

Motives to Respond Without Prejudice: Predictors of Greater Expressed Inclusiveness Toward Students with Disabilities by Pre-Service Teachers?

H. Michael Crowson* & Joyce A. Brandes
University of Oklahoma

**H. Michael Crowson; Department of Educational Psychology, University of Oklahoma, 820 Van Vleet Oval, Collings Hall, Room 321; Norman, OK 73019. mcrowson@ou.edu (e-mail).*

ABSTRACT - This study examined individual differences in motivations to respond without prejudice to students with disabilities. Internally motivated individuals respond without prejudice out of a desire to act in a manner that is consistent with deeply held non-prejudiced standards; whereas, externally motivated individuals are driven to respond without prejudice out of a desire to conform to perceived social normative pressures. Eighty-eight pre-service teachers completed scales measuring motivation to respond without prejudice and anti-inclusive attitudes. Internal motivation was a significant negative predictor, whereas external motivation was a significant positive predictor, of anti-inclusive attitudes. A trend in the data was consistent with Butz and Plant's (2009) assumption of an interaction between the two motivational factors and prejudice.

A current aim of many teacher education programs in the United States is to produce future teachers who are appreciative of the diversity of students with whom they will come into contact, sensitive to the needs of these diverse students, and willing, if necessary, to advocate on their behalf in order to ensure they receive appropriate educational services (Unruh & McCord, 2010). In the service of this aim, programs may include explicit coursework addressing issues such as the history and philosophy of education (Bruno-Jofre & Steiner, 2007; Christou, 2009; Kliebard, 1995), multiculturalism (see e.g., Banks, 2010; Garmon, 1998), and special education (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Stecker, 2010; Nieto & Johnson, 2007; Romi & Leyser, 2006; Shade & Stewart, 2001). Courses such as these represent explicit efforts to facilitate recognition in pre-service teachers of historical and current barriers to full inclusion of minority groups within school and society and the importance of working on their behalf in order to provide the maximum educational benefit possible (Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Garmon, 1998; Romi & Leyser, 2006). Other courses address diversity-related issues more implicitly in the context of discussions on the psychological aspects of learning and instruction (e.g., addressing cultural, family, and individual differences that impact learning) and pedagogical strategies (Avramidis, Bayliss et al., 2000; Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007; Shade & Stewart, 2001).

Despite both explicit and implicit efforts by teacher preparation programs to foster greater awareness, appreciation, and consideration of the needs of diverse students, some pre-service teachers may nevertheless maintain negative attitudes towards certain student

groups that could contribute to active opposition to efforts to provide equal access for these students to public school services. This, in turn, may have negative consequences for student learning and achievement (see e.g., Van den Berghh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010). We, as have others (Brandes & Crowson, 2009; Dee & Henkin, 2002; Garmon, 1998; 2004; Unruh & McCord, 2010), reason that teacher preparation programs need to pay greater attention to (a) those individual difference factors among pre-service teachers that may influence the manner in which diversity-related messages are processed and (b) how those factors relate to pre-service teachers' judgments, beliefs, and attitudes that may ultimately influence the ways in which they interact with students once they are in the classroom. The current research was undertaken in this spirit. In our study, we examined the relationship between two motivational (i.e., internal and external motivation to respond without prejudice) factors and pre-service teachers' opposition to fully include students with disabilities in public school classrooms.

What is Motivation to Respond Without Prejudice?

The concept of *motivation to respond without prejudice* (Plant & Devine, 1998) originates in earlier work by Devine (1989) that suggests both automatic and controlled information processing components are implicated in expressions of prejudice toward underrepresented groups. According to Devine (1989), stereotypes of different groups are ubiquitous in society and are recognized by individuals who fall at both the high and low ends of prejudiced responding. The difference between individuals who express prejudice and those who do not, therefore, does not arise out of a difference in the availability of stereotypic content within their mental structures. Rather it stems from the goals they construct regarding how they should regulate those factors (i.e., available stereotypes) that could lead to prejudiced responding. Individuals who express lower levels of prejudice are those who have available to them a set of "nonprejudiced beliefs and personal standards" (Devine, Plant, Amodio, Harmon-Jones, & Vance, 2002, p. 835) that serve as inputs to future action. In sum, "(b)ecause the stereotype has a longer history of activation (and thus greater frequency of activation) than the newly acquired personal beliefs, nonprejudiced responses require intentional inhibition of the automatically activated stereotype and activation of the newer personal belief structure" - processes that can only be described as "controlled" (Devine, 1989, p. 6).

Devine (1989) suggested that two conditions that must be met for inhibition of automatic prejudiced responses to occur are (a) time for the inhibition process to unfold and (b) cognitive capacity. Plant and Devine (1998) later argued that the degree to which one is successful in inhibiting prejudiced responses also depends on the particular motivational orientation of the individual. According to Plant and Devine, the motivation to respond without prejudice can be characterized as either being internal or external in nature. Internal motivation stems from a deeply held desire to be free of prejudiced responding. Individuals motivated according to this goal engage in active efforts to eliminate traces of prejudice in their thought and behavior, irrespective of whether that prejudice is perceptible to others (Plant & Devine, 2009). Individuals characterized as externally motivated to respond without prejudice, on the other hand, are driven by the

perception of “social pressure to comply with nonprejudiced norms” (p. 813) and concerns about experiencing social sanctions if prejudice is detected by others.

Previous research on the relationship between internal motivation and explicit measures of prejudice (and related variables) provides ample evidence of the predictive validity of Plant and Devine’s (1998) Internal Motivation Scale (IMS; and its variants). In their initial validation study, Plant and Devine (1998) demonstrated that scores on internal motivation to respond without prejudice towards Blacks (i.e., individuals of African descent) correlate negatively with measures of racism and anti-Black attitudes and right-wing authoritarianism, and positively with measures of humanitarianism-egalitarianism (Plant & Devine, 1998). Other research by Ratcliff, Lassiter, Markman, and Snyder (2006) provided evidence that internal motivation to respond without prejudice toward gays and lesbians is related to the expression of anti-homosexual prejudice, with persons scoring higher on internal motivation being less likely to express prejudice. Moreover, they reported that internally motivated individuals were significantly less likely to hold traditional gender role beliefs. Finally, a study by Klonis, Plant, and Devine (2005) demonstrated that males who score higher on internal motivation to respond without sexism tend to score lower on measures of modern sexism, traditionalism, neosexism, and hostile sexism.

Research incorporating Plant and Devine’s (1998) External Motivation Scale (EMS; and its variants) also suggests that external motivation to respond without prejudice is related to scores on explicit measures of prejudice (as well as measures of related variables), although these relationships appear to be weaker than those observed with the IMS. In their initial validation study, Plant and Devine (1998) found that external motivation scores correlated positively with scores on modern racism and negatively with positive attitudes toward individuals of African descent. Ratcliff et al. (2006) reported small, but statistically significant positive relationships between external motivation to respond without prejudice, lesbians and anti-lesbian attitudes in their research. Moreover, external motivation to respond without prejudice toward gays and lesbians were each positively related to expressions of traditional gender role beliefs. Klonis et al. (2005) reported significant positive associations between motivation to respond without sexism and neosexism, modern sexism, and hostile sexism. Finally, Pruett and Chan (2006) reported that external motivation to respond without prejudice toward people with disabilities was significantly related to scores on the Attitudes Toward Disabled Persons Scale.

Hypotheses

For the current study, we assumed that self-reported opposition to inclusion among pre-service teachers may reasonably be treated as indexing prejudiced responding concerning students with disabilities. Although opposition to inclusion could theoretically be grounded in rational concerns (e.g., concerns about what students with disabilities may or may not be able to accomplish in classrooms; effects on classroom learning environments), it also seems quite possible that anti-inclusive attitudes stem from incorrect application of social stereotypes and feelings of intergroup anxiety (see e.g., Brandes & Crowson, 2009; Crowson & Brandes, 2010) regarding students with disabilities. Reasoning from the research discussed above concerning relationships

between internal and external motivations (on the one hand) and prejudice (on the other), we hypothesized that pre-service teachers scoring higher on the EMS or lower on the IMS would be more likely to oppose inclusion of students with disabilities in regular education classrooms in the current study.

In addition to hypothesizing main effects of internal and external motivation, we also considered the possibility that these variables might interact to account for variation in opposition to inclusion. Butz and Plant (2009) described four possible combinations of internal and external motivation that may produce variation in prejudice measures considered within different assessment contexts. These authors suggested that in the context of completing a survey privately (a context factor present in our study), individuals scoring high on the IMS should score lower on prejudice measures, irrespective of where they score on the EMS (i.e., the “effective” prejudice reducers being those who score high on IMS and low on EMS; the “determined” being those scoring high on IMS and high on EMS). Persons scoring high on EMS and low on IMS (the “compliant” prejudice reducers) were assumed to score highest on private measures of prejudice, whereas those scoring low on both IMS and EMS (the “unmotivated”) were assumed to exhibit lower scores than the former group. Reflecting their conception of a possible interaction between internal and external motivation when it comes to predicting prejudice, Butz and Plant suggested that any difference observed in prejudice scores between individuals who are “effective” and “determined” should be smaller than the difference observed between individuals who are “compliant” and “unmotivated”. Findings reported by Plant and Devine (1998) bear these assumptions out. Based on Butz and Plant’s (2009) discussion, we tested the possibility of an interactive effect of internal and external motivation in our study.

Method

Participants

Eighty-eight pre-service teachers (10 male, 77 female, 1 failed to report) at a large Southwestern university participated in the study at the end of the spring 2010 semester. These participants were enrolled in a mandatory survey course designed to introduce pre-service teachers to concepts and issues related to special education. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the sample was as follows: White = 78.4%, American Indian = 6.8%, Asian = 5.7%, and Hispanic = 2.3%. Those identifying themselves as African American, Other, and Multiracial constituted the remaining 6.8%. Of the 84 participants for whom we acquired information regarding age, their ages ranged from 19 to 38 ($M = 22.43$, $SD = 3.762$).

Measures

Opposition to Inclusion Scale (General). This scale (see Brandes & Crowson, 2009) was used for the purposes of assessing participants’ global, or general, negative attitudes toward including students with disabilities into general education settings. Example items include: “My impression of the practice of including students with disabilities in classrooms with non-disabled students is generally negative,” “If a student with a disability cannot function in the same way that students without disabilities can within the classroom, then he/she should not be there,” and “Students with disabilities should be

given the opportunity to learn in classrooms with students who do not have disabilities" (reverse coded). Participants rated their level of agreement or disagreement to each item on a scale containing numerical anchors of 1 ("not at all") and 7 ("a great deal"). Higher scores on this scale represent greater generalized opposition to the practice of inclusion. Cronbach's alpha was .91 in the sample.

Disability-Specific Measure of Opposition to Inclusion. Acknowledging the possibility that opposition to inclusion might vary as a function of having particular disability groups in mind, we created a measure that asked participants to rate their agreement that students in the following disability categories should be included in general education classrooms: students who have been diagnosed with (a) cancer, (b) epilepsy/seizure disorder, (c) ADHD, (d) hemophilia, (e) hepatitis, (f) asthma, and (g) learning disability. Participants rated their level of agreement or disagreement concerning the inclusion of students on a scale containing numerical anchors of 1 ("strongly disagree") and 7 ("strongly agree"). Items were coded so that higher full scale scores represented greater disability-specific opposition to inclusion. Cronbach's alpha was .94.

Personal Unwillingness to Teach Students With Disabilities in the Classroom. Our final measure of opposition to inclusion was constructed to measure the degree to which pre-service teachers themselves were willing to teach students with various disabilities (i.e., physical, intellectual, and specific learning disabilities) in their future classrooms. Example items include "To what extent would you be willing to teach a student with a specific learning disability in your classroom?" and "To what extent would you be willing to teach a student with a physical/orthopedic disability in your classroom?" Participants rated their level of willingness or unwillingness to teach students on a scale containing numerical anchors of 1 ("I would be completely unwilling") and 7 ("I would be completely willing"). Items were recoded so that higher scores on the measure indicated greater unwillingness to teach students with disabilities. Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Internal and External Motives to Respond Without Prejudice. Items from Plant and Devine's (1998) original measure of motivation to respond without prejudice were used in this study, with the items only slightly re-worded to take into account the fact that the target group was students with disabilities (as opposed to African Americans, as in the original version). Internal motivation scale (IMS) items measured participants' self-reported desires to avoid prejudiced responding stemming from internalized value priorities. External motivation scale (EMS) items measured participants' self-reported desires to avoid prejudiced responding out of concerns over social sanctions. Example IMS items include: "I attempt to act in nonprejudiced ways toward students with disabilities because it is personally important to me" and "Because of my personal values, I believe that using stereotypes about students with disabilities is wrong." Example EMS items include: "I attempt to appear nonprejudiced toward students with disabilities in order to avoid disapproval from others" and "I try to hide any negative thoughts about students with disabilities in order to avoid negative reactions from others." Participants rated their level of agreement or disagreement to items on a scale containing numerical anchors of 1 ("strongly disagree") and 7 ("strongly agree"). Cronbach's alphas for the EMS and IMS were .89 and .78, respectively.

Procedure

Students were recruited to participate in the study through their introduction to special education class that is taken as part of their education requirements. In order to participate, students logged on to an online survey maintained by the second author. Students read an informed consent form and, upon agreeing to participate, were allowed to access the survey. Those students choosing to participate were given course credit for their involvement in the study.

Preliminary Analysis

We conducted preliminary analyses prior to testing our main hypotheses. First, we examined the intercorrelations among our three measures of opposition to inclusion. Disability-specific opposition correlated positively and significantly with general opposition and with unwillingness to teach [$r(84) = .628, p < .001$ and $r(84) = .646, p < .001$, respectively]. General opposition correlated positively and significantly with unwillingness to teach [$r(84) = .606, p < .001$]. These intercorrelations suggested to us that the three measures of opposition to inclusion are capturing much of the same variation and potentially should be aggregated into a composite index.

Next, we conducted a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) on our opposition to inclusion scales (i.e., general opposition, disability-specific measure, unwillingness to teach measure) in order to better determine whether we should aggregate the scores across measures to form a single, composite "Opposition Index." We factored the full-scale score from our general opposition measure alongside the individual items from the disability-specific opposition and unwillingness to teach measures. The decision to use the individual items from the disability-specific opposition and unwillingness to teach measures was made in order to capture any potential factors that might emerge from having participants consider anti-inclusive attitudes in relation to different disability categories. We used parallel analysis (Crawford et al., 2010) in order to identify those factors to retain from our data. Those factors emerging from our data containing eigenvalues falling above the 95th percentile of eigenvalues generated from randomly generated correlation matrices were retained. Based on our parallel analysis, we retained a single dominant factor from the data. That factor (eigenvalue = 7.666) accounted for 63.88% of the variation in the original measured variables. Factor loadings ranged from .692 to .898. Given these findings, we aggregated the three measures of opposition to inclusion into a single composite index ["Opposition Index"] with higher scores representing greater anti-inclusiveness.

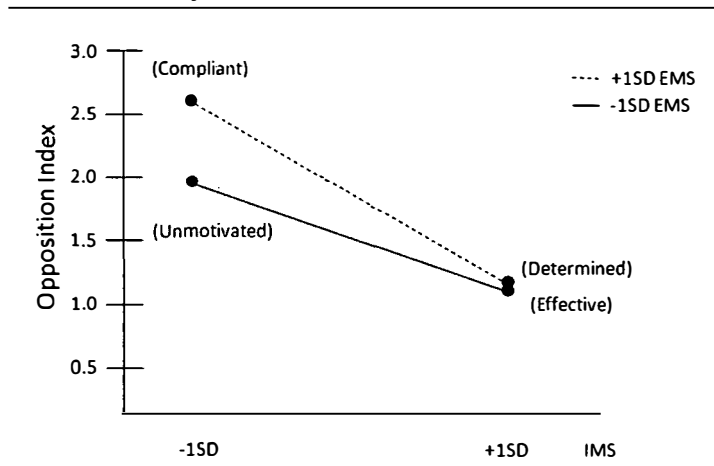
Primary Analyses

Descriptive information on our main variables is as follows: External motivation (EMS; $M = 4.02, SD = 1.61$); internal motivation (IMS; $M = 6.16, SD = .94$), Opposition Index ($M = 1.69, SD = .86$). In general, participants in our sample scored at the scale midpoint of the EMS, well above the scale midpoint on IMS, and well below the scale midpoint on the Opposition Index. Skewness statistics associated with the IMS and Opposition Index suggested a moderate amount of skew (positive, in the case of the former; negative, in the case of the latter) on these variables. However, the departures these variables exhibited from normality were not extreme (see Kline, 2005). Pairwise

correlations among our variables are as follows: EMS and IMS, $r(84) = -.054, p = .624$; EMS and Opposition Index, $r(84) = .170, p = .06$, one-tailed); IMS and Opposition Index, $r(84) = -.715, p < .001$.

Next, we conducted a multiple regression analysis with centered scores on the IMS and EMS, along with a product term (to address any possible interaction between the two measures), as predictors of the Opposition Index. The set of predictors accounted for approximately 54.4% ($R^2 = .544$, adjusted $R^2 = .527$) of the variation in opposition to inclusion, a statistically significant amount [$F(3, 80) = 31.85, p < .001$]. Internal motivation ($b = -.656, S.E. = .069, \beta = -.717, p < .001$) emerged as a significant negative predictor, whereas external motivation ($b = .100, S.E. = .044, \beta = .186, p = .026$) emerged as a significant positive predictor, of opposition to inclusion. The product term ($b = -.096, S.E. = .056, \beta = -.140, p = .093$) reflecting the interaction between internal and external motivation was not statistically significant at conventional levels in the model. Nevertheless, a plot (see Figure 1) of simple slopes (Aiken & West, 1991) representing the interaction between internal and external motivation shows a discernible trend that is consistent with that proposed by Butz and Plant (2009). Descriptors of each motivational type based on Butz and Plant's (2009) classification scheme are provided in parentheses.

Figure 1
Plot of Interaction Between EMS and IMS



Discussion

The results of our study provide several intriguing findings, many of which support our hypotheses. First, the preliminary factor analysis of our opposition to inclusion scales suggested that irrespective of whether an opposition measure is pitched to respondents at a general or disability-specific level, or whether the measure does or does not address personal unwillingness to be inclusive in the classroom, any patterns of association

among these kinds of measures may be explained by a single anti-inclusiveness factor (as reflected in our "Opposition Index"). This may reflect the presence of stereotypes regarding students with disabilities within school systems and colleges of education that are so broad that it is near impossible for survey respondents to think in terms of differences among disability subgroups. On the other hand, this may also reflect either (a) a tendency on the part of many pre-service teachers to generalize the value of inclusiveness across disability types or (b) the effects of pervasive social norms toward inclusion that are heavily endorsed by faculty and administrators within colleges of education. The fact that the IMS mean fell well above its scale midpoint, whereas the Opposition Index mean fell well below its scale midpoint, suggests that (a) is a reasonable possibility. Contrary to the assumption laid out in (b), EMS scores fell right at midpoint, suggesting no tendency to exhibit higher or lower scores on external motivation.

We hypothesized that pre-service teachers scoring lower on the IMS and higher on the EMS would be more inclined to exhibit opposition to inclusion of students with disabilities than those scoring higher on the IMS or lower on the EMS. The results from both our correlation and regression analyses bear these hypotheses out. Specifically, we observed a strong negative relationship between internal motivation and opposition to inclusion in the data. The association between external motivation and opposition scores was positive, though weak. In general, these findings are consistent with previous studies on the relationship between internal and external motives and (private) measures of prejudiced responding (see review by Butz & Plant, 2009).

Finally, although the test of our interaction effect was not statistically significant by conventional standards, our plot of the (albeit, non-significant) interaction suggests a pattern consistent with Butz and Plant's (2009) conception of the relationship between different motivational types and prejudice (as measured within private survey conditions). Pre-service teachers who might be considered as "compliant" (i.e., high EMS/low IMS) scored highest on anti-inclusive attitudes, followed by those who may be considered "unmotivated" (i.e., low EMS/low IMS). Those who may be considered as "determined" (i.e., high EMS/high IMS) scored roughly the same as those who may be treated as "effective" (i.e., low EMS/high IMS).

Limitations

Our study was limited in a couple of respects. First, our findings were based on a rather small sample of pre-service teachers in a college of education, collected at one university, and at the end of a semester-long course addressing disability-related concerns within school settings. The issues of sample homogeneity, sample size, and assessment context naturally raise questions about the generalizability of our results to pre-service teachers in general. It is clear that the hypotheses in this study need to be tested further using larger, more diverse population samples of pre-service educators at different points in teacher preparation programs to assess the generalizability of the associations reported in this study.

Second, several of our measures of anti-inclusive attitudes are rather new – two of which (i.e., disability-specific measure; unwillingness to teach measure) were constructed for the purposes of this study. Although our measures appear to measure anti-inclusive

attitudes on their face, they nevertheless have not been systematically tested for construct validity (although the general opposition measure exhibited theoretically consistent associations with anti-inclusive attitudes in the study by Brandes and Crowson (2009). That said, our correlation and factor analytic results suggested that a single underlying dimension may account for the variation in our measures, allowing us to make a reasonable inference that we were measuring opposition to inclusion. More work is needed in order to validate our discipline-specific opposition and unwillingness to teach measures as valid indicators of anti-inclusive attitudes.

Conclusion

The findings in this study suggest that teacher educators may need to direct their attention towards the motives that pre-service teachers have for responding without prejudice toward students with disabilities and, perhaps, work towards changing them in certain circumstances. Assuming the present results give an accurate picture of the relationship between internal and external motives and prejudice, an important next step for teacher educators may be to develop instructional goals and strategies aimed at increasing pre-service teachers' internal motives, and decreasing their external motives, to respond without prejudice.

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