

Sunita Sah

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ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Post-doctoral Associate at Fuqua School of Business, Duke University	2010 - present
Non-residential Fellow, Edmond J. Safra Ethics Center, Harvard University	2011 - 2012

EDUCATION

Ph.D.	Organizational Behavior Tepper Business School, Carnegie Mellon University, USA Dissertation: Essays on Conflicts of Interest in Medicine Committee: George Loewenstein (Chair), Don Moore, and Max Bazerman	2008 - 2010
M.S.	Organizational Behavior Tepper Business School, Carnegie Mellon University, USA	2008 - 2010
M.B.A.	Executive MBA, With Distinction London Business School, UK, Elected Class Representative (liaison between faculty and students) Women's Scholarship Prize for Leadership Potential	2003 - 2005
M.B.Ch.B. (M.D.)	Medicine and Surgery University of Edinburgh, UK	1991 - 1997
B.Sc. (Hons)	Psychology University of Edinburgh, UK	1991 - 1994

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research focus is in corporate corruption, business ethics, advice-giving and advice-taking; in particular how professionals who give advice alter their behavior as a result of conflicts of interest and disclosure policies. My work employs theories from psychology and behavioral economics to study different aspects of giving, and reacting to, biased or over-confident advice.

- Business Ethics
- Institutional Corruption
- Advice
- Trust
- Conflicts of Interest
- Unconscious Processes

PUBLICATIONS

- **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** (forthcoming). More Affected = More Neglected: Amplification of Bias in Advice to the Unidentified and Many. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*.
- **Sah, S., & MacCoun, R.** (2011). Unconvinced but Persuaded: How Confident Advisors Influence You. Published in *Best Paper Proceedings of the Academy of Management Conference*, San Antonio, TX.
 - **Best Paper Award, MOC Division, Academy of Management**
- Loewenstein, G., Cain, D., & **Sah, S.** (2011). The Limits of Transparency: Pitfalls and Potential of Disclosing Conflicts of Interest. *American Economic Review: Paper and Proceedings*, 101(3), 423–428.
- **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** (2010). Effect of Reminders of Personal Sacrifice and Suggested Rationalizations on Residents' Self-reported Willingness to Accept Gifts: A Randomized Trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 304(11), 1204-1211. Impact factor = 28.90.

PAPERS UNDER REVIEW

- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** The Burden of Disclosure: Increased Compliance with Distrusted Advice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. (Revise and Resubmit)
- **Sah, S., Moore, D., & MacCoun, R.** Cheap Talk and Credibility: The Consequences of Confidence and Accuracy on Advisor Credibility and Persuasiveness. Under review at *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*.

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WORKING PAPERS

- **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** Second Thoughts on Second Opinions: Conflicted Advisors Exaggerate More When They Know They Will be ‘Second-Guessed’ (Manuscript in Preparation).
- **Sah, S., Cain, D., & Moore, D.** Putting Your Money Where Their Mouth Is: Broker-Dealers’ Conflicts of Interest and the Limits of Disclosure (Working Paper).
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** Burdening Patients with Doctors’ Conflicts of Interest (Working Paper).
- **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** Self-Calibrating Disclosure: Advisors Reject Conflicts of Interest with Mandatory and Voluntary Disclosure (Manuscript in Preparation).

SELECTED RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

- **Sah, S., & Larrick, R.** I’m Immune: Predicting Self-Bias and Self-Restraint (Data Collection, 3rd study).
- **Sah, S., Huettel, S., & Ariely, D.** The Neural Correlates of Accepting Conflicts of Interest and Disclosure (Data Analysis in Progress).
- **Sah, S., & Ubel, P.** Physician’s Admission of Bias: Trust and Second Opinions (Data Analysis in Progress).
- **Sah, S., & Ariely, D.** Advisors’ Concerns to Appear Unbiased Before Acting Unbiased (Data Collection, 4th study).
- **Sah, S., & Rosette, A.** Conflicted Advice and Diversity (Data Collection, 2nd study).
- **Sah, S., & Ariely, D.** Making Disclosure Work: Reversing Moral Licensing Effects (Data Collection, 4th study).
- **Sah, S.** Professionalism and Moral Superiority Effects on Accepting Conflicts of Interest (Research in Progress).
- Impact of Conflict-of-Interest Policies on Doctors’ Prescribing Behavior (Research in Progress, with Ian Larkin and George Loewenstein).

AWARDS and SCHOLARSHIPS

Paper Awards

- **Best Paper Award, MOC Division, Academy of Management**, August 2011, San Antonio, for **Sah, S., & MacCoun, R.** (2011). *Unconvinced but Persuaded: How Confident Advisors Influence You.*
- **Best Paper Proceedings, Academy of Management Conference**, August 2011, San Antonio, for **Sah, S., & MacCoun, R.** (2011). *Unconvinced but Persuaded: How Confident Advisors Influence You.*
- **Poster Presentation Award (1st place)**, November 2010, Society for Judgment and Decision Making, for **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** *More Affected = More Neglected: Amplification of Bias in Advice to the Unidentified and Many.*
- **Best Paper Award**, August 2010, Society for Business Ethics, Montreal, for **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** *Unburdening Disclosure.*
- **IACM-DRRC (International Association of Conflict Management and Dispute Resolution Research Center, Kellogg School of Management) Scholar Award**, June 2010, Boston, for **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** *The Burden of Disclosure*, and **Sah, S., Moore, D. & MacCoun, R.** *Cheap Talk and Credibility.*
- **Poster Presentation Award and Honorable Mention (2nd place)**, January 2010, Society for Personality and Social Psychology, for **Sah, S., Moore, D., & MacCoun, R.** *Cheap Talk and Credibility: The Consequences of Confidence and Accuracy on Advisor Credibility and Persuasiveness.*
- **Best Paper Award (Organizational Behavior)**, May 2009, London Business School Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference for **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** *Burdening Patients with Doctors’ Conflicts of Interest.*

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Scholarship Awards

- **Edmond J. Safra Center non-residential Fellowship Award, Harvard University**, 2011-2012, for research on conflicts-of-interest and disclosure.
- **National Institute of Mental Health**, 2010-2012, for research on physician prescribing behavior and events affecting prescribing patterns such as the introduction or changes to conflict of interest laws/policies.
- **William Larimer Mellon Fellowship Award, Carnegie Mellon University**, (\$70,950 per year, 2008-2010), in recognition of past academic achievements and doctoral work potential.
- **National Science Foundation Grant**, November 2009, for presentation at Society of Medical Decision Making, Hollywood, CA, USA, on
Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D., *Burdening Patients with Doctors' Conflicts of Interest.*
- **fMRI Training Course and Decision Neuroscience Workshop Scholarship Award**, August 2009, University of Michigan, MI, USA.
- **MBA funding**, IMS Health, 2003-2005, London, UK (£31,500).
- **Women's Scholarship Prize for Leadership Potential**, 2003, London Business School, UK (£10,500).
- **Medical Research Council Scholarship (UK)**, 1994, Psychology B.Sc. Hons (full tuition plus grant of £2,200).

Conference Funding Awards

- Edmond J. Safra Center, Harvard University, Honorarium and full Travel Award: 2011.
- International Association of Conflict Management (IACM) Graduate Student Scholarship: 2010.
- American Orthopedic Association, Honorarium and full Travel Award: 2010.
- Carnegie Mellon Graduate Student Association Funding Award: 2008, 2010.
- Judgment and Decision-Making Pre-Conference of Society of Personality and Social Psychology, Las Vegas, 2010, awarded two travel awards (from total of 10 grants) for
**Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D. *The Burden of Disclosure*, and
Sah, S., Moore, D. & MacCoun, R. *Cheap Talk and Credibility.***
- Center for Neural Basis of Cognition, Carnegie Mellon University and University of Pittsburgh: 2009, 2010.
- Society for Medical Decision Making, Honorarium and full Travel Award: 2009.
- Tepper Business School, Carnegie Mellon University: 2008, 2009, 2010.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- October 2011: *Overcoming Barriers to Reform*. Conference on "Conflicts of Interest in the Practice of Medicine." American Society of Law, Medicine, and Ethics. Pittsburgh, USA.
- April 2011: *The Burden of Disclosure*. Symposium on "The Scientific Basis of Implicit Cognition and Conflict of Interest," Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard, Boston, USA.
- March 2011: *What You Do Know Can Hurt You: How Disclosure Increases Your Compliance with Advice You Trust Less*. Joint Research Seminar: INSEAD Social Innovation Centre and Marketing Department, INSEAD, Fontainebleau, France.
- July 2010: *Medical Conflicts of Interest: Physicians' Rationalizations and Limits of Disclosure*. Medical Decision Making Research Group, Department of Primary Care & Public Health Sciences, King's College London, UK.
- July 2010: *Conflicts of Interest: Physicians' Rationalizations and Limits of Disclosure*. Choice Group, London School of Economics, London, UK.
- June 2010: *Incentives, Marketing and your Brain – Conflicts of Interest and the Physician*, Symposium on Medical Marketing at American Orthopedic Association, San Diego, USA.

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SELECTED REFEREED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- **Sah, S.** (November 2011). Organizer of symposium *Conflicted Advisors: Understanding the Antecedents and Consequences of Biased Advice* at Society of Judgment and Decision-Making, Seattle, WA. Speakers: Alison Wood (Wharton), Francesca Gino (Harvard), Janet Schwartz (Tulane), Sunita Sah (Duke).
 - Presenting, **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** *Second Thoughts on Second Opinions: Conflicted Advisors Exaggerate More When They Know They Will be 'Second-Guessed'*.
- **Sah, S., & MacCoun, R.** (August 2011). *Unconvinced but Persuaded: How Confident Advisors Influence You*. Talk at Academy of Management, San Antonio, TX.
 - Published in **Best Paper Proceedings** of the 2011 *Academy of Management Meeting*
 - **Best Paper Award, MOC Division, Academy of Management, 2011**
- **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** (November 2010). *More Affected = More Neglected: Amplification of Bias in Advice to the Unidentified and Many*. Poster presented at Society of Judgment and Decision Making, St. Louis, MO.
 - **1st Prize, Society of Judgment and Decision Making Poster Presentation Award.**
- **Sah, S., Cain, D., & Moore, D.** (September 2010). *Putting Your Money Where Their Mouth Is: Broker-Dealers' Conflicts of Interest and the Limits of Disclosure*. Talk at Fiduciary Forum, Washington D.C. (presented by co-author).
 - Published in **The Fiduciary Papers** submitted to *US Securities and Exchange Commission*.
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (August 2010). *Unburdening Disclosure*. Talk at Society of Business Ethics, Montreal, Canada.
 - **Best Conference Paper Award**
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (August 2010). *The Burden of Disclosure*. Talk at Academy of Management, Montreal, Canada.
- **Sah, S., Moore, D. & MacCoun, R.** (August 2010). *Cheap Talk and Credibility*. Talk at Academy of Management, Montreal, Canada.
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (June 2010). *The Burden of Disclosure*. Talk at International Association of Conflict Management, Boston, MA.
 - **International Association of Conflict Management and Dispute Resolution Research Center, Kellogg School of Management, Scholar Award**
- **Sah, S., Moore, D. & MacCoun, R.** (June 2010). *Cheap Talk and Credibility: Advisor's Influence*. Poster presented at International Association of Conflict Management, Boston, MA.
 - **International Association of Conflict Management and Dispute Resolution Research Center, Kellogg School of Management, Scholar Award**
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (June 2010). *The Burden of Disclosure*. Talk at Behavioral Decision Research in Management Conference, Pittsburgh, PA.
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (February 2010). *The Burden of Disclosure*. Talk at Princeton Graduate Student Conference on Psychology and Policymaking, Princeton, NJ.
- **Sah, S., Moore, D. & MacCoun, R.** (January 2010). *Cheap Talk and Credibility: The Consequences of Confidence and Accuracy on Advisor Credibility and Persuasiveness*. Poster presented at Society of Personality and Social Psychology, Las Vegas, NV.
 - **Society of Personality and Social Psychology Poster Presentation Award and Honorable Mention**
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (November 2009). *Burdening Patients with Doctors' Conflicts of Interest*. Talk at Society for Judgment and Decision Making, Boston, MA.
- **Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D.** (October 2009). *Burdening Patients with Doctors' Conflicts of Interest*. Invited talk at Special Symposium at Society for Medical Decision Making, Los Angeles, CA.
- **Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G.** (May 2009). *Burdening Patients with Doctors' Conflicts of Interest*. Talk at Ninth Annual Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference, London Business School, UK.
 - **Best Paper Award, Organizational Behavior Division**

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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Academic

- **Power and Influence**
Guest Lecturer for Dan Ariely, Fuqua School of Business, Duke University
PhD Seminar Course – Behavioral Economics
- **Group Decision-Making**
Guest Lecturer for Dan Ariely, Fuqua School of Business, Duke University
Undergraduate course – 450 students, Behavioral Economics Class, Econ 196
- **Change Management**
Solo Instructor, Learning Tree International, London – Senior Executives
- **Strategy Dynamics**
Co-Instructor, London Business School – MBA 2nd Year Course
Co-Instructor, London Business School – Senior Executives on Accelerated Development Programme
Co-Instructor, Scandinavian International Management Institute (SIMI) – Master’s Degree in Strategy

Executive Education / Industry Courses (selected programs)

Topics Taught (Solo Instructor)

- Communication
- Decision-Making
- Sales and Marketing
- Targeting and Profiling
- Crisis Communication
- Medical Communication and Advocacy
- Managing Investor Relations

To: CEOs, Finance Directors, Vice Presidents, General Managers, Sales and Marketing Heads, National Managers, Directors, Corporate Affairs, and Medical Directors.

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Reviewer for:

Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes Journal (ad-hoc)

Academy of Management Conference

Society for Business Ethics Conference

International Association of Conflict Management

London Business School Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Organisational Dynamics Ltd, Managing Director and Founder, London

Consultancy and training in Organizational Behavior, Decision-Making, Communication, Change Management and Strategy. Clients include Amgen, AstraZeneca, Novo Nordisk, London Business School (LBS), Scandinavian International Management Institute (SIMI), UK Motor Neurone Disease Association.

IMS Health, Senior Consultant then European Marketing Director, London

Medical and management expertise to Brand and Launch Management business; responsible for development, implementation and alignment of marketing strategy across 22 European countries. Developed and aligned pharmaceutical industry consulting services for promotion and performance management to enable more effective decision-making, and evaluation of influences on doctor’s prescribing behavior.

NHS Trust UK, and overseas, Medical Doctor

Practiced General Medicine, Respiratory Medicine, Nephrology, and Accident & Emergency in Edinburgh Western General Hospital (UK), Royal Melbourne Hospital (Australia), and Rarotonga Government Hospital (The Cook Islands) fulfilling demanding permanent and locum roles

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MEMBERSHIPS

- Member of Academy of Management (AOM)
- Society for Business Ethics
- Society for Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)
- Society for Judgment and Decision Making (SJDM)
- Member of the UK General Medical Council (GMC)
- Member of British Psychological Society (MBPsS) and American Psychological Association (AMA)

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- Organizer of Symposium, “Conflicted Advisors: Understanding the Antecedents and Consequences of Biased Advice,” Society of Judgment and Decision-Making, Seattle, November 2011
 - Invited participant: OMT/MOC Doctoral Consortium at Academy of Management, San Antonio, August 2011
 - Negotiation and Decision-Making Course, Harvard Business School, January 2010
 - Decision Neuroscience Workshop, Ross Business School, August 2009
 - fMRI training course, University of Michigan, August 2009
 - Certificate of Proficiency in Professional Presentation Skills (**Distinction**) - *English Speaking Board, 2000*
 - Flute player (Grade 8 with Merit from Royal Schools of Music, UK)
 - Qualified PADI Open Water Diver
 - Also enjoy Body Combat, Yoga, and Travelling (visited over 30 countries, worked in 5 countries)
 - Languages: English, Hindi (Bilingual); French (Intermediate proficiency)
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APPENDIX (Selected abstracts)

Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G. More Affected = More Neglected: Amplification of Bias in Advice to the Unidentified and Many. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, in press.

Professionals often give advice to many anonymous people. For example, financial analysts give public recommendations to buy, hold or sell stock, and medical experts formulate clinical guidelines that affect many patients. Logically, knowing the advice-recipient's name should not influence the quality of advice, and when advice affects a larger number of people, greater care should be taken to ensure its accuracy. Yet, contrary to this logic, and consistent with research on the identifiable victim effect, results from two experimental studies demonstrate that advisors confronting a financial conflict-of-interest give more biased advice to multiple than single recipients, and to unidentified than identified single recipients. Increased intensity of feelings towards single identified recipients appears to drive this process; advisors experience more positive emotion, and appear to have greater awareness and motivation to reduce bias in their advice when the recipient is single and identified.

Sah, S., Loewenstein, G., & Cain, D. The Burden of Disclosure: Increased Compliance with Distrusted Advice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. (Revise and Resubmit)

Although disclosure is often proposed as a solution to problems caused by conflicts of interest, prior research has found both positive and negative effects of disclosure. On the downside, disclosure can worsen advice and fail to cause sufficient discounting. We present six experiments that hold advice constant to reveal a previously unrecognized perverse effect of disclosure: While disclosure can decrease advisees' trust in the advice, it simultaneously increases pressure to comply with that same advice. This compliance pressure comes from two mechanisms: recipients (1) fear signaling distrust of advisors, and (2) feel an increased pressure to help satisfy their advisors' personal interests when those interests have been disclosed. Hence, disclosure can burden those it is ostensibly intended to protect. We show that the increased pressure to comply is reduced if (1) the disclosure is provided by an external source rather than from the advisor, (2) the disclosure is not common knowledge between the advisor and advisee, (3) a cooling-off period is introduced, or, (4) the advisee can make the decision in private.

Sah, S., Moore, D. & MacCoun, R. *Cheap Talk and Credibility: The Consequences of Confidence and Accuracy on Advisor Credibility and Persuasiveness*, (under review)

Is it possible to increase one's influence simply by behaving more confidently? Prior research presents two competing hypotheses: (1) the confidence heuristic holds that more confidence increases credibility and (2) the calibration hypothesis asserts that overconfidence will backfire when others find out. Study 1 reveals, consistent with the calibration hypothesis, that while accurate advisors benefit from displaying confidence, confident but inaccurate advisors received the lowest ratings of credibility. Furthermore, when an advisor's inaccuracy is revealed, it is difficult for these advisors to recover from their lost credibility. But Study 2 shows that when feedback on advisor accuracy is unavailable or costly, confident advisors hold sway regardless of accuracy. In other words, the confidence heuristic prevails when accuracy is difficult to determine. However, people also made less effort to determine the accuracy of confident advisors; interest in buying advisor performance data decreased as the advisor's confidence went up. These results increase our understanding of when overconfidence helps and when it may backfire.

Sah, S., Larkin, I., & Loewenstein, G. *Impact of Policy on Doctors' Prescribing Behavior* (research in progress)

Over the past four years, many Academic Medical Centers across the United States have adopted far-ranging Conflict-of-Interest (COI) policies, limiting physician interaction with industry (e.g. banning industry gifts and meals, prohibiting interaction with drug sales representatives, limiting the use of free drug samples). We aim to examine the effects of these policies on prescribing behavior. Looking at the data collected over the past six years, we will examine how prescriptions change when an academic medical center adopts a COI policy. Results will report the impact of policy implementation and help us understand the effects of these policies on patient care as well as the ways in which physicians are influenced by industry marketing and COI.

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Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G. Effect of Reminders of Personal Sacrifice and Suggested Rationalizations on Residents' Self-Reported Willingness to Accept Gifts: A Randomized Trial. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 304(11), 1204-1211

Despite expanding research on the prevalence and consequences of conflicts of interest in medicine, little attention has been given to the psychological processes that enable physicians to rationalize the acceptance of gifts. This paper investigates whether reminding physicians of the sacrifices made to obtain training, as well as suggesting this as a potential rationalization, increases self-stated willingness to accept gifts from industry. Three hundred and one US resident physicians from two sample populations (pediatrics and family practice) who were recruited during March-July 2009 participated in a survey presented as evaluating quality of life and values. Physicians were randomly assigned to receive one of three different online surveys: The sacrifice reminders survey asked questions about sacrifices made in medical training, followed by questions regarding the acceptability of receiving gifts from industry. The suggested rationalization survey presented the same sacrifice questions, followed by a suggested possible rationalization (based on sacrifices made in medical training) for acceptance of gifts, before the questions regarding the acceptability of gifts. The control survey asked about the acceptability of gifts before asking questions about sacrifices or suggesting a rationalization. Reminding physicians of sacrifices made in obtaining their education resulted in gifts being evaluated as more acceptable and although most residents disagreed with the suggested rationalization, exposure to it further increased the perceived acceptability of receiving gifts.

Sah, S., & Loewenstein, G. *Second Thoughts on Second Opinions: Conflicted Advisors Exaggerate More When They Know They Will be 'Second-Guessed'* (working paper)

Second opinions have been advocated, particularly in medicine, as an antidote to bias in advice when primary advisors have conflicts of interest. However, two experiments find that primary advisors give more biased advice when they are aware of a second advisor. This occurs because advisors exaggerate more to counteract anticipated discounting in response to the second opinion, and feel morally licensed to give biased advice since the second opinion appears to undermine the relationship with the primary advisor. These results highlight potential pitfalls that new policies that encourage second opinions should seek to avoid.

Loewenstein, G., Cain, D., & **Sah, S.** (2011). The Limits of Transparency: Pitfalls and Potential of Disclosing Conflicts of Interest. *American Economic Review: Paper and Proceedings*, 101(3), 423–428.

We review evidence from our published and ongoing research that disclosing conflicts of interest has unintended consequences, helping conflicted advisors and harming their advisees: With disclosure, advisors feel comfortable giving more biased advice, but advisees do not properly adjust for this and generally fail to sufficiently discount biased advice. Disclosure also increases pressure on advisees to comply with advice; following disclosure, advisees feel more uncomfortable in turning down advice (e.g., it signals distrust of the advisor's motives). Finally, we examine the effectiveness of policy interventions aimed at reducing these unintended consequences and discuss how to realize potential benefits of disclosure.