

Implicit Bias and You

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Let's Review

This is a re-cap of the essentials from the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity training at <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/>

Implicit Bias – defined

- The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in **an unconscious manner**.

Bias

- Bias is a neutral term (often not perceived as neutral)
- An evaluation or belief
- Can be neutral, positive, or negative
- A bias toward a person, object, or concept, that is positive or negative

Implicit

- Is a neutral term
- Operating outside of our conscious awareness
- Can be positive or negative
- We rely on implicit processes to navigate the world

So why talk about it?

- Our implicit evaluations may be based on inaccurate information or stereotypes of people, objects, and ideas
- Implicit biases can impact our decisions, perceptions, and behaviors
- Implicit bias is unconscious, automatic, and relies on associations that we form over time
- This makes it difficult for us to live up to our values of equity and fairness
- We can form bias toward groups of people based on what we see in the media, our background, and experiences
- Our biases reflect how we internalize messages about our society rather than our intent. Nevertheless, we can still act on our biases in ways that can harm others.

Implicit bias is not

- Does not refer to those beliefs we conceal or suppress in an effort to appear non-biased.

Stereotype

- Beliefs that are mentally associated with a given category.

Real World Implications

- Implicit bias can turn even our best intentions into unwanted outcomes.
- Teacher's implicit biases can impact their perceptions of the quality of students' work and the teaching strategies they choose to implement.
- Implicit biases can impact perceptions of students' behavior and is a contributor to racial differences in school discipline outcomes—particularly between Black and White students.
- Institutional and historic patterns of inequity within the education system contribute to the manifestation of implicit bias in schools. A targeted approach to address the negative effects of implicit bias must also include strategies to address these systemic issues.

Implicit bias

- There are two main ways in which we measure implicit bias. We can understand our biases through examinations of our behavior and by looking at how our brain is activated through the use of imaging technology.
- One of the most utilized behavioral assessments of implicit bias is the Implicit Association Test (IAT), which measures if there are positive or negative attitudes toward a particular concept or social group.

Implicit.Harvard.edu

- Implicit bias test available online
- Take the IAT!
- You can find out your own biases by taking an implicit association test at:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/>
- All tests are free and take roughly 5 minutes
- Try taking 2–3 tests and reflect on your results

What did you think?

- It is important to reflect on your results. Consider how your background and personal experiences may have impacted your results.
- Any surprising biases?
- How did you feel about your results?
- Did you find yourself trying to beat the test?

Mitigating Unwanted Bias

- Become aware of your own biases
- Taking an IAT – or several – is a great way to start
- Mindfulness and perspective taking
- Through meditation – people are able to alter their own implicit biases
- Intergroup Contact (cooperative) (same status as all others)
- Exposure to counter-stereotypical examples

Mitigating Unwanted Biases

- There are long term strategies and changes that we can engage in to reduce our unwanted biases, such as mindfulness and intergroup contact.
- One of the best ways to prevent and intervene against bias, is by knowing when you are more susceptible to acting on it, such as moments of high ambiguity, subjectivity, or stress.
- Knowledge about the operation of implicit bias can help inform the individual and institutional approaches you take to address inequitable outcomes in your classroom or school.
- Learning about implicit bias provides a lens to help examine causes of racial, gender, or other social disparities, even in the absence of explicit intent to discriminate.

Additional resources

- <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/mitigating-bias.pdf>
- <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/iat-results.pdf>
- <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/implicit-bias-training/resources/mythbusters.pdf>
- <http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Combating-Implicit-Bias-in-the-workplace.pdf>