Garment Workers and Garment Factories in Bangladesh

Rachel Heath

University of Washington

May 31, 2016
Garment sector employment in Bangladesh

Garment sector jobs have lead women to delay marriage and childbearing, and raised girls’ education levels (Heath and Mobarak 2015)
But factory-level heterogeneity is important
For worker $i$ in factory $f$ at time $t$:

$$y_{ift} = \alpha_i + \gamma_f + f(experience_{ift}) + \varepsilon$$

- $y_{ift}$’s: wages, measures of working conditions
- Estimated variance of $\hat{\gamma}_f$ versus $\hat{\alpha}_i$ informative of industry-wide variance in outcomes
But...

- Data intensive in best of cases. Vast majority of evidence from US and Europe.

- In Bangladesh, no systemically administrative data (and probably can’t trust factories’ reports anyway)

- So use a household survey
  - Wage and factory history of 991 garment workers
  - Collected by me and Mushfiq Mobarak in 2009
  - Matched to the 911 factories they have worked in

- Currently working on clustering types of factories and workers to use data more efficiently