Nishita Singh

nishitaa@umich.edu | +1-947-273-8888 | 530 Church Street, 3463 East Hall, Ann Arbor, MI

Education

Postgraduate Diploma in Liberal Studies Aug 2022 – Jul 2023
Young India Fellowship, Ashoka University
GPA: 3.8/4.0
Selective interdisciplinary postgraduate fellowship in India

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Psychology Aug 2019 – Jun 2022
Jesus & Mary College, The University of Delhi
WES GPA: 4.0/4.0
Honors: Sunit Saral Award (Top Academic Performer, Dept. of Psychology)
Senior Thesis Title: "From Public to the Personal: Deconstructing the Discourses Concerning Women with Disabilities"

Research Experience

Behavior, Culture, and Inequality Lab, University of Michigan Sept 2025 – Present
Lab Manager (Ann Arbor, MI)
Principal Investigator: Dr. Catherine Thomas

I conduct experimental social and cultural psychology research, on systems of poverty and inequality, across three of the lab's key projects:

- **Cash Plus Psychosocial Intervention, Malawi & Rwanda** *(with GiveDirectly)* is an RCT testing psychosocial interventions that complement unconditional cash transfer programs, including workshops and community film/discussion interventions
  - Leading biweekly field piloting in Malawi and Rwanda for three intervention components: peer champion recruitment (to identify and train trusted community coaches), community film screenings and discussions (to establish new growth-conducive social norms), and recipient workshops (to reinforce film messaging through personalized, actionable household roadmaps)
  - Co-designing core intervention component(s), including a peer champion nomination methodology that adapts social network recruitment approaches, using network observers and community insiders, to local kinship and governance structures, to identify and safeguard recruitment of trusted peer coaches
  - Supporting storyline development and pre-production process for upcoming film and community viewing component in Malawi
- **Aspirations Study, Philippines** *(with Innovations for Poverty Action)* – 4-arm cluster-RCT testing an aspirations intervention (film + facilitated discussion) on economic, psychological, and social outcomes; nested in IPA's Philippines Socioeconomic Panel Survey (PSPS).
  - Conducted predictive validity, treatment effect, and moderation/mediation analyses on baseline and midline economic and psychosocial outcomes; data visualization (forest plots, scatter plots, line plots, conditional effect plots) with panel study data
  - Undertook data preparation and index construction, resolving methodological issues (e.g., outlier handling, composite index specification) in coordination with PIs
  - Managed organization data handover: auditing deliverables against codebook, restructuring project data architecture
- **Jharkhand Soft Skills Study, India** *(with Centre for Social and Behavior Change)* – 3-arm RCT testing intrapersonal vs. interpersonal soft-skills coaching within the JH-SAY government program, with Jharkhand State Livelihood Program and The/Nudge Institute.
  - Supporting the design of intervention curricula and materials (flipbooks, training, and avatar videos) for both treatment arms

Administrative ownership across all three projects; research partner relationship management (IPA, GiveDirectly, CSBC); regulatory compliance (IRB, local research permits); and grant deliverable tracking.

- **Predictors of Redistribution Project** *(Independent project, BCI Lab)*
  - Conducted elastic net and LASSO regression analysis to identify predictors of support for redistribution in rural Philippines; independently designed variable selection strategy and analytical pipeline

Social Networks Lab, Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab Jul 2023 – Nov 2024
Research Associate, J-PAL South Asia (Bangalore, India)
Principal Investigators: Dr. Emily Breza (Harvard University), Dr. Arun Chandrasekhar (Stanford University)

- Led research and operations for the ASHA project in Karnataka; a study mapping social interactions among grassroots healthcare workers and community members in rural and low-income settings (outcomes studied: treatment prioritization, information sharing, and inter-community reliance, institutional trust and skepticism)
- Implemented a 250-village RCT in rural Odisha testing information diffusion strategies for a government crop insurance scheme (PM Fasal Bima Yojana, July 2024); village meetings outperformed flyers, increasing insurance applications by 27% and enrollment among non-loanees by 90% (PI analysis)
- Evaluated belief distortions across treatment assignments in Karnataka (September 2024)
- Secured $40,000 in project funding from the King Center for Global Development (Stanford) for the ASHA project, 2023
- Piloted field experiments (fuzzy RD and difference-in-differences) across three threads: network-based risk sharing, skepticism, and noise in information diffusion among marginalized farming communities in rural India
- Led field data collection and monitoring in Karnataka and Odisha, including data quality checks (spot checks and high-frequency checks)
- Managed field data collection exercises and coded measures on networks, rosters, and households on SurveyCTO
- Drafted grant and IRB applications; synthesized and presented field findings to PIs (Overleaf, LaTeX)
- Co-developed social-isolation questionnaire and mental health screener to study social connectedness in networks and their subsequent impact on mental health for the Networks & Risk Sharing Project

Department of Psychological & Behavioural Science, LSE Nov 2022 – Sept 2023
Research Assistant, London School of Economics (Remote, part-time)
Supervisor: Monisha Dhingra, PhD Candidate

- Designed case vignettes and lottery-based dictator game measures to examine how status threat, social dominance orientation, and class/income position shape support for redistribution
- Designed experimental stimuli and survey instruments (Qualtrics) to examine how the contextual salience of Hindutva ideology affects personal, community, and institutional support for violence following caste-based norm violations (continued at Stanford)
- Coded Qualtrics surveys, monitored data collection to ensure protocol fidelity, and organized and merged resulting datasets

Centre for Studies in Gender & Sexuality, Ashoka University Sept 2022 – Jul 2023
Associate Researcher for The Sexual Justice Project (on-site, India)
Principal Investigator: Dr. Madhavi Menon

- Prepared an Annotated Bibliography by synthesizing 100+ Supreme Court judicial cases
- Produced a Podcast for The Sexual Justice Project that maps the Indian discourse on sexual jurisprudence over the past five decades
- Moderated and Hosted a discussion panel on Sexuality and the Law in India with Dr. Madhavi Menon, Dr. Gautam Bhatia, Dr. Ghazala Jamil, and Saurabh Kirpal

Department of Psychology, University of Zurich (UZH) Jul 2022 – Sept 2022
Research Project Member at the Personality, Mental Health & Culture Lab (Remote, part-time)
Principal Investigators: Dr. Amber Gayle Thalmayer, Dr. Julia Rotzinger, Dr. Daniel Hofmann

- Assisted with "The Africa Long Life Study" (ALLS), a longitudinal exploration of psychological development among young adults in Namibia, Kenya, and South Africa, recontextualizing the concept of emerging adulthood among adolescents.
- Analyzed Wave 1 data (N=150) using SPSS; supported data collection via Qualtrics and LimeSurvey
- Monitored data collection for Wave 2 (N=600); conducted literature review and participant/administrative correspondence

Co-Curricular Activities

Enactus, Jesus & Mary College Aug 2020 – Apr 2022
Project Head & Senior Advisor (New Delhi, India)

- Designed and led flagship "Project Sugam" (Enactus JMC), an initiative using eco-bricks (repurposed plastic bottles) to build low-cost sanitation infrastructure and address plastic waste mismanagement for underserved communities in Delhi
- Led team to Top 4 (Race to Rethink Plastic) at the Enactus World Cup and secured a INR 25,000 Business Ethics Grant (KPMG) and the Swachhta Saarthi Fellowship (Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser, Government of India)
- Organized an anti-plastic campaign inaugurated by Gautam Gambhir, collecting 1,500 kg of plastic waste

Girl Up Bani Dec 2019 – Jan 2022
Co-founder & Vice President (New Delhi, India)

- Co-founded an inter-college feminist club; organized 20+ awareness sessions and menstrual hygiene resource distribution campaigns across Delhi NCR
- Implemented a period literacy programme for local schools in collaboration with the Government of Haryana, India

Film Making & Appreciation Society, Panorama Jul 2019 – Aug 2020
Team Member

Honors & Awards

- Awarded for Outstanding ELM Performance, Ashoka University — Jul 2023
- Lirio Lopez Prize (Top Extracurricular Performer, College-wide), Jesus & Mary College — Apr 2022
- Sunit Saral Award (Top Academic Performer, Dept. of Psychology), Jesus & Mary College — Apr 2021
- National Runner-Up, Innovation Global Lean Challenge (General Electric) — Sept 2021
- Second Position, Adidas Run for the Oceans Innovation Collaboration with Parley — Mar 2020
- First Position, Delhi Technical University's (DTU) Social Ideathon Competition — Feb 2020

Research Background

Research Interests: Meritocracy Beliefs, Welfare Participation and Stigma, Redistributive Attitudes, Affirmative Action, Zero-Sum Beliefs, Identity and Moral Reframing Interventions, Wise Interventions, Social Networks

Field Research Experience: India (Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Karnataka, Punjab)

Professional and Research Skills: Econometrics, Statistical Analysis, Elastic Net & LASSO Regression, Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Randomized Controlled Trials/Field Experiments, Qualitative Research, Research with Marginalised Populations, Government and Research Partner Management

Research Tools (Advanced experience): R, Qualtrics, LimeSurvey, SurveyCTO, Overleaf, LaTeX, Dedoose, NVivo

Languages: English (Native), Hindi (Native), Spanish (Intermediate)