# Implicit Bias in Pediatric Academic Medicine

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OBJECTIVE: Despite known benefits of diversity, certain racial/ethnic groups remain underrepresented in academic pediatrics. Little research exists regarding unconscious racial attitudes among pediatric faculty responsible for decisions on workforce recruitment and retention in academia. This study sought to describe levels of unconscious racial bias and perceived barriers to minority recruitment and retention among academic pediatric faculty leaders.

METHODS: Authors measured unconscious racial bias in a sample of pediatric faculty attending diversity workshops conducted at local and national meetings in 2015. A paper version of the validated Implicit Association Test (IAT) measured unconscious racial bias. Subjects also reported perceptions about minority recruitment and retention.

RESULTS: Of 68 eligible subjects approached, 58 (85%) consented and completed the survey with IAT. Of participants, 83% had leadership roles and 93% were involved in recruitment. Participants had slight pro-white/anti-black bias on the IAT (M = 0.28, SD = 0.49). There were similar IAT scores among participants in leadership roles (M = 0.33, SD = 0.47) and involved in recruitment (M = 0.28, SD = 0.43). Results did not differ when comparing participants in local workshops to the national workshop (n = 36, M = 0.29, SD = 0.40 and n = 22, M = 0.27, SD = 0.49 respectively; p = 0.88). Perceived barriers to minority recruitment and retention included lack of minority mentors, poor recruitment efforts, and lack of qualified candidates.

CONCLUSIONS: Unconscious pro-white/anti-black racial bias was identified in this sample of academic pediatric faculty and leaders. Further research is needed to examine how unconscious bias impacts decisions in academic pediatric workforce recruitment. Addressing unconscious bias and perceived barriers to minority recruitment and retention represent opportunities to improve diversity efforts.

## Journal:

Journal of the National Medical Association
Authors: Johnson TJ, Ellison AM, Dalembert G, Fowler J, Dhingra M, Shaw K, Ibrahim S

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  Apr 2017