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Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation

ISSN: 1047-4412 (Print) 1532-768X (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/hepc20

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To cite this article: Oliver W. Edwards, Caitlyn McKinzie Bennett & Brooke Johnson (2019) School Consultation to Counter Stereotype Threat, Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 29:2, 188-205, DOI: 10.1080/10474412.2018.1482218

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2018.1482218

Published online: 11 Jun 2018.

JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSULTATION
2019, VOL. 29, NO. 2, 188–205
https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2018.1482218

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ABSTRACT

Perceptions teachers have regarding their students are associated with their students' school performance. Similarly, students' psychoeducational and psychosocial functioning are partly shaped by their beliefs about teachers' opinions of them. Psychoeducational performance and psychosocial interactions are linked with perceived stereotype threats. Stereotype threat refers to how a person's fear or anxiety about confirming a negative stereotype associated with being a member of a stigmatized group undermines their performance in evaluative contexts. This work offers a theoretical and practical prevention and intervention teaching and learning framework to ameliorate stereotype threat. We describe the stereotype threat interruption model (STIM) as a consultation model that delineates stereotype threat and provides teacher-focused, student-centered, and environment-applied consultation strategies to abrogate its effects. STIM is applicable in graduate training and in the professional environment. It highlights a prevention science teaching and learning framework that proactively encourages healthy student development and efficient consultation services.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 27 November 2017
Revised 17 May 2018
Accepted 22 May 2018

Perceptions teachers have regarding their students correlate with their students' performance in school (Bae, Holloway, Li, & Bempechat, 2008; Pantaleo, 2016). In addition, students' school performance and psychosocial functioning are partly shaped by their perceptions relative to their teachers' opinions of them (Garcia & Chun, 2016; Jussim & Harber, 2005). Research reveals a positive association between teacher and student relationships and students' social-emotional and academic functioning in school (Poulou, 2017). That is, there is a robust relationship between teachers who view students favorably and their students' satisfactory performance in school (Pantaleo, 2016). Conversely, teachers who manifest low expectations for their students may adversely influence said students' school functioning (Garcia & Chun, 2016). Low teacher expectations are linked with students' dislike for school, distrust for school staff, and weak academic functioning (Bae et al., 2008; Jussim & Harber, 2005; Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, & Rosenthal, 2015). Further,

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The authors report that to the best of their knowledge neither they nor their affiliated institutions have financial or personal relationships or affiliations that could influence or bias the opinions, decisions, or work presented in this article.

teachers who either tacitly or overtly evince negative stereotypes regarding specific subgroups of students adversely impact those students' psychoeducational and psychosocial functioning (Doyle & Voyer, 2016; Jordan & Lovett, 2007). These negative stereotypes are related to the phenomenon labeled *stereotype threat*, which has profound implications for student functioning in numerous performance domains and, concomitantly, the work of school mental health professionals.

This scholarship offers graduate students and school mental health professionals a teaching and learning framework to aid in the early recognition and amelioration of stereotype threat as they offer problem-solving consultation services in schools. The framework integrates tenets of Ingraham's (2000) multicultural consultation model to address the negative perceptions associated with stereotype threat and its connection to personal identity. In this work, we describe (a) teacher expectations in association with student performance, (b) stereotype threat and its implications, and (c) a stereotype threat consultation model that school consultants can use to abrogate stereotype threat in schools.

Teacher expectations and student performance

More than four decades of research reveals a pervasive and distinct association between the expectations teachers have for their students and the students' school-related functioning (e.g., McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Rubie-Davies et al., 2015; Timperley & Phillips, 2003). Teachers form expectations about students due to variables such as the student's ethnicity, culture, attractiveness, classroom behavior, educational history, special education labels, gender, societal stereotypes, and social class (Bae et al., 2008; Edwards, 2006; Garcia & Chun, 2016; Shillingford & Edwards, 2008b). These teacher expectations manifest via disparate treatment of students (Good, 2014). Research indicates elementary school students are able to differentiate very clearly the verbal and nonverbal treatment of high-achieving and low-achieving students by their teachers (Pantaleo, 2016; Rubie-Davies et al., 2015). In addition, there is a positive correlation between elementary school students' perceptions of their academic performance and their teachers' expectations for their class (Rubie-Davies et al., 2015). Further, scholars assert that "teachers' beliefs about students' potential academic achievement become their goals for the students and shape their daily classroom decisions and actions, including what they believe to be appropriate curricular and instructional practices" (Timperley & Phillips, 2003, p. 628). Thus, the research literature shows robust connections among teachers' expectations of their students, the teachers' ensuing actions relative to curricula and instructional practices, students' beliefs regarding their teachers' expectations and behaviors, and the students' overall school-related functioning (Bae et al., 2008).

School serves as an important socializing setting for many students (Edwards & Sweeney, 2007). Attending school involves adopting and adapting some of the behavioral patterns of school staff and schoolmates (Garcia & Chun, 2016). As socializing agents in schools, teachers either explicitly or implicitly convey values and stigmatizing messages to students (Bae et al., 2008; Edwards, 2001). When students internalize these messages, they can become a self-fulfilling prophecy of low achievement and inappropriate social-emotional behavior (Bae et al., 2008; Edwards, 2009; Garcia & Chun, 2016). Teacher expectations and stereotype threat are related because both constructs involve teachers' negative influence on students' school-related functioning. That is, in both cases, diminished student performance occurs when teachers have low expectations of students and when students believe authority figures hold explicit or implicit negative stereotypes about them as part of their membership in a stigmatized group. Understanding how teacher expectations and stereotype threat influence student performance are important in designing prevention and intervention strategies to mitigate the effects of these two constructs.

Theoretical framework

Stereotype threat

A wave of research has emerged over the past two decades regarding the influence of negative stereotypes about an individual's membership in a specific subgroup and the individual's performance in multiple areas of achievement, cognitive functioning, work tasks, and aspirations (Bratter, Rowley, & Chukhray, 2016; Weber, Appel, & Kronberger, 2015). Stereotype threat was initially recognized in the early 1990s, and it helps explicate the poor performance of certain persons in evaluative situations (Steele, 1997; Steele & Aronson, 1995). *Stereotype threat* is defined as underperformance on tests or tasks by persons of a stigmatized group due to anxiety regarding conforming to a negative stereotype (Steele & Aronson, 1995). When individuals who are part of stigmatized groups suspect others view them negatively in an important performance domain, they may display anxiety about their performance unrelated to their ability. This anxiety tends to undermine their performance, not because of lack of ability, but because of fear of confirming the bias of the evaluator (Doyle & Voyer, 2016; Edwards, 2006; Weber et al., 2015). Persons within these societally stigmatized cultural groups are susceptible to stereotype threat resulting in diminished performance when evaluated by authority figures. For students, authority figures may include teachers, psychologists, or test examiners. Moreover, stereotype threat intensifies in cases of subjective performance measures that permit the evaluator latitude when making decisions, such as when teachers grade

students' work (Doyle & Voyer, 2016). Thus, stereotype threat provides a theoretical and practical framework to understand how perceived negative attributions about a person by an evaluator and the person's self-attributions undermine performance and aspirations (Lewis & Sekaquaptewa, 2016; Steele, 1997).

Early studies of stereotype threat addressed Black/African American students' scores on measures of intelligence and academic achievement (Steele, 1997). Subsequent research studies examined whether stereotype threat is evident among other specific subgroups as well as in areas such as self-esteem and academic domains including science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM; Nguyen & Ryan, 2008). Research consensus is emerging regarding the pervasive existence of stereotype threat and its pernicious influence on ethnic minorities and other stigmatized groups, including children living in low SES environments and their cognitive performance as well as women and STEM (Bratter et al., 2016; Désert, Préaux, & Jund, 2009).

> Overall, the generalizability of stereotype threat effects across domains reflects the broad influence of threat on the way people approach a variety of tasks. When one's motivation, persistence, sense of belonging, and expectations for performance and intergroup contact are diminished by threat, this can affect nearly any ensuing task. . . . While much of the focus has been on effects of stereotype threat on test performance, the broader body of work on threat suggests that the influence of stereotypes on our everyday lives may be far-reaching. (Lewis & Sekaquaptewa, 2016, p. 42)

In summary, the research literature reveals a large, growing, and replicated body of evidence supporting the negative influence of stereotype threat in testing situations and nontesting situations in which an authority figure is responsible for evaluating a person of a stigmatized cultural group (see Doyle & Voyer, 2016 for a meta-analysis).

Stereotype threat and consultation

Comprehensive school mental health services include engagement in some form of school-based consultation (Fagan, 2014; Merrell, Ervin, & Peacock, 2012). School consultation increases the likelihood that all students in need of mental health services will receive some degree of prevention or intervention to advance successful school and life outcomes (Conoley, Conoley, & Reese, 2009; Edwards, Mumford, & Serra-Roldan, 2007; Erchul, 2011). Employing school-based consultation with teachers and other school staff can serve to attenuate low teacher and staff expectations about students' performance, abilities, and goals (Edwards & Taub, 2009; Hunter, Dieker, & Whitney, 2016), concomitantly interrupting stereotype threat.

Since school mental health professionals receive specific education, field-based training, and practice experiences in consultation methodologies, they

are the best-positioned school professionals to offer consultation services to diminish stereotype threat in schools. School consultants are able to employ their consultant skills with teachers and other school staff to provide psychoeducation about the potential for threat, develop methods to reduce threat, and empower school staff to seek favorable outcomes for all students, particularly stigmatized students. Utilizing a culturally sensitive problem-solving consultation model is considered a highly effective method of providing mental health support to stigmatized cultural groups (Erchul & Martens, 2012; Ingraham, 2000).

Multicultural consultation in schools

Addressing stereotype threat using a multicultural lens offers school consultants a systematic approach to ameliorate the negative implications among stigmatized cultural groups. Multicultural consultation has implications for stereotype threat because it is "a culturally sensitive, indirect service in which the consultant adjusts the consultation services to address the needs and cultural values of the consultee, the client, or both" (Behring & Ingraham, 1998, p. 58). Ingraham (2000) developed a multicultural school consultation (MSC) model that is applicable within a variety of consultation contexts and encourages examination of one's individual biases (Behring & Ingraham, 1998). Consistent with multicultural school consultation and problem-solving models, we developed a systematic approach to reducing stereotype threat called the stereotype threat interruption model (STIM). STIM is designed to ameliorate stereotype threat in the education context. It is aligned with the popular problem-solving model (i.e., problem identification and definition, problem analysis, plan design and implementation, and treatment evaluation; Erchul & Martens, 2012) as well as the MSC model and its five main tenets (consultant learning and development, consultee learning and development, cultural variations in the consultation constellation, contextual and power influences, and hypothesized methods for supporting consultee and client success; Ingraham, 2000).

The first tenet of MSC (*domains for consultant learning and development*) that is integrated into STIM involves consultants using their skill sets and attitudes to develop insight into the worldviews of all parties involved (i.e., consultant, consultee, and/or client) while also creating connections between all perspectives. The second tenet (*domains of consultee learning and development*) requires skills and understanding on the part of the consultee (e.g., teacher and/or school). In this domain, consultees benefit from gaining insight and awareness into their own biases that can impact implementation of the consultation model. The third tenet (*cultural variations in the consultation constellation)* requires understanding the commonalities and/or differences among individuals involved in the consultation process. The

fourth tenet (*contextual and power influences*) considers the cultural commonalities among those in the consultation process as well as the differences of the larger cultural system, ultimately influencing communication and planning. Finally, the fifth tenet (*hypothesized methods for supporting consultee and client success*) provides hypotheses to increase the successful implementation of consultation and calls for researchers and educators to generate additional strategies that advance successful, multicultural approaches to consultation (Ingraham, 2000).

STIM to attenuate stereotype threat

STIM is a sequential, multiphase consultation approach that is teacher focused, student centered, and environment applied. The five teacher-focused phases of STIM are as follows: preventive psychoeducation, case conceptualization, structural analysis, intentional application, and reflective appraisal. The three student-centered phases are additive psychoeducation, skills training, and modifying the setting (environment applied). The teacher-focused (one through five) and student-centered phases (one through three) are ordinal. However, intervention strategies occur in multiple phases simultaneously. That is, the student-centered phases occur after the first three teacher phases and begin during the intentional application teacher phase. Further, intervention strategies continue to be applied during the teacher-focused reflective appraisal phase. The sections to follow describe STIM comprehensively. We also include Tables 1 and 2, which describe STIM in an abbreviated, reference format.

Teacher-focused strategies

Preventive psychoeducation

The first phase of STIM is preventive psychoeducation. School consultants can use STIM to engage in consultation to prevent the manifestation of stereotype threat by providing psychoeducation to school staff at the beginning of the school year. Providing teacher presentations and workshops about the characteristics and implications of stereotype threat can occur even prior to school consultants receiving student referrals. Engaging in psychoeducation is a preventive measure to help teachers and staff identify, define, and manage stereotype threat early in the school year. School consultants can also disseminate information pamphlets and websites (https://cesp.rutgers.edu/blog/how-teachers-can-reduce-stereotype-threat-classroom) about stereotype threat that demonstrate effective methods of ameliorating threat. Implementing a prevention science approach helps teachers and other school staff understand how stereotype threat can be latent and implicit in undermining students' performance, yet how stereotyping overtly influences the manner in which authority figures engage with students of stigmatized groups.

Table 1. Teacher-Focused STIM Strategies (Facilitated by the School Consultant).

Teacher-focused STIM strategies (facilitated by the school consultant)
Preventive psychoeducation
• Teacher presentations and workshops about the characteristics and implications of stereotype threat
• Provide information pamphlets and websites
Case conceptualization
• Identify behavioral and environmental concerns
• Discuss the teacher's and student's understandings of the situation and the implications for the scope of the problem
• Consider biases, privileges, stereotypes, and beliefs of parties involved with the case
• Evaluating biases can include journaling, consultation with a colleague, and seeking out materials for more knowledge
Structural analysis
• Engage in observation to understand dynamics of the situation, teacher, and student
• Ask reflective questions about observations (to self)
• Engage in interviews with teacher and student
• Identify teacher/consultee skills, knowledge, cultural perceptions, and presuppositions
• Use a structural process of analyzing the teacher's curricula as well as their instructional and behavioral tendencies
• Create opportunities for effective communication and understanding as well as rapport building
Intentional application
• Encourage teacher to engage in reflective teaching to determine potential stereotype threat
• Teachers identify classroom goals and objectives, examining their behaviors in striving to achieve their goals
• Determine which behaviors were effective and ineffective and apply the former
• Provide evidence of stereotype threat (if found)
• Provide activities to work through stereotype threat (e.g., positive role model activity)
• Implement student-centered phases
Reflective review
• Monitor and track changes through pre- and postassessments
• Engage in periodic monitoring/observation of teacher to determine change of teaching practices or identified stereotype threat
• Conduct follow-up interviews

Primary prevention is important, but consultants can also engage in intervention approaches to diminish the effects of stereotype threat. Consultation involving secondary and tertiary prevention or intervention may be most effective when teachers, other school staff, students, parents, and the ecological environment are all part of the process (Edwards, Mumford, & Shillingford, 2007; Erchul & Martens, 2012). Via the use of STIM, as aligned with MSC and problem-solving approaches, school consultants can determine whether referrals are manifestations of stereotype threat and engage in secondary and tertiary prevention or intervention with teachers, students, and the environment to mitigate the effects.

Case conceptualization

Once a school consultant receives a referral, he or she begins the next phase of STIM via case conceptualization. This phase comprises problem identification and definition processes of problem-solving consultation to determine whether stereotype threat is implicated. The school consultant meets with the

Table 2. Student-Centered STIM Strategies (Facilitated by Teachers).

Student-centered STIM strategies (facilitated by teachers during the intentional application phase)
Additive psychoeducation
• Provide materials and information to help students better understand what stereotype threat is and its effects
• Engage in activities such as sharing success stories
• Assist students in understanding view of test as a method for success and not for diagnostic purposes
Skills training
• Share about influence of anxiety and its impacts (e.g., influences academic performance; influences overall emotional well-being)
• Engage in cognitive behavioral strategies (e.g., thought stopping)
• Practice self-affirming thoughts
• Facilitate students writing essays about role models or other successful individuals who align with their identity/ies
• Engage in dialogue/activities that promote recognition of student similarities rather than student differences
Modifying the setting
• Creation of safety within the classroom and school environment through affirmation and acceptance of multiple identities
• Engage in child-centered teaching, teamwork, resourcefulness, and student participation in decision making
• Promote social-emotional learning through social skills training, role playing, and exploration of a physically and psychologically safe environment

teacher to identify behavioral and environmental concerns. The two parties discuss the teacher's and student's understandings of the situation and the implications for the scope of the problem. The intent is to ascertain when and how the problems occur (Erchul & Martens, 2012) and whether the case involves stereotype threat. The school consultant considers biases, privileges, stereotypes, and beliefs about all parties involved in the consultation process. Evaluating personal biases and potential privileges aids in creating more understanding and attenuates potential barriers to identifying the multicultural intricacies of consultation (Ingraham, 2000). This process aligns nicely with the first tenet of the MSC model (domains for consultant learning and development). Evaluating biases can include journaling thoughts and beliefs about the referred case, engaging in a dialogue with a colleague about the positionality of the consultant, or engaging with various resources (e.g., articles or podcasts) about the specific aspects of the case referral. For example, if the case involves a female student of color who is experiencing anger outbursts, the consultant could seek out materials that provide understanding regarding the experiences of female students of color and how emotions may be expressed.

Structural analysis

After referrals have been received and conceptualized, school consultants engage in structural analysis. This third phase of STIM is similar to problem analysis of problem-solving consultation. School consultants conduct

reflective observations to assist with establishing baseline data and goals for change (Erchul & Martens, 2012). Observations also allow for the school consultant to examine teacher and student behaviors and the interactions between the two parties. For example, school consultants can evaluate the environment and structure of the classroom and consider questions such as the following: What determines how students get placed in specific groups? Are there similarities or differences of the students in the assigned groups? Asking questions may offer clues regarding differential treatment of students with respect to the way students are grouped for instruction, whether feedback differs for certain subgroups of students, and whether differential opportunities are provided for learning (Bae et al., 2008).

Structured and informal teacher and student interviews are also important in structural analysis. In addition, consultant-made assessment measures (e.g., surveys and checklists) can add value to the process of structural analysis and consultation success. These measures can help identify how students problem solve in school subjects where they are experiencing difficulty. To illustrate, within an English language arts class, the school consultant could ask the student: "What type of strategies do you use to try to understand the protagonist of *Lord of the Flies*?" Conversely, the school consultant could ask the teacher: "How do you individually assist your students when they are struggling to identify protagonists and themes in *Lord of the Flies*?" Asking questions during the interview process allows the school consultant to better understand target student/client and teacher/consultee skills, knowledge, cultural perceptions, and presuppositions. The process of creating awareness of cultural biases and beliefs of the consultee are part of the second tenet (domains of consultee learning and development) of the MSC model (Ingraham, 2000). Developing insight into the beliefs and worldviews of the consultant, teacher (consultee), and student (client) creates the opportunity for a more holistic, multicultural approach to mitigate stereotype threat.

Intentional application

After identification of the potential for stereotype threat, teacher meetings, observations, interviews, and structural analysis, phase four of STIM begins. This phase is akin to plan design and implementation of problem solving. This phase helps teachers recognize whether they are unintentionally expressing stereotypes as a function of students' cultural identities. This process of categorizing treatment of students in relation to their cultural identities and determining whether these cultural identities are valued equitably in class, school, and society aligns with the MSC's fourth tenet (contextual and power influences).

The goal of the school consultant in this phase is to empower teachers to consider modifications to their instructional and behavioral practices via

reflective teaching. *Reflective teaching* refers to teachers who intentionally analyze their classroom practices to determine their efficacy (Larrivee, 2008). This process involves teachers identifying classroom goals and objectives, examining their behaviors in striving to achieve their goals (e.g., student learning and success), determining which of their behaviors were effective and ineffective in goal attainment, and selecting and engaging in behaviors that will advance successful goal attainment (Shillingford & Edwards, 2008a, b). Encouraging the teacher-consultee to be intentional regarding using reflective teaching assists in identifying important modifications. This process will help eliminate disparate treatment based on power and influence by recognizing and affirming cultural commonalities between teachers and students and among students.

School consultants can tactfully highlight evidence of differential treatment of students from stigmatized cultural groups if it is apparent. In addition, consultants may offer strategies regarding providing equitable curricula as well as instructional and behavioral treatment. To illustrate, boys may generally answer and ask many questions in some science courses. Teachers may be instructed to encourage both boys and girls to answer and ask questions. If teachers ask questions or accept answers from males predominantly, establishing a target number of female responses each day may inspire teachers to connect more closely with the female students. Further, teacher use of common phrases such as "those kids" or "students like that" separates the speaker from the students of a stigmatized cultural group, implying that these students are a problem, and different from, or somehow less than, their peers (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). Motivating teacher-consultees to monitor their language patterns to avoid stereotyping any subgroup of students may limit many potential classroom and school encounters that can lead to stereotype confirmation. Engaging in dialogue regarding cultural identities that are potentially part of stereotype threat and that differ from the larger societal systems creates the opportunity for effective communication and understanding as well as further rapport building.

Another curriculum strategy to ameliorate stereotype threat is the positive role model lesson. Students who are anxious about confirming a negative stereotype in testing situations tend to perform better when they first identify with, and think about, a positive role model of their stigmatized subgroup (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). School consultants can help teachers spotlight numerous successful and prominent persons within each stigmatized cultural group whom students can identify with and model. Familiarizing students with role models whose success, performance, or competence discredits negative stereotypes can weaken stereotype threat (Shapiro & Neuberg, 2007). Exemplars include countless female scientists, NASA Black/African American mathematicians,

Latino/a engineers, and Black/African American politicians. These are merely a few of the credible role models among stigmatized cultural groups who are successful in their chosen field. Consultation techniques such as teacher skills training, encouraging the teacher-consultee to observe teachers modeling effective behaviors (Shillingford & Edwards, 2008a), and consultant social power (Erchul & Martens, 2012) can be used to encourage teachers to focus classroom attention on these role models as a means of undermining stereotype threat and fostering favorable student outcomes.

It is also during this phase that teachers are taught to apply student-centered STIM strategies (see the *Student-centered strategies* section). The school consultant instructs, encourages, and empowers teachers to facilitate these strategies by collaborating with them to co-construct their design and implementation.

Reflective appraisal

The next phase of STIM involves the consultant reflectively reviewing the previous phases to assess whether teacher practices change and students' work or behaviors show tangible improvement. This phase parallels plan evaluation of problem-solving consultation. To ascertain consultation success, measurable and specific goals and objectives are developed early in the process (Eagle, Dowd-Eagle, Snyder, & Holtzman, 2015). The goals determine success of the interventions. These goals could be student improvement in academic performance or a decrease in psychosocial problems. Objectives help guide plan implementation and evaluation. They identify the target students and teachers and the specific indicators that are examined, and they determine the criteria for success. Thus, planning for reflective appraisal begins in the first phase of STIM.

The appraisal phase of applying consultation interventions to ameliorate stereotype threat requires establishing baseline performance for students and continuously monitoring students' performance to determine whether the interventions help improve said performance. Measuring students' progress toward specific benchmark goals occurs by contrasting their performance at baseline with their performance after intervention implementation. These measurement data are used to determine whether interventions are effective or ineffective and need alteration (Eagle et al., 2015). Consultants can monitor and chart teacher practices and student behaviors to establish a baseline of performance. For example, integrating the use of assessments that highlight preintervention behaviors/observations (e.g., grouping students by performance; using stereotypic speech patterns) and postintervention behaviors/observations (e.g., grouping students to help increase engagement in classroom activities; modifying stereotypic speech patterns) can assist school consultants in determining whether the teacher has successfully integrated

recommended strategies to interrupt stereotype threat. In addition, school consultants can engage in periodic monitoring of teacher practices and student behaviors during all phases and follow-up to evaluate student performance and consultation success. Follow-up interviews and observations are important to ascertain whether classroom practices are stereotype-free.

Student-centered strategies

Providing targets of stereotype threat a combination of three strategies, as part of the teacher-focused intentional application phase, is useful in ameliorating stereotype threat (Spencer, Logel, & Davies, 2016). These strategies are applied by the teacher in the context of STIM. First, providing student targets with psychoeducation (additional to that offered teachers) can help them reinterpret threat events they may construe as harmful in a more benign manner. Second, providing skills training to students helps the students learn effective methods to manage the potential threat. Finally, modifying the setting and stimuli in the classroom or test environment assists in substantially diminishing the specific threat. All three strategies are aligned with the second MSC tenet (domains of consultee learning and development).

Additive psychoeducation

In the first student-centered strategy, consultants can begin by helping students reinterpret how the potentially threatening event is perceived to reduce its threat level (Spencer et al., 2016). For example, teachers can share success stories with their students about specific student groups, including previous students achieving high test scores, learning course concepts successfully, and excelling in the class. In this way, teachers can highlight the success of their former students, despite any demographic group differences. Research supports this sharing of successes of former students. For example, when students in a math course were informed that their tests do not reveal gender differences, women's test performance improved substantially and they scored higher than men in the course (Good, Aronson, & Harder, 2008). In addition, teachers administering tests can ensure the tests are perceived as a means of helping the student learn or improve their achievement in school rather than as a test that is designed to diagnose disabilities or problems. This strategy is useful because research reveals Black/African American students who are shown that intelligence and academic achievement are malleable demonstrate more appreciation for the academic environment and better grades than do comparison groups (Suzuki & Aronson, 2005).

Skills training

The second student-centered strategy involves teaching stigmatized students to recognize that their anxiety is grounded on a specious premise. They are also shown how excessive levels of anxiety undermine performance (Johns, Inzlicht, & Schmader, 2008). This new knowledge helps students learn to control and redirect their arousal to focus more intensely on the task (Ben-Zeev, Fein, & Inzlicht, 2005). Cognitive behavioral strategies are used to attenuate anxiety regarding task performance (Logel, Iserman, Davies, Quinn, & Spencer, 2009). These include strategies such as thought suppression (Logel et al., 2009), a discrete form of thought stopping in which students learn to recognize when they begin thinking self-defeating thoughts and remind themselves to cease thinking those thoughts because they are faulty (Bakker, 2009). Instead, they can practice using self-affirming thoughts regarding their skill set and previous successes. These strategies help students learn to separate anxiety from ability because anxiety is a function of stereotype threat; this limits the negative impact on their performance (Spencer et al., 2016).

Further, students can be encouraged to write short reflective essays about their goals and desired legacy, with this writing process diminishing the effects of stereotype threat (Bowen, Wegmann, & Webber, 2013). Writing about persons they find inspirational also undermines stereotype threat (Miyake et al., 2010). Research reveals these types of writing activities result in improved grades for Black/African American high school students (Cohen, Garcia, Purdie-Vaughns, Apfel, & Brzustoski, 2009). Research also reveals minority students who engage in a values-affirmation writing exercise during middle school courses achieve a higher course grade point average than students who do not participate in the exercise (Sherman et al., 2013). Moreover, merely reading tributes about successful persons in their stigmatized groups that reveal how they achieved success and significance also militates against stereotype threat (Sherman et al., 2013). When students realize that their stigmatized cultural group is subject to stereotyping that is illegitimate, this decreases the negative impact on their personal performance (Spencer et al., 2016). Encouraging students to realize that they have more commonalities with than differences from the majority group and appreciating these shared characteristics encourages similar performance in threat situations (Rosenthal, Crisp, & Suen, 2007; Spencer et al., 2016).

Modifying the setting

The third student-centered strategy involves changing the environment to eliminate stereotype threat. It is a rather robust approach to creating threat-free schools and classrooms to foster feelings of personal psychological safety (Spencer et al., 2016). This process is known as establishing identity-safe schools

and classrooms (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). The concept of identity safety in schools mobilizes school staff to provide the necessary conditions for students to discover and strengthen their own identities, while simultaneously understanding and accepting their individuality (Davies, Spencer, & Steele, 2005). These environments offer multiple opportunities for each student's identity to be sensitively recognized, accepted, and affirmed (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). The cardinal characteristics of identity safety include child-centered teaching that promotes teamwork, resourcefulness, and student participation in decision making (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). Identity-safe schools and classrooms also encourage diversity in its many forms. This includes consistent and authentic use of diverse methods of instruction and classroom activities, use of diverse learning materials, and the use of diverse groups of instructors (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). Creating connections between teacher and students and among student groups is also important to students' identity safety. In addition, social-emotional learning is valued and social skills are taught and practiced via social skills training, role playing, and guidance lessons to promote a protective physical and psychological environment (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013).

To help mobilize identity safety in schools, school consultants can work with school administrators to schedule destereotyping school assemblies that highlight the commonalities of diverse groups. They can teach school staff to quickly confront and counteract name calling, derogatory statements, or acquiescence to negative stereotypes so that they can promote an environment of acceptance and student self-confidence (Spencer et al., 2016). School staff are motivated to demonstrate their appreciation and value for students as persons via stimuli such as wall decorations, morning exercises via intercom or closed-circuit television, and school newsletter articles (Steele & Cohn-Vargas, 2013). Creating an equitable, stereotype-free climate among students will help to eliminate stereotype threat for all students.

Conclusion

Teachers often judge students and their work in schools, and teachers' expectations are implicated in students' performance and aspirations. High expectations are associated with positive performance, and low expectations are associated with subpar performance or aspirations. Some populations of students are part of stigmatized cultural groups who are subject to negative societal stereotypes. In schools and classrooms, these students are susceptible to evaluative situations in which they are at risk of being judged by teachers and other school staff based on these stereotypes. Students' perceptions of the potential for confirming negative stereotypes in evaluative situations impede their performance and aspirations in school. Known as *stereotype threat*, this circumstance of poor performance due to fear and anxiety regarding

confirming social biases and low expectations occurs among ethnic minorities and other student groups such as women in STEM courses.

School consultants are often trained in psychology, education, counseling, and consultation methodologies and perhaps are the ideal professionals in schools to offer strategies to eliminate stereotype threat in school settings. This article describes STIM, a consultation method that school consultants can employ to prevent and ameliorate stereotype threat. Application of STIM can advance positive psychosocial and psychoeducational outcomes for all students, but particularly those who are part of stigmatized groups. STIM provides school consultants opportunities to contribute to the well-being of students, honor the multicultural identities of students, and establish effective schools beyond their work with students in the special education pipeline.

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