

Civil Rights Committee Supplemental Information

Bias Training Research

Source:

<https://www.discovermagazine.com/mind/curbing-implicit-bias-what-works-and-what-doesnt>

Curbing Implicit Bias: What Works and What Doesn't

Psychologists have yet to find a way to diminish hidden prejudice, but they do have strategies for thwarting discrimination.

June 5, 2020 12:45 PM

By Betsy Mason, Knowable Magazine

A quarter-century ago, social psychologist Anthony Greenwald of the University of Washington developed a test that exposed an uncomfortable aspect of the human mind: People have deep-seated biases of which they are completely unaware. And these hidden attitudes — known as implicit bias — influence the way we act toward each other, often with unintended discriminatory consequences.

As awareness of implicit bias and its effects has increased, so has interest in mitigating it. But that is much harder to do than scientists expected, as Greenwald told an audience in Seattle in February at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Greenwald, coauthor of an overview on implicit bias research in the 2020 Annual Review of Psychology, spoke with Knowable Magazine about what does and doesn't work to counter the disparities that implicit bias can produce.

This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

...Greenwald: I see most implicit bias training as window dressing that looks good both internally to an organization and externally, as if you're concerned and trying to do something. But it can be deployed [without actually achieving anything](#), which makes it in fact counterproductive. After 10 years of doing this stuff and nobody reporting data, I think the logical conclusion is that if it was working, we would have heard about it.

Source: <https://diverseeducation.com/article/165817/>

When They Say: "Implicit Bias Trainings Don't Work"
February 4, 2020

by J. Luke Wood [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._Luke_Wood]

Implicit bias training must be combined with other strategies, such as inclusive job announcements and search criteria, pool certification for representational diversity, diversity advocates on search committees, evaluation of teaching demonstrations based on the use of inclusive pedagogies, cluster hiring, systems of accountability, and clear support from campus leaders.

By itself, implicit bias training can accomplish nothing, even for the willing. But, in tandem with other strategies, it is a powerful tool for change.

Factors that lead search committees to regularly select people just like themselves are complex. These factors are informed by a litany of assumptions, stereotypes, in-group inclinations, and histories of exclusion. Complex issues such as this simply cannot be solved with a single strategy. For example, any researcher worth their salt would never attempt to solve a complex issue using a single independent variable. Rather, they could examine the confluence of factors that lead to an outcome of interest and construct a complex, multivariate model to address the issue.

Source: <https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/dobbin/files/an2018.pdf>

Why Doesn't Diversity Training Work? The Challenge for Industry and Academia

2018

By Frank Dobbin and Alexandra Kalev [Frank Dobbin is professor of sociology at Harvard. Alexandra Kalev is associate professor of sociology and anthropology at Tel Aviv University]

Nearly all Fortune 500 companies do training, and two-thirds of colleges and universities have training for faculty according to our 2016 survey of 670 schools. Most also put freshmen through some sort of diversity session as part of orientation. Yet hundreds of studies dating back to the 1930s suggest that antibias training does not reduce bias, alter behavior or change the workplace. We have been speaking to employers about this research for more than a decade, with the message that diversity training is likely the most expensive, and least effective, diversity program around.

[T]wo-thirds of human resources specialists report that diversity training does not have positive effects, and several field studies have found no effect of diversity training on women's or minorities' careers or on managerial diversity. These findings are not surprising. There is ample evidence that training alone does not change attitudes or behavior, or not by much and not for long. In their review of 985 studies of antibias interventions, Paluck and Green found little evidence that training reduces bias. In their review of 31 organizational studies using pretest/posttest assessments or a control group, Kulik and Roberson identified 27 that documented improved knowledge of, or attitudes toward, diversity, but most found small,

short-term improvements on one or two of the items measured. In their review of 39 similar studies, Bezrukova, Joshi and Jehn identified only five that examined long-term effects on bias, two showing positive effects, two negative, and one no effect.

Source: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-problem-with-implicit-bias-training/>

Scientific American

The Problem with Implicit Bias Training: It's well motivated, but there's little evidence that it leads to meaningful changes in behavior

August 28, 2020

By Tiffany L. Green, Nao Hagiwara

...We just [don't have the evidence yet](#) that implicit bias training actually works.

To be sure, finding ways to counter unfair treatment is critical. The evidence is clear that implicit prejudice, an affective component of implicit bias (i.e., feeling or emotion) [exists among health care providers](#) with respect to Black and/or Latinx patients, as well as to dark-skinned patients not in those categories. In turn, these biases lower the quality of patient-provider communication and result in lower satisfaction with the healthcare encounter.

But while implicit bias trainings are multiplying, few rigorous evaluations of these programs exist. There are exceptions; some implicit bias interventions have been conducted empirically among [health care professionals](#) and [college students](#). These interventions have been proven to lower scores on the Implicit Association Test (IAT), the most commonly used implicit measure of prejudice and stereotyping. But to date, none of these interventions has been shown to result in permanent, long-term reductions of implicit bias scores or, more importantly, sustained and meaningful [changes in behavior](#) (i.e., narrowing of racial/ethnic clinical treatment disparities).

Even worse, there is consistent evidence that bias training done the "wrong way" (think lukewarm diversity training) can actually have the opposite impact, [inducing anger and frustration](#) among white employees. What this all means is that, despite the widespread calls for implicit bias training, it will likely be ineffective at best; at worst, it's a poor use of limited resources that could cause more damage and exacerbate the very issues it is trying to solve.

Source: <https://hbr.org/2019/07/does-diversity-training-work-the-way-its-supposed-to>

[They conducted their own study.]

Does Diversity Training Work the Way It's Supposed To?

July 09, 2019

By Edward H. Chang, Katherine L. Milkman, Laura J. Zarrow, Kasandra Brabaw, Dena M. Gromet, Reb Rebele, Cade Massey, Angela L. Duckworth, and Adam Grant

What did we find? Let's start with the good news. The bias-focused trainings had a positive effect on the attitudes of one important group: employees who we believe were the least supportive of women prior to training. We found that after completing training, these employees were more likely to acknowledge discrimination against women, express support for policies designed to help women, and acknowledge their own racial and gender biases, compared to similar employees in the control group. For employees who were already supportive of women, we found no evidence that the training produced a backlash.

But did the training change behavior?

This brings us to the bad news. We found very little evidence that diversity training affected the behavior of men or white employees overall—the two groups who typically hold the most power in organizations and are often the primary targets of these interventions.

Addition to Definitions from Paul S.

In support of Melanie's affirmation that it is important to name the issues in the most accurate terms available, I am wondering if it would make sense to add this definition to the final list presented to the Council.

White supremacy

White supremacy is an historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression. The system exists across continents, nations, and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent. Its purpose is the maintenance and defense of a system of wealth, power, and privilege.

Sources: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_supremacy and, especially, with the history, here: http://www.pym.org/annual-sessions/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/06/What_Is_White_Supremacy_Martinez.pdf

As a Jew and as a member of this committee, a related topic I'd like to see discussed* is the forms white conservatism and white liberalism take in the maintenance of white supremacist societies. As it has been taught to me by Black, Jewish, and Indigenous activists, each variation poses its own threats to people of color across ethnicity, and Jews of any color: each is oppressive and deadly. Very generally speaking, only one is experienced as problematic to non-conservative white people. Steering clear of naming the direct truth of what's going on to make one's position more acceptable to social dominants is one form of white liberalism. A famous axiom and core value in peaceful social change movements is "Speaking Truth to Power." Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speaking_truth_to_power

*I suppose this could occur via the library or as part of some other antiracist educational event in town.