

Jose Alfredo Cervantez

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EDUCATION

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania <i>Ph.D. in Operations, Information, and Decisions (OID), Decision Processes Track</i>	Philadelphia, PA <i>Expected May 2027</i>
University of California, Los Angeles <i>B.A. in Psychology, Departmental Highest Honors</i>	Los Angeles, CA <i>June 2020</i>
Cerritos Community College <i>Psychology Transfer</i>	Norwalk, CA <i>May 2018</i>

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Sponsorship, Diversity in Organizations, Judgment and Decision Making

PUBLISHED AND ACCEPTED PAPERS

1. **Cervantez, J.A.**, Pink, S. L., Chang, L., Rai, A., & Milkman, K. L. (2026). Does Feedback Enhance Diversity in Selection Decisions? *Management Science* (in press).
2. Pink, S. L., **Cervantez, J.A.**, Kirgios, E. L., Chang, E. H., & Milkman, K. L. (2025). Can Stereotype Reactance Prompt Women to Compete? A Field Experiment. *Organization Science*, 36(5), 2008–2027. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2024.19563>
3. **Cervantez, J.A.**, & Milkman, K. L. (2024). Can Nudges be Leveraged to Enhance Diversity in Organizations? A Systematic Review. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 101874. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2024.101874>
4. Wu, S. J., **Cervantez, J.A.**, & Mei, B. (2022). Preferences and Perceptions of Workplace Participation: A Cross Cultural Study. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.806481>

UNDER REVIEW AND WORKING PAPERS

5. **Cervantez, J.A.**, Preston, M., Milkman, K. L., & Kessler, J. (2026). Does Simplifying Search for Qualified Racial Minorities Boost STEM Diversity? A Field Experiment. *Under Review*.
6. Wang, B., **Cervantez, J.A.**, Xue, J., Milkman, K. L., & Wang, D. (2026). The Legibility Gap: How Gender Equity Interventions Redistribute Recognition Across Cultures. *Working Paper*.
7. **Cervantez, J.A.**, Mosleh, M., & Milkman, K. L. (2026). Does Tracking Diversity Change Behavior? A Field Experiment with Podcasters. *Working Paper*.
8. Pink, S. L., **Cervantez, J.A.**, & Milkman, K. L. (2026). All at Once or One at a Time? Goal Difficulty and the Initiation of Multiple Routine Goals. *In Preparation*. Field experiment with 8,000+ participants completed.
9. Chow, R. M., Chang, J. W., **Cervantez, J.A.**, & Chadha, A. (2026). Validating the Difference Between Mentorship and Sponsorship. *Data Collection*.
10. **Cervantez, J.A.**, Chow, R. M., & Kirgios, E. L. (2026). The Impact of Sponsorship on Sponsors. *Data Collection*.

 HANDBOOK CHAPTER

11. Kiyawat, A., **Cervantez, J.A.**, & Kirgios, E. L. (2026). Behavioral Interventions for Reducing Inequality. *The Oxford Handbook of Inclusion Practice* (in press).

 CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Does Simplifying Search for Qualified Racial Minorities Boost STEM Diversity? A Field Experiment.

- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, 2026
- Behavioral Decision Research in Management Conference, 2026
- Behavioral Science and Policy Association, 2026
- Diversity in Management and Organizations (DMO) Conference, 2026
- East Coast Doctoral Conference, 2026
- Interdisciplinary Network for Group Research (INGRoup) Conference, 2026
- International Association of Conflict Management Conference, 2025

Does Feedback Enhance Diversity in Selection Decisions?

- Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management, 2023, 2024
- Behavioral Science and Policy Association, 2024
- Diversity in Management and Organizations (DMO) Conference, 2024
- East Coast Doctoral Conference, 2024
- International Association of Conflict Management Conference, 2023

Does Tracking Diversity Change Behavior? A Field Experiment with Podcasters.

- East Coast Doctoral Conference, 2025

 GRANTS AND AWARDS

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Howard C. Kunreuther Research Fellowship	2025
British Academy/Leverhulme Research Grant	2024
University of Pennsylvania Presidential Fellowship	2022
Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program	2020

HONORS AND AWARDS

UCLA Psychology Departmental Highest Honors	2020
UCLA Alumni Scholarship	2018
UCLA Transfer Alliance Scholarship	2018
Cerritos College Academic Excellence Award	2018
Cerritos College Highest Honors, Scholars Honors Program	2018
Edison STEM Award	2018

TEACHING

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

TEACHING ASSISTANT

OIDD 6900 Managerial Decision-Making	2024 – Present
BEPP 7650 Economics of Diversity and Discrimination	Spring 2024

SERVICE AND AFFILIATIONS

The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

SERVICE

Co-Chair of DEI Initiatives, Wharton Doctoral Council	2023 – 2025
Research Associate, Coalition of Equity and Opportunity at Wharton	2023 – 2025

AD HOC REVIEWER

Nature; Nature Communications; Organization Science; Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

AFFILIATIONS

Society for Judgment and Decision Making; Academy of Management; Society for Personality and Social Psychology

PROFESSIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

ACADEMIC

Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow, <i>UCLA Anderson</i>	2020 – 2022
Research Data Analyst, <i>Carnegie Mellon University</i>	2021 – 2022

INDUSTRY

Kogi BBQ, <i>General Manager, Operations Manager, Line Cook</i>	2009 – 2014
Salt & Straw, <i>Store Manager</i>	2014 – 2016

APPENDIX: ABSTRACTS FROM PUBLISHED AND WORKING PAPERS

Cervantez, J.A., Pink, S. L., Chang, L., Rai, A., & Milkman, K. L. (2026). Does Feedback Enhance Diversity in Selection Decisions? *Management Science* (in press).

Some organizations provide employees with feedback on the demographics of people they've chosen to spotlight, hire, and promote, hoping to spur more diverse future selections. However, it is an open question whether purely descriptive feedback accomplishes this. We theorize and show that descriptive feedback highlighting low past selection rates of women or racial minorities (e.g., "5% of previous experts interviewed were women") triggers a motivation to respond without prejudice, increasing the subsequent selection of members of underrepresented groups. Conversely, providing descriptive feedback about low selection rates of people with other attributes (e.g., areas of expertise, geographical location) that don't evoke image or reputational concerns has less influence on future decisions. We demonstrate these patterns across seven preregistered experiments (total $N = 6,502$), including one framed field experiment (Study 2). One study identifies motivation to respond without prejudice as a mediator of the effect of descriptive feedback about past choices on future selections of women and racial minorities. Another study shows that when women are overrepresented, the effect of descriptive feedback reverses in direction, increasing the subsequent selection of men (due to concerns about fairness), but this effect is significantly smaller in magnitude than the feedback effect produced when women are underrepresented. Practically, the effects of descriptive feedback were 45% to 80% as large as those of a simulated strict quota requiring that at least one woman or racial minority be selected for a given opportunity, highlighting that descriptive feedback is a light-touch but potentially powerful intervention for promoting diversity.

Cervantez, J.A., Preston, M., Milkman, K. L., & Kessler, J. (2026). Does Simplifying Search for Qualified Racial Minorities Boost STEM Diversity? A Field Experiment. Under Review.

Racial minorities are underrepresented in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) in academia and industry. A possible contributor may be that decision-makers lack awareness of qualified racial minority candidates. We ran a field experiment targeting the organizers of 1,881 STEM academic seminars at 146 top U.S. universities. Organizers were encouraged to diversify their seminars and randomized to receive either a database of qualified URM faculty speakers (treatment) or links to department websites where qualified speakers could be found (control). The treatment produced a (non-significant) 12% increase in URM speakers the following year, with the strongest effects for Black speakers—a 41% increase (+0.73pp). Most additional speakers came from outside our database, suggesting the treatment spurred broader searches.

Cervantez, J.A., Mosleh, M., & Milkman, K. L. (2026). Does Tracking Diversity Change Behavior? A Field Experiment with Podcasters. Working Paper.

How does prompting gatekeepers to self-monitor the diversity of those they've supported in the past affect the diversity of those they support in the future? We propose and show that the effects of asking gatekeepers to classify and count the demographic composition of the people they have previously platformed depends on the extent to which decision-makers feel scrutinized. When subsequent choices after a self-audit are perceived as being under scrutiny, prompted self-monitoring should create an external motivation to control prejudice, leading to an increase in support for diverse candidates. When people's subsequent choices after a self-audit are not perceived as under scrutiny, however, externally prompted self-monitoring should no longer generate an external motivation to control prejudice and may even elicit reactance, as gatekeepers seek to reassert their autonomy. We test these theories in a large-scale pre-registered field experiment with 6,050 active U.S.-based podcasters who regularly feature guests on their shows. Participants were all prompted to complete a self-monitoring exercise. For those randomly assigned to our treatment condition, the self-audit focused on tallying the race and gender diversity of their recent guests. For those randomly assigned to our control condition, the self-audit focused on tallying other characteristics of past guests (e.g., their professional backgrounds and their ages). The treatment increased the likelihood that—immediately after the audit—podcasters chose to click on a resource we provided to them offering a recommended list of underrepresented minority guests (where click throughs were plausibly scrutinized) by 1.7 percentage points. However, it reduced replies to a subsequent booking request from

a Black female prospective guest by 4.2 percentage points and lowered the percentage of underrepresented minority guests featured on their shows over the following three months by 1.4 percentage points—both actions that gatekeepers presumably did not believe were under scrutiny by the organization that prompted their self-audit. Our findings suggest that prompted self-monitoring of the diversity of gatekeepers can increase support for diversity when gatekeepers are under scrutiny but can backfire and reduce support for diversity when gatekeepers do not feel scrutinized.

Cervantez, J.A., & Milkman, K. L. (2024). Can Nudges be Leveraged to Enhance Diversity in Organizations? A Systematic Review. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 101874.

In this article, we review and summarize key findings from a growing literature exploring how nudges can facilitate efforts to diversify organizations. Nudges are psychologically-informed interventions that change behavior without restricting choice or altering incentives. We focus on two types of nudges to enhance organizational diversity: (1) nudges that target organizational processes directly or the decision makers who oversee them to increase the diversity of those hired and promoted and (2) nudges that target the underrepresented candidates themselves to increase the diversity of those applying for organizational roles. We categorize nudges designed to enhance organizational diversity, both by their target and based on the psychology they leverage to improve outcomes for women and racial minorities.