

# Urveesha Nirjar, M.A.

Pronouns: she/her/hers  
[urveesha.nirjar@uky.edu](mailto:urveesha.nirjar@uky.edu)

171 Funkhouser Dr., Office 111 – G  
 Lexington, KY 40506

## EDUCATION

### University of Kentucky Expected 2028

Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychology in progress  
 Mentor: Michelle Martel, Ph.D.

### Teachers College, Columbia University 2020

Master of Arts, Psychology in Education: Clinical Psychology  
*GPA: 3.9/4.0*  
 Concentration: *Child and Family; Global Mental Health*  
 Integrative Project: *An Exploratory Analysis of Impact of Sex and ADHD Subtype on Age of Diagnosis*

### Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi 2018

Bachelor of Arts (Hons), English Literature (Psychology as a Minor)  
*CGPA: 7.432 – Division 1<sup>st</sup>*

## AWARDS

### Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi, India 2016 – 2018

- Secured 1<sup>st</sup> Position in the B.A. (Hons) English cohort (Fall 2017; Spring 2018)

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

### Human Research Technologist 2 2020 – 2022

Penn State College of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, Hershey, PA  
 Attention and Behavior Clinic Research Group

*Supervisors:* James Waxmonsky, M.D., Dara Babinski, Ph.D., Daniel Waschbusch, Ph.D.

- Coordinated, multimethod studies in the lab, including 4 EEG studies, 1 fMRI study, 2 behavioral/experimental studies
- Executed EEG on participants (age 7 – 12) to obtain data to predict emotion regulation, reward responsiveness, reward positivity, and social acceptance
- Processed neuroimaging data via BrainVision
- Administered clinical batteries to assess children and adolescent intelligence and achievement
- Conducted semi-structured interviews with caregivers and ADHD providers for qualitative study
- Obtained parental consent and children's assent
- Administered screenings, such as the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale
- Utilized E-Prime and Presentation to administer behavioral tasks in conjunction with the EEG
- Oversaw administration of assessment measures
- Programmed participant databases through REDCap and Excel
- Communicated with the Institutional Review Board (IRB), submitting study-related protocols, amendments, continuing reviews, and other events
- Compiled and maintained integrity of clinical research data, participant files, regulatory binders and electronic databases like REDCap
- Managed participant recruitment and retention, conducting telephone screening interviews to assess eligibility
- Maintained lab finances and budgets for studies and expenditures

### Research Assistant 2020

Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY

## The Neurocognition, Early Experience and Development Lab

*Supervisor:* Kimberly Noble, Ph.D.

- Assisted on the BUDDY (Building Understanding of Developmental Differences across Years) study – Project aimed at understanding how brain function, language, and memory develops during the first three years of life.
  - Scheduled visits with mother-infant dyads for follow-up visits and facilitated participant retention
  - Prepared LENA (language environment analysis; talk pedometer) devices to send to participants
  - Transferred, uploaded and processed LENA data for data analysis
- Assisted on the Baby's First Years Project – A randomized control trial testing causal connections between poverty reduction and brain development among young children.
  - Updated REDCap databases, and tracked participants' survey completion
  - Trained in EEG methods (including Portable EEG protocols with infants)

## Research Assistant

2019 – 2021

The New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia University Medical Center, New York, NY

Youth Treatment & Evaluation of Anxiety & Mood (Y-TEAM) Program/Children's Day Unit

*Supervisor:* Paula Yanes-Lukin, Ph.D.

- Worked on the Ketamine Treatment for Pediatric-Refractory Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) Trial Study – A pilot study conducted to determine the acceptability, feasibility and potential efficacy of ketamine as a rapid treatment for OCD symptoms in adolescents and young adults with OCD.
  - Developed, cleaned and maintained databases for the study using Access
  - Assisted in analysis of data using Excel and SPSS
  - Presented poster titled after the project at the 28th Annual OCD Conference Researcher and Exhibitor Meet & Greet.
- Worked on the IPT-A for Adolescents with PTSD Treatment Study – A pilot study and open clinical trial being conducted to examine the feasibility and acceptability of Interpersonal Psychotherapy for Adolescents(IPT-A) for adolescents with depression diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
  - Developed and maintained REDCap database for the study
  - Shadowed during intake evaluations of participants
  - Attended IPT-A therapist supervision
- Attended weekly lab meetings to discuss current lab projects and progress of patients in the Day Treatment Program
- Received training in diagnostic interviewing using the Mini-International Neuropsychiatric Interview, and scored measures such as the Family History Screen
- Assisted research coordinator with IRB protocols, and screening of participants for lab studies
- Conducted and helped with literature reviews
- Programmed REDCap databases for various projects in the lab
- Updated evaluation data and measures in Excel and REDCap to collect and analyze data
- Trained new research assistants
- Created training documents that improved onboarding process for new lab members
- Spearheaded weekly journal club and group discussions in research assistants meetings in research areas of interest

## Research Assistant

2018 – 2020

Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, NY

Behavioral Health Integration Program

*Supervisors:* Aliza Grodtko, PsyD. & Miguelina German, Ph.D.

- Received training in Electronic Medical Records management using EPIC
- Maintained two patient databases tracking system to analyze symptom progression and treatment for East Bronx clinic
- Conducted patient outreach calls, general between-sessions with patients and caregivers

- Educated caregivers and families about the BHIP model of care
- Evaluated ACEs and PHQ-2 measure packets for inclusion in BHP's HealthySteps program
- Conducted quarterly double checks for data for HealthySteps National to monitor data integrity
- Trained new research assistants and assisted lab manager with onboarding procedures
- Attended weekly lab meetings, conducted mindfulness in meetings, discussed recruitment initiatives
- Conducted literature reviews for new grants and presentations
- Helped with other research or administrative tasks at the lab
- Assisting on Phase 2 of the HERO (Healthy Early Roots and Origin) – Study assessing the feasibility of collecting bio specimens from children (0-3 years) during their well-child pediatrician visits to assess toxic stress levels
  - Assisted with recruitment and retention of participants
  - Tracked participants' well-child visits
  - Prepared and set-up materials for the study visit
  - Collected bio specimens (saliva, buccal cells and hair) from children (2 month – 3 year old) at their well-child visits
  - Conducted feasibility surveys with parents
  - Provided childcare during study visits
  - Managed study databases using Excel for the study

#### **Research Assistant**

**2018 – 2021**

Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY

Global Mental Health Lab

*Supervisor:* Helen Verdeli, Ph.D.

- Worked on the Thrive NYC Maternal Depression Learning Collaborative Project – A pilot study evaluating the acceptability and feasibility of training healthcare providers in Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) to treat women experiencing perinatal depression in New York City
  - Edited videos of IPT Training and compiled detailed notes for future trainings
  - Assisted graduate students in editing the IPT manual developed for the project
  - Hosted and attended weekly supervision calls and tracked provider-trainees progress
  - Developed and managed databases of provider-trainees patient cases to track symptom reduction and therapy progression
  - Conducted quantitative data analysis for poster presentations
  - Scored knowledge tests of provider-trainees
  - Transcribed focus group interviews
  - Conducted qualitative data analysis (thematic analysis) by utilizing NVivo by helping in the conceptualization of themes and execution of coding process
  - Trained graduate students and peer research assistants in NVivo coding protocols; helped establish inter-rater reliability by analyzing teams coding and coding practices and calculating Cronbach's alpha; troubleshooted issues in coding
- Worked on the IPT Meta-Analysis Project – Study assessing the Effectiveness and Efficacy of Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) for Depression in Low and Middle Income Countries
  - Attended team meetings to conceptualize inclusion and exclusion criteria for the study
  - Conducted coding for inclusion of studies for a full text review using Excel and Covidence

#### **Research Assistant**

**2018 – 2021**

Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, NY

Richardson Research Lab

*Supervisor:* Randall Richardson-Vejlgaard, Ph.D.

- Worked on the IRAH/Community Integration project - Study that aims to improve the inter-rater reliability and construct validity of the interpersonal connectedness subscale in the TUCP in romantic partners of

individuals who have previously experienced homelessness and conduct cognitive interviews of the TUCP with these couples

- Met weekly to discuss inclusion and exclusion criteria for coding of transcripts as well as themes for coding
- Used NVivo for the coding of cognitive interviews
- Worked on the HPTN Review Project – Project aimed at studying the measurement of sexual risk behaviors by conducting a systematic review of reviews
  - Helped conceptualizing and executing the review process at all stages – met weekly to discuss findings, codes, and leads
  - Utilized NVivo for qualitative coding and data analysis
  - Assisted in training and supervising other team members
  - Collaborating on the manuscript for the project
- Assisted graduate student with Hoc Reviewer duties: Reviewed manuscripts submitted to AIDS Care and Cambridge Press
- Conceptualized and presented poster presentations at various conferences

## CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

### Crisis Counselor

2020 – 2021

DeafLEAD, Columbia, MO

Suicide Prevention Lifeline Online Chat Program

*Supervisors:* Wendy Logan & Tyler Hannsz

- Received and completed 40-hour training in Crisis Intervention
- Provided brief supportive counselling through online chats
- Assisted in the training of new recruits

### Research Assistant

2019 – 2021

The New York State Psychiatric Institute, Columbia University Medical Center, New York, NY

Youth Treatment & Evaluation of Anxiety & Mood (Y-TEAM) Program/Children's Day Unit

*Supervisor:* Paula Yanes-Lukin, Ph.D.

- Tutored and helped Day Treatment Program patients with schoolwork
- Attended biweekly institution-wide grand rounds
- Attended and participated in staff DBT Skills Group and Training
- Attended CBT therapist supervision for OCD
- Shadowed intake evaluations for participants' admission to the Day Treatment Program
- Conducted meal monitoring with patients suffering from Anorexia Nervosa
- Helped team psychologists and clinical interns with therapeutic procedures such as Exposure Therapy with Day Treatment Program patients

### Clinical Research Assistant

2018 – 2020

Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, NY

Behavioral Health Integration Program

*Supervisors:* Aliza Grodtko, PsyD. & Miguelina German, Ph.D.

- Shadowed clinical psychologists and psychiatrists at the Bronx East clinic
- Wrote clinical case reports for supervising psychologist
- Provided childcare during patient visits
- Conducted warm handoffs with patients and families
- Collaborated with pediatricians to help onboard patients and families in the HealthySteps program
- Received training in Motivational Interviewing and used it for patient recruitment and retention during visits

**Clinical Psychology Intern****2017**

Karma Center for Counselling and Wellbeing, Delhi, India

*Supervisor:* Ruchika Kanwal, MPhil

- Gained familiarity with alternative non-traditional forms of therapy such as Art based therapy and Pet therapy
- Visited and volunteered at the NGO Earth Saviour's Foundation – provided counseling support to elderly and children
- Conducted interviews of patients and caregivers to understand barriers to care
- Interacted with study participants of various psychological histories and age
- Gained insights into various psychological disorders through patient case studies and discussions

**Psychology Intern****2016**

Fortis Hospital, Noida, India

Department of Psychiatry &amp; Psychology

- Shadowed licensed clinicians and psychiatrists during sessions
- Provided psychoeducation to patients and families
- Organized therapy sessions for caregivers of patients diagnosed with various mental disorders
- Attended and completed various workshops such as Crisis Intervention, Art Therapy, and Cancer and Psychology
- Collaborated with peer interns on presentations on patient case studies
- Conducted Art therapy sessions at the in-patient ward with children and palliative care patients
- Learned about various forms of psychological testing through shadowing such as Rorschach Inkblot Test, behavioural assessments, and IQ tests

**TEACHING & MENTORING EXPERIENCE****Student Research Mentor****2021 – 2022**

Polygence, Stanford, CA

*Organization profile:* A selective online research academy founded by Harvard, MIT & Stanford researchers dedicated to democratizing access to research opportunities for high school students

- Provided mentorship to high school students on the inception and development of research projects related to Psychology, Mental Health and English Literature
- Selected as a Polygence Writing Fellow – Providing writing feedback to Polygence students writing research and review papers

**Operations Manager & Teacher Volunteer****2017 – 2018**

The WordsWorth Project, New Delhi, India

*Organization profile:* A student-run initiative in association with NGOs across Delhi to promote reading among children from disadvantaged areas

- Developed and managed the curriculum as well as resources such as books and worksheets for the center
- Taught English to underserved children aged between 5 and 15 (total 35 kids at this location)
- Conducted teaching workshops for other teacher volunteers
- Supervised 7 teacher volunteers and oversaw their work progress throughout the year, with periodic evaluations
- Organized meetings with parents to discuss progress
- Provided academic support and counseling to children with learning disabilities, behavioural and/or emotional problems
- Organised meetings with parents to discuss progress

**PUBLICATIONS**Malik, T., **Nirjar, U.** (In Press) Optimizing Patient Care with Effective Psychotherapeutic Interventions.*Chapter in* Optimizing Patient Care in Psychiatry. USA: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.



Mandavia, A., Goddard-Eckrich, D., **Nirjar U.**, Arslanbogan, C., Aragula, S., Richardson, R., Wu, E., Gilbert, L., & El-Bassel, N. (In preparation) Measurement of Sexual Risk Behaviors: A systematic review of reviews.

## POSTER PRESENTATIONS

---

*Joint authorship is indicated through an \**

**Nirjar, U.**, Brennan, G., Babinski D. E., Waschbusch, D.A. (November, 2021) Caregiver Strain Questionnaire – Short Form 22 (CGSQ-SF11): A Validation Study. Poster presented at the 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the ABCT.

Ishimuro, S. H., Yanes-Lukin, P., Goldberg, H. P., **Nirjar, U.**, Simpson, B., Rynn, A. M. (2021, August). Ketamine Treatment for Pediatric-Refractory Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. Poster to be presented at the 28th Annual OCD Conference Researcher and Exhibitor Meet & Greet.

Renaud, A., Alix, A., Arenz, J., **Nirjar U.**, Verdeli, H. (2021, May). Integrating Mental and Maternal Healthcare in NYC: Training Healthcare Providers in Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) for the Treatment of Perinatal Depression. Presented at the Association of Psychological Science Conference.

Renaud, A., Alix, A., Arenz, J., **Nirjar U.**, Verdeli, H. (2021, February). Integrating Mental and Maternal Healthcare in NYC: Training Healthcare Providers in Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IPT) for the Treatment of Perinatal Depression. Presented at the Big Apple Health Psychology Colloquium.

Aragula, S., Mandavia, A., **Nirjar U.**, Arslanbogan, C., Davis, A., Brooks, M., Juneja, G., Richardson, R., & El-Bassel, N. (2020, October). Impact of poverty on trends of Community Viral Load in New York City over 5 years. Poster accepted for the American Public Health Association.

**Nirjar U.**, Mandavia, A., Aragula, S., Arslanbogan, C., Davis, A., Brooks, M., Juneja, G., Richardson, R., & El-Bassel, N. (2020, August). Understanding factors associated with forced sex among Young Men who have sex with Men (YMSMs) engaging in risky sexual behaviors. Poster accepted for the American Psychological Association.

Aragula, S., Mandavia, A., **Nirjar U.**, Arslanbogan, C., Davis, A., Brooks, M., Juneja, G., Richardson, R., & El-Bassel, N. (2020, August). Contextual factors affecting forced sex and intimate partner violence among individuals engaging in sexual risk behaviors. Poster accepted for the American Psychological Association Conference.

**Nirjar U.\***, Aragula, S.\*, Mandavia, A., Arslanbogan, C., Davis, A., Brooks, M., Juneja, G., Richardson, R., & El-Bassel, N. (2020, August). The importance of "venue" in understanding sexual risk behaviors. Poster accepted for the American Psychological Association.

Mandavia, A., Davis, A., Arslanbogan, C., **Nirjar, U.**, Aragula, S., & El-Bassel, N. (2019, June). *Sexual Risk Behavior Working Group*, Systematic Review of Reviews of Sexual Risk Behaviors. Symposium conducted at Annual HIV Prevention Trial Network Committee Leadership Meeting, Washington, D.C.

Mandavia, D. A., Arslanbogan, C., **Nirjar, U.**, Blake, E., Aragula, S., Richardson, R., and El-Bassel, N. (2019, April). Measurement of Sexual Risk Behaviors: A Systematic Review of Reviews. Poster presented at 3<sup>rd</sup> Psychology @ TC Conference 2019, Teachers College, Columbia University in the City of New York.

Mandavia, D. A., Blake, E., Arslanbogan, C., Aragula S., **Nirjar, U.**, Richardson R., & El-Bassel N. (2019, April). Validation and Improved Reliability of a Community Participation Measure among Individuals with Mental Illness and a History of Homelessness. Poster presented at 3<sup>rd</sup> Psychology @ TC Conference 2019, Teachers College, Columbia University in the City of New York.

## LEADERSHIP AND VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

---

**Indian Students Association at Columbia University (ISAC)****2018 – 2019**

Digital Media Chairperson

**English Literary Society, Kamala Nehru College****2015 – 2018**

Core Team Member

2017 – 2018

Public Relations Manager

2015 – 2017

Member

- Managed social media pages, promoted festivals and events online
- Covered events as the Department Photographer
- Conceptualized events and managed logistics of annual inter-college event *LitLuminous*
- Organized the Creative Writing Competition of *LitLuminous* 2018
- Published academic paper '*Harry Potter & The Appeal of Fantasy*' in Inter-College Literary Fes
- Completed courses in English Language Teaching (2017) and Creative Writing (2016)

**National Service Scheme, Kamala Nehru College chapter****2015 – 2018**

Member

- Participated in cleanliness rallies at Begampur, a slum area in northwest part of Delhi
- Taught elementary English to pre-school children at NGO Save the Quest

**Expressions, KNC Creative Writing Society****2015 – 2017**

Member

**SOFTWARE & PROGRAM PROFICIENCIES**

EPIC

REDCap

BrainVision

Microsoft Office

Electroencephalography

CareConnect/Cerner

Qualtrics

LENA

SPSS

NVivo

CATS IRB

R (Novice)

EndNote

Covidence

**LANGUAGES**

English (native; proficient); Hindi (native)