

Validating an ally skill-building workshop: Assessing antecedents and outcomes

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Abstract

In partnership with Portland State University, the present study is designed to validate an Ally Skill-Building workshop intended to mitigate bias and establish egalitarian behaviors and norms within a work setting. By assessing the extent of Implicit Person Theory and Social Identity Theory with current social norms and basic demographic information, the present study seeks to guide better understanding of the conditions in which an Ally Skill-Building workshop can be most effective.

Methodology

Utilizing an applied longitudinal analyses, four participating departments within a Fortune 500 insurance company will offer the workshop to 50 employees and will contrast the antecedents and outcomes of the present study to comparison groups within each department. Data is actively being collected over three time points: (1) baseline data is being gathered prior to employees attending the workshop, (2) reactionary data will be gathered following the completion of the workshop, and (3) post-workshop data will be gathered two-weeks after each in-person workshop.

Theoretical Background

No study to date has addressed the current combination of antecedents paired with behavioral intentions and attitudes towards an allyship training over time. Therefore, this study contributes to diversity literature in two ways, (1) the present study supports the notion that diversity initiatives may be more impactful over time when used as a collective culture shift and emphasize behavioral actions of bystanders instead of solely bringing awareness to individual biases (see Table 1 for data collection sequence), and (2) proposes a new model based on the combination of theoretical antecedents and outcomes of an Ally Skill-Building Workshop.

Antecedents

Implicit Person Theory (IPT). IPT posits employee's responses to behavioral interventions may be influenced by their beliefs in how rigid their abilities and personality characteristics are (Chiu et al., 1997).

Social Norms play a vital role in creating suitable environments for adaptive behaviors that can be sustained over time (Linnehan et al., 2006).

Bias. Social Identity Theory suggests that the extent to which an individual categorizes others as either in-group or out-group members, is due to the accessibility and salience of others' characteristics in certain contexts (van Knippenberg et al., 2004). The present study will assess the outcomes of common salient social categorizations (i.e., gender and race) and their impact on the efficacy of the workshop.

Outcomes

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a model of human behavior that can be used to explain and predict the intention to engage in behaviors by examining attitudes towards the behaviors in general (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980).

Employee Reactions will be measured via future-tense and past-tense questions directly identifying allyship behavioral intentions and the frequency of behaviors performed post-workshop.

Hypothesis 1a, 1b, and 1c:

(1a) An individual's bias will decrease over time (1b) depending on the social norms in their department and (1c) their personality characteristics.

Hypothesis 2a and 2b:

(2a) An individual's bias will influence their reactions to the training, (2b) depending on the social norms in their department.

Hypothesis 3a and 3b:

(3a) An individual's reactions to the training will interact with their bias to predict behavioral intentions, (3b) such that those with more favorable reactions will display more allyship behavior.

Hypothesis 4: In contrast to the comparison group(s), individuals in the experimental group will have significantly less bias over the 3 measurement time points

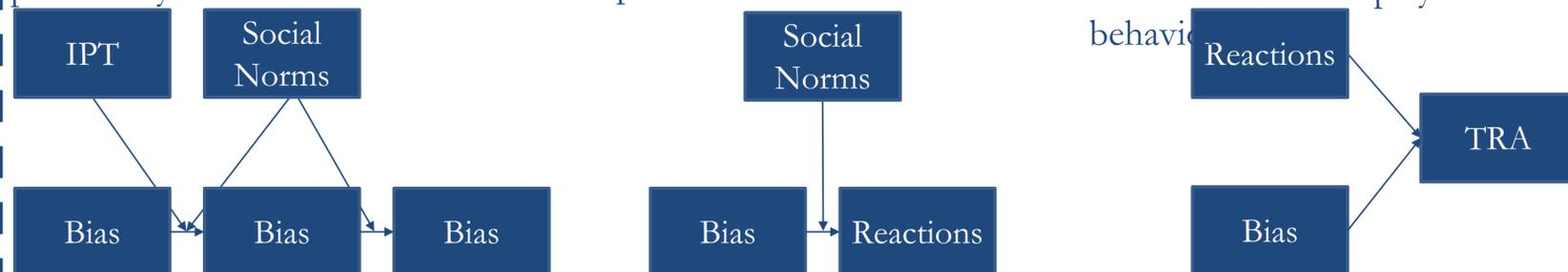


Table 1
Data Collection Time Sequence

	Survey Distribution		
	Baseline	Reactionary	Follow-Up
IPT	X		
Social Norms	X	X	X
Bias	X	X	X
TRA		X	X
Reactions		X	