Noticing and Avoiding Implicit Bias

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- Advantages of Diversity
- Implicit Associations
- Identity Threat
How Diversity Offers Advantages

People who are different from one another bring unique information and experiences. Diversity promotes creativity.

- Female representation in top management leads to an increase of $42 million in firm value.
  
  Deszö & Ross, Strategic Management Journal, 33(9), 2012

- Diverse groups share more information. Being with similar others makes us believe we all have the same information.
  
  Neale, Northcraft & Phillips, Group Processes and Intergroup Relations, 9, 2006

- Papers written by diverse groups have more citations and higher impact factors. (R Freeman and W Huang)
  
  Freeman & Huang, NBER Working Paper No 19905, 2014
But diverse groups cause

- Greater discomfort
- Rougher interactions
- Lack of trust
- Greater interpersonal conflict
- More concern about disrespect

If the upside of diversity and globalization makes us smarter, how do we mitigate these anxieties?
UC Berkeley Percent International 2012

- Undergrads
- Doct. St.
- Postdocs
- Assist. Prof
- Assoc. Prof
- Full Prof
UC Berkeley Faculty Headcount

**Gender**
- Men: 70%
- Women: 30%

**Ethnic Groups**
- Non-Minority/White: 77%
- Asian: 12.4%
- Under-Rep. Min.**: 8.4%
- Other/Unk.: 2%

Total N=1506

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*Data for AY 2012-13 is preliminary, as of Aug. 20th, 2012.
**URM includes African Am., Hispanic, and Native Am.

Why So Few?

- Careers are long (turnover is slow)
- Care-giving is not distributed evenly
- Implicit associations work against diversity
- Self-selection out of careers due to identity threats
Implicit Associations

Research suggests that overt prejudice or old-fashioned bigotry has been reduced in US society…

BUT…

Research also shows that we all — regardless of the social groups we belong to — perceive and treat people differently based on their social groups (race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, politics, etc.)


Implicit Association Test

Four lists of words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>male</th>
<th>female</th>
<th>science</th>
<th>humanities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>woman</td>
<td>biology</td>
<td>philosophy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boy</td>
<td>girl</td>
<td>physics</td>
<td>literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>chemistry</td>
<td>art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandpa</td>
<td>grandma</td>
<td>math</td>
<td>music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>husband</td>
<td>wife</td>
<td>geology</td>
<td>english</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>astronomy</td>
<td>history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncle</td>
<td>aunt</td>
<td>engineering</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Project Implicit: https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/research/
Implicit associations do …

- Allow for rapid, but sometimes inaccurate, processing of information.
- Often conflict with consciously held attitudes.
- Change based on experience/exposure.

Awareness is critical both when you are the evaluator and when you are the one being evaluated.

Unexamined Bias Examples

Results are similar for reviewers of all identity groups.

**Example 1:** University psychology professors prefer 2:1 to hire “Brian Miller” over “Karen Miller,” even when the application packages are identical.

*Steinpreis, Anders, Ritzke, Sex Roles 41, 1999.*

**Example 2:** White-sounding names yielded as many more callbacks as an additional eight years of experience.

*Bertrand & Mullainathan, American Economic Review, 94(1), 2003.*

**Example 3:** When a male instructor mentioned a male or female partner, the “straight” instructor received 22% more positive comments. while the “gay” instructor received 320% more critical comments.

*Russ, Simonds, & Hunt, Communication Education, 5(3), 2002*
Unexamined Bias Examples

Example 4: “Blind” auditions can explain 30% to 55% of the increase in women winning orchestral jobs.

Example 5: Research participants redefined the job criteria as requiring credentials that matched those of the desired gender. Commitment to hiring criteria prior to disclosure of applicant gender eliminated discrimination.

Example 6: Professors at top Universities were contacted by a fictional prospective graduate student. Faculty ignored requests from women and minorities at a significantly higher rate than requests from Caucasian males, particularly in higher-paying disciplines and private institutions.
Letters of Recommendation

Read the two sample letters of recommendation

– Identify references to specific accomplishments.
– Identify phrases that raise doubt.

What differences do you notice?
Bias in Recommendations

Figure 3. Semantic realms following possessives. Rank-ordered within gender sets from equal numbers of letters ‘her training’; ‘his research’

Trix and Psenka, Discourse & Society, 2003
Bias in Recommendations

Figure 4. Distinctive semantic realms following possessives. Greatest contrasts across genders in equal number of letters ‘her personal life’; ‘his publications’

Trix and Psenka, Discourse & Society, 2003
Identity Threat

We do not perform as well if we think that our identity matters.

- Male vs female
- Majority vs minority
- Asian vs white male

Imposter Syndrome

Feeling like a fake, attributing success to luck, downplaying success as no big deal

- Such feelings are prevalent among highly achieving and highly successful individuals

Example: US Ph.D.s accepting faculty positions abroad.
Women underapply compared with their numbers in the PhD pool.

* Based on U.S. PhD Recipients from 2000-2004 from Top 50 Universities Producing the Greatest Number of PhDs
Reasons Most Commonly Cited by UC PhD Students in the Sciences for Shifting Career Goal away from Professor with Research Emphasis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Citing Factor As “Very Important” in Career Goal Shift</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Negative experience as PhD student</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Other life interests</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Professional activity too time consuming</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Issues related to children</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Geographic location Issues</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Feelings of isolation/alienation as PhD student</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Career advancement issues</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Job security</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Bad job market</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Monetary compensation (e.g. salary, benefits)</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Spouse/partner issues or desire to marry</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Other career interests</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yellow shading indicates the group’s response is significantly higher than the other group’s response (P<.01).

Faculty Caring for Children are Busy

![Graph showing weekly hours providing care by age and gender](http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu)

Childcare is critical for faculty recruitment and retention, especially for female faculty.

Source: UC Berkeley, Faculty Climate Survey, 2003 and 2009.
Key Conclusions

- **Implicit associations** influence our judgments of others (regardless of our own group).

- **Identity threats** influence group members’ expectations about how they will be judged.
Suggestions for Mitigation

When you are the **evaluator**

- Be systematic about evaluation criteria
- Do not work under stress or time pressure
- Seek advice from individuals who are different from you

When you are being **evaluated**

- Seek information about the criteria and context
- Provide thorough information about your work
- Go for it