



Actions by Junior Faculty in Addressing Unconscious Bias

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Conscious Rejection of Bias?

March 10, 2010 American Association of University Women Report “Why So Few?”

Finding #6:

Even people who consciously reject bias such as negative stereotypes about women in science can still hold these beliefs at an unconscious level.



How can Junior Faculty Learn About their Unconscious Biases?

- Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT)
<https://implicit.harvard.edu>
- Unconscious biases in gender-career, age, Arab-Muslim, native, sexuality, religion, disability, Asian, race, weapons, skin-tone, presidents, weight, gender-science
- Gender-Science Test Results: Since 1998, 70% of more than 1/2 million people more readily associate males with science and females with art.



Junior Faculty Influence in Classroom

Gender-science test results
(Mahzarin Banali, Harvard):

- Implicit bias affects girls' likelihood of identifying with and participating in science in math.
- The stronger the association of “male” with “science” in a country or in a culture, the larger advantage males have over females in science performance.



Race Implicit Bias

May 18, 2010 “AC360” doll study (tests and interviews) by CNN & Margaret Beale Spencer, University of Chicago Researcher and Child Psychologist, on 130 children in 8 schools with different racial and economic demographics, age groups: 4/5 & 9/10, two races

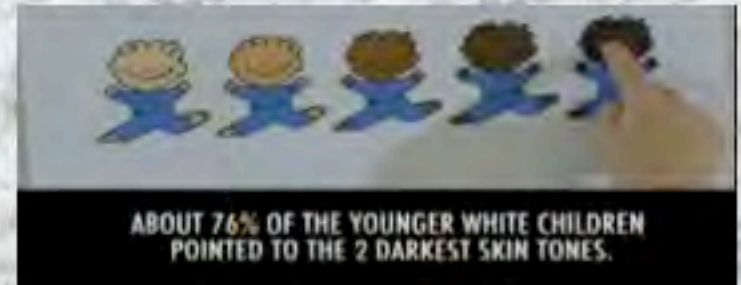
One goal: “How much to do kids learn from what they see and hear from adults?”

We are (still) Living in a Society where Dark Things are Devalued and Light Things are Valued, Prof. Spencer

AC360 Doll Pilot Study Findings:

1. White Bias: White children identify color of own skin with positive attributes and darker skin with negative attributes
2. Even black children, as a whole, have some bias toward whiteness
3. All kids are exposed to stereotypical messages. However white children are maintaining stereotypes more strongly than African-American.

"Show me the dumb child"



"Show me the one (color) you think most children would think looks bad on a boy."

Junior Faculty (Personal) Actions to Combat Implicit Bias

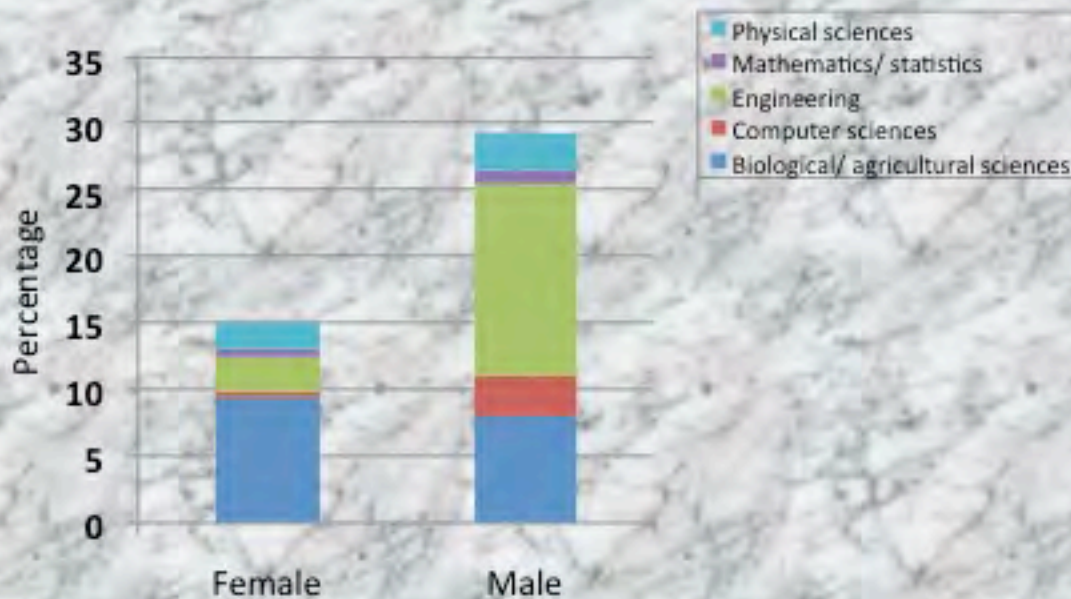
- take IAT tests
- “reset” implicit gender-science biases:
 - actively learn about women scientists and engineers
 - Reflect on biases learned early in life; follow with self-monitoring
 - Share life experiences w/ diverse group(s)
 - Show positive images of women in science in your workplace, classroom, and/or home



Junior Faculty (Collective) Actions To Combat Implicit Bias

Goal: retain the few females that wish to pursue STEM fields

Intent of First-Year College Students to Major in Science and Engineering Fields, by Gender, 2006



Junior Faculty (Collective) Actions to Combat Implicit Bias

AAUW “Why So Few?”

Finding #5: The climate of science and engineering departments at colleges and universities is especially important for female students.

- Actively recruit female students.
- Emphasize broad applications of science and engineering in introductory courses.
- Review admissions policies to ensure that departments are not unintentionally “weeding out” potentially successful students.

Actions by Junior Faculty – The Bottom-Up Approach Recipe

- Ask to chair a committee (e.g., Hiring)
- Ask for relief in exchange for chairing
- Populate committee with undergraduate students, graduate students, post-docs, adjuncts, junior and/or senior faculty
- Change or create departmental policy to address unconscious bias (e.g., active recruitment of females)
- Get Departmental Chair by-in prior to presentation to faculty for vote
- If new policy part of goal/mission of College/University, have Department Chair suggest policy for college and/or university



Example – UCF Physics Department Diversity Committee

- UCF Physics Department Diversity Committee
- Created policy on Diversity in Hiring
 - Diversity training of Hiring Committee every 3 years
 - Department chair enforcement: deny faculty placement on committee if not trained
 - Staff to send job advertisements to women and minority newsletters
 - Department chair to send out job advertisement to women and minorities identified by Hiring Committee
 - Use checklist in evaluation of folders to minimize bias

Summary

- Take personal actions to discover your country/culture/other unconscious biases
- Take personal actions to actively minimize your unconscious biases and not take them into the classroom
- Take collective action by changing policy in your department followed by changing policy at college or university levels

Thank
you

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