

# ANEESH RAI

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## EDUCATION

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### The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

*Expected 2023*

Ph.D. Candidate in Operations, Information, and Decisions

Advisor: Katherine Milkman

Dissertation Committee Chair: Maurice Schweitzer

Dissertation Committee Members: Rebecca Schaumberg, Sandra Matz

### Princeton University

*2017*

B.A. in Psychology, *summa cum laude*

Minors in Computer Science and Cognitive Science

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Diversity, Discrimination, Behavior Change

## PUBLICATIONS

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Chang, E.H.\*, Kirgios, E.L.\*, **Rai, A.**, & Milkman, K.L. (2020). "The Isolated Choice Effect and Its Implications for Gender Diversity in Organizations." *Management Science*, 66(6), 2752-2761.

\*denotes equal authorship

Milkman, K.L., Gromet, D., Ho, H., Kay, J., Lee, T., Pandiloski, P., Park, Y., **Rai, A.**, Bazerman, M., Beshears, J., Bonacorsi, L., Camerer, C., Chang, E.H., Chapman, G., Cialdini, R., Dai, H., Eskreis-Winkler, L., Fishbach, A., Gross, J.J., Horn, S., Hubbard, A., Jones, S.J., Karlan, D., Kautz, T., Kirgios, E.L., Klusowski, J., Kristal, A., Ladhania, R., Loewenstein, G., Ludwig, J., Mellers, B., Mullainathan, S., Saccardo, S., Speiss, J., Suri, G., Talloen, J.H., Taxer, J., Trope, Y., Ungar, L., Volpp, K.G., Whillans, A., Zinman, J., & Duckworth, A.L. (2021) "Megastudies improve the impact of applied behavioural science." *Nature*, 600(7889), 478-483

Kirgios, E.L., **Rai, A.**, Chang, E.H., & Milkman, K.L. (2022) "When Seeking Help, Women and Racial/Ethnic Minorities Benefit from Explicitly Stating their Identity." *Nature Human Behaviour*

## PAPERS UNDER REVIEW

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**Rai, A.**, Chang, E.H., Kirgios, E.L., & Milkman, K.L. "Group Size and Its Impact on Diversity-Related Perceptions and Hiring Decisions" (*2nd Revise and Resubmit at Organization Science*)

**Rai, A.**, Sharif, M.A., Chang, E.H., Milkman, K.L., & Duckworth, A.L. "A Field Experiment on Goal Framing to Boost Volunteering: The Tradeoff Between Goal Granularity and Flexibility" (*Conditionally Accepted at the Journal of Applied Psychology*)

## WORKING PAPERS

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Blunden, H.\*, Kirgios, E.L.\*, **Rai, A.**, Chang, E.H., & Milkman, K.L. "When Flattery Fails: Documenting the Negative Consequences of Ingratiation for Advice Seekers." (*Preparing to submit to the Academy of Management Journal*)

\*denotes equal authorship

## SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

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**Rai, A.** “The Consequences of Prosocial Signals That Leak Political Information for Job-Seekers.” (*Data collection in progress*)

**Rai, A.**, Kirgios, E.L., Lucas, B.J., & Milkman, K.L. “The Impact of a Longer List Manipulation on Gender Diversity in Referrals.” (*Field experiment with 1,300 participants completed*)

**Rai, A.**, Kirgios, E.L., & Milkman, K.L. “Insider vs. Outsider Perceptions of Group Diversity.” (*Data collection in progress*)

**Rai, A.**, Schaumberg, R.L., & Matz, S.C. “Promoting Re-engagement After Rejection in Job Applicants” (*Data collection in progress*)

Kirgios, E.L., **Rai, A.**, Chang, E.H., & Milkman, K.L. “Pay-It-Forward or Help Others? Analyzing the Impact of Pay-It-Forward Messaging on Charitable Giving.” (*Field experiment with 9,000 participants completed*)

Schaumberg, R.L., **Rai, A.**, & Chang, E.H. “The Psychological Consequences of the Changing Nature of Work and Their Implications for Dominant Demographic Group Members’ Support for Increasing Diversity in Organizations.” (*Data collection in progress*)

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

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Mack Institute for Innovation Management Research Grant, 2022 (\$5,000)

Russell Ackoff Doctoral Student Fellowship, 2022 (\$2,500)

Paul R. Kleindorfer Scholar Award, 2022 (\$4,000)

Mack Institute for Innovation Management Research Grant, 2021 (\$7,000)

George James Term Fund Travel Award, 2019 (\$300)

Russell Ackoff Doctoral Student Fellowship, 2019 (\$2,000)

Princeton Psychology Senior Thesis Prize, 2017

Princeton Psychology Senior Award, 2017

Princeton Psychology Junior Award, 2016

## CHAired CONFERENCE SYMPOSIA

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- **New Perspectives on Increasing Diversity and Reducing Inequality in Organizations** (Co-Chaired with Linda W. Chang). Academy of Management (selected as a showcase symposium), Seattle, WA, 2022.

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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### **Group Size and Its Impact on Diversity-Related Hiring Decisions**

- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Montreal, Canada, 2019
- East Coast Doctoral Conference, New York, NY, 2020\*
- International Association for Conflict Management, 2020\*\*
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, 2020\*\*
- Academy of Management, 2021\*\*
  - Selected as part of a showcase symposium

### **A Field Experiment on Goal Framing to Boost Volunteering: The Tradeoff Between Goal Granularity and Flexibility**

- CHIBE-PAIR Roybal Mini-Symposium, 2020\*\*

- Society for Personality and Social Psychology Judgment and Decision Making Pre-Conference, 2021\*\*
- East Coast Doctoral Conference, 2021\*\*
- Association for Consumer Research Conference, 2021\*\*
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making, 2021\*\* (poster)
- MIT Conference on Digital Experimentation, 2021\*\*
- Behavioral Science and Policy Association Annual Conference, 2022\*\*

#### **Insider vs. Outsider Perceptions of Group Diversity.**

- Academy of Management, Seattle, WA, 2022
  - Selected as part of a showcase symposium
- International Association for Conflict Management, Ottawa, Canada, 2022

#### **The Psychological Consequences of the Changing Nature of Work and Their Implications for Dominant Demographic Group Members' Support for Increasing Diversity in Organizations**

- International Association for Conflict Management, 2021\*\*

\* Conference canceled due to COVID-19 pandemic

\*\*Conference held virtually due to COVID-19 pandemic

### **PROFESSIONAL SERVICE**

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Ad hoc Reviewer for *Management Science*, 2019-Present

Ad hoc Reviewer for *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2021-Present

Co-Chair of DEI Initiatives (with Bella Ren) of Wharton Doctoral Council, 2021-Present

Ph.D. Social Chair of Operations, Information, Decisions Department, 2019-2020

### **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

---

Teaching Assistant for 'Managerial Decision Making' (MBA, Spring 2020; Spring 2021; Spring 2022; Spring 2023)

Teaching Assistant for 'Foundations of Teamwork and Leadership' (MBA, Fall 2021)

Guest Lecturer for 'Evaluating Evidence' (Undergraduate, Fall 2021; Topic: Audit studies in behavioral science)

### **MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**

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Kirgios, E.L., **Rai, A.**, Chang, E.H., & Milkman, K.L. (2022) "To Fight Bias, Consider Highlighting Your Race or Gender." *Scientific American* (March 28, 2022)

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

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Academy of Management (AOM)

International Association for Conflict Management (IACM)

Society for Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM)

Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)

### **OTHER RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

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Research Coordinator, Behavior Change for Good (University of Pennsylvania), 2017-2018, Philadelphia, PA  
Research Assistant, Elizabeth Levy Paluck Lab (Princeton University), 2014-2017, Princeton, NJ

## REFERENCES

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**Katherine L. Milkman** (Letter Writer)  
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Wharton School of Business  
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**Sandra C. Matz** (Letter Writer)  
*Associate Professor of Management*  
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**Angela L. Duckworth** (Additional Reference)  
*Rosa Lee and Egbert Chang Professor*  
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**Rebecca L. Schaumberg** (Letter Writer)  
*Assistant Professor of Operations, Information and Decisions*  
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**Maurice E. Schweitzer** (Additional Reference)  
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## APPENDIX: SELECTED RESEARCH ABSTRACTS

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### **The Isolated Choice Effect and Its Implications for Gender Diversity in Organizations** with Edward H. Chang, Erika L. Kirgios, and Katherine L. Milkman (*Management Science*, 2020)

We highlight a feature of personnel selection decisions that can influence the gender diversity of groups and teams. Specifically, we show that people are less likely to choose candidates whose gender would increase group diversity when making personnel selections in isolation (i.e., when they are responsible for selecting a single group member) than when making collections of choices (i.e., when they are responsible for selecting multiple group members). We call this the *isolated choice effect*. Across six preregistered experiments ( $N = 3,509$ ), we demonstrate that the isolated choice effect has important consequences for group diversity. When making sets of hiring and selection decisions (as opposed to making a single hire), people construct more gender-diverse groups. Mediation and moderation studies suggest that people do not attend as much to diversity when making isolated selection choices, which drives this effect.

### **Group Size and Its Impact on Diversity-Related Perceptions and Hiring Decisions** with Edward H. Chang, Erika L. Kirgios, and Katherine L. Milkman (*2nd Revise and Resubmit at Organization Science*)

Why do some groups face backlash for lacking diversity, while others escape censure? We suggest that a group's size and Bayesian reasoning may help explain this puzzle. Because each member of a group represents the outcome of a selection decision, people have more information about larger homogeneous groups. Thus, we theorize that, consistent with Bayesian reasoning, people make different inferences about larger homogeneous groups than smaller ones, with downstream consequences for diversity management. Across a field study and three experiments, we examine how a homogeneous group's size influences diversity-related perceptions and hiring decisions. We first examine U.S. corporate boards in the S&P 1500, finding that among larger boards, all-male boards and all-White boards are significantly underrepresented relative to chance expectations. This underrepresentation increases as a function of board size, suggesting that larger groups work harder to avoid homogeneity. Moreover, larger homogeneous boards are more likely than smaller ones to add women or underrepresented racial minorities. We corroborate these field results with three experiments that generalize our findings to other settings. One experiment also examines the underlying mechanisms for the effect: Larger homogeneous groups are viewed as having (i) selection processes that are more likely to be unfair; (ii) less diversity; and (iii) greater impression management concerns than smaller homogeneous groups, all of which predict a greater likelihood of diversifying. Our findings highlight the role of group size in shaping diversity-related perceptions and decisions, and the benefits of incorporating Bayesian reasoning into theories about how groups are judged and selected.

### **Women and Racial Minorities Benefit from Explicitly Stating their Identity** with Erika L. Kirgios, Edward H. Chang, and Katherine L. Milkman (*Nature Human Behaviour*, 2022)

Receiving help can make or break a career, but women and racial/ethnic minorities do not always receive the support they seek. Across two audit experiments—one with politicians and another with students—as well as an online experiment (total  $N=5,145$ ), we test whether women and racial/ethnic minorities benefit from explicitly mentioning their demographic identity in requests for help, e.g., by including statements like *As a Black woman* in their communications. We propose that when a help seeker highlights their marginalized identity, it may activate prospective helpers' motivations to avoid prejudiced reactions and increase their willingness to provide support. Here we show that, when women and racial/ethnic minorities explicitly mentioned their demographic identity in help-seeking emails, politicians and students responded 24.4% (7.42 percentage-points) and 79.6% (2.73 percentage-points) more often, respectively. These findings suggest that deliberately mentioning identity in requests for help can improve outcomes for women and racial/ethnic minorities.

**A Field Experiment on Goal Framing to Boost Volunteering: The Tradeoff Between Goal Granularity and Flexibility** with Marissa A. Sharif, Edward H. Chang, Katherine L. Milkman, and Angela L. Duckworth (*Conditionally Accepted at the Journal of Applied Psychology*)

Research suggests that breaking overarching goals into more granular subgoals is beneficial for goal progress. However, making goals more granular often involves reducing the flexibility provided to complete them, and recent work shows that flexibility can also be beneficial for goal pursuit. We examine this tradeoff between granularity and flexibility in subgoals in a pre-registered, large-scale field experiment ( $N = 9,108$ ) conducted over several months with volunteers at a national crisis counseling organization. A pre-registered vignette pilot study ( $N = 900$ ) suggests that the subgoal framing tested in the field could benefit goal-seekers by bolstering their self-efficacy and goal commitment, and by discouraging procrastination. Our field experiment finds that reframing an overarching goal of 200 hours of volunteering into more granular subgoals (either 4 hours of volunteering every week or 8 hours every two weeks) increased hours volunteered by 8% over a 12-week period. Finally, we find that increasing subgoal flexibility led to more durable benefits from creating subgoals, but we find mixed evidence as to whether increasing subgoal flexibility directly boosted productivity.