

IMPLICIT BIAS RESEARCH

An Brief Overview of Interdisciplinary Evidence

UIC

RESEARCH EVIDENCE

There is a large body of research demonstrating the ways in which implicit bias comes up in a number of fields including education, medicine, housing, and criminal justice, among others.

Many of these studies have shown how implicit biases related to race or gender, for example, impact individuals' likelihood of getting a job callback, mentorship opportunity, or housing. Implicit bias also shows up in criminal sentencing and physicians' perceptions of patients' pain.



STUDIES

There is a 50% callback discrepancy between white and black job applicants based solely on name (Bertrand & Mullainathan 2004).

Psychology faculty rated "Brian Miller" higher than "Karen Miller" in teaching, research, and service despite having identical CVs (Steinpreis et al. 1999).

Professors at over 200 Universities were more likely to respond to emails by white male students than women and students of color, despite the emails being identical (Milkman et al. 2015).

Using a screen to create "blind" symphony orchestra auditions increases the probability women will advance in the hiring process by 50% (Goldin & Rouse 1997).

Job applicants were rated more favorably in phone versus face-to-face interviews and this difference was stronger for less physically attractive applicants (Straus et al. 2001).

Doctors have offered less pain medication to non-white patients than white patients despite similar expressed levels of pain (Chapman et al. 2013).

STUDIES CONTINUED

When expressing anger, male attorneys are rated highest in competence while women attorneys are rated lowest in competence. Female attorneys' anger is attributed to her emotional disposition, while male attorneys' anger is attributed to his situation (May 2014).

In a study of criminal sentencing, individuals with more Afrocentric features (e.g. dark skin, wide nose, full lips) were given harsher sentences than those with less Afrocentric features, even after controlling for other factors such as the seriousness of the primary offense and number of previous offenses (Blair, Judd, & Chapleau 2004).

Male physicians were more likely to prescribe opioids to white patients than black patients when they had high cognitive loads. The reverse was true in low cognitive load scenarios (D.J. Burgess et al. 2014).

Law firm partners reviewing fictional legal research memos from 3rd year associates with intentional errors found more of the errors and rated the memos lower when the author was black than white (Reeves 2014).

10 WAYS IMPLICIT BIAS OPERATES

- **Selective Attention**—selectively seeing some things but not others depending on the context (e.g., pregnant women are more likely to notice other pregnant women).
- **Diagnosis Bias**—labeling people, places, and things, based on our first impression irrespective of evidence put before us.
- **Pattern Recognition**—sorting information based on prior experience.
- **Value Attribution**—infusing a person or thing with certain qualities based on initial perceived value (i.e. judge someone's importance based on what they are wearing).
- **Confirmation Bias**—unconsciously seeking out evidence to confirm what we believe is true.
- **Priming Effect**—responding to something based on expectations created by a previous experience or association.
- **Commitment Confirmation**—becoming attached to a particular point of view even when it may be obviously wrong.
- **Stereotype Threat**—anxiety or concern in a situation where a person has the potential to confirm a negative stereotype about their social group.
- **Anchoring Bias**—relying too heavily on one trait or piece of information when making decisions, such as assuming that people from elite school are more qualified despite holes in the elite school graduate's credentials.
- **Group Think**—the influence of group associations and beliefs on our thoughts and behaviors.