

Tom (Aviv) Emanuel, PhD

People Insights | Behavioral Science | Research Design & Causal Inference | AI-Enabled Analysis

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SUMMARY

Behavioral scientist and insights partner with 11+ years turning ambiguous questions about human behavior into decision-ready evidence, from controlled experiments to platform datasets with millions of users. Practiced at evaluating the rigor of work executed by others and explaining what a signal shows, and what it does not prove. Author of 16 peer-reviewed papers (500+ citations), mentor to 24 student researchers, and daily user of AI tools across research, analysis, and synthesis.

CORE SKILLS

Insight partnership: reframing ambiguous requests into decision-focused evidence questions, decision briefs and executive-ready narratives, long-term stakeholder partnership, building alignment without direct authority, interpreting evidence in context

Research methods: mixed-methods research, causal inference, experimental design and A/B testing, longitudinal and repeated-measures designs, survey design and psychometrics, sampling, measurement validity and bias

Statistics and data: regression, mixed-effects and Bayesian models (Stan/MCMC), predictive modeling, data visualization; SQL, R, Python, Excel, Qualtrics, Jupyter, Power BI, Tableau, Git; large behavioral datasets

Governance and AI: human-subjects research ethics, sensitive-data handling, data-quality standards, preregistration and open science; LLM tools in research and synthesis, model-output evaluation; English fluent, French (B2)

Independently certified (micro1): 47 skills via structured assessments, including research methodology and rigor, data quality and methodology critique, analytical synthesis and critical review of evidence, cross-functional leadership and stakeholder management, and data visualization and storytelling

SELECTED IMPACT

- Ongoing analytics partner to a long-term client for nearly two years; identified behavioral markers of persistent users in 10 years of product data, improved retention prediction by 23%, and translated the models into decision-ready retention recommendations.
- Analyzed longitudinal behavioral data from brain-training and online-learning platforms spanning millions of users, and from real-world tennis competitions.
- Led research programs and teams of up to 6 collaborators across 43 postdoctoral months; mentored 24 student researchers across three universities.
- 16 peer-reviewed publications, 500+ citations, and \$213.8K in research funding and awards; ad hoc reviewer for *JPSP* and *JEP: General*, evaluating and challenging other researchers' designs.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

AI Programmer and Founder | Spark (founder-led startup) Jan 2026 - Present

- Built a fully automated, LLM-based fitness-coaching web application prototype within the first quarter, combining market discovery, product experimentation, and automated insight generation; orchestrate AI coding agents (Claude, Cursor, Codex) and review and approve their output.

Statistician / Data Scientist (Contract) | micro1 Aug 2025 - Present

- Selected for quality-control responsibilities after strong AI-refinement performance; evaluate the accuracy and rigor of frontier model outputs produced by others through error detection and calibrated quality judgment in fast-turn remote workflows.

Statistical Consultant / Data Scientist Nov 2023 - Aug 2025

- Served as ongoing analytics partner to a long-term client; led retention workstreams, identifying behavioral markers of persistent users across 10 years of product data and building predictive models that improved performance by 23%.
- Turned behavioral signals into decision-ready retention recommendations for non-technical stakeholders.

Cognitive Researcher | McGill University Sep 2023 - Apr 2025

- Led a research program on reward-independent motivation and sustained engagement; designed and ran online studies with daily data-quality checks on incoming data.
- Communicated model performance, limitations, and implications to scientific audiences, including invited talks at McGill and the Montreal Neurological Institute; mentored student researchers.

Cognitive Researcher | Hebrew University of Jerusalem Oct 2021 - Aug 2023

- Led a research program on reinforcement learning, decision-making, and computational modeling; applied Bayesian/MCMC methods to multi-study datasets and built end-to-end R/Python pipelines.
- Managed cross-functional projects: timelines, weekly progress meetings, and review of technical and research outputs.

R Instructor and Statistical Programming Coach | Self-employed Nov 2018 - Sep 2023

- 4+ years of R and statistical programming coaching; helped 13 learners move into data and tech roles.

Doctoral Researcher | Tel Aviv University Oct 2016 - Mar 2022

- Built R-based open-science pipelines across behavioral, neuroscience, exercise, survey, and app-user data; developed online study tools and survey instruments.
- Co-authored a methodological critique of the field-standard perceived-effort rating scale (*Sports Medicine*, 160+ citations); guest lecturer in graduate Research Methods and Human Motivation courses.

EDUCATION

PhD, Experimental Psychology and Exercise Science | Tel Aviv University | 2022 | MA, Experimental Psychology | Tel Aviv University | 2017 | BA, Psychology and Philosophy | Ben-Gurion University | 2015