How Personal Biases Influence Our Voting Habits

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This project measured implicit bias in high school students. I collected data by administering 903 surveys. Minority candidates scored overall approval ratings that were ~.3 points higher than white candidates. Black candidates averaged the highest approval ratings, scoring higher than White and Asian candidates. There is a statistically significant difference in the scores between white candidates, with the White female candidate scoring just under 1 point higher than the white male candidate. Analyzing scores by respondent gender, female survey participants more often gave higher candidate ratings, regardless of who the candidate was, with a p-value of .000. Male and female respondents tended to rate their own gender higher. In addition to this, survey participants with higher GPAs tended to give candidates higher overall ratings. Everything from workplace diversity to advertising to politics are influenced by our implicit biases, and being aware of these can impact our tolerance and diversity. I would love to dive deeper into why I got the results I did. I would also like to increase the diversity and population of my sample size, and take my own candidate photos. Fremont High School is overwhelmingly white and Republican, so measuring trends that center around the race and political alignment of my survey participants (other than those that are white or Republican) wasn't possible to do reliably. I would like to survey more politically and racially diverse groups, and possibly experiment with candidates of different ages. This study showed that the way a candidate is perceived depends on their demographic and the demographic of their audience.

Awards Won:

Central Intelligence Agency: First Award: $1000 award