

Equity & Excellence: Hidden Bias Implicit Bias Inherent Bias

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- Anderson Cooper Interviews...



My Inherent Bias: Hurricane Andrew



Essential Questions

- What are Hidden/Inherent/Implicit Biases?
- Is it important for a teacher to believe in his/her students?
- What is the impact of inherent biases on kids?
- How can I identify my hidden biases?
- What is meant by disproportionality in Special Education? Student Management/Discipline?
- What's the difference: Punishments vs Consequences?
- Impact of Behavior Misperceptions?



How do Our Inherent Biases Develop?

- We are bombarded with **millions of images** and bits of information daily
- Our brains absorb each and everyone of those images and bits of information
- **Most of it registers subconsciously** and not through a cognitive filter that processes and interprets that data.
- **Subconsciously, unfiltered information influences our inherent biases**



Inherent Biases

- Penetrates all realms of our society, from hiring decisions to medical care and even foul calls in the NBA!
- What about inherent biases in our everyday lives?
- Does it play a role in..
 - the neighborhoods we choose to live?
 - the establishments we patronize?
 - the shows we watch?
 - those with whom we socialize?



Implicit/Hidden/Inherent Biases

- *Implicit Bias refers to attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in an **unconscious** manner.*
- *It's **different** from **suppressed thoughts** we might conceal to keep the peace (cigarette)*
- *It's the **opposite of explicit bias**, which refers to attitudes or beliefs that we fully admit to.*

Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, Ohio State U.



It's in the news!

- Recent assertions of overt and covert discrimination across our society from college campuses to public safety to police responses raises the question:
 - How does someone's unconscious reaction to people of a different race, religion or sexuality influence their judgment and behavior?
- Experts say America is still struggling to reverse the legacy of institutional racism that has left many communities segregated today, creating the pool from which we form relationships and social circles.
- Research shows those relationships -- along with the interactions and experiences that come from them -- influence hidden biases. They can start forming in children [as young as six years old](#) and are reinforced in adulthood through social settings and mass media.



Hidden Biases

- Do you automatically exclude certain neighborhoods as places you might live? Or send your kids to school?
 - *Price of Paradise- the Costs of Inequality and a Vision for a More Equitable America*, David Dante Troutt
- Do you 'only date' a certain type?
- Do you have a 'gay friend'?
- Do you have A 'black doctor'?
- Is your accountant a “female”?



Who are YOUR Trusted 10?

- Chances are, they're the same race as you,
- Socializing with...
 - 68% of whites (18-34) associate with other whites
 - 37% of Hispanics (18-34) associate with other Hispanics
 - 36% of Blacks (18-34) associate with other Blacks



Who are YOUR Trusted 10?

Name/Initials	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Age	Sexual Orientation	Education	Marital Status	Disability Yes or No	

For Individual Reflection:

- Complete the First Column by listing the initials/names of personal friends and professional colleagues, exclude family members
- What patterns do you observe?
- How many of your trusted 10 are “like you”?
- How diverse is your Trusted 10?



Harvard's Project Implicit Project

- Battery of "implicit association tests" enables participants to measure their levels of implicit bias
- Results: tests reveal distressing things about how our **unconscious** minds work.
- <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- To measure your implicit bias levels:
 - [Understanding Prejudice: Implicit Association Test](#)
 - [Teaching Tolerance: Test Yourself for Hidden Bias](#)
 - [Look Different: Bias Cleanse](#)



Inherent Bias in Schools:

**What does the data and research
report?**



Data-2010

- 70%+ of school arrests/referrals to law enforcement: Black or Hispanic
- Ed Week 72,000 k-12th graders studied:
 - Black students comprise 18% of sampled schools
 - 35% of those suspended once
 - 46% suspended more than once
 - 39% of all expulsions
 - Black students 3.5 times more likely to be suspended or expelled than White peers



Data: African-American Males

- Portland (OR)
 - AA students 5X more likely to be expelled/suspended than White peers
- Oakland (2011)
 - 20% of AA males suspended at least once
 - 6 times the rate of White peers
- Chicago (2009-10)
 - Black students = 45% of the student body
 - Black students = 76% of the suspensions



- Research Reports:
 - Black students 5 yo and up are routinely suspended/expelled for minor infractions:
 - talking back to teachers
 - writing on their desks.
 - The assertion that over-zealous application of “zero tolerance” policies is the cause is false.
 - African-American/Black males do not “act out” in the classroom any more than their White peers



- *Research found that the hypothesis that African American students act out more than other students is not valid.*
- *Research found that African American students appear to be referred to the office for less serious and more subjective reasons.*
- *When combined with extensive and highly consistent prior data, these results argue that disproportionate representation of African Americans in office referrals, suspension and expulsion is evidence of a pervasive and systematic bias that may well be inherent in the use of exclusionary discipline (Skiba, 2000).*



- Implicit Bias: major contributing factor of racial disproportionality in school discipline.
- In this context, implicit bias is the *mental process that causes us to have negative feelings and attitudes about people based on characteristics like race, ethnicity, age and appearance.*
- Because this cognitive process functions in our unconscious mind, we are not consciously aware of the negative racial biases that we develop over the course of our lifetime.



- In the general population:
 - Implicit Bias supports the stereotypical caricature of Black youth (especially males):
 - irresponsible, dishonest, and dangerous.
- In an ideal world:
 - teachers and school administrators (among others) would be immune to these unconscious negative attitudes and predispositions about race
- 2003 study: students who displayed a “black walking style” perceived by their teachers as **lower in academic achievement, highly aggressive** and more likely to need special education services).



My Last District (2001-2013)

- Rapid Diversification
- 2 White HS teachers did a triangulated analysis of student discipline referrals
- The data reported bias in the implementation of the HS Code of Conduct
- PD: NJSDC, RIISA
- Increase in students of color in AP/Honors
- Elimination of Remedial HS Classes
- More equitable application of discipline code



Kirwan Institute Research Suggests:

- Implicit bias is implicated in **every** aspect of racial and ethnic inequality & injustice.
- Powerful consequences of implicit bias: in an empathy challenged society, it robs us of **compassion for** and **connection to** individuals and groups who suffer society's burdens of racial or other **inequality** and **injustice**.
- Implicit bias contributes to an **unconscious** “**hierarchy of caring**” that influences who we care about and what groups and individuals are **beyond our caring**, in a place of invisibility or disposability.



- Implicit bias may influence a teacher's expectations for academic success.
- Meta-analysis of research found statistically significant evidence that **teachers hold lower expectations**—either implicitly or explicitly, or both—for **African American** and **Latino** children compared to European American children

(Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007)



Disproportionality

2008-2009 academic year, Black students in North Carolina public schools were **suspended at rates significantly higher** than White students:

- 8 times higher for cell phone use,
- 6 times higher for dress code violation,
- 2 times higher for disruptive behavior,
- 10 times higher for displays of affection



Disproportionality

- NJ DOE identifies districts with over representation or disproportionality of African-American males who are **CLASSIFIED** or **SUSPENDED**
- Districts are required to develop action plans to address the disproportionality



Hidden Bias Shapes Expectations & Discipline

- Psychology research documents self-fulfilling expectation of delinquent behavior
- A student “labeled” as “defiant” or “problematic” is “more likely” to internalize these labels and *act in ways that match the expectations* that others have set for him/her...
- Labeling and exclusionary practices can create a self-fulfilling prophecy that results in a cycle that can be difficult to break



Punishment vs. Consequences

- Schools often “punish” the students who have the greatest needs.
- Misbehaviors are often the result of a child’s needs not being met at home and/or by the school
- Children who act out often:
 - Are experiencing abuse or neglect
 - Have hunger or food insecurity
 - Have internalized low expectations
 - Are unable to perform at grade-level



- Punishments

- Demeaning
- Unrelated to the offense
- Diminish self-esteem
- Are not instructive
- Do not change behaviors

- Consequences

- Respectful...
Maintain student dignity & esteem
- Related to the offense
- Restitution—
making it better
- Guidance to
change behaviors



4 Goals of Misbehavior

- To Get Attention
- To Get Power
- To Get Revenge
- To Avoid Failure



Behavior Misperceptions: Pedro Noguera

- Boys struggle more than girls with traditional academic system; the mismatch between learning styles and educational practice can lead to the disconnect of boys at an early age.
- Girls are more successful at soft skills like knowing how... *to listen, to work with others, and to sit still*...things with which boys struggle
- The “**boy code**” further complicates issues of academic underachievement- especially for boys of color
 - Society expectations: tough, independent, and strong
 - Latin/Hispanic male “machismo” archetype reinforces these messages
 - “As boys struggle to hide their academic vulnerabilities, a false bravado may be erected.”
- Subsequent disconnect from school can lead to **elevated rates of depression and suicide attempts** among young Latino/Hispanic males



Behavior Misperceptions: Pedro Noguera

- Black males: surroundings and environmental context construct masculinity and influences the ways black males experience and behave in schools
 - For some, projecting an image of a tough and angry Black man is **protection**
 - To be nice, gentle, kind, or sincere could make them vulnerable and bullied
 - Some Black male students- the way they express their thoughts has been described as flamboyant, non-conformist--- a “cool pose”
 - The expressions are not problematic, BUT issues arise when they are misinterpreted by teachers.
 - Several novice white teachers reported that they often perceived these lively debates occurring between black males as suggestive of aggressive behavior and concluded it was disrupting.
 - To the students it was rooted in their construction of masculinity, not a sign of defiance
 - Misperceptions are also rooted in common definitions of “good behavior”



Pedro Noguera

- Media reports contribute to misperceptions about black males: violent, disrespectful, unintelligent, and hyper masculinity
- Some teachers may rationalize such behaviors as defiant/intimidating, the result:
 - **Black male students are more likely to be disciplined.**
- Latin/Hispanic and Black/African American males, researchers report the “stigma” of acting White: academic success and peer pressure to reject the norms associated with academic success.
- Simultaneously, Latin/Hispanic and Black/African American males confront the **negative stereotypes** associated with their behavior, their peer interactions, and their academic standing.
- The “stigma” of acting White among minority males is a reflection of their lack of identification with traditional norms of academic success which leads to them devaluing academics and education in the traditional sense.
- Since traditional academic norms of academic success have not worked; **Is the problem the traditional academic structure itself?**



Teachers Union

NEA Magazine- September, 2015

- Whether or not a teacher “believes in” her students and “expects” them to succeed has been shown to affect how well that student does in school, particularly among disadvantaged students.
- But educators should be aware that those expectations can be influenced by their own implicit racial biases



National Education Association

- 16,000 U.S. teachers interviewed
- Black and non-Black teachers were asked to predict their 10th-graders' future educational attainment.
 - Would s/he graduate from high school?
 - How about college?
- When asked about **any specific Black student**:
 - Non-Black teachers were about 30 percent less likely than Black teachers to predict he or she would someday earn a college degree.
 - For White students, the teachers' predictions, or expectations, were about the same.



NEA

- “We cannot determine whether the black teachers are too optimistic, the non-black teachers are too pessimistic, or some combination of the two...
- ..systematic biases in teachers’ expectations for student success might contribute to persistent socio-demographic gaps in educational achievement and attainment.”

American University’s Seth Gershenson



NEA

- **“*These results are not meant to, nor should they, demonize or implicate teachers,*”**
- “Biases in expectations are generally unintentional and are an artifact of how humans categorize complex information.”

Seth Gershenson.



Consider various ways you can gain some insight into your bias.

- Biases affect us all in ways we seldom fully realize, even when we have one we are aware of and would like to deal with.
- We may see ordinary, happy people living their day-to-day life in all kinds of environments, but they all have a bias of some kind which is directing their intentions.
- Biases can be positive or negative aspects of human nature; they all influence how we act and interact with other people and events.
- It's important to compare our biases, because the way we create biases in our minds is the same process for both mild biases and severe ones.



Recognize that the specific bias exists

- This is the beginning stage to enable you to overcome it. If you can, this means admitting there is a bias, as in really admitting it, not just thinking there is a bias.
- Often this is very difficult for most people to do honestly, as it is somewhat of a humbling act. But doing this will help you to explore it more in depth, as you are prepared to be more open.
- By recognizing your bias and what it relies on to stay in the mind, then you are one step closer to getting rid of it.



Community Response Team

- Town Administrator (Mayor/Governing Body)
- Superintendent (BoE President/BOE)
- HS/MS Leadership
- SACs
- Health Dept.,
- Recreation Dept.
- Municipal Alliance
- Police Command
- Juvenile Officers
- local citizen's advocacy groups



NJSBA Initiatives

- NJSBA Equity Council (March 2018)
- NJSBA PD – Inherent Bias
- Mandated Training: Equity and Inherent Bias
- NJSBA – Policy Wellness Check
- NJSBA Task Forces plus Reports with Suggestions to Consider:
 - School Security - 2013
 - Special Education - 2014
 - Student Achievement - 2016
 - Health & Wellness - 2015
 - Non-College Bound Learner — anticipated June 2018



“Let us in education dream of an aristocracy of achievement arising out of a democracy of opportunity”

Thomas Jefferson



- **Your Questions?**
- **Your Reflections?**
- **Your Thoughts about Next Steps Individually?**
- **Your Thoughts about Next Steps as the Governing Body of the School District?**

