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**Rising Scholars Conference  
Policy and Society Student Research Presentations**

**Shilaan Alzahawi**  
shilaan@stanford.edu

**Stanford University**

Shilaan Alzahawi is a Master student in Statistics at Ghent University and a PhD candidate in Organizational Behavior at the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Her research focuses on the science of team science: the coordination and effectiveness of large-scale science collaborations. In addition, Shilaan is interested in open, reproducible, and rigorous science.

**ABSTRACT:**

The Sway and Credibility of Crowd Science  
Shilaan Alzahawi  
Benôit Monin

Every day, important scientific findings are rejected at large. From man-made climate change to the safety and effectiveness of Covid-19 vaccinations, science skepticism appears to have run rampant among lay consumers in modern (American) society (Hornsey & Fielding, 2017).

Science skepticism is not simply a phenomenon of the lay masses. In the past decade, doubts about the veracity of scientific research have emerged from within the scientific community itself. Reliance on widely followed research practices, some scientists have come to realize, can generate impossible results, such as the ability of humans to feel what's in the future (Bem, 2011) or to become younger in age from listening to certain music (Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, 2011). Highly impactful titles include, for example, "Why most published research findings are false" (Ioannidis, 2005; cited over 10,000 times) and "False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant" (Simmons, Nelson, Simonsohn, 2011; cited over 5,000 times).

What can we do about the existence of these widespread doubts, sometimes referred to as a crisis of confidence, about science? Several tools have been proposed to improve the rigor and reliability of scientific research and, consequently, combat the crisis of confidence. One such tool is the crowd or big team science approach, which leverages a large number of individuals or teams at specific stages of the research process (Uhlmann et al., 2019).

Crowd science aims to promote the diversity, transparency, and credibility of scientific research, by running large-scale cross-cultural research collaborations that actively engage typically underrepresented populations. Does it meet its promises in reality? In this talk, I will report the results of an experiment in which I explore whether scientific findings emerging from a crowd (vs. a typical science collaboration) are more likely to (1) sway the prior beliefs of research consumers, (2) increase ratings of confidence and credibility, and (3) decrease ratings of bias and error.

**Cintia Hinojosa**  
chinojosa@chicagobooth.edu

**University of Chicago**

Cintia Hinojosa is a first-generation student in the Behavioral Science PhD program at The University of Chicago Booth School of Business with a background in designing and evaluating psychological interventions. Her current research explores how people come to understand the structural forces that perpetuate racial disparities, how causal attributions of social problems influence support for relevant policies, and how to harness adolescent reactance against societal inequality to motivate civic and community building behaviors.

**ABSTRACT:**

Given the tendency to attribute deviant behavior to individual dispositions (Ross, 1977), how does consciousness of the societal conditions underlying stark racial disparities, such as gun violence in poor neighborhoods of color, influence support for relevant public policies? Three experimental studies test the hypothesis that an understanding of structural racism as a root cause of racial disparities in community gun violence shifts support for public policy solutions. In study 1 (N = 570), online participants read an ostensibly real news article that explained one of three narratives: how structural racism creates conditions that foster gun violence (structural condition), how an individual's impulsive traits lead to gun violence (individual condition), or an unrelated topic (control condition). Regression analyses controlling for demographic variables revealed that, compared to the latter two conditions, participants in the structural condition reported less support for punitive policies to address gun violence, greater support for restorative socioeconomic policies, and lower levels of symbolic racism. No significant differences were found between the individual and control condition. Study 2 (N = 1,034) pitted the structural article against a revised version that mentions the phrase "systemic racism" without explaining the causal mechanisms (naïve structural condition). The results suggest that merely calling out systemic racism is not sufficient to replicate the main effects on punitive policy support, restorative policy support, or racial attitudes. Study 3 will use a nationally representative sample to provide a robust test of whether the main effects are unmoderated by political orientation. Our preliminary findings highlight the importance of substantively explaining the causal connection between systemic racism and relevant societal problems to advance bipartisan, equitable policy solutions.

**Sandra Portocarrero**  
svp2118@columbia.edu

**Columbia University**

Sandra Portocarrero is a qualitative scholar studying issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in organizations. Sandra is finishing her PhD in Sociology at Columbia University.

**ABSTRACT:**

External Shocks and Racialized Expertise in Organizations:  
The Case of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workers

The year 2020 was a catalyst for organizations. First, the COVID19 pandemic fundamentally altered workplace relations. Second, the killing of George Floyd on May 25th, 2020, gave rise to protests across the United States, sparking calls to address structural racism embedded in organizations. Scholars across disciplines are producing a cornucopia of research to examine the consequences of the pandemic at work. However, less attention has centered on how George Floyd's killing and the protests that followed have shaped the American workplace, its workers, and the expertise of specific groups of workers that might have been affected by this unfortunate event. This paper extends current organizational theorizing on events, race and ethnicity, and expertise by developing a framework that clarifies how an external event altered the expertise of a particular group of workers, giving rise to a form of racialized expertise. Specifically, I study how the killing of George Floyd altered the expertise of diversity, equity, and inclusion (hereafter DEI) workers at a large public university that I call Redwood University.

I build a theoretical model of racialized expertise, and provide rich empirical in-depth interview data gathered before and after the killing of George Floyd to answer three interconnected questions. First, I ask: how does the ethnoracial background of DEI workers shape the perceived fit to fulfill the tasks associated with DEI work at Redwood? Preliminary data analysis reveals how, before the event, the ethnoracial background of DEI workers played a role in how DEI workers are perceived as fit to fulfill the tasks related to DEI work, and on how workers present previous experiences that prepared them to do this type of work. When talking about the previous experiences and skills that have prepared them for their current positions, a persistent feature was the way workers referred to the personal experiences that non-White workers have lived as a form of preparation for this type of work. In contrast, when talking about the experiences and skills that have prepared White workers to carry out DEI work, workers highlighted their previous professional experiences, rarely referring to experiences related to the ethnoracial background of these workers. To explain this juxtaposition, I coin the term diversity capital, which I define as the perceived value attached to the social assets of employees (e.g., credentials, accumulated expertise, ethnoracial background) that can help the organization's diversity and inclusion goals.

My second question asks: how did the organization's demands of DEI workers after the killing of George Floyd intensify the perception of the ethnoracial background of non-White DEI workers as a form of legitimate credential to perform DEI work? To answer this question, I draw from data gathered both before and after the killing of George Floyd. While credentials are supposed to be objective, organizationally generated statuses showing suitability for employment and legitimating modern stratification systems (Collins 1979), organization and race scholars argue that "whiteness provides access to organizational resources, legitimizing work hierarchies, and expanding white agency" (Ray 2019: 41). My initial

analysis potentially flips this script, showing that the external pressures emerging from the killing of George Floyd appear to legitimize the personal experiences of non-White DEI workers as valid credentials, increasing their diversity capital.

Finally, building on my findings, I propose a general theory of racialized expertise in organizations. I argue that DEI expertise is a highly racialized relational project, rooted in the race of workers and altered by pivotal societal events. While there was already a process in which individuals at Redwood came to see the ethnoracial background of workers as a credential, the murder of George Floyd heightened this process. Scholars define expertise as a network that links together objects, actors, techniques, devices, and institutional and spatial arrangements (Cambrosio, Limonges, and Hoffman 1992; Eyal 2013). A theory of racialized expertise shows how the race of workers is embedded in the network that links together actors, techniques, devices, institutional, and spatial arrangements.

**Thomas Ware**  
teware1@asu.edu

**Arizona State University**

Thomas is currently a second-year Ph.D. student in the information systems department at Arizona State University W.P. Carey School of Business. His current focus is on trust, perception, and uses of artificial intelligence. Thomas graduated with his bachelor's in finance and MBA from Bowling Green State University in 2011 and 2017, respectively.

**ABSTRACT:**

Investigation on how a Country's Socio-Economic and Political Environment Influences AI Perception  
Thomas Ware, Benjamin Shao, TS Raghu

Artificial intelligence (AI) is becoming one of the most pervasive technologies of the 21st century. The investment in AI continues to grow exponentially, while the cost of creation is decreasing over time. This combination will continue to spawn innovations, impacting the everyday lives of individuals, how organizations operate, national and global economies. Given the general-purpose nature of AI, previous literature on perception and adoption of technology is no longer applicable. Using status quo bias theory as the theoretical framework, we hypothesize that the socio-economic and political environments that should foster positive perceptions and adoption intentions actually encourages unfavorable perceptions of AI, despite empirical evidence suggesting otherwise, due to a societal preference of maintaining the status quo. We further refine our findings by performing a multi-level analysis by bringing in individual subjective well-being (SWB) as a moderating factor. We test our hypotheses using a mixed-effects ranked-ordered logit model. This research provides empirical evidence of the negative relationship associated between socio-economic and political environments; however, the results show the role of an individual's subjective well-being unambiguously moderate this relationship, showing only the most educated and highest income earners have favorable perceptions of AI, which could have significant implications for widening economic inequality. This research contributes to literature in the following significant ways; 1) this is the first study to examine the influence of the socio-economic and political climates of one's country's perception of AI. and 2) introduces status quo bias to AI perception literature as a mechanism of technology resistance. This study provides a mechanism for both companies and governments to understand the demographics of target populations, how well these technologies may penetrate respective markets, and suggests any policy changes to influence the adoption of AI should consist of specific targeted demographic interventions to foster AI adoption that benefits all members of society.