Confronting Prejudice: Comparing Reactions to Race Versus Gender Biases
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Introduction

• Confrontations of prejudicial bias often result in self-regulatory outcomes by motivating individuals to act in an egalitarian fashion and reduce future prejudiced responses [Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2010; Mallett & Wagner, 2011].
• Past research has shown that people care more about confrontations of racism and find sexism confrontations amusing (Gulker, Mark, & Monteith, 2013; Czopp & Monteith, 2010). People appear to legitimize sexism, thinking it really is not an important issue (Fiske & Stevens, 2002).
• If people are more concerned about their sexist biases if the confrontation occurs in a domain in which the problem of sexism is socially salient?
• Negative biases against women in STEM are pervasive (Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham, & Handelsman, 2012). Furthermore, underrepresentation of women in STEM is a socially salient issue. This study examined whether confrontation of sexism leads to the same self-regulatory outcomes as confrontations of racism in the STEM domain.
• If this is the case, results will suggest that the effectiveness of confrontations for curbing sexist bias is domain dependent. Whereas people are generally concerned when confronted about racial biases, they may care about sexist biases only in certain domains.

Method

Design: A 2 (race bias: race versus gender) x 2 (feedback: control versus confronted) between-subjects factorial design. 200 non-Black participants (Ps) evaluated an applicant for a lab manager position in Physics.

• Fixed feedback was provided so that Ps evaluating target applicants were told they evaluated them negatively based on race/gender. Ps who evaluated a control applicant (white male) were told they evaluated them favorably.
• After the confrontation, Ps completed the dependent measures and an Implicit Association Task (IAT)

Dependent Measures

• Ps indicated their believability of feedback (1-7). "The feedback I received was credible."
• Ps indicated their affect (1-7) on various dimensions. Negself (e.g., guilty), and Positive (e.g., good)
• Ps indicated their intent to monitor future behavior. "I am concerned about exhibiting sexist/racist bias in the future."

Discussion

• The present research moves beyond all previous confrontation work to suggest potential conditions that must be satisfied for confrontations of sexism to be effective at encouraging bias reduction.
• Although, past research has demonstrated that confrontations of racism often elicit greater concern than confrontations of sexism, the present research suggests otherwise.
• Ps reported equal ratings of negative self-directed affect in the sexism confrontation condition and the racism confrontation condition.
• Ps also reported intention to monitor behavior in the future and concern about bias both confrontation conditions.
• A mediation model was supported whereby the effect of confrontation condition on individuals’ concern about biases and intention to monitor biased behavior in the future was mediated by negative self-directed affect.
• Sexism within the STEM domain is a socially salient issue. The underrepresentation of women in the sciences is well known among college students.
• Therefore, domain is important. When society has presented clear messages that certain biases against women exist (as in the case with STEM), it is more likely that confrontation of bias will lead to self-regulatory outcomes help to reduce future biases.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>Race Bias</th>
<th>Gender Bias</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Confronted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe Feedback</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Self-Directed Affect</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affect</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>3.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future Concern &amp; Intent to Monitor</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IAT Data

• Significant ME for prejudice condition.
  • t(190) = 3.19, p = .002, d = .45
  • Ps strongly associated males with science and females with humanities reverse (IAT M = .46, SE = .04), but less strongly associated whites with science and blacks with humanities (IAT M = .11, SE = .04).
  • This result points to the socially salient issue of gender bias against women in STEM.

Tests of Mediation in Confrontation Conditions

• The findings suggest the possibility of testing a mediation model. We reasoned that the effect of confrontation condition on the extent to which Ps intended to monitor their behavior in the future and expressed more concern about biases should be mediated by negative self-direct affect.
  • Using Hayes’s PROCESS (Model 4) to test this model, the Confidence Interval (95%) did not include 0.

References


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