Research Statement

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My research centers on the intersections of organizational economics, labor economics, and personnel economics, focusing particularly on how recruitment processes, socioemotional skills, and organizational dynamics shape labor market outcomes and individual career trajectories. I employ large-scale data analyses to explore critical workplace phenomena, including interview outcomes, job satisfaction, and employee turnover across diverse industries. Additionally, my work addresses emerging trends related to the future of work, specifically examining how organizations can effectively adapt to evolving labor dynamics and technological transformations in recruitment and employee management.

Diversity, Inclusion, and Organizational Barriers in Elite Hiring

My paper *Making the Elite: Class Discrimination at Multinationals* investigates barriers to diversity and inclusion in elite organizational roles by analyzing recruitment data from over 1,000 jobs at multinational corporations. The study specifically examines how hiring discrimination, particularly during subjective interviews that focus on cultural fit, perpetuates socioeconomic disparities. My analysis reveals that nearly 90 percent of socioeconomic (caste) disparities in hiring arise in the final interview stage, where subjective evaluations of merit and "fit" disproportionately exclude disadvantaged candidates. Significantly, candidates from disadvantaged castes who are hired demonstrate approximately 20 percent higher promotion rates compared to their socioeconomically advantaged counterparts, indicating that these biases during hiring decisions are unjustified by actual job performance.

The main contribution of my paper is demonstrating that subjective interviews serve as the central mechanism through which social class is revealed and subsequently penal-

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ized. Conceptually, this paper advances our understanding of social class by leveraging India's unique caste system to explicitly measure socioeconomic status—a clarity typically unattainable in Western contexts. Western measures of social class typically rely on ambiguous and overlapping indicators such as accents, educational credentials, and social networks, complicating precise identification of class disparities. India's caste system provides a well-defined, consolidated measure of social hierarchy, overcoming this measurement barrier and enabling precise quantification of class disparities in elite hiring. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's framework, which identifies social class as an interplay between economic, cultural, and social capital, the Indian context allows for a clearer analysis of how these forms of capital consolidate and manifest in discriminatory hiring practices.

This research contributes meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by uncovering the specific mechanisms through which bias influences elite hiring processes. The findings emphasize the critical need for organizations to reassess their recruitment practices, particularly at advanced stages where subjective judgments create substantial barriers for underrepresented groups. As organizations increasingly recognize diversity and adaptability as essential for sustainable success, addressing these biases becomes crucial in developing inclusive and equitable leadership pipelines.

The Role of Job Interviews in Organizational Fit and Labor Market Outcomes

In my co-authored paper, *Interviews*, we examine 1.5 million interview reports from Glassdoor to investigate how the perceived difficulty of job interviews serves as an informational signal to candidates about their potential work environment and colleagues. This research demonstrates that candidates, particularly those interviewing for high-paying roles, are significantly more likely to reject job offers after experiencing interviews they perceive as easy, associating such experiences with poor organizational fit and a lower-quality work environment. Specifically, we find that workers who accept positions after easier interviews report substantially lower job satisfaction and exhibit shorter tenure compared to their counterparts who underwent more challenging interviews, highlighting that interview difficulty conveys valuable signals regarding match quality.

Leveraging advanced text analysis through large language models, we further analyze the content of interview narratives to uncover the underlying signals embedded within perceptions of interview difficulty. Our findings reveal that challenging interviews communicate

valuable organizational characteristics such as colleague competence, opportunities for skill development, and engaging work experiences. In contrast, easy interviews convey a perception of low selectivity and insufficient opportunities for personal and professional growth. Thus, our study underscores the dual nature of interviews, functioning not only as tools for employers to evaluate candidates but equally as mechanisms enabling candidates to assess prospective employers.

These insights carry significant implications for organizational recruitment practices and the broader labor market, particularly in the context of increasingly automated hiring processes. Our findings suggest that removing traditional interviews in favor of purely algorithmic selection methods may inadvertently strip workers of crucial information regarding firm quality, organizational culture, and peer quality, leading to less optimal matching outcomes. Future research will explore how evolving hiring methods, including remote and automated interviewing technologies, might alter these informational dynamics, especially in high-skill and high-demand job markets. This line of inquiry is critical for designing recruitment strategies that effectively balance efficiency and informational transparency to foster improved employee-firm matches and organizational performance.

Socioemotional Skills and Success in Top Business Schools

My research on socioemotional skills is another key focus area, particularly as it relates to success in elite MBA programs and subsequent job placements. In my co-authored paper *Personality and Professional Pathways*, we explore how socioemotional traits such as industriousness, gregariousness, and compassion play a critical role in shaping MBA students' academic and career outcomes. Using pre-matriculation data on personality measures collected for applicants to a top US business school, we find that socioemotional skills often outperform traditional standardized test scores (GMAT/GRE) in predicting key outcomes such as GPA, job search intensity, employment, and eventual compensation.

This work is novel in illuminating the direct and indirect effects of these socioemotional skills on career outcomes. For instance, while both industriousness and gregariousness positively predict eventual compensation, they do so through different channels. In particular, industriousness is strongly associated with academic performance, whereas gregariousness drives job search intensity, leading to higher compensation. These findings challenge the conventional emphasis on cognitive skills in elite educational settings, suggesting that socioemotional traits are equally, if not more, important in predicting academic and career

success. This research provides valuable insights for both business schools and employers looking to improve their talent assessment and management strategies. Understanding the role of socioemotional skills is also crucial for navigating the changing landscape of leadership in the future of work.

Future Directions

My future research agenda will continue to explore the pivotal role of organizational fit, recruitment processes, and socioemotional skills in shaping labor market dynamics. A key focus will be on advancing the understanding of organizational biases and identifying strategies to mitigate them. Additionally, I intend to extend my exploration of socioemotional skills by examining their impact on entrepreneurial success and innovation-driven firms, particularly in environments where the capacity to manage uncertainty and foster collaboration is critical.

I also aim to deepen my research on how remote work and technological changes are reshaping recruitment practices, organizational culture, and employee satisfaction. In the context of the future of work, these shifts present opportunities for organizations to innovate and maintain competitive advantages in increasingly complex environments. By continuing to blend quantitative methods with insights from organizational behavior, I seek to provide evidence-based recommendations for firms aiming to attract, retain, and nurture top talent in increasingly complex and diverse environments.