Enhancing Equity in School Discipline 2: Using Data to Reduce Effects of Implicit Bias on Disproportionality

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Session Overview

1. Describe the term implicit bias and its role in decision making
2. Share tools for assessing and addressing implicit bias

Handouts: http://www.pbis.org
Getting going…

- Turn to a neighbor
  - What do you want to get out of this session?

Warm-Up Activity: Stroop Task

- Words are displayed in different colors to test “snap decision” making
- Easier to identify the color in which this word is displayed: GREEN (i.e., green) than this word: GREEN (i.e., red)

Stroop Task (Part 1) Practice

- Say the color of each word as quickly and accurately as you can.
  - CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ARE THE BEST
  - CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ARE THE BEST
Stroop Task (Part 1)  
- Say the color of each word as quickly and accurately as you can
- Note the time it takes you to finish

Stroop Task (Part 2)  
- Say the color of each word as quickly and accurately as you can
- Note the time it takes you to finish

Stroop Task:  
A test of automatic associations
- Our brains are wired to look for patterns
- When we are forced to make quick decisions, we use our automatic associations to respond

Warm Up Activity #2:  
 Implicit Association Test  
- [https://implicit.harvard.edu/](https://implicit.harvard.edu/)
- Uses beliefs (stereotypes) and evaluations (attitudes) associated with social groups
- Example: Gender-Career IAT  
  - Tests automatic association of MEN more with CAREERS (work outside the home) and WOMEN more with FAMILY
Think-Pair Share

- What did you notice about completing the activity?
- How might patterns of responses on this activity relate to real world interactions?

What is implicit bias?

- Unconscious, automatic
- Based on stereotypes
- We all have it (even those affected by it)
- Generally not an indication of our beliefs and values
- More likely to influence:
  - Snap decisions
  - Decisions that are ambiguous

Implicit Bias at Work

- Attractiveness
  - Real estate agents rated as more attractive sell homes for significantly higher prices (Salter, Mixon, & King, 2012)
- Height
  - One inch of height is worth $789 per year in salary (Judge & Cable, 2004)

Implicit Bias in Refereeing

(Carlson, 2014)

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<th>Away game differential</th>
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Implicit Bias and Gender
(Reuben et al., 2014)

- Subjects randomly split into groups of 4 (employers and job candidates)
  - Job candidates paid by performance on timed math (adding sets of 2 digit numbers)
  - Employers paid if they chose the best of 2 job candidates

- Hiring criteria:
  - Appearance
  - Self-reported performance
  - Actual pre-test performance

Implicit Bias and Gender
(Reuben et al., 2014)

"the challenge is not a small number of twisted white supremacists but something infinitely more subtle and complex: People who believe in equality but who act in ways that perpetuate bias and inequality."

-Nicholas Kristof, *The New York Times*
Implicit Bias predicts the extent to which…

- **Police Officers** use force when arresting African American children as opposed to White children (Goff et al., 2014)
- **Arbitrators** decide labor grievances in favor of men over women (Girvan, Deason, & Borgida, 2014)
- **Pediatricians** recommend less pain medication for African American children than White children with identical symptoms (Sabin & Greenwald, 2012)

Disproportionality in School Discipline (Losen et al., 2015)
A Unidimensional View of Bias

Racial Bias → Disproportionate Discipline

A Multidimensional View of Bias

Racial Bias → Disproportionate Discipline

Two Systems for Decision Making (Kahneman, 2011)

- **System 1: Fast Decisions**
  - Automatic, snap judgments
  - Intuitive, unconscious

- **System 2: Slow Decisions**
  - Deliberate decisions
  - Allows for conscious attention

Discussion

- Which decisions in schools are more likely to be snap judgments?
  - Correcting a student’s behavior
  - Sending a student to the office
  - Picking which student to call on
  - Deciding whether to call a student’s parent
  - Suspending a student from school
  - Grading students’ work
Wows and Wonders

- Turn to partner and share
  - One wow (an “aha moment”)
  - One wonder (a question)

Assumptions

- We all believe that a student’s color should not be fate to negative outcomes
- Discussing equity and race is uncomfortable
- Creating discomfort without providing effective strategies for equity is not productive
- In discussing equity and taking steps, we will make mistakes

A 5-point Intervention Approach to Enhance Equity in School Discipline

1. Use engaging academic instruction to reduce the achievement gap
2. Implement a behavior framework that is preventive, multi-tiered, and culturally responsive
3. Collect, use, and report disaggregated student discipline data
4. Develop policies with accountability for disciplinary equity
5. Teach neutralizing routines for vulnerable decision points

Recommendations for Addressing Discipline Disproportionality in Education

Components of Effective Intervention to Prevent and Reduce Disproportionality

- Use evidence-based practices to reduce the achievement gap
- Ensure multiple components are in place and carefully monitored
- Implement multi-level interventions that address academic, social, and behavioral needs
- Provide targeted supports for students who are at risk

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis
5. How can we reduce implicit bias in our decision making?

What is a Vulnerable Decision Point (VDP)?

- A specific decision that is more vulnerable to effects of implicit bias
- Two parts:
  - Elements of the situation
  - The person’s decision state (internal state)

Situations: Options for Identifying VDPs

- Levels of specificity:
  1. All ODR/suspension decisions (general self-instruction routine)
  2. Identify VDPs through national data
  3. Use school or district data
Using Discipline Data within SWPBIS to Identify and Address Disproportionality: A Guide for School Teams

Introduction
The purpose of this guide is to provide schools the SWPBIS school teams in favor of disproportionality and office discipline referrals. It describes an evidence-based framework and steps for identifying cases of disproportionality, disproportionate discipline referrals, and examining the data for school teams and school districts. Specific practices to address disproportionality are described in other guides in the series.

Audience
This guide is designed specifically for use by school or district teams seeking to reduce racial and ethnic disproportionality in school discipline, regardless of whether they are implementing SWPBIS.

http://www.pbis.org/school/equity-pbis

National SWIS Data (2011-12)
3,026,367 ODRs
6,269 schools
47 states, plus DC

Office Referrals by Problem Behavior

Office Referrals by Location
Office Referrals by Time of Day

VDPs from national ODR data

- Subjective problem behavior
  - Defiance, Disrespect, Disruption
  - Major vs. minor
- Non-classroom areas
  - Hallways
- Afternoons

Multidimensional View of Bias

Situations:
Activity - Identify VDPs worksheet

1. Identify a demographic group of interest
2. Fill the top set of blanks with national ODR data

- Behavior:
- Location:
- Time:
- Day:
- Grade lvl:
Situations:
Activity - Identify VDPs worksheet

3. Fill the middle left set with your school or district’s overall data (ODR, susp.)
- Behavior:
- Location:
- Time:
- Day:
- Grade lvl:

4. Fill the middle right set with data for your demographic group
- Behavior:
- Location:
- Time:
- Day:
- Grade lvl:

SWIS Drill Down (www.swis.org)

Add demographic group of interest as a filter (click to “Include in Dataset”).

Click each graph and compare to overall patterns.

Stage 1 Behavior: White Students

Referrals by Problem Behavior
Drill Down

- Referrals
- M. Disruption
- M. W/继
- M. Contact
- M. Substance
- M. Other

Problem Behavior
5. For this group, what are some common student behaviors that push your buttons?

6. How might these specific behaviors be related to cultural differences?

7. How might these behaviors meet a functional need for these students?
Talking out (aka “overlap”)
- Origin: churches and desired group responses to leader
- Demonstrates engagement

Emotional reactions to requests (aka “machismo”)
- Origin: years of living in a society that marginalizes them, need for academic support?
- Expect this kind of response from some
- Not necessarily a response to you
- Provide “peacock moments”

Ignoring requests
- Origin: need for academic support?
- Functional alternative to defiance?
- Rather than look bad than stupid
- Identify parts of (a) task, and (b) request that may be aversive

Misperceptions of Aggression? (Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003)
- Participants were shown a series of computer generated White and Black faces from scowling to smiling
Implicit bias was not related to perceptions of White faces
Those with higher implicit bias perceived Black faces as more angry

Misperceptions of Aggression?
(Hugenberg & Bodenhausen, 2003)

Situations:
Responses to culturally-based behaviors
- May be desirable/adaptive outside of school
  - May work/be reinforced in other settings
  - Not necessarily “wrong” – just not for school
- Solutions
  1. Be explicit in teaching situational specificity ("code-switching")
  2. Provide extensive practice
    - Example: operation signs

Decision States:
Setting Events
- An event occurring before or with an antecedent that increases likelihood of a behavior
- Sets it up (slow trigger)
- Sometimes is present and sometimes is not
- Does not require one’s awareness
- Examples from students:
  - Lack of sleep
  - Headache/illness
  - Lack of food (e.g., no breakfast)
  - Fight with peer/parent/etc.
  - Failed a test in previous class
  - Didn’t get any coffee this morning

Decision States:
Resource Depletion
(Girvan et al., 2014)
- As we become fatigued, our filters for appropriate behavior can be affected
- Effects of hunger (Gailliot et al., 2009)
- Decreases in willpower later in day
  - “The Morning Morality Effect” (Kouchaki & Smith, 2014)
  - Examples…
Decision States: Activity - Identify VDPs worksheet

1. What are some common VDP decision states for many adults in schools?

2. What do you think might be possible VDP decision states for you?

Two-step Neutralizing Routine for Staff:

- When you see problem behavior, stop and ask yourself:
  1. Is this a VDP?
    - Situation
    - Decision state
  2. If so, use an agreed-upon alternative response

Neutralizing Routines for Reducing Effects of Implicit Bias

What makes for a good neutralizing routine?

1. Brief
2. If-then statements
3. Clear steps
4. Interrupts the chain of events
5. Doable
Neutralizing Routine Examples

- If this is a VDP…,
  - “See me after class/at the next break”
  - am I acting in line with my values?
  - take two deep breaths
  - recognize my upset feelings and let them go
  - picture this student as a future doctor/lawyer
  - model taking think time
  - delay decision until I can think clearly
  - ask the student to reflect on their feelings/behavior
  - know that’s Rock Brain talking to me
  - “I love you, but that behavior is not ok”

Two-step Neutralizing Routine for Staff:

- Can also be used as precorrection
1. Am I about to enter a VDP?
2. What are my values?
3. When I see problem behavior, I’ll use the alternative response

Neutralizing Routine: Activity - Identify NRs worksheet

1. Brainstorm possible neutralizing routines
2. Check if each idea has all 5 critical features
   1. Brief
   2. If-then statements
   3. Clear steps
   4. Add space/delay between behavior and response
   5. Doable

Neutralizing Routine: Activity - Identify NRs worksheet

3. Decide on a single neutralizing routine for you (or the school)
4. Practice the neutralizing routine
5. Identify helping and hindering variables
6. Make a plan to maximize its use
Two-step Neutralizing Routine for Administrators:
(Susan Barrett)

- When you have to handle problem behavior, stop and tell yourself:
  1. Don’t just do something, stand there!
     - Be sure you are ready to act in line with values
     - Get information from student and staff
     - Assess student-teacher relationship
  2. Whenever possible, use an agreed-upon instructional response
     - Teaches missing skills
     - Connects student to school and staff

The Restorative Chat
(Alton School District, Alton, IL)

1. Tell me what happened.
2. What you were thinking at the time?
3. What do you think about it now?
4. Who did this affect?
5. What do you need to do about it?
6. How can we make sure this doesn’t happen again?
7. What I can do to help you?

Professional Development

1. Use data to identify:
   - The extent of the problem
   - Vulnerable Decision Points (VDPs)
2. Teach and practice:
   - Implicit bias
   - VDPs
   - Neutralizing routines
3. Follow up:
   - Ongoing coaching
   - Monitor progress with data

School Example

Urban K-8 School
Black/White ODR Risk Ratio = 2.67

Problem Behavior: All Students

Problem Behavior: Black Students Only

Drill Down: Phys. Aggression on Playground

Black/White ODR Risk Ratio = 4.5
The School PBIS Team’s Intervention

- ODRs and observations indicated differences in perceived basketball rules
- Team clarified rules for staff and students  
  - Aka “code-switching”
- Additional teaching, practice, and acknowledgement
- Monitor with ODRs and Black-White RR

The School PBIS Team’s Intervention Outcomes

Black-White Risk Ratios

- Overall  
  - 2013-14: 2.67
  - 2014-15 (Sept to Dec): 2.0

- Physical Aggression on Playground  
  - 2013-14: 4.5
  - 2014-15 (Sept to Dec): can’t calculate (1 ODR)

Big Ideas

- Thinking about and discussing solutions is the first step
- Pick a neutralizing routine and try it out
- Use your data to assess and monitor  
  - If you don’t have the data you need at hand, advocate for it
- This is hard work – but you know how to do it!

Wows, Wonders, & What’s Nexts

- Turn to partner and share:  
  - One wow
  - One wonder
  - One next step
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References


References


References


