

Immigrant Narrative Perspectives: Exploring Implicit Bias in Higher Education

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Abstract:- Implicit bias is emerging as a plausible explanation for discrimination in higher education. We explore biases using a qualitative (narrative) design with immigrant students sharing unfair experiences with faculty and negative effects on their engagement with faculty and decisions to remain (or drop out) of the academic program. Implicit bias can have unconscious intent and instructors are unaware of discrimination that perpetuate inequality. The article shares narrative perspectives of college students and reveals implicit bias is relevant, harmful to the learning environment and manageable. Our discussion includes the recent scholarship regarding unconscious and pervasive faculty biases, influence on the Community of Inquiry dynamics (social, cognitive and teaching activities), and suggestions for controlling outcomes consistent with student academic expectations. In addition, sharing views of immigrant students is an opportunity to recognize faculty behaviours leading to discriminatory actions, which impede the academic accomplishments of immigrants in higher education.

I. INTRODUCTION

In every part of the world, migration is impacted by individual and national factors, or *push and pull drivers* (Castelli, 2018), such as large-scale political instability and social and environmental disasters. As of 2017, approximately 245 million migrants were living outside their homelands in a host country, with millions residing in the United States. The Migration Policy Institute (2018), which tracks migration patterns worldwide over time, has reported that there were some 44 million foreign-born residents living in the United States in 1910; in 2016, 14% of the total population consisted of migrants. Migrants come to the United States for a variety of reasons, particularly for opportunities to work and pursue higher education goals and concerns for the safety and welfare of vulnerable family members (Castelli, 2018). Thus, the lure of the *American Dream*—that is, of democratic values, domestic tranquility, and the chance to get ahead—may be a strong driver of migration to the United States and other developed countries.

Personal crises can also motivate individuals to travel to a foreign country for the purpose of furthering their education. Instructors are responsible for evaluating students' academic performance objectively based on assignments, in-class activities, research, and quizzes and examinations. Rubrics can help to ensure that instructors are objective and fair in their assessments of students'

performance. However failing to apply guidelines for reasonable positive learning progress can demotivate the migrant student—for example one migrant student describes receiving professional criticism of an assignment which was not in the rubric and resulting in feelings of shame and embarrassment owing to the student's status as a migrant second language learner. It is reasonable to conclude that, while diligent instructors follow the available rubrics as a basis for positive and constructive feedback, critiques that fall outside of a rubric and are merely deprecating are likely to discourage rather than to motivate students, migrant and otherwise. Conversely, the unique skills, ways of being, and approaches to tasks that individual students bring to class need to be recognized by using flexible rubrics.

At the same time, from a broader perspective, demographic changes, including in the migrant population, have been impacting educational institutions in terms of the diversity of the student body and staff. Evidence of a disparity between the demographic makeup of the faculty and administration ranks on the one hand and that of the student body on the other is a matter of particular concern (NCES Database, 2018). On university campuses, frequent conversations are heard in residence halls and classrooms about bias and discrimination, and, as the incident described in the previous paragraph suggests, one source of these problems can be attitudes toward migrants. The purpose of the present study is to explore such incidents and the analysis of them in the scholarly literature.

The stories of migrants naturally focus on their efforts to acculturate and assimilate (Clifford & Kalyanpur, 2011; Hirschman, 2013). Some of these stories involve coming to the United States in pursuit of educational opportunities (Blanchard & Muller, 2015). Because many migrant parents are committed to achieving a higher standard of living for their children through education and training programs, school often becomes a central part of those children's new life in the United States. When migrants are able to pursue their educational goals in a U.S. university, they may confront obstacles associated with the conventions of the higher education system, in particular the attachment of the faculty to normative and formative values, codes, and practices (Jussim, 1986; Waxman, Padron, & Garcia, 2007). Some scholars have spoken of an "Anglo-American-centrism" with regard to the overall weaker academic performance in reading, writing, and oral presentation skills of ethnic and racial minority, immigrant and migrant students compared with Caucasian (Anglo, or

white) students in U.S. higher learning institutions (Van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010).

The problem of Anglo-American-centrism has been associated with the functioning of the faculty—for example, teaching professionals' (adjunct faculty that are part-time, temporary and full-time professors) control over curricula, the preference for direct instruction over facilitation, and current means of evaluating student coursework—and it has obvious implications for the problem of implicit bias (Boysen, Cope, Vogel, & Hubbard, 2009). Braxton, Bayer, and Finkelstein (1992) pointed to problems in the traditions that guide faculty and in the implementation of normative and formative codes and tasks for student learning. Other scholars have argued that such codes may lead to unfair treatment of and undue pressure on students in the form of, again, implicit (or sometimes explicit) bias (Van de Werfhorst & Van Tubergen, 2007; Van den Bergh, et al., 2010). Ramon's (2003) study of students learning English as a second language addressed specifically the issue of implicit linguistic bias in higher education.

The term "implicit bias" is not new, but it remains controversial. Thus Staats (2014) referred to it as *emotionally charged*, and a growing body of empirical research and literature is shedding light on the issue in university contexts. A key consideration in this regard is that some academic subjects, while being universal, are taught in very different ways depending on the cultural context. A good example is the teaching of basic mathematical computation (addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division), which in Asian and Latin American countries emphasizes mental calculations and in the United States emphasizes the use of technology (Thom & Pirie, 2002). When immigrant students from the developing world arrive in the developed world and come into contact with academic instructors from the dominant culture, the latter may encounter difficulties understanding the students' behaviors, actions, and language (Blanchard & Muller, 2015). Part of the problem is that instructors' biases can influence their students' academic efforts and limit their potential (van den Bergh et al, 2010; Blanchard & Muller, 2015). Implicit bias especially flourishes when the participants in an academic system differ culturally and linguistically. The *differences*, or barriers, can result in misunderstandings and miscommunication between students and instructors and inaccurate assessments of students' academic potential (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2010; Hagelskamp, Suárez-Orozco, & Hughes, 2010). Migrants experience or at least perceive bias when they lack the cultural and linguistic skills to interact with others in the teaching and social learning environment (Bandara, 1977; Garrison & Anderson, 2003). Given their large numbers, the successful integration of migrant students is an important part of preparing them to enter the workforce (Hachfeld, Hahn, Schroeder, Anders, Stanat, & Kunter, 2011).

In order to assess the impact of bias on students' academic achievement, it is necessary to observe and analyze the dynamics of interpersonal interactions in the classroom. In the following discussion, we present an in-depth case study of implicit bias as it relates to migrant students' trajectory in higher education institutions. In particular, we investigate students' efforts to confront implicit bias, their reluctance to speak out for fear of reprisal (in the form of low grades), and possible ways of overcoming implicit bias in faculty codes, values, and practices.

II. THE PROBLEM

A major motivation for this study is the relatively little scholarly attention that has been paid to implicit bias in higher education or to the personal stories of immigrants, which can serve as a window into the pressures that shape the learning opportunities of students attempting to assimilate into the Anglo-American academic system. Among those who have addressed the issue, Staats (2013, 2014), a researcher at the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, has observed that implicit bias "...is increasingly being included in current events dialogue, often in light of emotionally-charged situations police interactions with minorities (African Americans as Jonathan Ferrell). It also called for additional efforts to eradicate this unconscious form of discrimination: "Sometimes the behavioral research leads us to completely change how we think about an issue. For example, many of our anti-discrimination policies focus on finding the bad apples who are explicitly prejudiced." (2014, pp. 13-14)

As mentioned, civil discord and oppression are among the motivations for foreign-born minority students to come to the United States and seek higher education, but their behaviors and actions may be perceived as irrational and inappropriate for the prevailing individual and social constructions of the host country (Young & Laible, 2000). The implicit bias in academic settings obviously can cause in migrant students feelings of alienation and create antipathy in them toward education. The crises that migrant university students face often involve perceptions of unfairness regarding the assessment of their written and oral work. Lopez (2016) has decried the fact that instructors, though they are responsible for educating members of the coming generation regardless of their origins, in some cases continue to *marginalize and/or trivialize issues of race*. Other scholars have also spoken of the linguistic bias against university students from cultures different from that of the host country (Leaders Project, 2013). Changes in pedagogy and curricula to correct these problems require a foundation in new scholarship that accounts for the impact of the various *isms*—those relating to ethnicity and race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and migration status—on the normative and formative tasks of instructors in higher education.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Implicit bias on the part of academic staff, administrators, and faculty against migrant students, then, is a widespread problem in U.S. institutions of higher learning. Conspicuous in the recent scholarly literature about implicit bias are the ongoing efforts simply to acknowledge the phenomenon and to document incidents of inequality and discrimination by faculty against minority (or multicultural) students and their adverse effects on the social and teaching environments of higher education institutions. I experienced such bias when, as an undergraduate student, a child of barely literate parents, having entered the United States as an undocumented immigrant and speaking English as a second language, at one point was refused a letter of recommendation for graduate school from a professor on the grounds that he could not imagine me advancing in my education beyond a bachelor's degree (I am pleased to report, however, that I was able to obtain very supportive letters from other professors at my institution).

Such individual narratives of migrant students can help to identify unconscious attitudes and effects of implicit bias in the academic campus environment. The long-lasting impact of prejudice is indicative of an association between self-image and social cognition, and the implications for learning about self through the socialization process have been recognized at least since Allport's (1954) work in the middle of the past century. It is, for instance, known that such social experiences and interactions as attending school and consuming media images of ethnic and racial groups have a significant impact on social learning. According to the social learning theory proposed by Bandura (1961), individuals learn by observing others in the context of such social institutions as the family (as when children watch parental interactions), labor institutions, and education—including students' interactions with their instructors. Responses to what is observed in the social environment are mediated through the learning process; thus students' peer groups may mediate interactions between students and professors in the university classroom. Students for whom English is a second language may encounter serious impediments to learning as a result of embarrassment caused by what is deemed improper use of English expressions or of the Anglo-American-centric evaluation of their performance in the classroom (Ramon, 2003).

IV. FACULTY NORMS AND IMPLICIT BIAS

From a functionalist perspective (Goode, 1969), university instructors play a normative role authorized by their status as members of a group of professionals dedicated to serving the community through research and scholarship (leading to published work) and facilitating student learning. Braxton, Bayer, and Finkelstein (1992), in a study of faculty norms—in particular corrosive ones involving “interpersonal disregard, inadequate planning, moral turpitude, and particularistic grading”—described the normative codes, in the form of official guidelines and rules as well as informal agreements, that guide teaching

practice, but they assigned a key role in implicit bias to the *principal components of teaching patterns* (p. 1).

In order to be effective, instructors must accept responsibility for students' socialization in terms of acquiring the necessary skills for success in university. Not surprisingly, academic success has been linked to quality instruction and eliminating “the perception of discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fulfill these demands which is known as stress” (Ahmed, Riaz, & Ramzan, 2013, p. 688; cf. Katz, 1976; Lopez, 2003; Misra & McKean, 2000; Stevenson & Harper, 2006; Vermunt & Steensman, 2005). Perceptions of bias in the attitudes and behavior of university instructors on the part of migrant students at U.S. universities can make them feel that they are *unable to cope*. We found that foreign-born students studying in the U.S. did want to share their stories such as the doctoral student from El Salvador who was aspiring to study medicine at a U.S. university and experienced harsh criticism and lack of support when requesting recommendation letters. When this student asked for support in applying for medical school scholarships, several professors advised him to be “realistic” about his academic and professional goals, having already categorized his academic aspirations and professional goals as being limited. This kind of negative reaction and feedback from instructors, who are for students role models and subject-matter experts, can cause them to question themselves and their goals.

Akareem and Hossain (2016) are among the scholars who have studied the drivers of education quality from the perspectives of academic staff, administrators, and faculty regarding their role in the process of transitioning migrant students to the host country's educational institution. For instance, the potential for education to serve as a vehicle for linguistic inequality is revealed in the story of another Salvadorean student whom was interviewed about aspirations and is a child of barely literate parents who fled civil war in his home country, and struggled to complete his assignments and to meet the same standards to which other students, the children of professionals and native speakers of English, were held in law school owing to his difficulties with English as a second language.

In university settings, faculty who make it their responsibility to build a community of learning inclusive of migrant students can prioritize the normative roles of social pressure, teaching, and cognitive presence (Garrison & Anderson, 2003) by creating learning climates characterized by supportive discourse, relatable learning, and respect for linguistic diversity. As alluded to above, current curricula, goals, and instructional methods may be substandard in terms of relevance and reliability (e.g., use of works that perpetuate stereotypes). Informative in this respect is a narrative of a Palestinian student agreeing to speak about experiences studying in the United States whom we interviewed and wanted to focus the dissertation topic on the healthcare situation in the Gaza Strip under the Palestinian Authority, and was told by a teaching faculty

member in a condescending manner that topic was of “no interest to anyone” and the study was a “waste of time”. After arguing that the effectiveness of public administration policies was contingent on the traditions and practices of a given culture, was told by the instructor that a society had merely to follow faithfully the policies enacted in the United States in order to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its public administration, without regard to geographical, political, social, economic, and other factors. In both of these situations, the professors failed to make the effort to look at the situation from the student’s perspective.

In the specific case of mathematics pedagogy, curricula, instruction, and support materials that maximize multiculturalism by using the method for dividing numbers that is taught in Europe and Latin America would be ideal for U.S. universities. This instructional method would introduce immigrant (and migrant) students to a different way to solve mathematical equations while at the same time remaining inclusive. In the literature about *implicit bias* and the key components of a *quality education* in the modern university, researchers have strongly urged faculty to facilitate discussions, rather than trying to direct the instruction, which they can do by integrating migrants’ experiences into their learning opportunities and actively working to eliminate their implicit bias when evaluating the work of all students (Akareem & Hossain, 2016; Staats, 2014).

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The community of inquiry (COI) framework (Garrison, 2003) provides a useful theoretical perspective for identifying teaching fallacies and problems that instructors may encounter when interacting with diverse student bodies. The COI framework can also facilitate the forging of strategies for enhancing interactions between students—especially those belonging to minority groups as well as instructors with respect to effective use of instruction that creates a collaborate learning environment in which immigrant students learn through the interdependent elements of social, cognitive and teaching presence. Again, the goal here is to reduce or eliminate the influence of implicit bias on curricula, course material, and discussions on students’ prospects for education and employment. Staats’ (2014) report on 30 years of research into implicit bias suggest ways to reduce disparities in higher education. Modern universities are experiencing a student demand in which they use tuition dollars to purchase knowledge and credentials that are earned through various curricula, educational resources, and instructional methods (e.g., hybrid, mobile, and eLearning) in more or less diverse learning environments (Akareem & Hossain, 2016). The literature on implicit bias indicates that, overall, dedicated students are attracted to learning environments in which the faculty norms are not particularly Anglo-American-centric. Failure to give due attention to faculty norms, however, can result in the continued dominance of Anglo-American-centric perspectives in scholarly publications as well as in curricula and instructional

practices while minorities remain invisible. Thus Braxton, Bayer, and Finkelstein (1992) argued that

Although teaching and research form an integrated core of activities for the academic profession ...and teaching is the primary activity of most college and university faculty...little is known about the mechanisms of informal social control that guide teaching role performance in the academic profession. (p. 3)

The obvious goal of faculty in the academic system, then, is to meet the needs of their students, colleagues, students’ parents (as those responsible for tuition), accreditors, and so on. They do so successfully by using effective normative behaviors for student engagement and learning in the classroom (American Psychological Association, 2003; Blau, 1973; Goode, 1957, 1969). However, instructors may show implicit or explicit bias when assessing migrant students’ academic potential, in large part because of linguistic differences, regardless of official codes of conduct meant to ensure that instructors avoid discrimination and treat students fairly—at least this is what the American Association of University Professors’ (2009) ethics statement has mandated.

VI. THE FORMATIVE TASKS OF FACULTY AND IMPLICIT BIAS

In higher education settings, students seek approval and model behavior by observing whether an action is rewarded positively. This sort of vicarious reinforcement of behaviors is reflective of the attachment to specific formative practices in Anglo-American-centric universities that rely on a reward system (e.g., grades). Immigrant university students naturally emulate and internalize peer behaviors that are rewarded by their professors, engaging in social learning through a process of *observation of consequences* (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Navabi, 2012). This kind of observational learning requires cognition—active awareness and mental acuity—in order to determine which behaviors will meet with an instructor’s approval. Migrant students, again, frequently encounter prejudice, stereotypes, and outright discrimination, for instance receiving lower grades for high-quality work than white students. Whether the bias is explicit or implicit, it carries with it the unpleasant implication that the professor is unjust. Migrant students, however, may be unsure whether to respond, feeling that they are powerless against the instructor who controls the learning environment.

It is useful in this context to distinguish the responsibilities of university faculty in terms of normative tasks (e.g., developing curricula and research activities for publishing) and formative tasks (e.g., grading students’ performance, holding office hours). The current emphasis in academia seems to be on the former rather than the latter, with the result that too few of students’ complaints are heard and too few discussions held among faculty held about bias, with students fearing repercussions if they speak out (Boysen et al., 2009). The discouraging and condescending comments of professors to students seeking

recommendation letters cited above are an example of the ways in which students may feel silenced in contexts outside the classroom.

A study by Feiman-Nemser (1989) suggested a means for would-be instructors to conceptualize and prepare for the teaching profession; consistent with earlier prescriptions, this one involves writing and directing, rather than facilitating, lectures and evaluating students' work in ways that are not Anglo-American-centric. Higher education faculty learn their craft through a combination of on-the-job training, mentoring, and studying teaching faculty as well as by following professional codes, values, and practices. The modern teaching profession distinguishes between implementing the structural conventions of teaching preparation on the one hand and theorizing ways to accomplish formative tasks that emphasize inclusion of non-Anglo (migrant) students on the other; thus education scholars sometimes refer to "reflective teaching and teacher education" rather than "competency-based" teaching (Feiman-Nesmer, 1989; Houston, 1974). The implicit bias that underpins the ways in which some instructors view and implement the tools available to faculty for such formative tasks as evaluating presentations and assignments and administering academic discipline in one-on-one meetings is likely to persist until a new, instructor-led educational design is implemented. It is up to those who advocate for learning materials that are culturally relevant and sensitive, student-centered, and embrace inclusion—that is, multiculturalists—to bring about the necessary changes (Banks, 2015; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2003; Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007; Taylor, 2010). The normative and formative tasks that perpetuate implicit bias and deny a diverse student body an equitable learning environment, in other words, are in need of a reform that will empower these students so that they may thrive.

VII. METHODOLOGY

A qualitative design was appropriate for this study of the narratives of migrant students in the U.S. college and university system relating to the implicit bias of their professors. Researchers regularly choose the qualitative approach, which involves the use of interviews, case narratives, and small sample sizes, for investigating these kinds of issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this case, we gathered narratives of personal experiences and conducted interviews with colleagues in their doctoral program. A total of five subjects participated in this case study. They were guaranteed anonymity in order to ensure that their remarks would not be met with any retaliation or negative feelings from others in the field.

The core of this paper is an analysis of the narratives and interviews in light of the key findings identified in the literature review. The case study method involving individual narratives was well-suited to the research question regarding the influence of implicit bias on the performance of normative and formative tasks by faculty in their teaching of migrant students. The strength of the qualitative case study method is the potential to generate an in-depth assessment of the phenomenon of interest. We acknowledge that the findings are not necessarily generalizable across U.S. universities, students, and faculty (Merriam, 1998).

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here I present three graphic representations that summarize my findings regarding the effects of instructors' implicit bias in their performance of normative and formative tasks on migrant students' learning. Figure 1 illustrates conditions that create unpleasant and difficult learning environments based on the literature review.

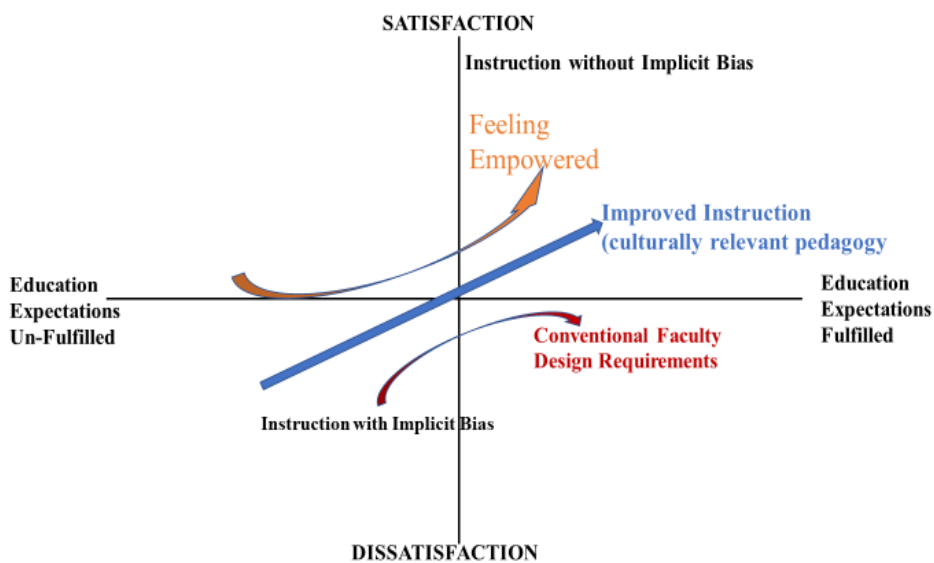


Fig 1:- Kano Model of Implicit Bias against Migrant Students

Conversely, the conditions that can help migrants to fulfill their expectations include conceptualizing teaching in ways that promote diversity (ethnic, racial, linguistic), in particular culturally relevant pedagogy. Tables 1 below summarize the key characteristics of implicit bias and

effect on the learning environment. Table 2 below offers a way to conceptualize the learning environment with purposeful instruction to create a trusting and collaborative learning environment.

Faculty Action	Implicit Bias Characteristic	Immigrant Student in Crises	Effects
Direct lecturing as opposed to facilitating inclusive discussion.	Intentional inclusion of Anglo-American-centric perspectives and values.	Cultural dissonance between home and host country with respect to beliefs, language, and practices.	Long-term effects on educational trajectories (e.g., migrants may stop attending school).
Curriculum development and assignments representing explicit beliefs (biases).	Biases formed through conventional orientations; disregard for culturally relevant pedagogy.	Shame and embarrassment across the learning spectrum as instructors reinforce biases through social learning.	Real-world effects on efficacy in acculturating and problems with self-image in educational and professional settings.
Pervasive implicit or explicit bias related to language use in class assignments, presentations, and discussions.	Automatic, unconscious individual prejudices (acts of discrimination) and practices as part of efforts to maintain control of the learning environment.	Feelings of frustration and powerless; fear of reprisal for speaking up.	Impediments to students' learning, unlearning and student-instructor conflict and problems in class and the academic program generally, resulting in change of academic major or dropping out).

Table 1:- Key Characteristics of Implicit Bias

Faculty Action	Implicit Bias-Free Characteristic	Immigrant Student Empowerment	Effects
Facilitate discussions with emphasis on inclusion of migrant students.	Intentional inclusion of non-Anglo-American students and attention to the contributions of all students.	Cultural connections between home and host country beliefs, language, and practices without ignoring one's own values and language.	Long-term effects on education trajectories (e.g., migrants achieve their educational goals).
Curriculum development and assignments representing multicultural, evidence-based designs and teaching materials.	Bias-reduction (elimination) through multicultural symbols, case examples, and media; culturally relevant pedagogy that minimizes Anglo-American-centrism.	Motivated to share cultural (ethnic/racial, linguistic, etc.) strengths across the learning spectrum; wants to improve diversity in the social learning process.	Awareness of the power of curricular materials and application to real-world problem solving; encouraged to apply relevant knowledge to accomplishment of diversity and inclusion goals in educational and employment settings.
Pervasive use of cross-cultural communication strategies (e.g., teaching migrant students to share and use of cultural language codes in class) and design of multicultural class assignments, presentations, and discussions.	Automatic and unconscious initiation of culturally relevant pedagogy that embraces linguistic diversity; matches teaching and learning styles to the learning community.	Feelings of cultural competence and willingness to support the learning community; perceives positive reinforcement and support when speaking with the instructor.	Supportive learning environment with emphasis on multicultural instruction; collaborative effort to work toward an implicit-bias-free environment in the classroom and academic program generally (preventing changes in academic major, dropping out).

Table 2:- Conceptualizing Learning Environments Free of Implicit Bias

IX. DISCUSSION

Results indicate that students felt their instructors reacted insensitive to their views and perspectives. Students expressed their viewpoints about unfairness and discrimination that involve class assignments, therefore, revealing perceptions of pervasive bias in the academic learning environment. Immigrant students felt that their instructors were not open to differing perceptions and preferred the American-centric perspective (e.g. in research topics, scholarly citations, and solutions). When students expressed their ideas on issues discussed in class and provided solutions to the problems, the instructors did not take their recommendations serious because culturally their solutions did not apply to the dominant Anglo-American society. The implicit biases did influence discriminatory acts and made the students feel incompetent, inadequate, and not capable to meet higher education academic standards. According to each student participating in this case study, there was a clear lack of cultural understanding from the instructors' side. The lack of cultural competency from the instructors made the student-instructor relationship difficult to come to a mutual understanding.

X. CONCLUSION

Instructors in the developed world often fail to understand that immigrant students, especially those for whom English is a second language, along with their families, place tremendous faith in them and in the school system. They expect instructors to guide and mentor them through their studies and are predisposed to look up to and admire them. As the face of academic institutions, instructors obviously play key roles in the success of the educational system, being in a position to facilitate each student's academic success or, alternatively, to act as gatekeepers and reproduce the inequity that immigrant and language minority students face in so many other aspects of their lives. The sad fact is that biased perceptions of students' academic preparedness create a false distinction between those who are capable of success in higher education and those who are not that becomes a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In-depth analysis of immigrant narratives was the basis for exploring these issues, and it strongly suggests that redesign of the orientation, codes, values, and practices of higher education faculty is necessary. Human beings adapt to environmental, social, and cultural changes, and this means that biases are not inescapable, at least not for those who are willing to learn from others about their differences and to accept and embrace the changes going on around them. When professors teach students from diverse backgrounds in terms of ethnicity and socioeconomic status, they must learn about and be sympathetic to these students' distinct needs and accept the fact that not all of what is taught in the classroom is universal. It is essential for instructors to learn from students as well by allowing them to voice their opinions and offer solutions that may

only occur to those who have had the experience of a culture very different from that of a U.S. institution of higher learning.

Taking the time to learn each students' background, then, is one way for faculty to avoid making false assumptions about migrant students, including the notion that all migrants from the same country share a similar background. When instructors make the effort to recognize and transcend their biases, students are more likely to trust that they genuinely want them to succeed regardless of their background. Trust is the cornerstone of the student-instructor relationship and a prerequisite for progress in the classroom.

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