

Nicholas Owsley

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EDUCATION

University of Chicago, Booth School of Business	Expected 2027
<i>PhD, Behavioral Science</i>	
Dissertation Committee Chairs: Erika L. Kirgios, Alex Imas	
Dissertation Committee: George Wu, Edward H. Chang	
University of Cape Town	2017
<i>MA, Economics (Development Specialization)</i>	
Distinction, Top Student	
University of Cape Town	2012
<i>BSocSci Honors, Politics, Philosophy & Economics</i>	
First Class Honors	

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Discrimination, Diversity, Motivation, Judgment and Decision-Making

REVISIONS AND UNDER REVIEW

Chang, L.W. *, **Owsley, N.***, Kirgios, E. L., Rai, A., & Milkman, K. L. *Evaluating the effect of shortlist quotas on gender diversity*. Minor revision at *Organization Science*. (*Joint first author with Linda Chang)

Owsley, N. *Discriminating Because Others Might: Anticipating Third-Party Discrimination*. Under review at *Management Science*. (**Job Market Paper 1**)

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Working Papers:

Owsley, N., Mandel, G., & Kirgios, E.L. *Sponsorship and Race in the Housing Market: Evidence from a Large-Scale Audit Experiment*. Working paper. Target: *Science*. (**Job Market Paper 2**)

Owsley, N., Wu, G., & Rowsey, D. *Dynamic Motivation in Goal Pursuit: How Near Misses and Narrow Wins Affect Subsequent Performance*. Working paper. Target: *Management Science*.

Owsley, N., Hajimoladarvish, N., & Laumas, A. *Some Biases are WEIRDer than Others: Testing Canonical Behavioral Biases in Two Non-WEIRD Samples*. Working paper. Target: *PNAS*.

Owsley, N. & Burns, J. *What Mom and Dad Don't Know, Might Hurt Me: Messaging Parents to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism*. Working paper. Target: *Journal of Human Resources*.

Shapiro, J., **Owsley, N.**, & Chang, J. *The Unreliability of Value Elicitation Techniques*. Working paper. Target: *Experimental Economics*.

Other work in Progress:

Owsley, N. & Risen, J. T. *How Motivated Reasoning Shapes Intergroup and Self Beliefs*.

Owsley, N., Kirgios, E.L., & Chang, E.H. *Beliefs about Outgroup Preferences as a Source of Discrimination*

Owsley, N., Fadayomi, T., & Urminsky, O. *The False Start Effect: Interruptions during Fresh Starts hurt Motivation More*.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Herman, B., Panin, A., Wellman, E.I., Blair, G., Pruett, L.D., Ochieng'Opalo, K., Alarian, H.M., Grossman, A.N., Tan, Y., Dyzenhaus, A.P., & **Owsley, N.** (2022). Field experiments in the global south: Assessing risks, localizing benefits, and addressing positionality. *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 55(4), 769–772. (Author order randomized: all authors contributed equally)
- Bago, B., Kovacs, M., Protzko, J., Nagy, T., Kekecs, Z., Palfi, B., ... **Owsley, N.**, ... et al. (2022). Situational factors shape moral judgements in the trolley dilemma in Eastern, Southern and Western countries in a culturally diverse sample. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 6(6), 880–895.
- Jones, B.C., DeBruine, L.M., Flake, J.K., Liuzza, M.T., Antfolk, J., Arinze, N.C., ... **Owsley, N.**, ... et al. (2021). To which world regions does the valence–dominance model of social perception apply? *Nature Human Behaviour*, 5(1), 159–169.
- Wang, K., Goldenberg, A., Dorison, C.A., Miller, J.K., Uusberg, A., Lerner, J.S., ... **Owsley, N.**, ... et al. (2021). A multi-country test of brief reappraisal interventions on emotions during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 5(8), 1089–1110.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Discriminating Because Others Might: Anticipating Third-Party Discrimination (Owsley)

- International Association of Conflict Management (IACM) Annual Conference, 2024; 2026
- Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP), JDM preconference, 2026
- Subjective Probability, Utility, and Decision Making (SPUDM), 2025
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM) Annual Conference, 2024
- Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Meeting, 2026

Dynamic Motivation in Goal Pursuit: How Near Misses and Narrow Wins Affect Subsequent Performance (Owsley & Wu)

- Society for Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM) Annual Conference, 2023
- Behavioral Decision Research in Management (BDRM), 2024
- Academy of Management (AOM) Annual Meeting, 2025
- International Association of Conflict Management (IACM) Annual Conference, 2025

Sponsorship and Race in the Housing Market: Evidence from a Large-Scale Audit Experiment (Owsley, Mandel, & Kirgios)

- International Association of Conflict Management (IACM) Annual Conference, 2025

Some Biases are WEIRDer than Others: Testing Canonical Behavioral Biases in Two Non-WEIRD Samples (Owsley, Hajimoladarvish, & Laumas)

- International Association of Conflict Management (IACM) Annual Conference, 2024
- Society for the Advancement of Behavioral Economics (SABE), 2020
- Symposium on Economic Experiments in Developing Countries (SEEDEC), 2019
- Africa Social and Behavioral Change (ASBC), 2019

What Mom and Dad Don't Know, Might Hurt Me: Messaging Parents to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism (Owsley & Burns)

- Africa Social and Behavioral Change (ASBC), 2019
- OECD Behavioral Insights Forum, 2018

GRANTS

University of Chicago, Booth School of Business Competitive PhD Office Grant (\$3,500)	2024
“” (\$4,000)	2023
IPA Competitive Fund on Advanced Research Methods in the Social Sciences	2021
“Measuring, Quantifying and Decreasing Survey Inattention in Mobile Surveys” (\$18,679)	

“Sensitive Behavior Measurement and Validation of the Item Count Technique” (\$19,921)

Wee-DiFine / BRAC Research Grant “Understanding How Mental Accounting Impacts Women’s Savings and Economic Empowerment” (\$43,350) 2020

World Bank ComPEL Impact Evaluation Grant “Business Plan Competition in Kenya” (\$200,000) 2017

AWARDS AND HONORS

Thesis nominated for ESSA Founders Medal for Best Economics Masters Thesis in South Africa 2017

Top Masters in Economics student; Best Thesis, University of Cape Town 2017

David and Elaine Potter Fellowship (full tuition & stipend) 2015

Allan Gray Top Academic Achievement Award, Undergraduate Economics 2011

Economic Research South Africa Prize, Undergraduate Economics 2010

US Commerce Faculty Dean’s List 2009–2011

TEACHING

University courses: Behavioral Decision-Making in Management (MBAs, TA), Behavioral Economics (Undergraduate, TA), Introduction to Political Science (Undergraduate, TA)

Professional training: Experiments and Causal Inference (designed and implemented staff training at a research firm)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Lead (Associate Director), Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Nairobi: 2021

Set up and led a division focused on improving research method rigor, transparency, and cross-cultural validity in experimental research. Developed a grant-funded research agenda and managed a team of research assistants.

Senior Research Specialist & Associate, Busara Center for Behavioral Economics, Nairobi: 2017–2020

Designed and managed a portfolio of randomized experiments in Sub-Saharan Africa and India, collaborating with national and regional governments and private companies to run policy-oriented behavioral research in the Global South; led training in experimental methods.

Research Assistant, Research Unit in Behavioural & Neuroeconomics, Cape Town: 2016–2017

Led an RCT testing the impact of SMS communication on after-school attendance in low-income schools, and a research program testing the effect of afterschool programs on academic performance.

Research Assistant, Institute for Humanities in Africa (HUMA), Cape Town: 2015

Researched the political economy of Affirmative Action policy in South Africa.

Assistant Project Manager, Fetola, Cape Town: 2013–2014

Helped scale a graduate employment program from 200 to 6,500 participants; built communication and data management systems and conducted program evaluation.