

The background of the slide features a large, faint watermark of the Rutgers University seal, which is a circular emblem with a sunburst design and the university's name around the perimeter.

RUTGERS

BIOMEDICAL AND
HEALTH SCIENCES

Mitigating Implicit Bias **Mentoring across Identity Differences**

Sangeeta Lamba MD MS HPEd

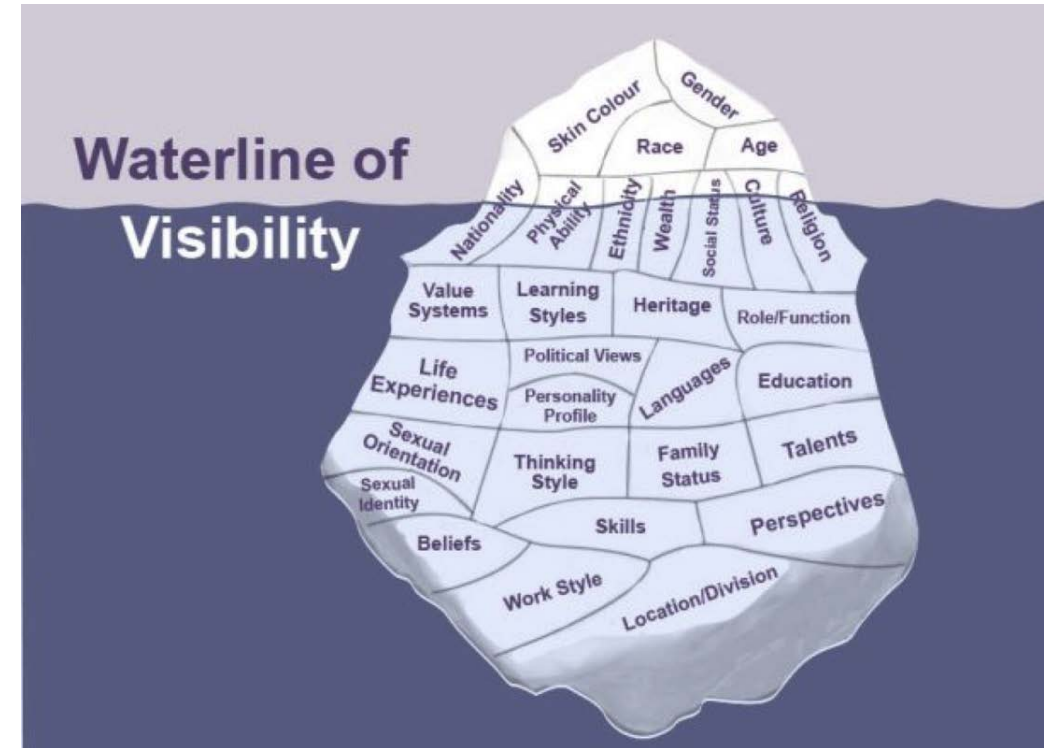
Vice-Chancellor for Diversity and Inclusion RBHS

Objectives/Roadmap

- Identity and Intersectionality
- Assumptions and Bias
- Mitigating Implicit Bias for healthy mentoring
- Creating a conducive environment
- Tips to succeed and bridge differences

Identity Differences/Intersectionality

- **Identity:** The way you define yourself or how others define you
 - Gender
 - Age Race
 - Ethnicity
 - Culture
 - Sexual identity
 - Religious affiliation
 - Ability



- *“Intersectionality is simply about how certain aspects of who you are will increase your access to the good things or your exposure to the bad things in life.”*
 - *Kimberle Crenshaw*

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Who is on Zoom? (your visible or invisible identity-intersectionality characteristics that you view as important)

 Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Assumptions and Bias

- IMPOLITE QUERY:
- **As a mentor (or as a mentee)**
 - **Are you biased?**
 - **Do you discriminate?**

I only judge based on.....

- Content of character
- Quality of work
- Demonstrated experience
- Merit

- NOT—gender, color, race.....

Our Brain is COMPLEX: Automatic processing...

Professional

Woman



middle aged

Indian or South-Asian

Cloud memory associations

- South-Asian/Indian Woman

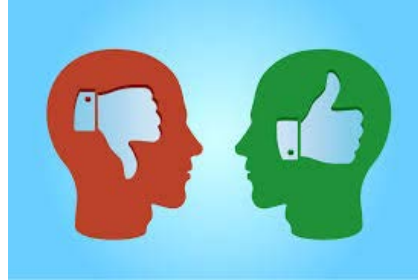
WOMAN



Automatic processing

- #South-Asian Professional Woman

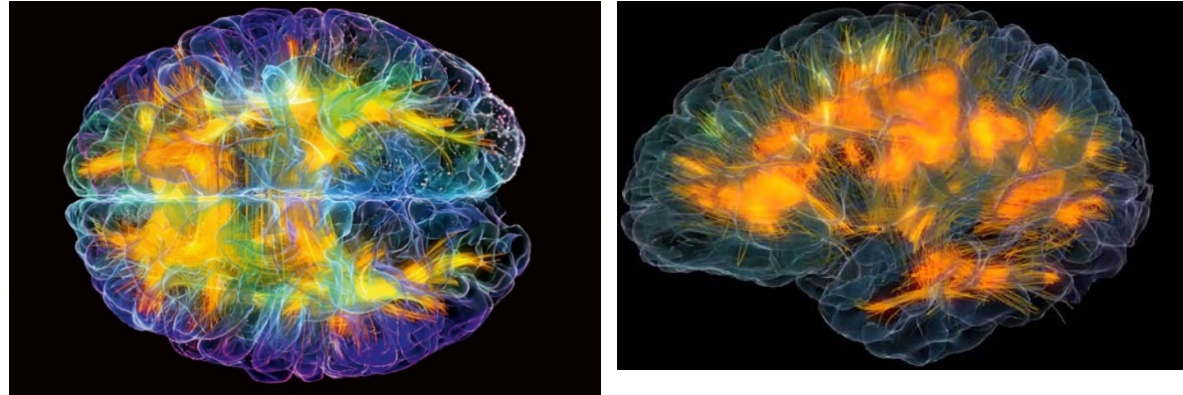
- Attitude:



- Stereotype:



Our Evolved Cognitive Machinery



- The brain *cannot* consciously process or be aware of more than 40 bits of information/ second.
- Can unconsciously process up to 11 millions bits of information of per second.
- To manage vast information the brain takes shortcuts that increase efficiency.
- **A bias is a shortcut that helps us categorize and process information efficiently**
- A bias can be positive or negative and is often helpful to navigate the world but makes us prone to errors.

Implicit bias creates blind spots....



ONE is a Convicted Felon

So do you have biases? How about if I ask you?

- On average are men better leaders than women?
- On average are Asians or South-Asians more likely smart with technology but lack the creativity we desire?
- On average are younger workers more likely to take time off than older? Leave job? Be loyal?

Discuss IAT

Where do I have biases?

Can you be biased against a group you belong to?
If so, how and why does this happen

Studies demonstrate implicit bias exists

- **Hiring** (Dovidio 2000; Moss-Racusin 2013)
 - Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? (Bertrand M 2004)
 - University psychology professors 2:1 prefer “Brian” over “Karen” (Steinpreis 1999)
- **Performance evaluations** (student rating women professors vs men professors)
 - Quicker judgements more disparity (Martell and Leavitt)
- **Letter of recommendation** (Trix F 2000)
 - used significantly more standout adjectives to describe male as compared to female candidates.
 - Teaching, training vs skills research

“People confident in their objectivity may overestimate their invulnerability to bias”

Eric Uhlmann and Geoffrey Cohen

Org. Behavior and Human decision Processes 2007

Summary: Assumptions and Implicit Bias

- Bias is automatic and inherent in all of us
- Implicit and Explicit Biases
 - Impact decision making (hiring, recommending others for positions etc.)
 - Influence mentoring relationships
 - Alter opportunities
- Build strategies to mitigate implicit bias (become aware of your blind spots)
- Acknowledging real and/or assumed differences can be helpful for a dialogue


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What are some benefits when mentor and mentee are different according to a specific characteristic?

 Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

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What are challenges of initiating conversations about differences?

 Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Small group case: Is it OK to ask?

- Last year I worked with a scholar who left to go to another department. I think she had a positive experience with me but a negative experience with her research team. She was a young African –American Woman and actually the only woman in our lab and in fact, the only African-American in our entire department. I wanted to ask her how she felt, but I worried I might be politically incorrect or insensitive to do so. I never asked. I still wonder about her experience here, how she would describe us to others, but I could never broach the subject as her mentor.
- **What is a theme raised in this case?**
- **What might be the mentor's intent have been in asking the question and what might be the impact on the mentee?**
- **If the mentor is asking so this could inform future faculty retention, how could that influence if and how a query is made?**
- **How would you engage in this conversation without feeling or expressing a judgement?**

Relationships

- **Similar identity relationship**
 - Psychosocial support
 - ?Too similar may impact depth and breadth due to similarity
- **Cross identity relationship**
 - May take time for connection
 - May provide diverse perspective, rich cross fertilization of ideas
- **Developmental networks**
 - Are BEST (Mosaic to fit the many facets of our needs)
 - Seek diversity in many dimensions: Identity, organizational positions, and functional roles

How Do We Do This?

- Safe and courageous space that invites trust and openness
- Initiate conversations on differences BEFORE a crisis
- Acknowledge differences in identities and experiences shape our approach

- Contextualize discussion (research is good)
 - Research shows that bias impacts organizations and individuals

- Broaden discussion with impact of differences on
 - Interprofessional relationships
 - Team dynamics
 - Organization culture

Final Tips

- Don't make assumptions about identity(ies) or about what you might have in common.
- Be curious about history and research related to differences and how this affects individuals, health systems/disparities, career achievement/satisfaction. This will help you understand and anticipate the challenges your mentee might face
- Advocate for your mentee/peer mentor
- Work together to name the challenge, identify and sharpen the navigation skills.
- Embrace exploration of difference –both in the relationship will learn and benefit. Use non-judgmental, open-ended questions to **explore**

Summary

- **Acknowledge differences**
 - Perception that another identity (generation, race, sex) “had/has it easier/harder” depends on the view of the individual. Experiences may be equally difficult, but in different ways.
 - Individuals from “different” groups don’t always have the same access as those from “like” groups, and might not be comfortable in exploring the difference.
- **Value differences**
 - Bridge differences by making the issues transparent.
 - Balance awareness of differences with values and expectations across identities and consideration of what might resonate or is important for one another.
- **Make difference discussable**
 - Recognize perception of differences and expectations
 - *Ask* mentees about their experiences
 - Understand the difference through appreciative inquiry

- **Discussion?**