SUMMER 2021 WEBINAR SERIES:
BUILDING YOUR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

July 14 to August 11, 2021
12 noon to 1:00pm
5-Part Webinar Series
July 14 – Aug. 11, Wed., Noon to 1pm

• July 21: “Understanding Bias in the Classroom: Language, Microaggressions, and Social Justice”
• July 28: Keeping the Best Bits: Technology and Teaching after COVID
• August 4: Evolution of the College Classroom: Strategic Integration of Experiential Learning
• Aug. 11: Running on Empty After the Pandemic: Managing Our Own Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing in the Year Ahead
UNDERSTANDING BIAS IN THE CLASSROOM: LANGUAGE, MICROAGGRESSIONS, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

July 21, 2021

Andrew L. Stewart, Associate Professor, Psychology
Agenda

• What is Bias?
  • Status Concerns
  • Implicit vs. Explicit Attitudes

• Language: Verbal and Nonverbal Conduits of Bias
  • Nonverbal Immediacy
  • Bias in classroom settings

• Applications and Recommendations for Eliminating Bias
What is Bias?

• Preferential attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors in favor of one social group or member of a social group compared with other social groups or members of other social groups

• Examples
  • Greater engagement with (White, male, American vs. BIPOC, female, international) students’ comments/questions in class
  • Coverage of topics that center White, Western, or cismen’s experiences and treatment of BIPOC, Global South, or ciswomen/gender minorities experiences as unusual/non-normative
Status Concerns

Competence

Morality
Implicit and Explicit Biases

- Implicit biases are attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner
  - Associations between men and intelligence, Black men and danger, women and nurturance
  - Activated involuntarily and without our awareness or intentional control
- Explicit biases are attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in a conscious manner
  - Conscious beliefs about different social groups
  - Voluntary, awareness, and intentional
Behavioral Consequences of Implicit/Explicit Biases

**Implicit Biases**
- Less smiling
- Leaning backward
- No nodding
- Rapid blinking
- Sweating
- Stuttering

**Explicit Biases**
- Verbal (un)friendliness
- Less positive words
- Negative written comments
- Derogatory comments
Awkward Intergroup Interactions

He might think I’m racist

Don’t be racist

I...uh...love Barack Obama

He’s sweating a lot

Oh my, can I leave now?
Cognitive Impairment in Intergroup Interaction

![Graph showing the relationship between predicted stroop interference and pro-white implicit racial bias for Black and White partners.](image-url)
Process Model of Interracial Contact

**Situational factors**
- Interaction roles, goals, scripts
- Discussion topic
- Evaluation potential (public vs. private)

**Individual difference predictors**
- Racial attitudes
- Previous contact experience
- Concern about appearing prejudiced (W)
- Race-based rejection sensitivity (RM)

**Activated interracial contact concerns**
- **Whites**
  - Appearing prejudiced
- **Racial minorities**
  - Experiencing prejudice
  - Confirming stereotypes

**Affective reactions**
- Physiological arousal anxiety

**Self-regulation**

**Executive attentional capacity**
- Self-regulatory failure
- Cognitive depletion
- Negative affect

**Intrapersonal outcomes**
- Partner liking
- Partner affect
- Rapport

**Interpersonal outcomes**
Implicit/Explicit Bias Taxonomy

- Egalitarians
  - Positive implicit and explicit attitudes

- Racists
  - Negative implicit and explicit attitudes

- Aversive Racists
  - Negative implicit and positive explicit attitudes
Language: Verbal and Nonverbal Conduits of Bias

• Implicit and explicit attitudes lead to biased verbal and nonverbal behavior
• Most communication is nonverbal, and nonverbal behavior is very difficult to control compared to verbal behavior
• People are affected by verbal and nonverbal behavior of others, whether they’re aware of it or not
Consequences of Nonverbal Behavior for Students

- Global Nonverbal Immediacy
- Differential Teacher Behavior toward Students of Different Race, Gender, and Ethnicity
Global Nonverbal Immediacy

• Immediacy Behaviors
  • Gestures when talking to class
  • Uses monotone/dull voice when talking to class
  • Looks at the students when talking
  • Smiles at the class as a whole, not just individual students
  • Moves around the classroom when teaching
  • Looks at board or notes when talking to the class
  • Stands behind podium or desk
  • Uses a variety of vocal expressions
### Global Nonverbal Immediacy

**Meta-Analysis of the Teacher Nonverbal Immediacy Literature**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Affective Learning</th>
<th>Behavioral Intentions</th>
<th>Cognitive Learning</th>
<th>Cognitive Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean $r$ (unweighted)</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of studies ($k$)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean $r$ (weighted by $N$)</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.42</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of effect sizes</td>
<td>.09 – .62</td>
<td>.00 – .54</td>
<td>-.12 – .70</td>
<td>.00 – .45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95% confidence interval</td>
<td>.38 – .48</td>
<td>.23 – .40</td>
<td>.26 – .45</td>
<td>-.06 – .33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Affective Learning: Positive evaluations of the course and teacher

Behavioral Intentions: Likelihood of taking another course from this teacher or on a similar topic

Cognitive Learning: Student report of how much they learned

Cognitive Performance: Actual performance in a course (e.g., recall tests, course grades)
Differential Teacher Behavior toward Students

• Stereotype consistent and inconsistent lessons communicate different nonverbal behaviors
  • Male teachers who taught quantitative lessons to female students had more hostile nonverbal behaviors (vs. female teachers, or male students, or stereotype-consistent topics)

• White teachers give more nonverbal criticism and negative evaluations to Black boys, compared to Black girls, and White boys and girls

• Videotaped office hour meetings between White teachers and White/Black students demonstrated racial bias in nonverbal immediacy behaviors (exacerbated by teacher prejudice)
Microaggressions: Subtle Forms of Racial Bias and Discrimination

• Microassaults
  • Explicit racial derogations
  • Example: Racial slurs

• Microinvalidations
  • Actions that nullify the experiential reality of racial minorities
  • Example: Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners

• Microinsults
  • Subtle behaviors or communication styles that debase or minimize an individual’s racial heritage
  • Example: Assuming all Asian/Asian Americans are good at math
Microaggressions against Asian Americans

• Microinsults
  • Second-class citizenship
  • Pathologizing cultural values/communication styles
  • Ascription of intelligence
• Microinvalidations
  • Alien in own land
  • Exoticization/immasculinity
  • Invalidation of interethnic differences
  • Invisibility
  • Denial of Racial Reality
## Microaggression Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Possible Interpretations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You can succeed if you try hard enough</td>
<td>You are lazy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are a credit to your race</td>
<td>People of your background are unintelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The only race is the human race</td>
<td>Your experiences as a minority are no different from anyone else’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A White woman to a Black woman] As a woman, I understand how it feels to be a minority</td>
<td>I’m not racist, because I’m oppressed like you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are you from?</td>
<td>You are not American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How did your mom react when she found out you were a lesbian?</td>
<td>Being a lesbian is not normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[A professor asks a Latina student during class] What do Latinas think about this?</td>
<td>Your experiences are interchangeable with anyone else in your racial/ethnic group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You speak English very well</td>
<td>You are not American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone take out your smartphones to take a poll</td>
<td>Everyone has enough money for common items</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Applications and Recommendations for Eliminating Bias

• Change implicit and explicit attitudes
  • Read histories of oppression and marginalization
  • Develop structural awareness and critical consciousness

• Reflect on own practices
  • Learn about disciplinary equity approaches to teaching/learning
  • Attend to potential androcentrism, ethnocentrism, etc. of the topics covered
  • Team up with a trusted colleague, observing each other's classes, and exchange feedback regarding each teacher's use of nonverbal behavior
Applications and Recommendations for Eliminating Bias

• Removing Status Boundaries in the Classroom
  • In lecture courses, practice nonverbal immediacy behaviors, and involve students in the lecture by having them ask and answer questions
  • In seminar courses, allow the students to dictate the direction of the discussion, provide structure

• Removing Status and Motivation
  • Removing status increases intrinsic motivation
  • Reinforcing status increases extrinsic motivation

• Clear and Unambiguous Evaluation Criteria
Class Activities

BreakingPrejudice.org

UnderstandingPrejudice.org

Abrahamic Religions Similarities Activity

The objective of this activity is to examine how perceived threat and ingroup bias lead to stereotypic beliefs about Muslims and Christians.

Acceptability of Prejudice Activity

The objective of this activity is to help people better understand their own prejudices and to consider why some prejudices are acceptable and others are not.

Advertisement Analysis Activity

The objective of this activity is to identify when stereotypes are present in advertisements.

Atheists and Christians Activity

This activity is designed to raise awareness of the stigma associated with atheism.
Action teaching is a high-impact style of instruction that contributes to peace, social justice, and sustainable living at the same time that it educates students.
Book Recommendations

• Sitting in the fire: Large group transformation using conflict and diversity by Arnold Mindell
  • Note from Andrew: could be helpful for thinking about group facilitation with attention to power and conflict.

• Biased: Uncovering the hidden prejudice that shapes what we see, think, and do by Jennifer Eberhardt
  • Note from Andrew: a great social psychologist who discusses a lot more about biases and the research behind them.
THANK YOU
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