Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Sheffield		
Unit of Assessment: D-30 Philosophy		
Title of case study: Implicit bias and institutional change		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014–2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	**Role(s) (e.g. job title):**	**Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:**
Dr Jules Holroyd	Vice-Chancellor's Fellow	2016–present
Professor Jennifer Saul	Professor of Philosophy	1995–2020
Dr Robin Scaife	Postdoctoral Research Associate	2012–2020
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013–2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		

1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)

Concerns about implicit bias have led many institutions to introduce implicit bias training. But this training is often problematic. Holroyd and Saul's research articulates the pitfalls of focussing solely on individual cognition in implicit bias training. Instead they argue, changing institutional norms, practice, and policy is essential in tackling implicit bias and its effects. They used their research to develop workshops to improve institutional practice in academia, the judicial and legal system, and the Cabinet Office. As a result, organisations developed inclusivity guidelines and made changes to vetting and recruitment processes with concrete changes to their practice. To further the learning and benefits of their research, the team designed 'train the trainer' workshops which support those providing training within their own organisations to improve how those organisations work.

2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)

Implicit biases – fast automatic cognitions involved in stereotyping social groups – are a likely causal factor in producing patterns of discrimination against and exclusion of stigmatised social groups. Implicit biases have been found to be pervasive, and in recent years many institutions have started to provide so-called 'implicit bias training' with the aim of helping their employees or members understand implicit biases and avoid discrimination. Much research from social psychology has focused on interventions that try to change or reduce individuals' implicit biases; much research, however, shows that such interventions are not robust.

Our research has focused on:

a) Developing a better understanding of what implicit biases are and how they operate. This research has made original contributions in emphasising the heterogeneity of implicit biases and the various kinds of influence they may have on behaviour [R1, R2].

b) Understanding the causal role of implicit biases in explanations of exclusion and discrimination, in particular of women in philosophy (76% of professional philosophers are male in the UK), but also in academia more widely [R3, R4]. We have also focused on the explanatory role of implicit bias in other contexts (such as criminal justice) [R2].

The former research has focused on the role that gender bias may play in hiring, promotion, publication and marking, and in ratings exercises that have been prominent in the discipline. We have also articulated the role that implicit biases may play in perpetuating institutional racism.

c) The importance of contextual, institutional, and structural factors that contribute to implicit bias, and the importance of changing those contextual and structural factors in order to combat the effects of implicit bias [R2, R5, R6]. This research is original in showing that, contrary to some assumptions made by scholars, change to implicit biases should not be understood individualistically. Rather bias change is part of a process of structural change. Structural change includes changes to norms, practices, and policies that govern these, and is to be contrasted with interventions that try to change individual cognition in isolation. This informs our approaches to combating the effects of implicit bias in workshops (detailed below), which focus on changes to practice and policy, rather than on individuals' biases alone. This supports an innovative approach to bias training.

d) How the knowledge developed above should inform both implicit bias training and other strategies to combat implicit biases. This research has been original both in focusing on the kinds of structural and institutional changes needed, and also in demonstrating that these sorts of changes are better placed to address multiple forms of discrimination, including discrimination due to intersectional oppressions. These changes are multiply justified, in that they are supported by other considerations also - such as avoiding explicit bias, and enhancing perceptions of procedural justice [R2, R5, R6].

The key findings of this work, developed through philosophical research and interdisciplinary research with social psychologists, are that:

- implicit biases are heterogeneous and may influence behaviour in many ways;

- it is plausible that implicit biases have an explanatory role (alongside other factors) in producing and sustaining gender and racial biases in a range of contexts;

- addressing implicit biases requires changes to structural factors (norms, practices, policies) rather than attention to individual cognition alone;

- 'implicit bias training' workshops should focus on addressing structural factors (changes to which are multiply justified).

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1. Holroyd, J., Scaife, R., & Stafford, T. (2017). What is implicit bias? *Philosophy Compass, 12*(10), e12437. https://doi.org/10.1111/phc3.12437

R2. Holroyd, J. (2015). Implicit racial bias and the anatomy of institutional racism. Criminal *Justice Matters, 101*(1), 30–32. https://doi.org/10.1080/09627251.2015.1080943

R3. Di Bella, L., Miles, E., & Saul, J. (2016). 'Philosophers Explicitly Associate Philosophy with Maleness: An examination of implicit and explicit gender stereotypes in philosophy' in Brownstein, M. & Saul, J. (eds.) *Implicit Bias and Philosophy, Volume 1: Metaphysics and Epistemology*. Oxford Scholarship Online. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198713241.003.0012

R4.   Saul, J. (2013). 'Implicit Bias, Stereotype Threat, and Women in Philosophy' in Hutchinsonm K. & Jenkins, F. (eds.) *Women in Philosophy, What Needs to Change?* Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199325603.003.0003

R5.   Saul, J. (2018). (How) Should We Tell Implicit Bias Stories? *Disputatio, 10*(50), 217–244. https://doi.org/10.2478/disp-2018-0014. Available at http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/137150/.

R6.   Holroyd, J. & Saul, J. (2018). Implicit Bias and Reform Efforts in Philosophy: A Defence. *Philosophical Topics*, *46*(2): 71-102. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26927951

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Through the development of training and best practice guidelines, Holroyd and Saul have increased understanding of implicit biases in institutional contexts, and of how to address them through structural changes, to policy and practice. This has resulted in changed workplace practice and improvements in diversity.

1) Impact in academia, nationally and internationally

Good practice guidelines for women in philosophy, informed by Saul's research [R6] and co-authored by her, were adopted by the British Philosophical Association (BPA) and the Society for Women in Philosophy UK (SWIP-UK) in 2013. Previously, there were **no discipline-wide guidelines for making philosophy more inclusive**. Between 2014 and 2018 these guidelines were adopted by 22 UK departments, 3 departments outside the UK, 13 learned societies & journals, and 5 research projects [S1]. Reports to the BPA, collated in the BPA/SWIP-UK Good Practice Guidelines Impact Report, indicate that substantial changes have occurred, with many reporting changes to hiring policies, event organisation, teaching practices and training provision, including mandatory implicit bias training for selection committee members [S2]. As a result, five universities adopting the guidelines increased the number of women hired, six increased the number of women speaking at seminars and conferences, and nine reported a change in workplace culture. Six universities now have more women on their reading lists [S3]. Staff reported a palpable culture change as a result of the guidelines noting that *"it is now generally accepted that sexist, racist or other discriminatory comments/behaviours are entirely unacceptable"* and that "*the outcome is a more inclusive and open culture*" [S3]. The guidelines have also been reported (by chairs of the respective associations) to have informed similar initiatives by the American Philosophical Association, and the Canadian Philosophical Association [S3].

By request, we have run **workshops on implicit bias for professional and academic staff at the** Universities **of Bristol, Nottingham, Cambridge and Manchester.** This has included workshops for both professional staff and academic departments, with a view to changing institutional practices. At Bristol, the initial training for the Department of Philosophy was reported by the department to have "*literally changed things across the whole Uni, not just our department"* [S3]. It has led to staff presentations across the University and a commitment from the University to make changes. At Nottingham, changes were reported in hiring practices and to research seminars, leading to a consistently better gender balance in these areas [S3]. The training for the University of Cambridge was recorded and is available for staff at Cambridge for future training purposes.

2) Impact on the justice system, legal firms, and professional organisations

Holroyd's work on implicit racial bias and institutional racism, indicating that it must be understood and dealt with structurally [R2], was incorporated into training sessions for the judiciary in England and Scotland (sessions ran from Sept 2015-Oct 2018). Training directly reached c.300 individuals and was recorded and made available to all judges in training. Individuals reported that their understanding of implicit bias had increased (95%) and that these sessions helped them to think about the ways of combating bias (92%) [S4, S5]. Structural changes have also been implemented as a result of this training. Implicit bias training workshops are now included as standard in judicial training, with the focus on structural rather than individual change, and the 'equal treatment benchmark' (a guide for judges) has been rewritten to include information about implicit biases, based on the training [S4, S5]. Follow up interviews with the coordinator of training for the judges indicate that "*there's definitely been a climate shift towards the understanding of the importance of implicit bias' and that judges now 'attempt to employ mitigation strategies - to help deal with implicit biases*" [S4, S5].

Training has also been provided for legal firms Hickman & Rose and Vinson & Elkins; and for the annual conference of the Association of Occupational Physicians [S2, S3]. These sessions have resulted in changes to institutional practice: for example, training staff at Hickman & Rose confirmed that following the session from Holroyd, changes were made including trialling anonymous recruitment, to avoid biases in the hiring process [S4 - impact on the judiciary report].

3) Impact on the Cabinet Office

A workshop led by Saul at the Cabinet Office in 2018 led to them commissioning Saul, Holroyd, Stafford and Scaife ('the Sheffield team') to make recommendations on wider Cabinet Office policy and practice. They worked with the Government Security Group on diversity and inclusion, since that group had particular concerns about inclusion (with few women working in security, and BAME employees underrepresented). At the start of this work (Jan 2018) the Cabinet Office had little data and few processes for analysing data which would enable them to understand the potential obstacles to diversity and inclusion. Work by the Sheffield team provided them with this data and analysis to inform vetting and recruitment processes, unconscious bias training and their diversity and inclusion strategy.

Based on Saul and Holroyd's approaches to implicit bias and institutional change [R4, R5, R6], their research and recommendations have impacted practice and policy in the following ways [S6, S7]:

- Changes to the information provided about the vetting process (which was found, in their commissioned research, to deter people from certain groups from applying).
- Changes to how jobs are advertised.
- The development of a Diversity and Inclusion strategy. This strategy includes:
  - mechanisms to gather data about employees and the working environment, and a new role to gather, analyse data, and revise policy;
  - adoption of targets for recruitment and retention of underrepresented groups;
  - establishing an outreach program, to recruit from underrepresented groups;
  - introduction of guidelines for inclusive meetings;
- Development of a recruitment tool kit, including role profiles, selection methods, positive action campaign advice, and information about implicit bias.

4) More effective training

'Train the trainer' workshops have been designed by Holroyd and Saul to train workshop leaders to lead implicit bias training focused on structural change within their own organisations. It enables Holroyd and Saul to step back from the process whilst their work reaches more people, and makes the programme more sustainable in the long term. So far, 25 trainers have taken part in this training. 87.5% of participants reported that the workshop had helped them to reflect on and change their practice [S7, S8]. All those surveyed reported that they would use the materials provided in their own settings. Follow-up evaluation indicates that participants are using ideas on structural change provided in the workshop to inform their own workshops. A participant who provides training for the University of Leeds reports: "*[I now place] less focus on individual psychologies and more on IB as a collective phenomenon*" and "*[I place] more emphasis on structural responses*" [S7, S8].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

S1. Details of all adoptees of the BPA/SWIP guidelines (https://bpa.ac.uk/swip/good-practice-scheme-subscribers/).

S2. S. Murphy, BPA/SWIP-UK Good Practice Scheme, Impact Report 2018. Report detailing impact achieved through the adoption of the BPA/SWIP UK guidelines, both in the UK and internationally, 2013-2018

S3. Letters from Canadian Philosophical Association & American Philosophical Association, and letters from UK Philosophy departments detailing impact of using BPA guidelines and training workshops.

S4. M. Pietrini Sanchez, The Impact of Confronting Bias: report on workshops for the judiciary 2019, and raw data collected from feedback forms.

S5. Transcripts - interviews with judiciary training providers

S6. Cabinet Office - Feedback detailing impact, meeting guidelines, recruitment guidance,

S7. Train the trainers: impact report 2019 and raw feedback information

S8. Transcripts - interviews with train the trainers participants.