Gulsah Gurkan

Applied Statistician | Psychometrician | Data Scientist

🎓 EDUCATION

2021

PhD, Measurement, Evaluation, Statistics, and Assessment
Boston College   📍 Chestnut Hill, MA

Dissertation: "From OLS to Multilevel Multidimensional Mixture IRT: A Model Refinement Approach to Investigating Patterns of Relationships in PISA 2012 Data"

Committee: Henry Braun (chair), Matthias von Davier, Michael Martin, Zhushan Li

2011

Integrated BSc. & MSc., Teaching Physics
Bogazici University   📍 Istanbul, Turkey

(Dual Degree in Physics and Secondary School Science & Mathematics Education)

💼 PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Present | March 2021

Kaplan North America
Psychometrician   📍 Remote

- Leading and executing projects to evaluate the efficacy of online test preparation products on academic and career outcomes.
- Building statistical models and communicating recommendations to product leaders for improvement.
- Developing programming and documentation in R and R Markdown to automate data processing, analysis, and reporting procedures.
- Providing expertise for research design and advanced statistical modeling techniques primarily used in quasi-experimental design.

February 2021 | September 2020

Boston College
Graduate Statistical Consultant (Research Services)   📍 Remote

- Provided consultations and tutorials to faculty and students from various departments to support their statistical computing and quantitative research.
- Assisted with selecting methodologies, planning and performing statistical data analysis, data management, and statistical computing.

Graduate Assistant (Institutional Research and Planning)

- Assisted with analysis and reporting of data from campus-wide surveys, which were used to monitor trends and provide feedback about various programs and campus issues.
- Automated data cleaning and wrangling processes for annually published internal dashboards.

September 2020 | July 2020

uAspire
Chewning Research Fellow   📍 Remote

- Designed and executed research projects to examine the organization's impact on college affordability/access and advance their learning for further program development and implementation.
- Employed data from multiple databases, conducted statistical analyses, and presented research findings to diverse audiences.

Summer 2020

Educational Testing Service
Research Intern   📍 Princeton, NJ

- Proposed project: The investigation of alternative RMSD statistics for international large-scale assessments. – *Canceled due to COVID-19.*

Contact

- ✉ gurkangulsah@gmail.com
- 🔗 gulsah-gurkan.com
- ⌂ @Gulsah-G
- in @gurkangulsah
- 🐦 @GulsahGurkan_

Skills

Areas of Expertise:

Quantitative methodology
Advanced statistical modeling
Experimental design
Causal inference
Psychometrics
Survey design and research

Computing:

Statistical: R, SPSS Syntax, HLM, mdltm, LISREL, IRTPRO, WINSTEPS.
Databases: SQL, RMySQL, GitHub.
Survey platforms: Qualtrics, Google Forms.

Boston College

Research Assistant (Center for the Study of Testing, Evaluation, and Educational Policy)   📍 Chestnut Hill, MA

July 2020
|
September 2015

- Conducted quasi-experimental studies employing both longitudinal and cross-sectional data from complex survey design studies.
- Analyzed data using various procedures such as generalized linear models, multilevel models, cluster analysis, inverse probability weighting.
- Conducted psychometric analyses to develop and validate instruments measuring both cognitive and non-cognitive constructs.
- Automated data analysis and reporting procedures in R and R Markdown to be shared with stakeholders.
- Assisted with organizing a 2.5-day conference and interactive workshop on the challenges with measuring hard-to-measure constructs.

Kaplan Test Prep

Psychometrician Intern   📍 New York, NY

Summer 2019

- Conducted an empirical simulation study to examine the feasibility and sustainability of automated test assembly methods to personalize online assessment products to each user's needs.
- Developed an R package for automated test assembly ('**ata**' available on CRAN R repository).

New York City Department of Education

Data Analyst | Education Pioneers Summer Fellow   📍 New York, NY

Summer 2018

- Built a dashboard to communicate the impact of a professional development program to 45 superintendents and 9 Field Support Centers in New York City.
- Developed visuals in R including mapping attendance data to geographically demonstrate the participation rates by NYC districts to be shared externally.
- Contributed to the team's ongoing work to refine the program logic model and design evaluation studies.

Dublin City University

Research Associate   📍 Dublin, Ireland

Summer 2017

- Developed and validated a scale measuring students' physical and emotional well-being.
- Conducted psychometric analyses employing factor analytic approaches and Rasch modeling.

Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (TEGV)

Measurement and Evaluation Specialist   📍 Istanbul, Turkey

June 2015
|
June 2012

- Coordinated measurement and evaluation studies to determine the effectiveness of more than 10 education programs across 30 cities in the underdeveloped provinces of Turkey.
- Developed measurement tools such as student questionnaires, interview and observation protocols.
- Collected, analyzed, and reported data for the purposes of organizational monitoring.
- Devised research briefs and reports on various aspects of education policy issues in Turkey.
- Represented the organization in "Volunteerism: Measuring Global Impact II" workshop that took place in June 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya.

💻 TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Fordham University

Workshop Host   📍 New York, NY

February 2020

- Automated Test Assembly in R (with Michael Chajewski)

Boston College

Teaching Assistant   📍 Chestnut Hill, MA

May 2019
|
September 2018

- Multivariate Statistics (Instructor: Zhushan Li)
- Psychometric Theory II – Item Response Theory (Instructor: Zhushan Li)

📦 SOFTWARE / STATISTICAL PACKAGES

Gurkan, G., Chajewski, M. (2020). ata: Automated test assembly. (Version 1.1.0). R software package: The R Project for Statistical Computing.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Gurkan, G., Benjamini, Y., Braun, H. (2021). Defensible inferences from a nested sequence of logistic regressions: a guide for the perplexed. *Large-scale Assessment in Education, 9*(16). doi: 10.1186/s40536-021-00111-7

Gurkan, G., von Davier, M., Braun, H. (2020). Accounting for measurement error and clustering in cross-cultural assessment data. *Presentation given at the (Virtual) International Meeting of the Psychometric Society*.

Gurkan, G., von Davier, M., Braun, H. (2020). On the cross-country heterogeneity of within-country bivariate relationships in international large-scale assessments: understanding, evaluating and adjusting for the contributions of measurement error and clustering. *Paper accepted to the 12th Conference of the International Test Commission, in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg*.

Gurkan, G., Chajewski, M. (2020). Exploring online assessment personalization via automated test assembly. *Paper accepted to the annual meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education, in San Francisco, CA*.

Gurkan, G. (2019). A multilevel modeling analysis to investigate the factors affecting Turkish students' scientific literacy performance in PISA 2015. *Presentation given at the annual meeting of the New England Educational Research Organization, in Portsmouth, NH*.

Gurkan, G., Luna Bazaldua, D., & Braun, H. (2018). Testing dynamic complementarity in educational opportunities to accumulate relevant human capital. *Presentation given at the annual meeting of the National Council on Measurement in Education, in New York, NY*.

Gurkan, G. (2017). Psychometric properties of Learning to Teach for Social Justice Practices scale. *Presentation given at the annual meeting of the New England Educational Research Organization, in Portsmouth, NH*.