

# MUSTAHSIN UL AZIZ

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## Research Interests



Environment



Urban/Regional



Energy



Applied Micro

## Education

### West Virginia University

*Ph.D., Natural Resource Economics (Expected Graduation: May 2026)*

**August 2021 – Present**

*Morgantown, WV, USA*

### University of Dhaka

*Master of Social Sciences (MSS), Economics*

**2017**

*Dhaka, Bangladesh*

### University of Dhaka

*Bachelor of Social Sciences (BSS), Economics*

**2012 – 2016**

*Dhaka, Bangladesh*

## Dissertation

*Three Essays on Environmental Economics*

Committee Members: Dr. Levan Elbakidze (Chair); Dr. Heather Stephens; Dr. Brad Humphreys; Dr. Julian Hwang

## Job Market Paper

### *The Role of Urban Greenspace in Shaping Labor Market Outcomes*

This paper examines how urban greenspace influences labor market outcomes. Using panel data from 950 U.S. counties (2011–2019), we estimate a spatial equilibrium model of compensating differentials. Greenspace is measured with the Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI), and endogeneity is addressed using historical land cover from the 1970s–80s as an instrument. We find a significant negative relationship between NDVI and wages, indicating that workers accept lower pay to live in greener counties. At the same time, greener places attract more employment and population, underscoring their economic appeal. These results highlight greenspace as an economic as well as environmental amenity. By shaping wage–amenity trade-offs and urban attractiveness, greenspace emerges as a policy-relevant tool for promoting livability and sustainable urban development.

## Publications

- Invisible Barrier: The Impact of Air Quality on Chronic School Absenteeism in the US, (2024), *Environmental and Resource Economics* with L. Elbakidze
- Effects of Recognition of Prior Learning on Job Market Outcomes, (2021), *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper* With S. Nakata, U. Sharma, T. Rahman, M. Rahman
- Can visual nudges reduce smoking tobacco expenditure? Evidence from a clustered randomized controlled trial in rural Bangladesh, (2020), *Journal of Smoking Cessation* With A. Fakir, A. Karim, M. Mubde, A. Ahmad
- A single-blind clustered randomised controlled trial of daily record-keeping for reducing smoking tobacco expenditure among adult male household heads in rural Bangladesh, (2020), *Journal of Smoking Cessation* With A. Fakir, A. Karim, M. Mubde, A. Ahmad
- Bangladesh chars tobacco assessment project (CTAP) 2018: A data note, (2018), *BMC Research Notes* With A.M. Fakir, M.B. Mubde, A. Karim, A.S. Khan, R. Raisa, L.F. Alim, M. Fahmin

## Work in Progress

- Natural Disaster Disruption and Recovery: A Spatial Analysis with Remote Sensing and Cell-Phone Data
- Safe Drinking Water Act Compliance with upstream Agricultural Production, *with Elbakidze, L. (Dissertation Chapter)*
- Licensing Disparities in Physical Therapy Practitioners, *with Plemmons, A.*
- The Impact of Air Quality on Learning Outcomes of School Children, *with Cary, M.*
- The Impact of Mental Health Funding for Schools in Curbing Chronic Absenteeism, *with Maupin, I.*

## Experience

### West Virginia University

Morgantown, WV, USA

#### *Graduate Researcher – Regional Research Institute*

January 2025 – Present

- Lead the design of an empirical study to better understand the role of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations; including methodology, data collection process, and analysis.
- Supervise carbon forecasting models and draft action plans exploring mitigation strategies for West Virginia under the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in partnership with WV Department of Energy.

#### *Instructor – ARE 150 (Introductory Agricultural & Agribusiness Economics)*

August 2024 – December 2024

- 80% of students found the instructor helpful, and 70% of 41 students found the course beneficial.

#### *Graduate Research Assistant – Division of Resource Economics and Management*

August 2021 – July 2024

- Initiated remote-sensing data collection within the department to enhance spatial analysis of air, water, and wind dynamics.

### The World Bank – Education Global Practice

Based in Dhaka, Bangladesh

#### *Education Economist (Short-Term Consultant)*

January 2019 – June 2021

- Designed second-generation regional Higher Education and Tertiary Education projects with a \$700 million portfolio, modernizing higher education and fostering regional collaboration. Led budget development, Environmental and Social Assessment, and Economic Analysis, including drafting the Project Appraisal Document.
- Organized an Early Childhood Education Global Learning Conference in China, coordinating logistics and engaging 60 government officials from South and Southeast Asia.
- Supported research initiatives via Randomized Control Trials to assess pilot programs, such as the Recognition of Prior Learning Assessment under the skills sector project.

#### *Operations Analyst (Short-Term Consultant)*

February 2018 – December 2018

- Managed project operations for national-level initiatives with a \$500 million portfolio, conducting target assessments and ensuring seamless project execution.
- Supported research data cleaning and analysis for ongoing projects to ensure proper impact assessment.

### Char Tobacco Assessment Project (CTAP)

Bangladesh

#### *Co-Principal Investigator*

2019

- Secured \$10,000 funding from Johns Hopkins Institute of Global Tobacco Control through grant application drafting and submission.
- Conducted a Randomized Control Trial using nudge-based behavioral economics, reducing tobacco consumption expenditure by 14% per household in rural Bangladesh.
- Coordinated research design, questionnaire development, data analysis, and publication of project research papers.

## Academic Presentations

- Association of Private Enterprise and Education Conference, Guatemala (2025)
- Southern Regional Science Association Annual Meetings, Kentucky (2025)
- Public Choice Society Annual Meetings, Kentucky (2025)
- Southern Economic Association Annual Meeting, Washington D.C. (2024)
- North American Regional Science Council Conference, Louisiana (2024)
- Southern Economics Association Annual Meeting, Louisiana (2023)
- Agricultural & Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting, California (2022)
- Western Economic Association International (WEAI), Oregon (2022)

## Awards & Fellowships

The Association of Private Enterprise Education – Student Fellow

Jan 2025 – Present

Public Choice Society – Student Fellow

Jan 2025 – Present

Mercatus Center – Paul Lewis Fellow

August 2025 – Present

Mercatus Center – Adam Smith Fellow

August 2024 – May 2025

Mercatus Center – Oskar Morgenstern Fellow

August 2023 – May 2024

USDA – Graduate Climate Adaptation and Mitigation Partners Fellow

August 2023 – May 2024

Division of Resource Economics and Management – Gempesaw/Alaby Family Scholarship

November 2022

## Data Projects

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- **UrbanEye:** a computer-vision machine learning algorithm to identify and enumerate natural and man made urban features.
- **Mapping Urban Green Space:** calculating greenspace of US cities using Google Street View images and the UrbanEye algorithm.

## Peer Reviews

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- International Journal Of Environmental Health Research
- Letters in Spatial and Resource Sciences

## Other Experiences

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Graduate Resource Economics Club – President	April 2023 – April 2024
Finding Bangladesh - A Documentary – Video Editor	2012 – 2019
Dhaka University Debating Society – Executive Committee Member	March 2015 – April 2017

## Skills

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- \* **Data Analysis:** Python, R, STATA, SQL
- \* **Economic Modeling:** IMPLAN, GAMS, Energy Policy Simulator
- \* **Spatial Analysis:** Machine Learning, GIS, Remote Sensing
- \* **Research Design:** Randomized Control Trials, Causal Estimation, Econometric Analysis
- \* **Other Software:** L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, Notion, Adobe Creative Suite
- \* **Policy Analysis:** Environmental Assessments, Workforce Analysis, Economic and Social Impact, Project Appraisal

## Professional Affiliations

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- \* American Economic Association (AEA)
- \* Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA)
- \* Association of Environmental and Resource Economists (AERE)
- \* Southern Economics Association (SEA)
- \* North American Regional Science Council (NARSC)
- \* Western Economic Association International (WEAI)
- \* Public Choice Society
- \* Institute of Humane Studies

## Language Proficiency

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- \* English — Full Professional Proficiency
- \* Bengali — Native Proficiency
- \* Hindi — Intermediate Proficiency
- \* French — Elementary Proficiency

## References

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Levan Elbakidze, Ph.D. – Professor <i>West Virginia University</i>	levan.elbakidze@mail.wvu.edu
Tashmina Rahman – Senior Education Specialist <i>The World Bank</i>	trahman3@worldbank.org
Heather Stephens, Ph.D. – Director <i>Regional Research Institute</i>	heather.stephens@mail.wvu.edu