Group Size and Its Impact on Diversity in Hiring Decisions

Aneesh Rai

Joint work with Edward Chang, Erika Kirgios, and Katherine Milkman
Vs.
Study 1: Do Boards Work Harder to Avoid Homogeneity as their Size Increases?
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- Context: S&P 1500 U.S. corporate boards
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  • Hold constant number of company boards, board size, and number of seats held by a person
  • Repeat this 10,000 times to mimic a gender-neutral selection process
Error bars = 95% confidence intervals
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$\Delta$ = Difference between observed and expected proportions of all-male boards

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$\beta_{\text{board\_size}} = -0.021$ (p = 0.03)
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- Choice data from 2007-2018 show the same pattern: larger all-male boards more likely to add women to their ranks
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  • Size of current group randomized (1-8, all white men)
Imagine you are a hiring manager at a tech company, ITT. You have been tasked with selecting a Software Engineer for ITT’s Innovation Team, a work group within the organization.

The current Innovation Team is composed of the 2 following people:

- **Items**
- Michael Eisenberg
- Robert Crandall
Study 2: Lab Experiment Exploring How Group Size Influences Hiring Decisions

• Participants: 450 Mturkers
• First shown current members of a work group
  • Size of current group randomized (1-8, all white men)
• Task: Choose between three candidates – two men and one woman – to add to the work group
There are three candidates for the Software Engineer position. Please select your choice for this position by dragging one (and only one) candidate into the box.

If you change your mind on your selection, you can drag the person you selected out of the box and replace them with a new candidate.

Whom would you like to hire for the job?

**Items**

- **Most recent job:** Software Engineer at Square
  Years of experience: 4

- **Most recent job:** Software Engineer at Palantir
  Years of experience: 3

- **Most recent job:** Software Engineer at Zynga
  Years of experience: 2
Study 2: As Group Size Increases, Participants More Likely to Hire Female Candidate

\[ \beta_{\text{size}} = 0.025, \ p = 0.003 \ (N = 450) \]
Summary

- Group size can influence who is hired next into a group
- Larger homogeneous groups are seen as less diverse
- Organizations seem to be aware of this, and act accordingly
  - Organizations work especially hard to avoid homogeneity as group size increases
Thank You!

Edward Chang  
Erika Kirgios  
Katherine Milkman

aneeshr@wharton.upenn.edu