

Praveen Punia

Doctoral Candidate, University of Houston

Phone: (832) 929-5366, email: ppraveen@bauer.uh.edu

Education

C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of Houston	2021 – Present
Doctor of Philosophy, Empirical Marketing	
Advisor: Prof. Michael Ahearne	
University of Hyderabad, India	2014 – 2019
Integrated Program in Financial Economics (MS)	

Research Interests

Substantive:	Better Marketing for Better World, Sales Force Management, Sales Incentives, Live Streaming, Online Gaming
Methodological:	Causal Modelling, Machine Learning, Survival Modelling, Time Series, Text Analysis

Doctoral Dissertation

Topic:	Career Management in the Sales Force
Committee:	Michael Ahearne (Chair), Johannes Habel, Jim Hess, Thomas J Steenburgh

Papers Under Review

So Near Yet So Far: The Impact of Near Misses on Salesperson Turnover

with Michael Ahearne, Arpit Agrawal, Yashar Atefi, and Johannes Habel – *invited for 3rd round revision at the Journal of Marketing Research*

- Won the best paper award at 2024 OFR Symposium, Sales Management Track at 2024 AMA Winter Academic Conference

How Does Sales Experience Affect Life Satisfaction?

with Michael Ahearne, Arpit Agrawal, and Johannes Habel – *under review at the Journal of Marketing Research*

- Conference Presentations: 2024 AMA Winter Academic Conference, 2024 University of Houston Doctoral Symposium
- Accepted at MSI Working Paper Series

Praveen Punia

Doctoral Candidate, University of Houston

Phone: (832) 929-5366, email: ppraveen@bauer.uh.edu

Papers Preparing for Submission

Freedom Isn't Free: How Self-Employment Reshapes Work, Health, and Happiness

with Michael Ahearne and Johannes Habel – *preparing for submission to the Journal of Business Venturing by Spring 2025*

Build vs. Acquire: The Impact of Internal vs. External Sales Hiring on Firm Performance

with Michael Ahearne, Johannes Habel, and Jim Hess – *preparing for submission to the Marketing Science by Summer 2025*

A Predictive Framework for Forecasting Long-Term Video Game Performance Using Key Launch Period Metrics

with Sam Hui and Rahul Suhag – *working on the model specification; data collection completed*

Awards & Honors

AMA – Sheth Foundation Doctoral Consortium Fellow	2025
Sales SIG Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Award Winner	2025
University of Houston Symposium Fellow (Presenter)	2024
President Fellowship, University of Houston	2021 – 2023
Bauer Doctoral Fellowship, Bauer College of Business, University of Houston	2021 – 2026

Teaching Experience

Instructor, MARK3338: Introduction to Marketing Analytics	Summer 2024
Instructor Ratings: 4.64/5.00	

Research Experience

C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of Houston, Houston	2019 – Present
Graduate Assistant to Prof. Michael Ahearne	
Indian School of Business, Hyderabad	2019 – 2021
Research Associate with Prof. S. Arunachalam	

Industry Experience

Academic Consultant, Xactly Corporation	2023 – Present
Transform and analyze large, structured data into actionable business insights and solutions	
Work directly with industry professionals to present and discuss actionable insights	
Participate in regular meetings with executives across the organization	

Computer Skills

R, Python, STATA, MATLAB

Praveen Punia

Doctoral Candidate, University of Houston

Phone: (832) 929-5366, email: ppraveen@bauer.uh.edu

Relevant Coursework

Marketing Courses

Seminar in Quantitative Marketing (Dr. Sriram Venkataraman)	Spring 2020
Marketing Research Methods (Dr. Ed Blair)	Fall 2021
Marketing Management and Strategy (Dr. Mike Ahearne)	Spring 2022
Marketing Models (Dr. Kachuen Sam Hui)	Fall 2022
Organizational Behavior and Management Theory (Dr. Derek Avery)	Spring 2023

Methods Courses

Mathematical Optimization Techniques for Economics	Fall 2017
Game Theory	Spring 2018
Time Series Modeling	Fall 2018
Financial Modelling	Spring 2019
Probability	Fall 2019
Linear Algebra	Fall 2019
Data Analytics for Marketing	Fall 2018
Econometrics – Cross Sectional Data	Fall 2019
Econometrics – Panel Data	Spring 2020
Quantitative Economic Analysis	Fall 2021
Microeconomics Theory	Fall 2021
Applied Econometric Analysis	Spring 2022
Data Science and Machine Learning	Spring 2022
Northwestern Advanced Causal Inference Workshop	Fall 2022
Advanced Topics in Econometrics	Spring 2023

Additional Information

Languages known: Hindi (Native), English (Fluent), Urdu (Fluent), Telugu (Basic)

Institutional and Professional Service

AMA DocSIG Assistant Vice Chair of Productivity Research	2021 – 2023
AMA DocSIG Vice Chair of Productivity Research	2023 – 2024
University of Houston 41 st Marketing Doctoral Symposium Organizer	2023 – 2024
Thought Leadership on the Sales Profession Conference Coordinator	2023 – 2025
AMA Winter Academic Conference Reviewer	2024
AMA Summer Academic Conference Reviewer	2024

Praveen Punia

Doctoral Candidate, University of Houston

Phone: (832) 929-5366, email: ppraveen@bauer.uh.edu

References

Michael Ahearne

C.T. Bauer Professor of Marketing and
Research Director, Stagner Sales Excellence
Institute
C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of
Houston
Email: mahearne.uh@gmail.com

Jim Hess

C.T. Bauer Professor of Marketing Science
C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of
Houston
Email: jhess@uh.edu

Johannes Habel

Michael J. Cemo Associate Professor of
Marketing
C.T. Bauer College of Business, University of
Houston
Email: jhabel@bauer.uh.edu

Thomas J Steenburgh

Ralph Owen Dean and Professor of
Marketing
Owen Graduate School of Management,
Vanderbilt University
Email: thomas.steenburgh@vanderbilt.edu

Praveen Punia

Doctoral Candidate, University of Houston

Phone: (832) 929-5366, email: ppraveen@bauer.uh.edu

Selected Research Abstracts

How Does Sales Experience Affect Life Satisfaction? (*MSI Working Paper; Under Review at JMR*)

Business-to-business (B2B) sales is perhaps the most ambivalent career the marketing discipline offers, entailing extreme advantages and disadvantages that might change individuals' lives for the better or worse. Thus, it is unclear how experience in a B2B sales role impacts an individual's life satisfaction, a terminal outcome of utmost importance given our pursuit of better marketing for a better world. We test this effect in three studies including cross-sectional data of 64,090 individuals, longitudinal panel data of over 12,500 individuals, and qualitative interviews with salespeople. Interestingly, we find that having experience in a B2B sales role on average enhances life satisfaction. This is because sales experience equips individuals with distinct interpersonal skills that they use to find greater satisfaction outside the work context, such as helping others, enforcing own interests, and building social relationships. The effect of sales experience on life satisfaction is more positive for individuals with a plastic personality, who are more likely to gain and transfer skills. Thereby, this study adds a neglected antecedent to life satisfaction theory and offers actionable implications for managers and educators on improving life satisfaction within organizations and society at large.

So Near Yet So Far: The Impact of Near Misses on Salesperson Turnover (*Invited for 3rd Round Revision at JMR*)

The role of sales is unique within organizations, marked by its high-profile nature and objective performance metrics. Meeting sales targets is vitally important for salespeople, and failure to do so can lead to significant frustration. It is well-established that quota attainment is a key factor influencing a salesperson's decision to quit. Research consistently shows that the lower the quota attainment, the higher the likelihood of the salesperson quitting. However, our study offers a new perspective and adds a subtle complexity to this understanding. Drawing from the concept of counterfactual thinking, we propose that salespeople who narrowly miss sales targets are more likely to quit, even if they are generally high performers. We examine this with two studies: 1) a panel dataset of over 2,900 retail salespeople and 2) cross-industry data on over 25,000 salespeople. Our results confirm that repeated quota near misses cause turnover and reveal three sources of heterogeneity: the effect of quota near misses on turnover increases with higher variable pay percentage and decreases with higher maximum possible pay and higher group performance diversity. Our findings extend sales force turnover theory and provide actionable implications for managers who aim at reducing turnover.

Build vs. Acquire: The Impact of Internal vs. External Sales Hiring on Firm Performance (*Working Paper*)

In business-to-business (B2B) sales, firms face critical decisions about salesforce compensation and skill development that significantly impact performance. This paper examines two key questions: (1) What are the performance implications of hiring salespeople internally versus externally? And (2) Among the salespeople hired internally versus externally who are like to stay

Praveen Punia

Doctoral Candidate, University of Houston

Phone: (832) 929-5366, email: ppraveen@bauer.uh.edu

longer with the firm? We develop an analytical model that captures the key trade-offs in these decisions and test it using a unique dataset of 40 companies. For hiring source decisions, we show that while internal hires initially outperform due to firm-specific knowledge, external hires exhibit steeper learning curves and may eventually match or exceed internal hire performance. Our empirical analysis validates these theoretical predictions and quantifies the magnitude of these effects across different industry contexts. The findings provide actionable insights for sales managers making hiring decisions under uncertainty, while contributing to theories of salesforce management and human capital development.

Freedom Isn't Free: How Self-Employment Reshapes Work, Health, and Happiness

(Working Paper)

Self-employment represents a fundamental trade-off between autonomy and personal well-being, yet its impact on individuals' lives remains incompletely understood. This research examines three critical questions: (1) How does transitioning to self-employment affect key life outcomes including income, work hours, life satisfaction, job satisfaction, health satisfaction, and leisure time? (2) How do individual characteristics—specifically gender and age—moderate these relationships? (3) How does business size influence the trade-offs between economic success and personal well-being in self-employment? Using longitudinal data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (SOEP) tracking over 92,000 individuals. Our findings reveal that self-employment improves job satisfaction and life satisfaction but creates significant trade-offs, particularly around work hours, leisure time, and health. The effects are strongly moderated by gender – with men experiencing higher income gains but worse health outcomes, while women achieve better work-life balance at the cost of lower earnings. Age and business size further moderate these relationships, with older entrepreneurs and those managing smaller ventures better able to preserve work-life balance. These results enhance our understanding of how entrepreneurship shapes individual well-being and highlight important boundary conditions around gender, age, and organizational context. The findings have implications for theories of occupational choice and work-life balance, while offering practical insights for potential entrepreneurs and policymakers.

A Predictive Framework for Forecasting Long-Term Video Game Performance Using Key Launch Period Metrics *(Work in Progress)*

This study develops a predictive framework to evaluate the performance of video games by analyzing metrics from their initial release period. By leveraging early data on streamer engagement, subscription trends, and tipping behavior, the model forecasts future subscriber growth and tipping potential. The approach combines machine learning techniques with key performance indicators such as user retention, playtime, and monetization patterns. These insights can guide developers and publishers in optimizing game strategies, enhancing user experience, and planning future content updates or marketing campaigns to maximize long-term success.