

Psychological Perspective Behind Discrimination in Workplace

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ABSTRACT

Over the last decade, diversity in the workplace has become a major topic of research in the organizational sciences, with numerous books and articles highlighting the benefits of a workforce that is diverse in terms of race, gender, disability status, age, and sexual orientation. By detecting when discrimination will be displayed or repressed, aversive racism supports social identity theory and the BIAS map. Discrimination can take many forms, including cultural, societal, institutional, and individual discrimination. Attitudes, prejudice, and stereotypes are three key concepts for understanding individual processes that result in discrimination. The BIAS and social identity theory are complemented by aversive racism. Three crucial concepts for understanding individual processes that result in discrimination are attitudes, bias, and stereotypes. The social identity perspective (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) posits that members of a group are motivated to protect their self-esteem and acquire a positive and differentiated social identity. Individual cognitive and affective processes can result in workplace discrimination in a variety of ways.

Keywords: *Discrimination, Prejudice, Attitudes, Culture, Organisation*

Over the last decade, diversity in the workplace has become a major topic of research in the organizational sciences, with numerous books and articles highlighting the benefits of a workforce that is diverse in terms of race, gender, disability status, age, and sexual orientation.

Discrimination affects victims' daily lives in areas such as employment, income, financial opportunities, housing, educational opportunities, and medical care.

Discrimination traditionally has been defined as unjustified negative actions that deny "individuals or groups of people equality of treatment" (Allport, 1954, p. 51). Discrimination occurs on a variety of levels, including cultural, social, institutional, and individual.

The social identity view, the 'behaviour from intergroup emotions and stereotypes' map, aversive racism theory, and system justification theory are four ideas that have impacted our understanding of intergroup relations, prejudice, and discrimination.

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Attitudes, prejudice, and stereotypes are three key concepts for understanding individual processes that result in discrimination. Individual cognitive and affective processes can result in workplace discrimination in a variety of ways. Prejudice, for example, can be manifested openly and blatantly in ways that create visible barriers to employment and advancement.

The first step is to categorize. We classify items to better comprehend and recognize them. We categorize individuals (including ourselves) in a similar fashion in order to comprehend the social context. Because they are helpful, we employ social categories like black, white, Australian, Christian, Muslim, student, and bus driver. If we can put people into a category, it tells us a lot about them. Similarly, understanding what categories we fall into allows us to learn more about ourselves. Intergroup behaviour is transformed into interpersonal conduct through classification. Personal identity (what differentiates one person from all others) and social identity (the component of the self-concept generated from the awareness of belonging to one or more groups) combine to form an individual's self-image.

The social identity view, the 'behaviour from intergroup affect and stereotypes' map, aversive racism theory, and system justification theory are just a few of the theories that have affected our understanding of intergroup relations, prejudice, and discrimination.

The social identity perspective (Tajfel and Turner, 1979) posits that members of a group are motivated to protect their self-esteem and acquire a positive and differentiated social identity. This need for a positive social identity can lead to discrimination, which can take the form of direct harm to out-group members or, more commonly and spontaneously, preferential treatment of in-group members, a phenomena known as in-group bias. Although intergroup interaction can result in stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination of the out-group, contact theory contends that it can also result in less bias and conflict between members of the majority and minority groups.

Once we have classified ourselves as a member of a group and associated with that group, we start to equate that group to other groups. To sustain our self-esteem, our group must do well in comparison to other groups. This is vital for understanding bias because once two groups identify as competitors, they are obliged to compete in order for the members to preserve their self-esteem. Competition and animosity between groups are thus the outcome of conflicting identities as well as fighting for resources (as in Sherif's Robbers Cave).

The BIAS map (Behaviours from Intergroup Affect and Stereotypes; see Cuddy, et al., 2007) offers insights into the precise ways that humans discriminate against members of different sorts of groups, whereas social identity theory explores basic, generic processes contributing to intergroup discrimination.

Aversive racism (Dovidio and Gaertner, 2004) complements social identity theory (which shows the pervasiveness of intergroup discrimination) and the BIAS map (which helps determine the form in which prejudice will express) by determining when discrimination will be manifested or repressed.

Aversive racism is usually perpetrated by "well-intentioned" people who claim not to want to be labelled racist but nevertheless conduct in a racist manner. Microaggressions, a concept created by Pierce in 1970, are the most common kind of aversive racial conduct. Microaggressions are short and ordinary everyday verbal, behavioural, or environmental

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indignities that transmit hostile, disparaging, or unfavorable prejudiced slights and insults toward any group, especially the culturally marginalized or a racial minority, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Aversive racism can have a significant impact on hiring decisions. Discrimination should occur in instances where decisions are purportedly based on criteria other than race, according to the aversive racism concept.

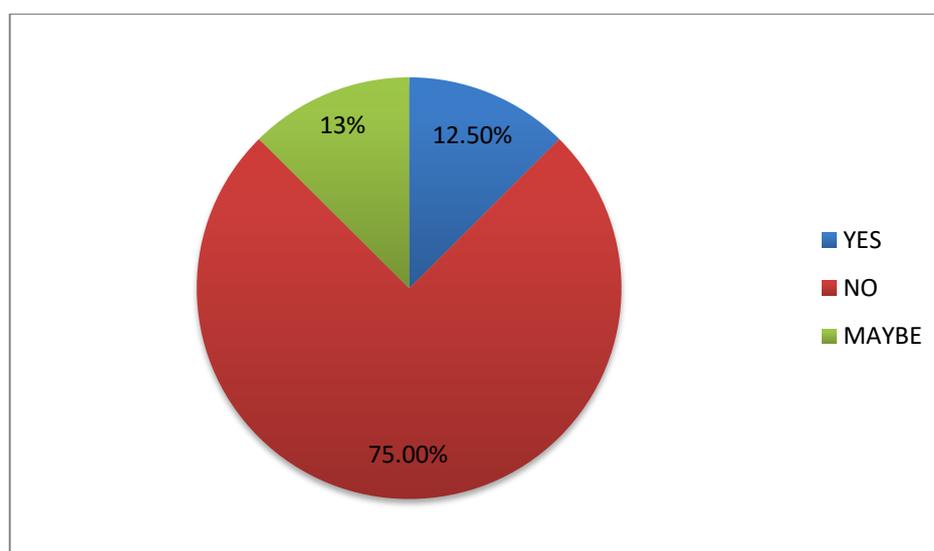
In today's culture, aversive racism still exists in the workplace. Unconscious racial prejudice is a new perspective on racism that has been observed. Workplace discrimination occurs as a result of societal racial views held by the majority. Many minority members are impoverished, for example, yet beliefs that all minorities are poor and ignorant are not respectable. African Americans are not well liked, making finding work even more difficult. Negative words such as impoverished or inept are used to describe African Americans in the media.

Discrimination's pervasiveness and systematic, though subtle, manifestations affect society in ways that perpetuate inequities. The last theory we'll discuss is system justification theory, which is based on the idea that low-status groups in "unequal social systems" internalise a sense of personal or collective inferiority (Jost et al., 2001, p. 367). According to system justification theorists, the social identity perspective's posited need for positive distinctiveness as a function of feeling good about oneself (ego justification) and one's group (group justification) is related (positively or negatively, depending on your status) to belief that the system on which the groups are based is fair (Jost and Banaji, 1994). Ego and group justification in high status groups correspond to a conviction that the system is right and that their high status is a reward for their merit. This results in in-group prejudice. People who have a history of personal and group advantage frequently derive the prescriptive from the descriptive, or, in other words, suffer from the 'is-ought' illusion (Hume, 1939); they believe that because this is how the world looks and has looked for a long time, this is what it should look like. However, if low status group members feel that the system is right, these justification demands may conflict (Jost and Burgess, 2000). Their poor status might be interpreted as merited punishment for their unworthiness, leading to the manifestation of out-group bias, or the belief that the out-group is superior and so deserves to be favored.

As a result, system justification theory expands the social identity viewpoint to explain why inequality and prejudice among groups persist and are allowed. While these theories of discrimination are by no means complete of the social psychology literature, we believe that they assist explain why, how, and when prejudice arises and persists across time. Thus, these ideas provide a good foundation for considering the discrimination investigations that follow.

To estimate the likelihood of job discrimination, a poll was conducted. The graph below depicts the replies given when participants were asked if their organization engages in discriminatory or stereotyped behavior based on gender, sex, caste, age, or religion.

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As can be seen, 12.5 percent of the participants are unsure if their organization engages in discriminatory behavior, 13% believe that their company is biased, and 75% of the participants stated that their company is bias-free and that no acts of discrimination occur in any element of their job.

Even though today workplace discrimination is fairly reduced it still prevails in huge number around the globe. Discrimination has an impact on victims' lives in areas like job, income, financial prospects, housing, educational chances, and medical care. Discrimination is traditionally described as unjustified negative behaviors that deprive «individuals or groups of persons of equal treatment. Discrimination can take many forms, including cultural, societal, institutional, and individual discrimination. Three crucial concepts for understanding individual processes that result in discrimination are attitudes, bias, and stereotypes. A range of cognitive and affective processes can cause discrimination in the workplace. The BIAS map elucidates the specific ways in which humans discriminate against members of various groups, whereas social identity theory investigates the fundamental, general processes that contribute to intergroup discrimination. The BIAS and social identity theory are complemented by aversive racism. By detecting when discrimination will be displayed or repressed, aversive racism supports social identity theory and the BIAS map. A poll was performed to determine the likelihood of workplace discrimination.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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