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A Virtual Educational Intervention Addressing Weight Bias in Medical Students

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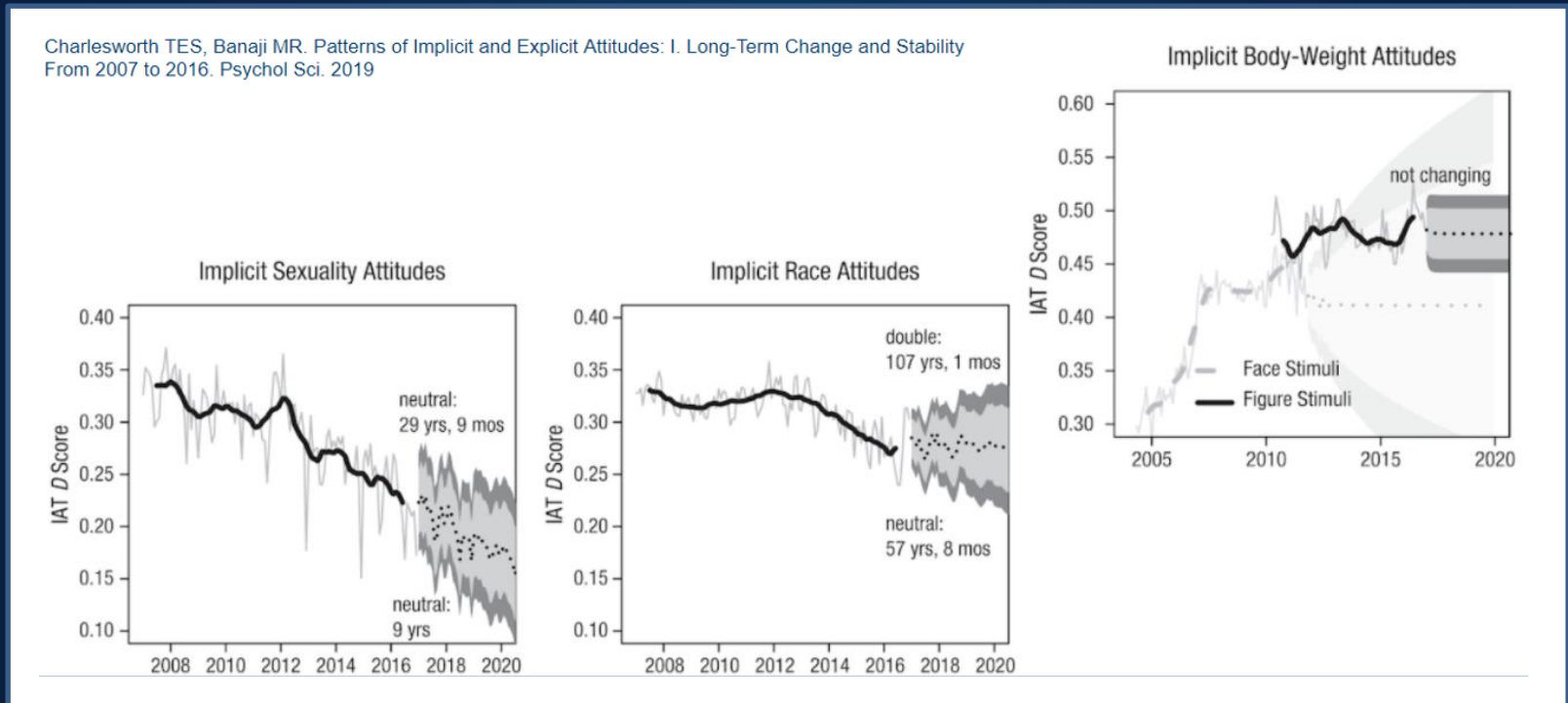
**Sidney Kimmel
Medical College™**
at Thomas Jefferson University

A Virtual Educational Intervention Addressing Weight Bias in Medical Students

Gina Goldberg, Joseph Majdan, MD*

(**) indicates another student who is declaring the same project as primary for SI

- Individuals with higher body weight experience severe and pervasive discrimination in nearly every walk of life¹



- Stigmatizing treatment from healthcare providers leads to poor health outcomes²

- Approaches in existing literature³
 - Increasing understanding of the uncontrollability of obesity
 - Induction of Empathy for individuals with obesity
 - Increasing awareness of implicit biases toward people with obesity
 - Decreasing the social acceptability of weight bias
- No existing studies include
 - Personal testimony of Physician Mentor
 - Virtual, self-guided format



Research Question & Hypothesis

- Research Question
 - Does a virtual educational session about obesity influence the explicit attitudes and implicit biases of medical students towards people with higher body weight?
- Hypothesis
 - Explicit attitudes towards people with higher body weight will improve after a virtual educational session about overweight and obesity. Implicit attitudes may not change.

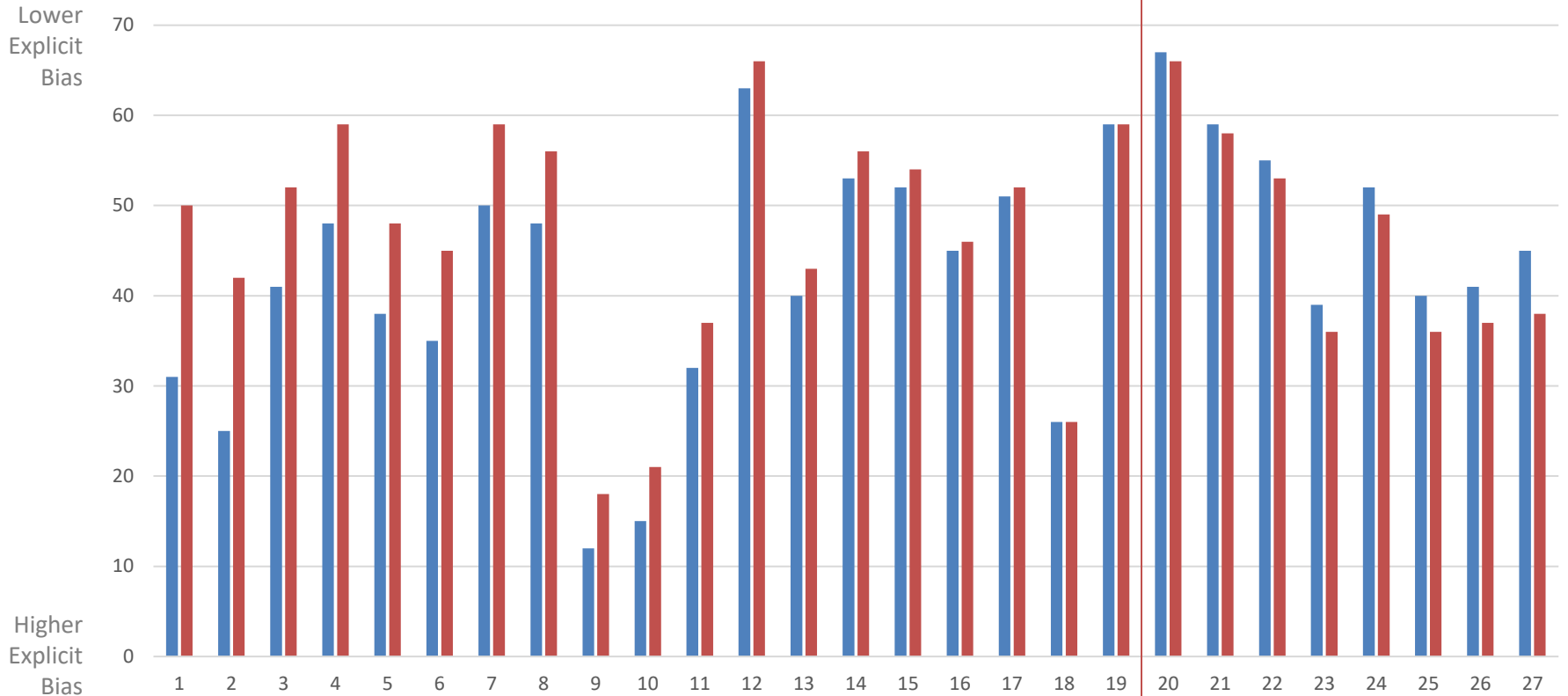
- Population
 - SKMC students
- Intervention
 - Virtual session
 - Biological basis (uncontrollability of obesity)
 - Personal experience (induction of empathy)
- Data Source and Collection
 - Implicit Associations Test (implicit bias)
 - Universal Measure of Bias Questionnaire (explicit bias)
 - Demographic questions

Implicit Association Test

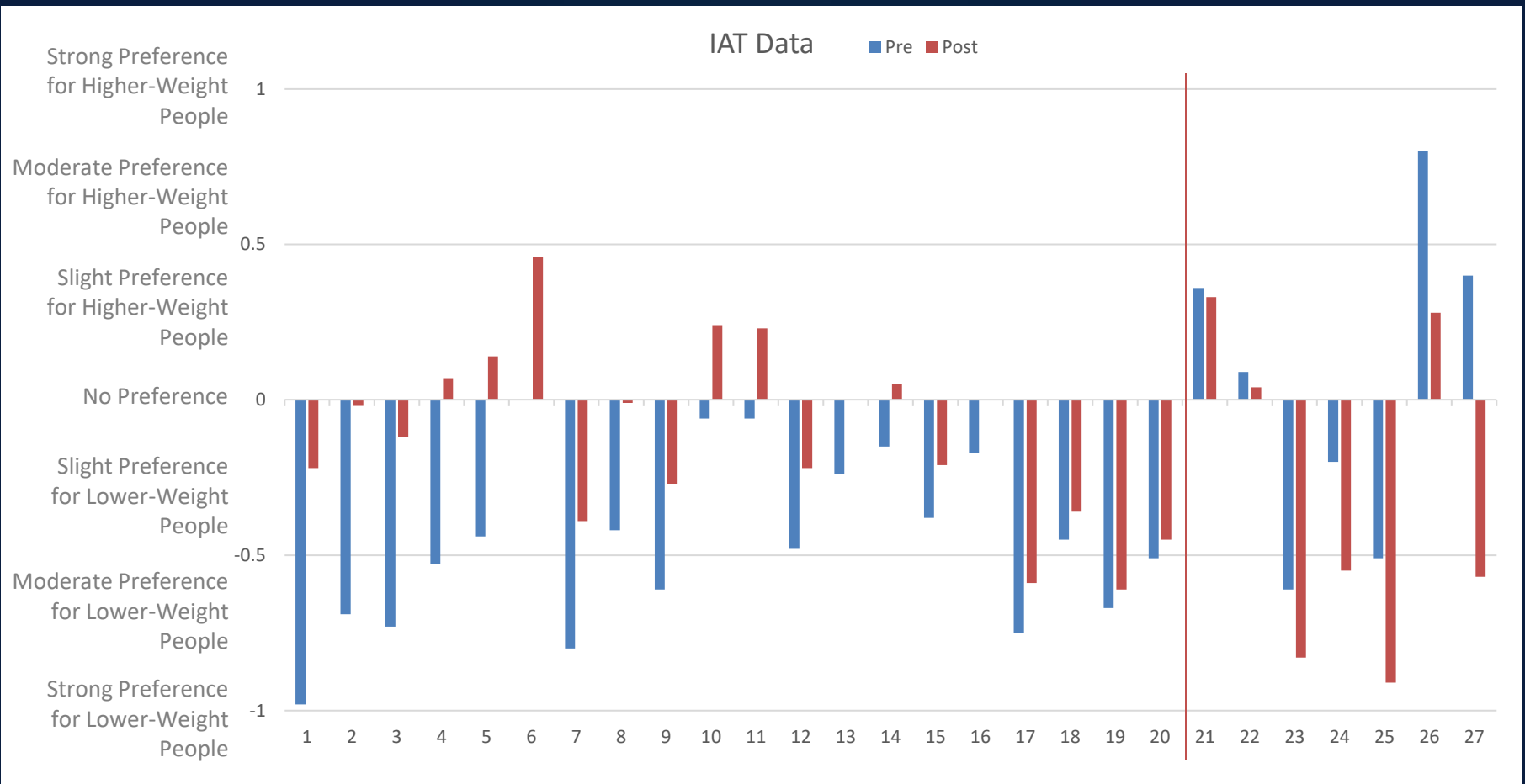
Next, you will use the 'E' and 'I' computer keys to categorize items into groups as fast as you can. These are the four groups and the items that belong to each:

Category	Items
Good	Lovely, Attractive, Pleasure, Excellent, Smiling, Delightful, Appealing, Cheerful
Bad	Rotten, Tragic, Hate, Abuse, Dirty, Detest, Horrific, Grief
Fat People	
Thin People	

UMB Data



- Universal Measure of Bias (UMB) Findings
 - Shift away from higher explicit bias toward lower explicit bias
 - 6.2% average decrease in explicit bias



• Implicit Associations Test (IAT) Findings

- Overall shift away from automatic preference for lower weight people toward automatic preference for higher weight people
 - 7.7% average change in preference overall (n=27)
 - 11.8% average change in preference in those who started with an automatic preference for lower weight people (n=22)

- Preliminary data suggest that both explicit and implicit bias tend to decrease after our virtual intervention
- Accessible, brief way to address weight bias in SKMC students
- Limitations
 - No control group (pre-post intervention study)
 - Tests, intervention dependent on full attention

Future Directions

- Data analysis
 - Relationships between explicit and implicit data
 - Demographics – self-reported weight status, gender identity, age, race/ethnicity, class year
- Follow-up in 3-6 months
- Easily scalable
 - Role of relationship with Dr. Majdan
 - Medical students at other schools
 - Other medical professionals
- Incorporation into JeffMD curriculum

Acknowledgements

- Alyssa Kyle
- Clara Farrehi
- Dr. Amanda Velazquez

References

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2. Potter LN, Brondolo E, Smyth JM (2019). Biopsychosocial correlates of discrimination in daily life: A review. *Stigma Health* 4(1): 38-61.
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