Discussion

Psychology

Stereotype Threat Stereotype Threat Definition Stereotype threat is the risk of validating as self-characteristic any negative label regarding a certain group (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002). A practical aspect involves observations in which African Americans College freshmen attaining unsatisfactory results in standardized exams compared to their White counterparts when race was highlighted. However, when race was not stressed, the Black students produced similar results or far greater compared to White students (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Such outcomes give rise to stereotype threats, whereby performance is undermined due to an understanding that ones conduct is observed and justified through racial stereotypes.

In education, stereotype results in students of the labeled ethnic group to decide not to follow a sphere of a given study, in addition to restricting the assortment of professions in which they can practice. This then results in long-term outcomes like educational disproportion and social inequality. This is also manifested in scenarios such as women poor performances in quantitative fields like engineering, rather lower performance of whites in sports compared to Black, and lower performance of Blacks in academics. Hence, culturally-induced stereotypes regarding negative aspects of particular groups when presented in a salient manner and in a context relating to the typecast observation, can upset output of the individuals recognized within that group (Nguyen & Ryan, 2008). Given that stereotype threats brings about negative academic performance due to self-handicapping labels, it is crucial to deal with the causal factors and intermediaries of stereotype threats.

Interventions

In order to deal with the core of stereotype threats I hold the view that there needs to be an enhancement of identity wellbeing or safety. This should entail implicit attempts in establishing varied social identities as an integral part of any setting or society. For instance, focus should be on overlapping identities involving all races and sexes, and as such, emphasis should be on making career options to become to a lesser degree stereotypically in favor of the stereotyped group (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). As a result, labels will misplay their influence in pushing performance when collective identities are emphasized, since disavowing of individual characteristics which are powerfully linked to negative stereotypes, can help reduce stereotype threats. Another way of reducing stereotype threats is to enhance the self-efficacy of the particular groups within the applicable domain. For instance, investing considerably in skills through all-inclusive training programs whereby social identity is not a determinant of success. This will make individuals from the negatively stereotyped grouping to feel more competent in exploring alternative academic or career paths, particularly through negotiation (Johns, Schmader, & Martens, 2005). Furthermore, emphasis should be on increasing mind-sets which underscores environments whereby people feel secure psychologically, regarding the outcomes of their failures since attempts and persistence are encouraged (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999).

I also hold the view that the most crucial approach in reducing the detriments of stereotype threats is to educate by reframing and applying different verbal communication to depict the task or analysis being performed (Aronson, Fried, & Good, 2002). This is because stereotype threat comes about in scenarios whereby task descriptions emphasize social

identities cliché linked to poor performance. Hence, by adjusting task descriptions, such labels will not be brought into play and can thus purge stereotype threat.

For instance, stereotype threat founded in academic can be minimized through ensuring that tests or quantitative assessments are racially and gender-fair, especially by explicitly invalidating implicit problem-solving of the test (Spencer, Steele, & Quinn, 1999). This can be attained by directly dealing with the image of racial and gender based performance disparities, within the framework of an openly analytic assessment. This can be attained through a combination of in-depth interventions which focus on educating students or employees regarding malleable characteristics of intelligence. However, it should involve simple modifications in classroom or organizational practices, such as emphasizing on hard-work and determination (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

References

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