (2014, March). *Does school type matter for student performance? The case of Nepal*. Paper presented at the 58<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, Toronto, Canada.

**Thapa, A.** (2013, March). *Analyzing student achievement in private and public schools in Nepal*. Paper presented at the 57<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, New Orleans, LA.

**Thapa, A. & Cohen, J.** (2012, April). *The school climate reform process: Review and assessment*. Paper presented at the 56<sup>th</sup> annual conference of Comparative and International Education Society, San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**Thapa, A.** (2011, May). *Does private school competition improve public school performance? The case of Nepal*. Dissertation presented during New Scholar's Workshop at the 55<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Comparative and International Educational Society, Montreal, Canada.

**Thapa, A.** (2010, March). *Community managed schooling in Nepal: An analysis of its scope and performance*. Paper presented at the 54<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Comparative and International Educational Society, Chicago, IL.

Iyengar, R., Mela, M., & **Thapa, A.** (2010, March). *The effect of social capital on years of education: A case of rural India*. Paper presented at the 54<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Comparative and International Educational Society, Chicago, IL.

**Thapa, A.** (2004, December). *An arithmetic of growth rates: An exercise in inter-sectoral linkages in the Indian Economy*. Paper presented at the National Workshop held at Sri Sathya Sai Institute on Agriculture and Rural Development, Prasanthi Nilayam, A.P., India.

## **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

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### **Editorial Boards**

*Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education*, 2018 – Present

### **Doctoral Dissertation Committee Member**

Manual M. Molina CEU San Pablo University, Madrid, Spain, PhD., Dec 2016.

Dissertation topic: *The competition between schools and their relationship with the equity and academic performance: An application to the region of Madrid*

### **Co-Chair**

Economics and Finance of Education Special Interest Group (SIG), Comparative and International Education Society, March 2017 – Present

### **Reviewer for Journal Articles**

*Economics of Education Review*

*Comparative Education Review*

*Review of Educational Research*

*International Journal of Educational Development*

*International Review of Education*

*Asian Education and Development Studies*

*Educational Policy*

### **Roles in Professional Conferences**

Manuscript Reviewer, Chair and Discussant, *American Educational Research Association*, 2012 – Present

Manuscript Reviewer and Chair, *Comparative and International Education Society*, 2011– Present

Discussant, *Learning at the Bottom of the Pyramid* conference, University of Pennsylvania, March 2017

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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Comparative and International Education Society (CIES)

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

American Evaluation Association (AEA)

Canadian Evaluation Association (CEA)

## **COURSES TAUGHT**

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### **University of Pennsylvania**

Economics of Education in Developing countries, Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Spring 2020  
Principles of Monitoring & Evaluation in International Education Development (Quantitative Methods),  
Spring 2016, Fall 2016, Fall 2017, Fall 2018, Fall 2019 and Fall 2020  
Advanced Topics in M & E in International Education Development (Quantitative Methods), Spring  
2018, Spring 2019 and Spring 2020  
Global Perspectives on School Climate, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Spring 2019  
Educational Evaluation for Innovation (Co-Instructor), Spring 2019  
International Economics of Education, Fall 2015 & Fall 2016

### **Columbia University**

International Comparative Studies in Educational Finance, Spring 2015  
International Trade and Public Economics, Spring 2009 (as Teaching Assistant)  
Microeconomics, Fall 2010 (as Teaching Assistant)  
Macroeconomics, Spring 2010 (as Teaching Assistant)  
Economics of Education, Fall 2010 (as Teaching Assistant)

### **City University of New York**

Introductory Microeconomics, Fall 2008

### **Kathmandu University**

Introductory Microeconomics, Fall 2005  
Introductory Macroeconomics, Spring 2006

## **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

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### **Institute of Global Education (IGE), Portland, OR**

Vice-President, July 2015 – Present  
United Nations Representative & Board Member, Sept 2011 – July 2015

### **Sri Sathya Sai Service Organization, USA**

Faculty, Institute of Sathya Sai Education–USA, Jan 2018 – Present  
Young Adults Representative, Mid-Atlantic region, June 2013 – Dec 2017  
Regular participant in weekly Harlem service program, New York, Nov 2014 – Aug, 2016  
Regular participant in monthly Goldwater Hospital service program, Roosevelt Island, New York, Nov  
2006 – Dec 2013

### **Sri Sathya Sai Service Organization, Nepal**

Youth Coordinator, May 2005- August 2006

### **Sri Sathya Institute of Higher Learning, Andhra Pradesh, India**

Participant in yearly village service program (Gram Seva), June 2000 – March 2005

## **LANGUAGES**

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Fluent in English, Nepali and Hindi; Intermediate in Spanish.